



2024 - 2025
Thailand
National Profile



Volunteer Spirit Association



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THAILAND



In brief



Official Name	Kingdom of Thailand
Term of Citizenship	Thai
Capital City	Bangkok (Krung Thep Maha Nakhon)
Region	South-East Asia
Population	69,800,000 (2020)
Area	513,120 km ²
Currency	Baht
Time Zone	UTC+7 (ICT)
GDP	501.8 Billion USD (2020) per capita 7,189.04 USD (2020)
Language	Thai, English , ethnic and regional dialects
Date Format	dd/mm/yyyy (BE)
Driving side	Left
Calling Code	+66
Voltage	The standard voltage is 220V, 50Hz The power plugs and sockets are most commonly type A / B / C / O



- ✓ Thailand is one of country that have never colonies by European Countries. Thailand's name in Thai is 'Prathet Thai' which means 'Land of the Free'.
- ✓ Buddhist religion
- ✓ Most Thai people have two names – their full, official name and their nickname. But, unlike in other countries where a nickname is usually just a shortened version of your real name, Thai nicknames are meaningful and chosen by your parents at birth.
- ✓ Thais eat with Spoons And Forks
- ✓ Heads are Sacred and Feet are Lowly
- ✓ The National Anthem is played twice A day (08:00 a.m. and 06:00p.m.)
- ✓ Thai New year is 13 April of every year
- ✓ Rice Is a staple at every meal
- ✓ The Thai Language has 76 letters - 44 consonants and 32 vowels and 5 tones

Geography



Thailand is located in southeast Asia when looking on a map, resembles the shape on an axe. To the north it borders Myanmar and Laos and to the east Laos and Cambodia. The south is next to the Gulf of Thailand and Malaysia. Westwards is the Andaman sea and Myanmar.

Thailand has six different types of terrain.



**Mountains and Plains
of the North**



Central Plains



Northeastern Plateaus



High Mountains of the West



**Mountains and Coastal Plains
of the East**



**Mountains, Plateaus, Coastal
Plains and Islands of the South**

Climate

Thailand is located between vast areas of land and water, so it is impacted by both the summer and the winter monsoons. As a result, Thailand weather consists of six months of rainfalls during the wet season, three months of dry and cooling breezes during the winter, and three months of heat during the summer. The average temperature of Thailand ranges from 18 to 38°C.

Summer	Mid-February to Mid-May
Raining	Mid-May to Mid October
Winter	Mid-October to Mid February

Except Eastern coast in the South of Thailand that has Monsoon season in October - December

History

With long periods of Thailand's History, according to evidences and studies, Sukhothai was the first kingdom of Thailand. At that time, an early Thai script was invented by King Ramkhamhaeng, the great king of Sukhothai, and there also were records about events in the king's reign. After Sukhothai period, the new kingdoms arose that are Ayuthaya, Thonburi and Rattanakosin which is the present kingdom of Thailand. Each period owns its important Historical events and interesting cultural changes.

In Sukhothai period, King Sri Indraditya founded Sukhothai in 1238 governed by the monarchy system. The glorious era was in the reign of King Ramkhamhaeng the Great and after his death, it came to the fall of Sukhothai Kingdom.

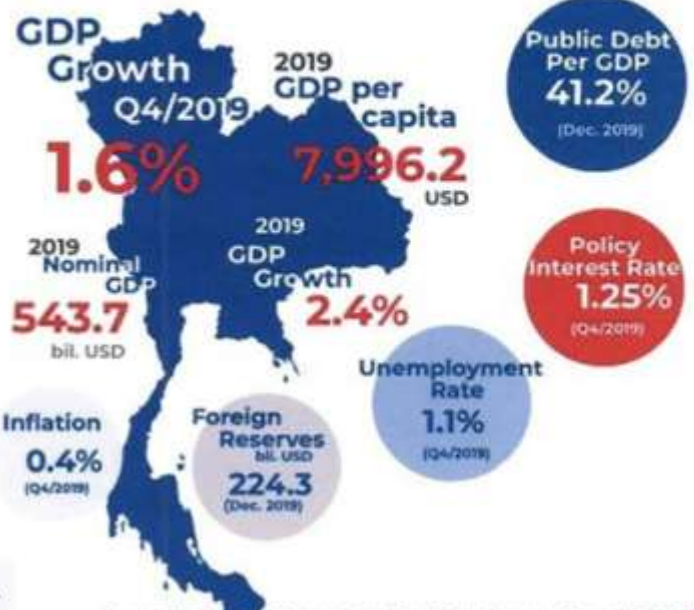
In Ayuthaya Period, King U Thong founded the kingdom in 1350, and the kingdom then became powerful in politics and economy of southeast Asia. Ayuthaya became stronger by firmly gathering Groups of Thai and connecting to foreign countries such as Portugal, France, Netherlands, China, and Japan. In 1569, Ayuthaya's glories fell to Burmese, then King Naresuan regained the City's independence and expanded more territories. In the era of King Narai was the rise of international relations, but later because of the big war, Ayuthaya Kingdom was destroyed by Burmese troops in 1767. That was the end of Ayuthaya period.

