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The Doi Tung Development Project (DTDP), one of the four flagship projects of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation, was established in 1988 by the Princess Mother on Doi Tung, a high mountain in Chiang Rai, the northernmost province of Thailand. The project area covers approximately 15,000 hectares, benefiting approximately 11,000 people from 29 villages. Doi Tung was once a secluded area in the heart of the Golden Triangle—a leading region of illicit world opium production. The problems of Doi Tung were complex. The watershed area was denuded by slash and burn cultivation, and further accelerated by opium growing. The residents were of six ethnic groups without Thai citizenship. They lived in a “survival world” where people lived in abject poverty, without basic infrastructure or government support. Armed groups occupied parts of the area, which made it even more difficult for government officials to provide any assistance to the local residents.

After the Princess Mother’s first visit to Doi Tung—then the barren hills—in January 1987, the Princess Mother announced "I will reforest Doi Tung". Recognizing that the root causes of such problems were poverty and lack of opportunity, the Princess Mother decided to improve the conditions of Doi Tung, socially, economically, and environmentally. The Princess Mother demonstrated her commitment by building her home in Doi Tung, giving hope to the ethnic minorities and providing opportunities for all people regardless of race, religion, or nationality. Her vision was to allow people and nature to coexist in harmony, by aligning the people’s interests with the preservation of the natural environment and providing opportunities for all, regardless of race or religion.

The timeframe for the DTDP is 30 years, broken down into three phases:

□ □ □ □ **Phase I:** (1988-1993) Immediate health issues by providing health education and sickness prevention were tackled. Simultaneously, basic life necessities and opportunities for job and skills-training were then provided to all people.

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□□□□□□ **Phase III:**(2003 – 2017) This phase is about strengthening the business units so that the brand and the community are sustainable. It is during this final phase that capacity building, empowerment, and education take place, so that the people are equipped to take over the project in 2017, when the project phases out. Our ultimate goal is to leave the administration and management of the development of the area and the businesses in the hands of a new generation of local leaders.

From the beginning, the Princess Mother aspired that the DTDP had to be able to finance itself and it would be unfair for Thai citizens outside Doi Tung if we continued relying on financial support from the government. Sustainable development can take place only when financial stability is coupled with social and environmental progress. The Mae Fah Luang Foundation therefore created the DoiTung brand as the main channel of our income to finance social activities of the DTDP. The DoiTung brand comprises four business units: food, handicrafts, horticulture, and tourism. The DTDP has been financially self-sustaining since 2001.

Since 2003, the DTDP has been recognized by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as one of the world's best examples of Alternative Development.

In 2009, Mom Rajawongse Disnadda Diskul, the CEO of DTDP, received the Schwab Foundation's "Social Entrepreneur of the Year for the Region of East Asia" award on behalf of the organization's effort to eliminate social illnesses, and provide people with legitimate livelihoods as well as better quality of life, while restoring the natural environment.

To help the people of Doi Tung meet their aspirations and future plans. the DTDP in conjunction with the Ministry of Education have embarked on a reform of the school curriculum. Not satisfied with children just being able to read, write and to do mathematics well, the Project looks into embedding deeper holistic values such as discipline and responsibility, creativity, innovation, and self-learning to meet the demand of today's fast changing world and to empower them to help themselves. Internationally-accepted approaches to education such as Montessori, project-based learning, and hands-on vocational training that are adapted to the local context and integrated into the Project's social enterprises are practiced. Moreover, the DTDP offers scholarships to local students to further their education and prepare for job opportunities. Local people employed by the Project are also encouraged and coached to understand the value of self-improvement.

By the year 2017, 30 years after the inception of the Project, the Foundation will phase out of its direct daily involvement, transferring the administration and management of the Project's social enterprises and the overall development of Doi Tung to a new generation of local leaders, making it truly an example of a sustainable development project.

The Doi Tung Development Project (DTDP) website : www.doitung.org