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First many thanks for orchestrated a fantastic trip. No doubt one of the better holidays I've experienced in terms of expanding horizons. You asked for some feedback to pass along to Khun Chai.

Here are my thoughts:

1. When you first suggested the trip I liked the idea for a few reasons. First I know you always do things right and look after every detail. I knew there would be incredible value as well as unique experiences. Second, its fun to travel with fellow alumni as there is an opportunity to share IU experiences and discuss university happenings along the way. Third, it's been more than 20 years since I was last in Chiang Rai...and that was a very fleeting visit. Serene Journeys send lots of people there so I needed to experience it for myself.

When I later came to focus on the humanitarian aspects of the visit, that was the real icing on the cake. When I travel I like to learn as opposed to bake in the sun, play golf, recreate. The subject matter was fascinating so I was quite eager for the journey.

2. I had three real favorites on the trip though the whole experience was extraordinary.

- I'm a history buff so the Hall of Opium ranked right up there. It exceeded my expectations. Great meaningful message very professionally presented in a comfortable setting.
- I also loved the visit to Princess Srinagarinda's home where history meets horticulture. Being at the home gave very intimate context to the story of Mae Fah Luang. Being a Hoosier in SE Asia it's not often one sees flowers of the Indiana climate...geraniums, begonias, impatiens. Of course we all appreciated that you had an outstanding display of Indiana cream and crimson in the planters.
- Another favorite was the Mae Fah Luang Arboretum visit. Hearing from Khun Chai and the local people impacted by the great work being done in the area in that beautiful setting was an incredible combination.

3. My key takeaway was obviously the incredible work of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation and the whole Doi Tung sustainable development story.

I've been incredibly lucky to have developed two significant golf projects in the Midwest...Sagamore and Harbor Shores. Sagamore is a typical, upscale golf community built on what previously had been considered trash land...unsuitable for crops. Today it is a very respectable golf club community with more than 300 homes creating tremendous economic impact for the area. Buy my greatest satisfaction comes from seeing families come together and the ensuing communal energy the place creates.

Harbor Shores' mission, similar to Doi Tung, is the transformation of a disadvantaged community via the rehabilitation of former contaminated industrial ground in Southwest Michigan including the creation of golf on former industrial land as the centerpiece of a lake side resort on 535 acres. Located in Benton Harbor, a community devastated by globalization and loss of industrial jobs in the 1980's. 25% unemployment, 50% high school drop rate, rampant teenage pregnancy, and an active, convenient drug trafficking location between Detroit and Chicago. Like Doi Tung, Harbor Shores has created 100's of jobs, increased tax base, brought solution to a systemic problem so deeply imbedded almost no one thought it could be fixed. And it's working. In the words of Churchill, *"Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb."*

Of course Doi Tung is much larger and more complex in scope than Harbor Shores, but undertaking projects that transform communities and change lives brings an unsurpassable sense of accomplishment. Harbor Shores provided the platform for transformation, Doi Tung goes well beyond and into the hard work of human rehabilitation, sustainability, etc. It's the chassis plus the engine too.

4. Perhaps what I was most surprised to learn was the dedication and involvement of the monarchy to improvement of the most under-trodden of its people. The respect for the royal family is a very tangible aspect of Thai culture. It permeates everything. What the Princess Mother started, what is carried on by the Princess, the inspiration and support by the King(s), are a tremendous credit to the royal family. In an age when governments seem more interested in sustaining themselves than the people they serve, it is refreshing to see a dynamic that supersedes, that does not fret over popularity but rather does good for good itself. Small wonder pictures of the King are everywhere from my local barber to the finest 5 star hotels in Bangkok. Noblesse oblige incarnate.

5. My suggestions for the trip would be few as the trip would be hard to improve. The time spent was appropriate, the accommodations and meals were impeccable, the transportation comfortable, the program itself informative without drudgery, the mix of touristy and educational elements was all top notch. It might have been nice to do something a bit more interactive. For example, I'd ask each guest to sponsor a tree (coffee or macadamia) for say Bt1,000 and plant it themselves...perhaps in a special area of the project. I'd suggest sharing (and paying for) a meal with the local people, the workers.

