

### 3.3.9 Thailand

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#### Creation of Awareness among Villagers and Mobilization of their Participation in Thailand

The village of Mae Kampong, is situated in Chiang Mai, the northernmost province of Thailand. The village is set among mountains and surrounded by virgin tropical forest, which is the main source of many rivers there. Most of the 421 villagers or 146 households build their houses on the steep side of the mountain and earn their income by cultivating native Thai tea and coffee. The geographic condition and situation of the settlement offer both advantages and disadvantages to villagers. The advantages lie in the fertile land favorable for crop cultivation, and the tranquility and beauty of its natural surroundings. Disadvantages, on the other hand, are the villagers' vulnerability to water-related disasters such as flash floods and landslides, and difficulty of access when natural disasters occur. The Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Chiang Mai Province Office has been well aware of these disadvantages, particularly villagers' vulnerability and difficulty of access. The Office has attempted to reduce the risk and losses of lives and property. At the same time, they have realized that it would be never achieved without the villagers' awareness and their commitment. The activities that have been implemented to prevent the hazard are as follows.

1. A training program entitled "Community Based Disaster Management" was carried out on February 16-17, 2004. After training, the villagers formed seven task force groups to help themselves and one another concerning disaster prevention and mitigation within their villages. These seven groups are:
  - Vigilance and Information Notification Group;
  - First Responder Group;
  - First Aid Group;
  - Evacuation Group;
  - Logistics Group;
  - Housing Rehabilitation Group;
  - Mental Rehabilitation Group.
2. Installation of simple rain gauges and manual warning sirens in Mae Kampong. This equipment is employed for observation and notification of local flood conditions, forecasts and warnings. The rain gauge is extremely cheap and very simple to use. The villagers will be trained to measure, record and read the daily amount of rainfall. Whenever the amount of rainfall exceeds the predefined normal level, the villager in charge of observations will broadcast the warning by using the manual siren device to notify the village headman to disseminate the warning through the village news broadcasting tower. The cost per installation of the device is THB 2,000.

#### Major achievements

The installation of simple rain gauges and manual warning sirens has been beneficial. After both pieces of equipment were set up at Mae Kampong village, villagers have become more aware of potential disaster, learned to protect themselves and safeguard the village through vigilance, and begun to help one another before and during a crisis. Damage was thereby extensively reduced. The following are examples of recent achievements in the village in 2004.

1. When a forest fire broke out in July near the village a guard used the manual warning siren to notify the villagers, who were able to extinguish the fire collectively.
2. On September 20, 2004 there was heavy rain in Mae Kampong. The villagers were able to use the simple rain gauges to forecast the potential flashflood. In consequence, the people had enough time to be well prepared in advance. Eventually, the latest flash flood to occur caused less damage to the lives and property of the villagers.



Simple rain gauges

**- Background**

The achievement of villagers' collaboration and participation

**- Objective**

Creation of awareness among villagers and mobilization of their participation

**- Activities Undertaken**

- Installation of simple rain gauges and manual warning sirens
- CBDM training

**- Major Achievements**

- Risk reduction
- Reduction of damage

**- Total Budget**

Approximately THB 22,000 THB (US\$500)

**- Contact Details**

Suporn Ratananakin,  
 Chief of Foreign Relations Sub-Bureau  
 Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior,  
 Thailand 10300  
 Tel : 66 2 243 0020 ext. 3362, Fax: 66 2 243 2204