



Visit Schedule: Thailand

We are happy to give you some basic information to help you prepare yourself for a visit to your sponsored child and his/her community. We hope you will find this useful. Please let us know if you require further information. We believe that this visit to your sponsored child will be a great opportunity for you to learn about his/her traditions, culture and family life. You will also learn more about the community development efforts that you have been supporting.

Name of visitor: Mr. and Mrs. Sponsor

Donor ID number: SC-9999999

Sponsored child's (SC) name and ID: Sponsored child 123456789

Departure date from Canada: July 14th, 2014

Approved visit date: July 21st, 2014

Return date to Canada: July 30th, 2014

Person coordinating visit: Name of Plan employee

Pick up at Hotel/Lodgings: Yes

Pick up time: 8:30 am

Pick up location: Empress Chiang Mai Hotel 199

Translator provided: Yes

ETA to sponsored child's community: 10:30-11:00 am

Lunch with sponsored child and family: 12:00 pm

Visit community projects: 1:30 pm -4:30 pm

Depart community: 4:30pm -5:00 pm

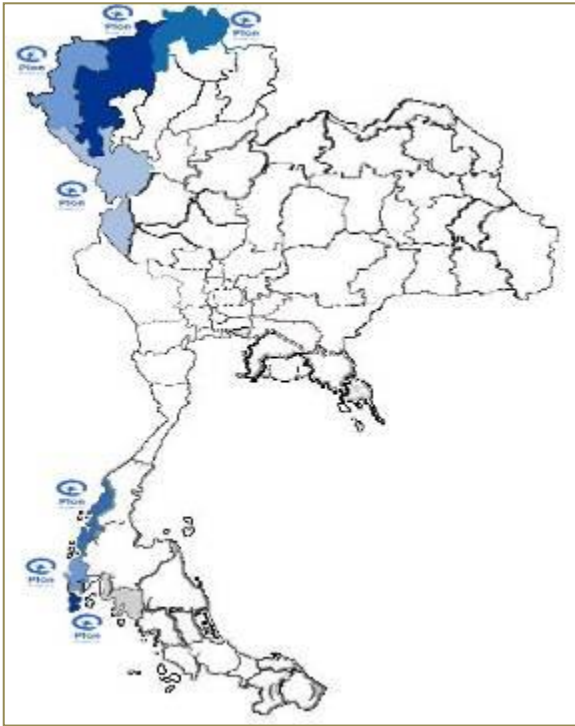
Plan Field Contact:

Name of employee

Sponsorship Team

Plan International, ChiangRai Office

PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR YOUR VISIT TO PLAN THAILAND



LOCATION OF PLAN THAILAND PROGRAM AREA AND SPONSORED CHILDREN'S COMMUNITIES

Currently, Plan Thailand works in some of the poorest areas of **Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai** -The local Plan coordinating office is in Chiang Rai where Country office is still in Bangkok.

ARRIVING IN THAILAND

The major port of entry to Thailand is **Suwanabhumi International Airport**, which is 45 kilometres east of Bangkok.

It may not be necessary to stop over in Bangkok as your arrival time may allow a connecting flight to Chiang Rai provinces. Your own travel agent should make reservations for these domestic flights well in advance. However, if you are stopping

over Bangkok, there are taxis, airport limousines and hotel buses available at the airport. Depending on the distance, fares range between 300 and 500 Baht (8 to 12 USD). It takes about an hour to go downtown, depending on traffic.

When you arrive in Thailand, please contact our Country Office to inform us of your arrival, to confirm arrangements and in case you need assistance regarding the visit. Our office hours are Mondays to Fridays, 08:30-17:00 hrs, with lunch break at 12noon-1pm. The Country Office will contact the specific program areas to prepare the visit.

**** Please note that Plan offices are closed during religious and public holidays*

VISITING PLAN PROGRAM AREA: Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai

- You have to fly from Suwanabhumi International Airport to Chiang Mai International Airport and stay at least one night in the city of Chiang Mai. Plan staff and translator will meet you at the hotel on the visit date and will accompany you to the office and to your sponsored family.
- During the visit, Plan provides transportation free of charge from our main office or your hotel to the child's house. If, for any reason, a Plan vehicle is not available, taxi service can be arranged.
- Travelling from Chiang Mai to communities of Chiang Dao may take up to 5 hours. It depends on where your sponsored child's community is. If it is in a great distance area, we recommend the sponsor stay another night at small resort in Chiang Dao.
- Plan Staff can help you booking the local hotel booking
- After the visit, you will have Feedback meeting with Plan staff – your experiences and final questions

- The next day, you can continue your journey independently in Chiang Dao or Plan staff will drive you back to Chiang Mai.

DO'S AND DON'TS WHEN VISITING YOUR SPONSORED CHILD

- Men should wear trousers and women a dress covering the shoulders. Shorts are considered inappropriate. The shoulders and knees should be covered.
- Do not use one's feet to gesture or to point at something or someone.
- Do not touch the head of another person, particularly the person older than you are. That is considered rude and not culturally acceptable. Touching the young ones in an appropriate manner showing your care is acceptable.
- To greet a Thai person older than yourself, bring your hands together at chest level – like praying (which is called *wai*), nod gently and say:
 - "Sawatdee Khrup" (If you are a man)
 - "Sawatdee Khaa" (If you are a woman)



(If the person is the same age or social rank as oneself, the *wai* is for the first meeting. After that it is considered too formal. If the person is younger than yourself – wait for them to *wai* first then you may respond. Do not over-exaggerate the *wai*.)