6. As to suggestions for the Foundation. Step up the marketing and PR program. This project is world class in so many ways. It should be a '60 Minutes' feature. It strikes at the heart cords. The more people in Thailand and abroad who can learn about this great work, that faster the mission can be furthered.

I'd consider a fund raising program for the project to give the private sector an opportunity to be more involved. In the fund raising game, you work hard on relationships so as to one day expand the relationship to monetary support. Here it may a bit of the reverse. Gaining support by creating ways for people to give time, talent and treasure. From my work with the Royal Bangkok Symphony Orchestra I understand that private support is not traditional to anything much beyond the local Wat. Perhaps the Foundation can be a leader in changing this mindset. I'm certain our friends at the Indiana University Foundation and the School of Philanthropy would be happy to help strategize such a program.

Create a platform for volunteerism.

Peter, that more or less sums it up.

Also if you could let Khun Chai and his wife Khun Ying know Serene Journeys would be happy to put a couple of itineraries together for Kashmir but we need a bit of information such as season of the year for travel, time availability, things they like to see and do, etc. My partner specializes in Kashmir and has been there many times so we'd love to organize something when appropriate.

Thank you.

Serenely yours,
Mark

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What expectations did you have in joining this trip? Why did you join this trip?

I wanted to know more about the foundation and how Khun Chai developed it from green field and manage the foundation effectively and successfully.

What was your favorite visit during the trip?

Roy Jai Rak project. Because it is the recent success work of Khun Chai and the foundation to solve the drug trafficking problem and to improve the lives of the people.

What key learnings do you take-away from this trip?

What I like the most is to learn the management style of Khun Chai to deal with this kind of difficult projects. He had to make decision top-down first and listen to feed back of villagers (bottom-up) to adjust his strategies to make the project suitable and solve the root cause. This means Khun Chai had to visit the villages and people regularly to know the real situation.

What were you surprised to learn about during this trip?

I surprised that Khun Chai in 80s years old, is still working very hard for Thai people and in many important projects.

Suggestions to help improve for future study trips

Very good already for this trip. For me, I am also interested about agricultural products and how the villagers grow coffee trees, macadamia trees and the others. If has more time, the trip may let the participants have direct experience in digging holes to plant a tree or something like that.

Suggestions in general you may have for the foundation

- Many beautiful sites of the foundation such as Hor Khum (หอคำ) are not known to Thai and international tourists. Should promote more to generate more revenues from it. Hor Fin (หอฝั้น) area has beautiful landscape for developing a quite luxury hotel to generate additional revenues.
- Expand more shops of Doi Tung coffee which has strong branding with high potential to grow.

Tiong Kah KONG (Singapore)

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1) Expectation of trip.

- Expect to learn something about how MFL has been successful as a social enterprise.
- How is MFLF funded or self-funded?

2) Why did you join?.

- I am interested in social enterprise. I coach social enterprise students. I am interested in organizations that do good deeds. It helps that this was organized by IU. (i.e. there were other invitations but I don't have the time/energy to attend the different study tours).

3) Favorite visit or activities?

- Discussion with the 2 groups of beneficiaries.
- Visit to the villagers' house esp. after understanding the context, it is more meaningful to meet the people and their living space.

Others visits:

a) Hall of Opium - good information and knowledge of the devastation from opium planting and the overall history. It gives context to Doi Tung projects - ie why Doi Tung was started.

b) Tree Top Walk - Zip Line was ok, more for fun to break the routine.

c) Hall of Inspiration - the quotations were encouraging, it gives context to the project. It's a good marketing method of the good work done.

Key learning:

- The principles that lay the foundation for the project work will be what I have learnt a lot and short cut my learning - e.g. solve the issues at the root - how to give the people opportunities to earn income, in place of opium.
- how to ensure forest is reforested and yet able to provide income to the villagers - i.e. take care of people, so they will take care of the forest.
- The details that went into choosing the right plant (why macadamia and why coffee?).
- The thoughts that go into the project, to make sure it is holistic and thus sustainable and always beneficiaries centric
- How MFLF will take the risk first, prove it works before transferring to beneficiaries. (e.g. macadamia nut tree will be grown first before transferring out to the villagers).
- The continuous improvement (like kaizen) i.e. how coffee was grown haphazardly, then systematically.
- How automation were not used, in order to create jobs.
- How the older ones were not booted but allowed to continue working - as social support and financial independence.