After the destruction of Ayuthaya period, King Taksin collected his troops to defeat Burmese troops and chose Thonburi as the new capital. After his death, King Yot Fa (Rama I) founded Chakri dynasty and decided to move the capital to Bangkok, so it was beginning of Rattanakosin period.

King Rama I was the first king of Rattanakosin. In the early period, there was an invasion from Western countries. The kings at that time solved the problems by trading and making agreements with the Western countries for preserving the independence even the country lost some territories.

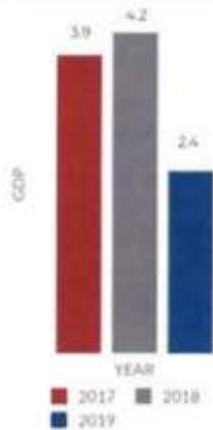
In 1932, Thailand had a big change of the country's government system, from the absolute monarchy system to the present democratic system with the King as the Head of State. The king abdicated in 1933 and was succeeded by his nephew, King Ananda Mahidol Rama VIII (1935-1946). The country's name was changed from Siam to Thailand with the advent of a democratic government in 1939. Our current monarch, King Vajiralongkorn (R. 13 October 2016 – present), is King Rama X of the Chakri Dynasty.

Thailand's Economic Factsheet



Source: The National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)

Economic Figures



2020 GDP Growth Forecast

NESDC	1.5-2.5
Bank of Thailand	2.8
Fiscal Policy Office	2.8
ADB	3.2
World Bank	2.7
IMF	3.3

Tourism

Top Tourists (Jan. - Dec. 2019)



Foreign Tourists (Jan. - Dec. 2019)

39.78 million

(Jan. - Dec. 2018)

38.18 million



Source: Ministry of Tourism & Sports (MOT)

Trade Statistics (bil. USD)

	Export Value	Import Value	Trade Balance
2019	243.0	216.4	+26.6
2018	251.1	228.7	+22.4
2017	233.7	201.1	+32.6

Source: The National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC)

Imports

Exports

Top 10 Exports Destinations (Jan. - Dec. 2019)



Total 246.24 bil. USD

Top 10 Exports (Jan. - Dec. 2019)

1. Auto Parts & Accessories
2. Computer, Equipment & Parts
3. Precious Stones & Accessories
4. Rubber Products
5. Plastic Pellets
6. Chemical Products
7. Electronic Integrated Circuits
8. Refined Fuels
9. Machinery & Parts
10. Iron, steel & Products

Source: Ministry of Commerce (MOC)

Top 10 Import Origins (Jan. - Dec. 2019)



Total 236.64 bil. USD

Top 10 Imports (Jan. - Dec. 2019)

1. Crude Oil
2. Machinery & Parts
3. Electrical Machinery & Parts
4. Chemical Products
5. Iron, Steel & Products
6. Auto Parts & Accessories
7. Electrical Integrated Circuits
8. Jewelry
9. Other Metal Ores
10. Computer Equipment & Parts

Source: Ministry of Commerce (MOC)

Department of International Economic Affairs
February 2020



THAILAND 4.0

Prosperity, Security, Sustainability

Innovative/Value-based Industry
High Income Country



New Engine of Growth

S-CURVE

NEW S-CURVE

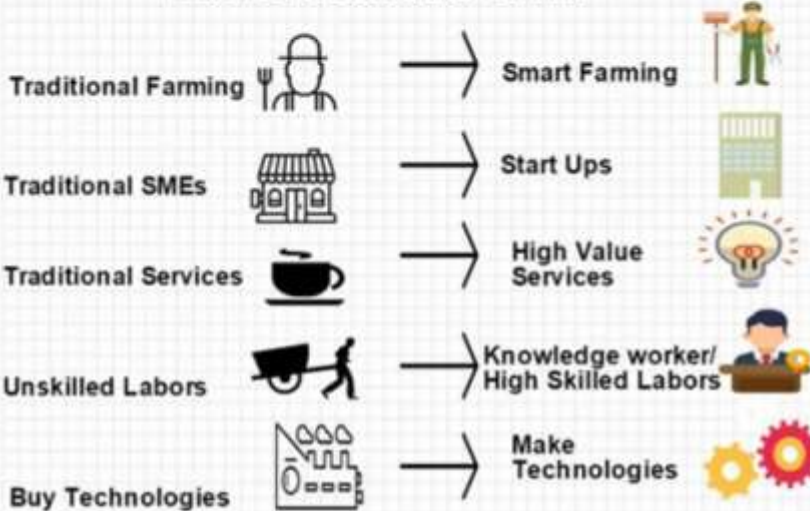
Next-Generation Automotive
Smart Electronics
Affluent, Medical and Wellness Tourism
Agriculture and Biotechnology
Food for the Future



