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## PROFILE OF MAE CHAN TAI VILLAGE

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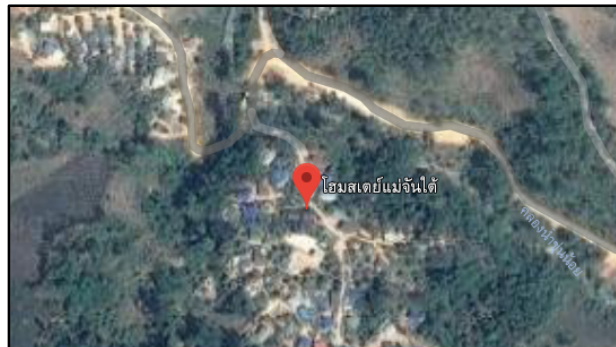
### I. BACKGROUND

Mae Chan Tai village is populated by Akha indigenous people. It is located in Tambon Thakor, Mae Suay District, Chiang Rai Province. It is a mountainous area located at an altitude of 1392 meters above sea level. The community does not have a problem with local authority even though the village is located inside the Mae Suay Conservation area.

In the past the Akha people lived in Doi Ngarm village but due to land conflict and change in religion, some families decided to move and settle in what they call now as Mae Chan Tai Village. The Akha population has gradually increased from 8 households to 39 households. The total population of the village is 225, comprising 119 men and 106 women.

However, Mae Chan Tai is not yet recognized as a village by the government. It is being known as a sub-village of Phana Sayree.

The village connects some part of Prao District in the southern and western parts and connects with Vieng PaPao in the eastern part of Chiang Rai province.



*Mae Chan Tai Village*

**Mae Chan Tai is 150 kilometers away from Chiang Mai city. It will take around 3 hours by car to reach the village.**

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### II. RELIGION

The Akha people practices both Animism and Buddhism. They worship their ancestors and have deep relationship with land.

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### III. CULTURE AND FESTIVALS

Akha people have maintained their beliefs and culture. Hence they are still performing traditional rituals and ceremonies and celebrating number of festivals. There are four (4) major festivals that they celebrate annually. These include Kin Kao Mai, Tee Luk Khang, Khai Dang and Lo Ching Cha or Akha Swing Festival. The Akha Swing festival is the most famous festival among

the four. This is where community members pray for blessing from goddess “Um Sa Yae” for abundant crops. The festival is organized in August every year and acknowledges the roles and contribution of women. Another festival linked to agricultural activity is the Kin Kao Mai or new rice ceremony, which is being done to identify the best day to collect new rice seed. This takes place in October every year. Tee Look Khang is celebrated every December after harvesting. Like any other communities, Akha people also celebrates new year called Khai Dang or Red Eggs festival which happens in April.

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#### **IV. GOVERNANCE SYSTEM**

Mae Chan Tai governance system is a mix of a traditional and modern government administration systems. While the community is predominantly operating under state administration system, they still rely on their traditional system of leadership. Over-all the villagers still depend on their traditional socio-political system and still uphold traditional values, culture and beliefs. Currently, a village leader is represented in the Ubatow (lowest government unit).

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#### **V. ECONOMY AND RESOURCES**

The main economic activity of Akha people is agriculture. They are known as people who grow and eat rice. Aside from rice, they also grow corns, cherry, plum ginger, coffee and winter plants. Around 70% of the households is self-sufficient in terms of livelihood and food security. Villagers used to practice shifting cultivation. However, they do not practice shifting cultivation anymore due to limited lands.

With increasing tourism especially in Chang Mai, Akha people are running homestays, selling local products and have arranged guided tours in their communities. These activities are additional source of income. 10 households of Mae Chan Tai village started running home stay since 2017. Around 1583 visitors come annually in the village. Community members organize two major activities:

- Cultural tour where visitors learn about history, culture, traditional knowledge, and ceremonies of Akha people
- Agriculture tour community members expounds on agro-forestry and eco-system

The average income is 23,000 Baht or 740 USD per family per year.

In terms of land use, the following breakdown shows how resources in the community are being utilized.

1. Agriculture	1,500 Rai
2. Animal husbandry	100 Rai
3. Water resources	10 Rai
4. Forest Area	2,500 Rai
5. Public area	3,000 Rai
6. Residential area	15 Rai

*Note: Rai is a measurement unit used for land in Thailand. 1 Rai is equal to 0.16 hectare*



## **VI. SOCIAL SERVICES**

The village has the following community facilities: school, health center and electricity. In terms of education, community has a community learning center with a curriculum on traditional farming, natural resource management and traditional treatment including knowledge on herbal medicines and rituals. Akha language is used for teaching in the learning center.

Social services are being provided by both government and other institutions:

### **Local Government Unit:**

- Mae Nam Khun Water Management Department
- Huay Nam Khun Health Center
- Mae Nam Khun School
- Huay Nam Khun Highland Agriculture Unit
- Mae Nam Khun Royal Project

### **District level:**

- Mae Suoy District
- Chiangrai Informal School
- Mae Souy District Informal School Center
- Mae Souy District Public Health
- Mae Souy District Livestock Department
- Mae Souy District Hospital
- Mae Souy District Police Station

### **Private sector:**

- Christian Foundation
- Akha Association/foundation

### **Others:**

- Royal foundation
  - Compassion project
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## **VII. ISSUES AND NEEDS OF THE VILLAGERS**

The villagers have identified number of needs and issues affecting them. These include but not limited to the followings:

- Citizenship (Some villagers still hold blue card or green card which means they are not yet a Thai citizen.)
- Education (Villagers want to have school in their community)
- Culture and language (Community members want to preserve and transfer their culture, language and knowledge to their future generations. Young generations go to study outside the village and get influenced by modern culture. Villagers are concerned about losing their culture and languages)

- Expansion of Electric Power (Community members are still using solar cell which is not enough for agricultural work, for instance, coffee hulling. They need to use generator which is costly)
  - Winter plant cultivation
  - Community library
  - Organic farming
  - Clean community
  - Rice bank
  - Road construction
  - Drainage system
  - Reforestation for the King.
  - Health issues like tuberculosis, common cold, gastric, diarrhea, respiratory system, diabetes, blood pressure
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