BTW: this week, I am lecturing on ethics and CSR. I will use MFLF as my real life case study (haha! fresh from the oven). How MFLF focuses on the philanthropic and ethical responsibilities of an organization?

- The opportunities to discuss with Khun Chai on how he manages his time, how he gets on the ground and how he gets feedback on the projects (using LINE and photos) were helpful.

4) What were you surprised to learn?

- The detailed thoughts that went into the projects, as stated above.
- The follow through.
- The big picture or vision of the marketing project, the willingness to share with other countries and how values & ideas were not imposed but the local or overseas beneficiaries get to adopt what is useful.

5) Suggestions to help improve for future trips:

- i) For the discussion group at the market, Roi Jai Rak project: maybe split the beneficiaries or support group into 2, to meet them separately, so we can ask more detailed questions. Not all in the panel may be interested in our questions for others.
- ii) More opportunities to ask the field staff questions – e.g. Ms Field etc.
- iii) I went to the village one morning - was surprised by how "rich" they are and wonder how much was result of Doi Tung project
 - Would be nice if there was a translator on my visit to the village.
 - The villagers were nice enough to offer a cup of tea.
 - If there is a visit to the village, maybe make it free and easy, small group as the conversation and information flow changes with group dynamics.

6) Suggestions in general for the foundation:

- i) Develop an online model for those interested in learning about the work of the foundation but are not able to visit the project in Doi Tung. People can use the online material, similar to an online course to follow and set up their own projects - anywhere else in the world.
- ii) MFLF may want to think of how to mentor/coach smaller outfit, social enterprises, start-ups worldwide, using part offline, part online material.
- iii) Offer internships (if not done yet)
- iv) Put process in place to ensure the foundation keeps true to its basic principles as it grows in diversity.

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Others Comments:

- a) The logistic were great
- b) The schedule was good, not too tight nor loose.
- c) Somehow the group bonded, maybe because there were 2 common threads: IU alumni (which is important for bonding and a common topic to build bonds) and everyone, one way or another is interested in doing good for society.
- d) The nightly discussions after dinner, though informal, was what I enjoyed too. It was relaxing as there is no pressure to talk about anything in particular
- e) Both hosts - Ms Field and Lim were very accommodative.
- f) I appreciate, though not expected, that they lined up the shoes every morning and there were umbrellas at the market (in case it rains) and I assume it was for the group.

Thanks and regards,
Tiong

PS: Sorry for late response, I was trying to catch with my works. As lecturer, there were strict dateline I had to meet.

I left for Bangkok after school, return late midnight and lecture next morning. Haha!

I hope to find time to send you further comments, maybe next week.



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On a mission to take Thailand's coffee culture to the next level...

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Thanks again for organizing the trip. Sending feedback below as requested:

What expectations did you have in joining this trip? Why did you join this trip?

I had heard about Doi Tung and seen the brand in Bangkok before this trip. Knowing that Khun Chai was an IU alum interested me to learn more about the foundation's work. And personally being in the coffee beverage industry, I was interested to learn more about the sources of Thai coffee, get a first-hand view of the production process, and learn more about the people/challenges behind the trade. I didn't really have any expectations other than that.

What was your favorite visit during the trip?

It's very hard to choose, but here are 3 things that I enjoyed most:

- 1) Visiting the Royal Villa and Hall of Inspiration to learn about Mae Fa Luang and the history of the Doi Tung project.
- 2) Exploring the garden and meeting the 3 generations of Doi Tung
- 3) Visiting Roi Jai Rak for interactive discussion with Khun Chai and local stakeholders

What key learnings do you take-away from this trip?

I think the most important lesson learned for me was about sustainability. The Doi Tung and Roi Jai Rak projects are a great example of a community that developed long term opportunity through trust, hard work, and cooperation for common good. And it seems like that is also being communicated effectively to the younger generations.

Below are some ways I thought that idea was reinforced on the trip:

- 1) I knew that there was a history of drug trade in the north, but it was interesting to hear about the addiction problem and the foundation's rehabilitation program
- 2) I liked the "plant what you eat, and eat what you plant" initiative as an example of addressing peoples' most basic needs. It was a perfect example of addressing the core problem preventing people from doing good (because now they have the opportunity) instead of doing bad.
- 3) I appreciated how Khun Chai described building trust in the local area by delivering on small promises first, then activating community leaders to validate new programs and help gain local support.