- If you start shaking hands, do not be surprised that you will have to shake hands with everyone present. It is better to *wai*.
- Hats and shoes must be removed before entering a house or temple. Women must wear a dress in a temple.
- Women must not touch a monk; likewise men must not touch a nun. (Even casual contact disrupts the ritual purity.)
- Do not step on pictures particularly of the Buddha, the royal family or the flag. His Majesty the King is highly revered and an offense violating the dignity of the king, queen and heir to the throne or the regent is a crime and will result in deportation.
- Never hail another person by whistling to them. Instead, wave the hand palm down, flexing the fingers. A palm up wave with flexing fingers is considered solicitous.
- Do not put your arms around the shoulders of people older than yourself or higher in social rank.
- Please do not give your address, telephone number or e-mail address to the sponsored family or Plan staff, or invite your sponsored child to visit your country.

BEST TIME FOR YOUR VISIT

The most suitable time for a visit is the cool, dry season, between October and February, when temperature averages between 22-28 Celsius (68-78 Fahrenheit).

Between March and May, the weather becomes warmer with temperature reaching 38-42 Celsius. This is the hot and dry season. June to September is the rainy season. Roads going to the program areas, especially in some villages in Chiang Mai can be difficult and at times impassable. Families are also usually busy with their farms at this time due to the short growing season. Visits at this time of year are, therefore, discouraged.

GETTING AROUND

- Air:** Refer to the above section.
- Buses:** Inter-city bus services offer a fast means of transport to all corners of the country. Air-conditioned buses service many provincial areas and bookings for both regular and tour coaches can be made through major hotels and travel agents, or at the bus terminals.
- Trains:** An efficient rail service links northern and north-eastern towns with Bangkok. Advance tickets are available at all principal stations or the Bangkok Advance Booking Office.
Tel: (66) 2225-0300 ext 5200-3.
- Hired Car:** If you want to go your own way, there are many car hire firms in Thailand, including international rental companies such as Budget and Avis. The road system is good and well sign-posted. An international driving license is required.
AVIS (+66) 2255-5300-4 email: res@avisthailand.com
Budget (+66) 22039200

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January	1	New Year's Day
February	Full moon day	Makha Bhucha Day
April	6	Chakri Day
April	13-15	Songkran Days (Traditional new Year)
May	5	Coronation Day
May	7	Ploughing ceremony Day
May	Full moon day	Visakha Bucha (Birth, Enlightenment, Death of Buddha)
July	Full moon day	Asalaha Bucha (start Buddhist Lent)
August	12	HRH the Queen's Birthday
October	23	Chulalongkorn Day (King Rama V) Memorial Day
December	5	HRH the King's Birthday
December	10	Constitution Day
December	31	New Year's Eve

Note : If the national holidays fall on weekend, the government offices and organizations are officially closed on the following working day(s). This will be declared in advance

LANGUAGE

The most common language in the cities is Thai, but in the North and Northeast villages, local dialects are widely spoken. Some hotel staff can speak English. Always speak slowly and clearly, and be patient and smile!

CHILD RIGHTS AND PROTECTION

As an international child-centred development organisation, committed to the wellbeing of children and to supporting the Convention of the Rights of the Child, Plan does not tolerate child abuse.

Plan sponsors MUST NOT

Disclose information that identifies sponsored families or children to unauthorised persons or make it available to the general public without the informed consent of the family and, when appropriate, the child.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

- A child's personal history, picture identity folders and photographs should be kept reasonably protected from unauthorized use.
- All sponsor correspondence with a sponsored child should be reviewed for inappropriate or suggestive comments, requests or obscenities. In the event of inappropriate correspondence being discovered, the organization reserves the right to decline sponsorship or sever the sponsorship relationship.
- The agency reserves the right to screen sponsors (including criminal background checks) prior to field visits. The agency shall require permission from the sponsor to do a criminal background check where permitted by local law. At the time of sponsorship, sponsors should be advised that the organisation's policy prohibits unannounced visits. Prior to the visit, sponsors will be asked to sign
- An acknowledgement statement that they have received and understand the visit policy. An agency staff member must accompany all visitors at all times when the sponsors are with the child. The sponsored child or sibling must not be removed from his/her community.
- Actual or suspected cases of any abuse or inappropriate behaviour are to be reported immediately to agency management. Appropriate action must be taken regarding the donor or sponsor, including criminal investigation and potential severance of the relationship with the organisation depending on the outcome of the investigation.

TO CONTACT YOUR EMBASSY/ CONSULATE

Canada 15th Fl., Abdulrahim Pl., 990 Rama 4 Rd. Bangrak, Bangkok, 10500 (P.O. Box 2090) Tel. 02-234561 to 9	Monday – Friday 08:00 – 12:30 13:30 – 16:30
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Enjoy your visit!!!