Robotics
Aviation and Logistics
Biofuels and Biochemicals
Medical Hub
Digital

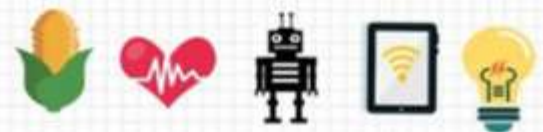


Transformative Shift



Clusters for Innovation & Start Ups

Food Agriculture & Bio-Tech
Health, Wellness & Bio-med
Smart Devices, Robotics & Mechatronics
Digital, IoT & Embedded Technology
Creative, Culture & High Value Services



Priorities for Innovation

Smart City Low-carbon Society
Medical Hub Food Innopolis
Water Management & Technology

What to do and How?

1. Active Role of Private Sector
2. Demand-driven Policy
3. Offer Tailored Support Fund
4. Build a Global, Regional & Nationwide R&D Networks
5. Strengthen Vocational Training & Education System
6. Develop Infrastructure
7. Introduce Capability-Based Investment Promotion Scheme & Performance Based Conditional Grants & Incentives

Source: Dr. Suvit Meezincee, Deputy Minister of Commerce

Division of Economic Information
Department of International Economic Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand.

Holidays and Observances 2024

Date	Name	Type	
1 Jan	Monday	New Year's Day	National holiday
13 Jan	Saturday	National Children's Day	Observance
16 Jan	Tuesday	Teachers' Day	Observance
10 Feb	Saturday	Lunar New Year's Day	Observance
11 Feb	Sunday	Second Day of Lunar New Year	Observance
12 Feb	Monday	Third Day of Lunar New Year	Observance
14 Feb	Wednesday	Valentine's Day	Observance
24 Feb	Saturday	Makha Bucha	National holiday
26 Feb	Monday	Day off for Makha Bucha	National holiday
20 Mar	Wednesday	March Equinox	Season
6 Apr	Saturday	Chakri Day	National holiday
8 Apr	Monday	Chakri Day observed	National holiday
13 Apr	Saturday	Songkran	National holiday
14 Apr	Sunday	Songkran	National holiday
15 Apr	Monday	Songkran	National holiday
16 Apr	Tuesday	Songkran Observed	National holiday
1 May	Wednesday	Labor Day	Bank holiday
4 May	Saturday	Coronation Day	National holiday
6 May	Monday	Coronation Day observed	National holiday
6 May	Monday	Royal Ploughing Ceremony Day (Tentative Date)	Government Holiday
3 Jun	Monday	Queen Suthida's Birthday	National holiday
21 Jun	Friday	June Solstice	Season
20 Jul	Saturday	Buddhist Lent Day	National holiday
22 Jul	Monday	Day off for Buddhist Lent Day	National holiday
28 Jul	Sunday	King Vajiralongkorn's Birthday	National holiday
29 Jul	Monday	King Vajiralongkorn's Birthday observed	National holiday
12 Aug	Monday	The Queen's Birthday	National holiday
22 Sep	Sunday	September Equinox	Season
13 Oct	Sunday	Anniversary of the Death of King Bhumibol	National holiday
14 Oct	Monday	Anniversary of the Death of King Bhumibol observed	National holiday
23 Oct	Wednesday	Chulalongkorn Day	National holiday
31 Oct	Thursday	Halloween	Observance
5 Dec	Thursday	King Bhumibol's Birthday/Father's Day	National holiday
10 Dec	Tuesday	Constitution Day	National holiday
21 Dec	Saturday	December Solstice	Season
24 Dec	Tuesday	Christmas Eve	Observance
25 Dec	Wednesday	Christmas Day	Observance
31 Dec	Tuesday	New Year's Eve	National holiday

Business Hours

GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Government offices and most tourist attractions open every Monday – Friday at 08.30 a.m. – 04.30 p.m. However, in metropolis like Bangkok, Pattaya, Chiang Mai and Phuket, opening hours of most tourist attractions is a bit longer.