What were you surprised to learn about during this trip?

The most surprising thing to me was to see the group of local government, community leaders, reformed addicts, and forgiven drug dealers in Roi Jai Rak sitting together and talking about how they are working together to build a stronger community. I could feel a positive connection between them all.

Suggestions to help improve for future study trips?

The Royal Villa tour and Hall of Inspiration helped me to understand the background and purpose of the project. It gave me an emotional connection to the visit, and I liked that we did that on the first day.

It was clear that a lot of thought went into the agenda. It was a heavy educational trip with a lot of lessons learned. Alternating between educational and leisurely destinations was nice, for example:

Hall of Opium (learning) > Golden Triangle (sight-seeing)

Roi Jai Rak (learning) > Changmoob/Arboretum (sight-seeing)

Four days might be intense for older people, but I'm young and energetic, so I fully enjoyed. And sundown drinks/snacks at the Arboretum viewpoint was a fantastic end to the day!

Suggestions in general you may have for the foundation?

I think the foundation could do more product sales if they expanded the shopping opportunities for gifts in the 150-1,500 baht range. Some of the clothes were a bit expensive for gifts, ceramics too heavy, so scarfs/coffee/nuts were the best option (and I did get a lot of those).

I would also be interested to learn about ways that companies or individuals could collaborate to support the foundation. Maybe some stories about successful collaborations in the past, or more details on future plans/needs by the foundation could help to inspire ideas. The whole experience really made me feel like it's something I wished I was a part of, and I think a lot of people would share that feeling!

Thanks again, to Khun Chai for everything, to all of the support from the foundation, the excellent guides, and to you as well for helping to organize and communicate details with the group.

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Expectations before? Why did you join this trip?

I was aware of Doing Tung and their products before this trip and expected to see much of the production operation. I joined because this was an IU event organized with Peter and wanted to meet Khun Chai and hear about his work. I expected to see and take in a lot of information and find inspiration for my own business working as a social enterprise in Thailand.

What was your favorite visit?

My favorite part was the interview with local people and to hear about the realities of what was happening in their village prior to Khun Chai arriving. The struggles, lack of opportunity, and the gripping effects on the drug trade were fascinating to hear from those who really lived in it. To see them proud and empowered to improve their lives for themselves and their families was touching and really shows that by offering people a "hand up" not a handout is the way to help transform a community. I also enjoyed the CCTV video Khun Chai showed me of his surveillance of the trafficking across the border. I really felt the very personalized and local experience was nothing we could've seen if not for Khun Chai.

Key learnings did you take away?

The main takeaway for me was to see firsthand the power to completely transform a community through a for-profit business, a true social enterprise that operates the triple bottom line model. As an owner of a much smaller business with similar initiatives to help local people, it was powerful for me to see how to build a company that genuinely helps local people in a very careful and sustainable way. Hearing how proud people were to earn honest money and to feel a part of such a wonderful project was very touching. I really took a lot of inspiration to find more ways to make our business more sustainable and uplifting for our people. Khun Chai stressed the point of truly understanding the people and their needs before you can try and help anyone. This was a powerful message for me.

What were you surprised about on this trip?

I was surprised how large the operation really is. I didn't realize how internationally recognized the project was for its efficacy in irradiating the drug trade through sustainable business development. The UN recognition and the other countries that come and visit, or Khun Chai's team visits, that try and implement similar projects in their home countries. I really didn't anticipate the operation to be this large. I was also very impressed with Khun Chai's energy levels at 80 years old, he is a very inspiring individual with so much passion for the good work he does. I want to know his secrets to a long energetic life!

Suggestions to improve the trip?

It was a lot of information to take in over the course of 4 days, and although it was all very fascinating, without taking notes, I'm not sure I can remember everything. Maybe condensing some of the information into a pamphlet for things like the water irrigation and farming project. I felt the information was very good, but to a point it is more than useful to convey what is happening.

Suggestions for the foundation?

It is hard to suggest anything as the Foundation seems to have most all things covered. I'd suggest creating other avenues of the business to help combat other issues in the north like forest burning and dealing with the air quality. If anyone can figure it out, it's Khun Chai.