

Rotational Farming Exposure Visit Report

25 – 31 October 2017, Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, Thailand



Collaboration With
Spirit in Education Movement
Kalyana Mitta Development Foundation
Towards Organic Asia

Learning Objectives:

Nong Tao: Indigenous wisdom and culture – This community is home to one of the key spiritual leaders of the Karen people of Northern Thailand. He has been a tireless advocate for the indigenous rights of the Karen people over the past 20 years, and has been recognized as an elder and leader among the Karen community.



Huay Hin Lad Nai: Forest management, land rights and sustainable livelihoods – This community is an excellent example of protecting and managing natural resources through their traditional farming and cultural practices practices, and has become a model of biodiversity conservation and carbon neutral farming. See below some articles on the community:



Key Learning Outcomes:

There were 2 levels of reflection done after the visit to the 2 communities. Firstly, as individuals, they were asked to identify their key learnings, and what they plan to do on return to their community.

At an individual level, according to their reflection, they expressed the following key learning points:

- Ability to be free through self reliant use of local resources (honey and tea plantation at Huay Hin Lad Nai)
- Transmission of cultural values through generations as the foundation for maintaining sense of belonging and willingness to protect their communities
- Income generation coming from sustainably managing the existing resources rather than exploiting them
- Working with less effort through paying more attention to how natural systems work
- Being free from debt and dependence on agricultural companies
- Networking brings strength in to manage resources and uphold rights

Research on what already exists can help community to come to a greater sense of ownership over their resources



INDIVIDUAL PLANS

- Khon Htu (upland Phekon): Mapping of the community and the forest. Secondly is to list down the tree species that exist there. Thirdly, listing the wild animals. This will start in January, 2018, with the youth group, and cooperation with elders in the village, and forestry department.
- Kyauk Nget (upland Inle): Knowledge sharing on how to generate household income from forest products – honey, tea etc. Secondly to share about self reliance at

household and community level. Thirdly, self management. These will be shared 1 time per month to the village through the youth group and expand to village head and neighbouring youth groups. Hlar Htoo(lowland Phekong): Start with integrating fruit trees and creating a wild garden. Would like to start with the mapping and collaboration with 4 villages in the village tract.

- Lwe Lon (upland Phekong): Agro forestry nursery in community so that seedlings can be transferred to community forest. Share about the importance of community forestry with youth group members and community.
- Khon Sone (lowland Phekong): Start with community mapping, and expand to tract. Will include herbal plants. Youth group, leaders and elders to be involved. Secondly, to share learning from this visit with youth group and community members. Set up agro-fruit trees in own farm. Lastly, ecovillage concept training in community with youth group.
- Khon Hwa: Organic farming, with integration of new concepts learnt here. Community mapping. Already started but will improve from what is learnt here. Thirdly, sharing on forest management to students and younger children.
- KMF Staff (Inle): Mobilise groups in watershed area to be able to facilitate mini research. Secondly, impart practical knowledge learned here among target group on income generation from the forest. As community mobiliser, would like to share on CF management with every training. Would like to work with local youth group and KMF target groups in Inle. Target village will be in lowland Inle and watershed area communities.
- Translator (Phekong): Start with lazy man gardening concept by planting more trees. Sharing knowledge on CF with upland farmers and catechists (Christian school that hosts many shifting cultivation farmers). Thirdly sharing to them on sustainable rotational farming and management.

Secondly, as a group, they were also asked to reflect what they would be able to work towards at a wider community and village tract level.



GROUP PLAN

- Increase community collaboration, sharing learning between each village regularly
- Mapping 4 villages in upper Phekon – for community forest (exists but not legally), and land management, in order to solve land issues
- Networking with academics and other networks, groups with same interests

Overall, the visit was extremely successful and has given key youth eco-farmers the motivation to look beyond their own families, and understand an holistic community approach to self reliance. The Phekon project area under KMF will continue to be supported by KMF, but in a backstopping capacity rather than implementation of activities. Therefore, follow up will continue through existing KMF staff in order to ensure that these traditional upland communities are strengthened to face external challenges and increase their own self reliance through sustainable income generation relating to the management of their local resources.

Exposure Visit Schedule

| Date | Activity | Key Learning |
|--------|---|--|
| 25 Oct | YGN-CMI (direct to Nong Tao Village) | |
| 26 Oct | AM: Orientation: know each other, expectations PM: Putee Joni –cultural practices and local wisdom for forest management EVE: Northern Young Farmer Network | Local wisdom Forest Management Income Generation |
| 27 Oct | AM: Field Trip in Nong Tao, Harvesting PM/EVE: Conclusion with Oshi and Putee Joni | |
| 28 Oct | AM: Travel to Chiang Rai – direct to Hin Lad Nai PM: Walk around Gardens of Hin Lad Nai, Community Forest | Forest Management Land Rights |
| 29 Oct | AM/PM: Intro to Huay Hin Lad Nai, Shifting Cultivation and Natural Resource Management | NRM and Shifting Cultivation |
| 30 Oct | AM: Field trip to Farm PM: Discussion (technical details on land rights, mapping if not covered in other sessions) | |
| 31 Oct | Travel to Chiang Mai AM: Trip Reflection and Evaluation PM: Visit to Organic Market | |
| 1 Nov | CMI-YGN | |

List of Participants

| No | Name | Date of Birth | Village |
|----|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1 | TINO | 29 MAR 1973 | PHEKON |
| 2 | THAN AUNG | 15 AUG 1995 | PHEKON |
| 3 | TIN HLA | 4 MAY 1974 | PHEKON |
| 4 | YE WING NAUNG | 29 APR1992 | PHEKON |
| 5 | TUN AUNG | 27 JAN 1990 | PHEKON |
| 6 | THAN TINT | 10 FEB 1988 | PHEKON |
| 7 | SAN NAING | 13JUN 1986 | PHEKON |
| 8 | AUNG SAN | 14APR 1994 | NYAUNG SHWE |