

EXPEDITION AGAPE

A journey empowering and transforming lives

UPDATES

Thailand
14th to 24th June 2014



Braving the challenge to take on two cycles of Expedition Agape (EA) mentoring journeys every year, it was the first time the overseas expedition was planned for June. Preparations commenced in March 2014 with intense team-building and leadership development camps and activities. The team of 13, comprising 7 volunteers and 6 teenagers gave their all, rising to the challenge to serve, grow and learn through the journey, with the incredible support of the EA family.

"Families are made in the heart. The only time family becomes null is when those ties in the heart are cut. If you cut those ties, those people are not your family. If you make those ties, those people are your family."

– C.JoyBell

Serving the Community

Expedition Agape partnered with Radion International, an organisation committed to serve the marginalised and the needy in Khek Noi village, where about 17,000 Hmong Hill tribe people live. Expedition Agape played a small part in Radion's extensive community development work in Khek Noi by participating in the water tank building project.



Work in progress for the water tank

Water Tank Project

Water shortages are common in the village and many villagers have no water source in their homes. Many are not able to travel the long distances to get water due to sicknesses and disabilities. The water tank will serve Radion Integrated Centre which will provide the surrounding villagers with clean water that they can use for their daily needs. In time, the centre will also provide accommodation for more than 150 adults and 200 children from disadvantaged, abuse backgrounds, as well as serve as a community gathering point.

Village Outreach

Radion visits the critically needy and poverty-stricken families on a regular basis to provide day-to-day help and work with them to develop long-term plans to reach self-sustenance. Expedition Agape joined Radion in making visits to these families. On one afternoon, the Expedition Agape team also served lunch to the villagers as a way to build friendships and bless the community.



Visiting the villagers, hearing their stories

Engaging with StreetKids

The Expedition Agape team had lots of interaction opportunities and time with the children from Radion's StreetKids Program, a rehabilitation shelter that cares for children between the ages of 6 to 16. On the team's last day in Khek Noi village, the team prepared a local Singaporean dessert to share with the children and provide them a taste of Singapore.

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A volunteer-driven programme of

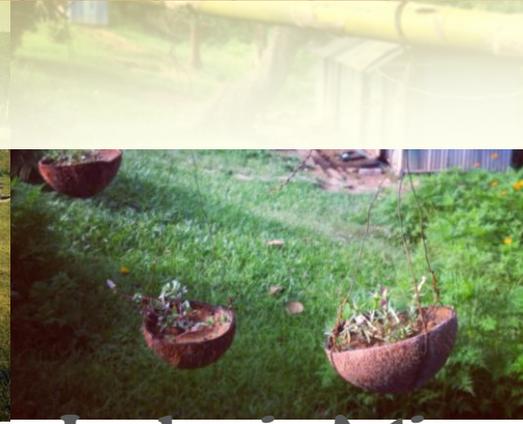


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Acceptance

Over the 11 days in Thailand, relationships were nurtured and friendships cemented. The warm acceptance and welcome by our Radion partner, the staff team and volunteers, warmed our hearts. As our friend in Thailand shared “*dong srang kuam sam phan, zak dai mii kuam suk, zak dai jai im.*” *You must build relationships, then your heart will be full.* Truly, we were touched, sharing deeply, coming closer, and committing to see one another through life -- life with all its ups and downs, highs and lows.

Growth

We learnt and we grew, courageously stepping out of our comfort zone to embrace new, sometimes scary experiences. We took turns to lead in our daily facilitations, spoke truth into one another's lives and most of all, we challenged ourselves... to be independent, to be responsible for ourselves and at the same time, to work in a team.

Affirmation

Words of love are words of life. They are hope-giving, life-giving. We saw lives blossom through encouragement and positive reinforcement. As we served, we experienced and saw the strengths in ourselves, finding clarity and purpose. Affirmation helps us to soar on eagles' wings to achieve the dreams we once thought impossible.

Perseverance

When adversity presents itself, as it certainly will, we learn to embrace it as a learning opportunity and not to give up. The stories of the children and villagers we met broke our hearts. They have struggled through poverty, abuse, illnesses, neglect, abandonment, and are still learning to love and to be loved through it all. They remind us that in every brokenness, we can find new dawns and new hope.

Empower

What is our legacy? The volunteers in Radion inspired us with their hearts of service, giving two months of their time to serve whole-heartedly in Thailand to the community. What are we doing with our lives? We dreamed dreams in Expedition Agape, and declared goals and action steps we will take. It is not just the overseas trip that matters... it is how we are living our lives when we return to Singapore. It is just the beginning of an incredible journey, and we are ready.

Leaders in Action



The Heart of



...is to build mentoring relationships that last a lifetime within the Expedition Agape team; to create a community that unites together as a **FAMILY** to support one another through the adventures of life that are ahead. Expedition Agape is a family where everyone enables and believes in one another's dreams, hopes and potential, and where we are the catalysts of possibilities and hope for one another.



The completed frame of the water tank

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