PRIVATE COMPANIES

Opening hours of private companies are different. Most of the companies open at 08.30 a.m. – 05.30 p.m. Some open every Monday – Friday, but some also open on Saturdays.

BANK

Every bank open every Monday – Friday from 08.30 a.m. – 03.30 p.m. except some branches especially those in the department stores open daily from 10.30 a.m. – 07.30 p.m.

MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERIES

Museums and art galleries open daily from 09.00 a.m. – 04.00 p.m. and are closed every Monday. Some are closed once a week or every public Holiday. Prior check is recommended.

DEPARTMENT STORES

Department stores open daily from 10.00 a.m. – 10.00 p.m. Opening hours of some markets such as JJ Market is varied as the products.

Pubs and bars

Pubs and bars open at night from 08.00 p.m. – 01.00 a.m. but some bars are also restaurants so they may open from 10.00 a.m. – 02.00 a.m.

RESTAURANTS

Opening hours of restaurants are varied depending on their menus. Some open at 06.00 a.m. until the evening, some restaurants like those in china town open from 05.00 p.m. – 01.00 a.m., or some open 24 hours.

SKYTRAIN (BTS) AND SUBWAY (MRT)

Skytrain (BTS) and subway (MRT) open daily from 06.00 a.m. – 12.00 a.m. and may extend the operating hours on the important days or events such as during the New Year's Day.

Law and Order

- The minimum age to enter a pub/bar or purchase alcohol is 18 years old. Always carry your ID with you or you may be refused entry.
- 18 years old considered an adult, no exception as children law.
- In Thailand you cannot drive if you drink alcohol. It is illegal. There are checkpoints along the road at night to randomly check the alcohol of the driver. You must not drive if you have more than 50 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood
- There are tourist policies in the big city to help foreigners.

Health and Safety

Everyone can easily access public health centers which are local in every sub-district. There are 250,000 Health volunteers in every community which represent public health centers in Thailand and support communities' health. Thailand health system ranked 5th in 2021 of Global Health Security Index.

Vaccine need before go to Thailand are

- Fully course of Covis-19 vaccine (Must)
- Hepatitis A (recommend)
- Hepatitis B (recommend)
- Japanese Encephalitis (recommend for those who stay in Japan more than a month)
- Malaria (recommend)
- Typhoid (recommend)

You are recommend to have travel and health insurance to take care your hospital expense

Safety Precautions

- Sunburn - Thailand located in a tropical area with high UV rays. Bring your sunscreen at least SPF 30
- Mosquitoes - Mostly come out for food in the evening 17:00 - 20:00. Recommend to bring insects repellent and use before peak time.
- Other insects/Bug - Can be in the rural area such as scorpion, wasp, bee, etc Recommend to bring insects repellent
- Heat and cold - In the shopping center and office building Thailand using air-conditioning everywhere. Be ready for temperature immediately change from outdoor to indoor temperature (daytime 27-40 degree and night time 20-25 degrees) like in Europe outdoor is cold and indoor is warm as in the opposite way in Thailand
- Driving a motorcycle in Thailand-not recommended as Thai traffic is sometimes by personal intention, there are motorcycle accidents every minute around Thailand.
- Car driving - Thailand is the left traffic road, if you are familiar with it and have an international driving license, you could drive the car in Thailand by renting.

Lifestyle

As a tropical country, people prefer to stay indoors during daytime , especially in the afternoon. And going out in the evening. Evering in Thailand is 17:00 - 20:00 as the sunset almost the same time everyday at about 18:00 and sunrise almost the same time everyday at 06:00 not changing in any seasons.

Values and Attitudes

- Buddhism is very influential in Thai culture. Thai society is family culture and hierarchical society.
- Heads are sacred and feet are lowly. So do not point anything by feet or cross things. No touching anyone heads except kids
- Gender equality is not much talked about in Thai society, as women are the respected gender. Man and woman have different responsibilities in thailand. They believe that women are the mother gender to be loved and respected. Anything that is marvelous and respectful always named "Mae" means "Mother". For example Mae Nam is River, Mae Thoranee is Mother Earth, etc.

Quality of Life

Rural and city areas in Thailand are quite different. There is a social gap in Thailand in terms of infrastructure, education opportunity, health care,etc. The city area has more quality than in the rural area.

Government

After 1932, Thailand has had 20 constitutions and charters. All constitutions state that the politics is conducted within the framework of a constitutional monarchy.

