



CHIANG MAI, THAILAND  
**MONTHLY ACHIEVEMENT REPORT**  
MAY 2016

15 LIFE ON LAND



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





## OBJECTIVES

- Build relationships with like-minded organisations, with possible collaborations.
- Build a network of organisations to further spread the message of animal welfare and conservation.
- Act as a sustainable, welfare focused, tourism model for other organisations to follow.

## SUMMARY

Here at GVI Chiang Mai, we are always on the lookout for other organisations that work towards promoting animal welfare and conservation, as well as working closely with communities to help educate about certain issues. Through our staff team, past and present, we have begun to build relationships with other elephant organisations, namely Kindred Spirit Elephant Sanctuary; an organisation set up by two past GVI Chiang Mai staff members, and a mahout.





## REPORT

It is important that the message of animal welfare is spread to as many people as possible, so that the issues facing elephants in Thailand, and around the world, becomes common knowledge. This message can be spread quicker by like-minded organisations working together to reach many more people/volunteers/tourists than one organisation could on its own. GVI Chiang Mai hope to be able to create and nurture such relationships with other elephant based organisations, tourist camps, research facilities etc. because it is through education that change can happen.

One such relationship that is starting to be built upon is that with a nearby elephant project called Kindred Spirit Elephant Sanctuary; a project set-up by two previous GVI Chiang Mai staff members (Kerri Mac and Talia Gale) and a previous mahout (Sombat). The project is located in another Karen hill tribe called Nah Klang, about 30 minutes from the GVI project in Huay Pakoot. The project has a similar outlook to GVI Chiang Mai, whereby they encourage free ranging elephants in the forest surrounding their village, and bring in volunteers to come and spend time in the forest, watching these happy elephants go about their lives, displaying their natural behaviour. They are also working closely with the community; teaching English at the local school, and living with homestay families in the village.

This month two of our current GVI staff, Danielle Riley and Jamie O'Connell, went to visit Kerri and Talia on their project. After having a tour around the village, being introduced to local families and mahouts, and enjoying the view of elephants walking through the river from the base hut, they were able to talk about how the projects can work together in order to benefit the communities, the volunteers, and of course the elephants. It is hoped that, by working together, the number of people knowledgeable about elephant welfare will increase, that both projects can support each other in order to continue bringing elephants back to the forest, and that other villages and/or projects will see the benefit of having their elephants in a natural environment.

It is great to see that the GVI Chiang Mai model is spreading in the area, and similar ideas being adopted by villages and projects alike. The elephant world needs to unite to be strong enough to fight the decrease in wild elephant numbers. By working together with these types of organisations/projects, hopefully we will soon see a forest full of elephants that can live happily; leaving their past of having to perform in tourist camps behind them.



## ABOUT GVI

We're a family-run organisation with an amazing culture and an awesome team of people across the world who are passionate experts in their chosen field and will make your experience a truly unforgettable one (in a good way).

Our award-winning projects receive over 2000 participants every year, and we're proud to say that the vast majority of them describe their experience with us as 'life changing'. Our approval rate from over 20 000 participants since 1997 is over 95%.

A key component of the success of our community development and conservation projects is the participants who join our programs. Opportunities include high impact volunteering from one week and up, internships for those looking for career development opportunities, Challenges that allow a one week adventure all for a good cause and a range of programs for school groups and younger volunteers.

## CONTACT

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