

PROJECT REPORT MAE LA

Addiction Prevention & Support in Mae La Refugee Camp, Thailand



30

CLIENTS IN TREATMENT

50,000

CAMP RESIDENTS

3

SUPPORTED CAMPS

€5,950

TOTAL BUDGET

PROJECT TITLE

Addiction Therapy & Healthcare Support in Camp Mae La

PROJECT LOCATION

Mae La Refugee Camp, Mae Hong Son Province, Thailand/Myanmar

TARGET GROUP

Approx. 50,000 refugees, particularly substance-dependent clients & families

PROJECT PARTNER

DARE Network (Drug & Alcohol Recovery Education)

LOCAL LEADERSHIP & CONTACT

Pam (CEO DARE, Addiction Therapist), Law La Say (Project Coordinator)

VISIT PERIOD / TRAVEL DATES

March 2022 (On-site Inspection & Work Evaluation)

1 BACKGROUND & MOTIVATION

"A place where freedom is a foreign concept and security an unwritten law – direct aid and addiction therapy create vital prospects amid isolation."

Local Situation & Framework Conditions:

- **High Population Density & Isolation:** Around 50,000 people live in closely confined conditions (approx. 6x6 km) in the Mae La refugee camp. The settlement extends steeply up the mountainside directly from the roadside.
- **Security Situation & Access Restrictions:** Due to COVID-19 regulations and strict military surveillance by the Thai government, direct access to the camp was prohibited for outsiders. The camp is enclosed with barbed wire and secured by armed checkpoints every 300 meters.
- **War & Displacement in the Border Region:** The camp is situated directly on the Moei border river. On the opposite bank in Myanmar, armed conflict prevails, continuously forcing people to flee.
- **Addiction Issues & Psychosocial Burden:** The lack of prospects and traumatic experiences within the camp lead to severe substance dependence among many residents, requiring targeted therapeutic support.

2 IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES & FIELD VISIT

Under the expert guidance of Pam (CEO) and Law La Say, the following steps and consultations were carried out on site:

ACTION AREA	CONCRETE OPERATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION & DESIGN
Partner Briefing	Detailed professional exchange at the main office (Mae Sariang) with the entire DARE Network office team regarding the current relief situation and operational workflows.
Travel & Outer Border Inspection	170 km journey through mountainous terrain along the Moei border river to the outer perimeter of Mae La Camp under strict security regulations.
Treatment Center Evaluation	Detailed consultation and evaluation with camp staff and the DARE camp leader directly at the treatment facility.
Traditional Herbal Medicine	Integration of holistic traditional herbal medicine and addiction therapy, specifically developed by DARE for refugee camp conditions.

3 TARGET ACHIEVEMENT & IMPACT

- **Continuous Client Care:** Despite severe access restrictions, 30 clients were actively receiving inpatient/outpatient treatment at the Treatment Center during the visit.
- **Regional Reach:** DARE Network serves a total of 3 refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border, representing the sole specialized facility for addiction rehabilitation in the region.
- **Community Integration & Trust:** The high level of acceptance of the DARE team among camp residents enables sustainable psychosocial stabilization and reintegration for those affected.

4 SUSTAINABILITY & FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Local Capacity Building:** The treatment teams consist mostly of trained camp residents (including members of the Karen minority), guaranteeing long-term on-site care.
- **Holistic Therapy Approach:** Combination of physical detoxification via traditional herbal medicine, education, sports, and ongoing psychosocial follow-up support.
- **Long-Term Partnership:** Continuous support ensures the ongoing operation of the treatment center and the provision of essential medical supplies.

5 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW & FUND UTILIZATION

Overview of grant funds and operational expenditure for the DARE Network Mae La project:

COST ITEM	APPROVED BUDGET	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE
Therapy & Medical Expenses (Traditional Herbal Medicine)	€3,200.00	€3,200.00
Local Personnel Costs (Addiction Therapists & Camp Staff)	€1,850.00	€1,850.00
Logistics, Transport & Security Costs	€900.00	€900.00
TOTAL AMOUNT	€5,950.00	€5,950.00

6 CONCLUSION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The field report and local observations vividly confirm the indispensable work of DARE Network under immensely challenging circumstances. The combination of expert addiction therapy, traditional medicine, and deep human dedication restores dignity and hope to the residents of Mae La camp.

On behalf of the camp population, the clients, and the entire DARE Network team, we sincerely thank **contribYOUte gGmbH** for their valuable and life-changing support!

Location, Date: Mae Sariang / Berlin, 2022/2026

Project Coordinator & Report Author: Sebastian Grabenstein
Project Partners: Pam (CEO DARE Network) & Law La Say