Government is separated into three branches:

- The legislative branch: the National Assembly is composed of the Senate, the 250-member fully appointed upper house, and House of Representatives, the elected 500-member lower house. The current constitution gives senators power to elect prime ministers along with the representatives until 2022. Its most recent election is the 2019 general election. The coalition led by Palang Pracharath Party currently holds the majority.
- The executive branch consisting of the Prime Minister of Thailand who was elected by the National Assembly and other cabinet members of up to 35 people. The cabinet was appointed by the king on the advice of the prime minister. The prime minister is the head of government.
- The judiciary is supposed to be independent of the executive and the legislative branches, although judicial rulings are suspected of being based on political considerations rather than on existing law.

Administrative divisions

Thailand is a unitary state; the administrative services of the executive branch are divided into three levels by National Government Organisation Act, BE 2534 (1991): central, provincial and local. Thailand is composed of 76 provinces which are first-level administrative divisions. There are also two specially governed districts: the capital Bangkok and Pattaya. Bangkok is at provincial level and thus often counted as a province. Each province is divided into districts and the districts are further divided into sub-districts. The name of each province's capital city is the same as that of the province. All provincial governors and district chiefs, which are administrators of provinces and districts respectively, are appointed by the central government.



VSA Thailand



Eco-Idea



Eco-Package



Eco-Living



Eco-Products

The Overview

Volunteer Spirit Association or VSA Thailand is an Informal Education Organization / Non-Profit Organization (NPO) / Non-Government Organization (NGO) / Social Enterprise / Peace organization collaborating international voluntary projects for people of all ages, cultures, religious and economic backgrounds.

VSA is IVS representative in Thailand as the bridge to bring people from various cultures or believing to learn cultural diversity, make understanding by supporting activities of local communities around the world. Imagine, the small group of people with different characters gathering in local communities around the world and supporting local activities with villagers. This's the image of idea 'Think Global Act Local'

Learning and understanding in cultural diversity bring the Companion, Reducing Conflict, Individual Capacity Building and Developing Community Potential.

Volunteer Spirit Association (VSA Thailand) was started in 2008 as SAWASDEE Thailand (ST) and organized the first international workcamp in 2009.

VSA is a member of CCIVS (Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service). We are promoting International Voluntary Service (IVS) in Thailand.

Vision & Mission



Vision

International Voluntary Service, Gateway to Global Citizen,
an organization where you can share friendships and dreams with people around the world.

Mission

Co-ordinates international voluntary projects for people of all ages, cultures, religious and economic backgrounds.

Team



Laksana Rodtrakul
Domestic Networking



Jarinya Kittikan
International Networking

Volunteering Project



Education Project

The aim of the project is to give opportunities to local communities to practice English. The project will be hosted by a school, university or learning center in Thailand. Volunteers do not need a teaching certificate as the main objective is a chance to meet and communicate in English.



Social Project

In social projects, VSA does cooperate with organizations for disadvantaged people and Rescue team ambulances to support the organization in their working details. So volunteers will be one of the staff teams in the organization. Some projects need the certificate in a specific field to consider the application because some work is sensitive to human beings, health and profession.



Culture Project

Regarding Thailand is multicultural in each region, the project aims to volunteer to exchange Thai local culture and languages by the cooperation with the folklore museum and local culture center. Volunteers will have a chance to participate in local culture activities during the project.



Environment Project

Eco-Life is the concept of Living of VSA Thailand to encourage people to live with minimalism and less environmental harm. Thinking about organic life and substance around us. Using all organic substances for the environment. As well as cooperate with the environment and resources in Thailand such as the department of marine and coastal resources or Sea Turtle Conservation Center, etc.



Agriculture Project

Regarding Thailand is the agriculture countries with appropriate soils and climate for planting, the permaculture methodology and many agriculture learn center in Thailand welcome international learners and volunteers to learn the way of permaculture in Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to bring the methodology adapt at their origin country. This is the sustainable way future living by producing our own food to live than rely on capitalism.

Starting the Project

VSA starts the project beginning of every month by On 5 days arrival orientation. So volunteers are expected to arrive 1st of every month to start the project except the Education project that the duration depends on school semester. Most Thai schools in primary - high school start 1st semester in Mid-May to September, October is school holidays. The 2nd semester starts from November to mid-March, Mid-March to Mid-May is summer vacation (Summer in Thailand is March to May). So the education project will start respectively by school semester. 1 year volunteers are expected to arrive 1st May to prepare themselves, adapt to new place and prepare for non-formal education learning before school starts.

Internet and Communication

In every hosting project has the internet in the organization to volunteer and can use wifi during working. Most of the public places such as cafe, shopping centers have free internet connection provided.

You will be able to organise a Thai Sim Card at the Orientation meeting.



Volunteer Acceptance Form

This is to confirm your participation in VSA MLTV Project with the agreement of "The conditions of participation" below. PLEASE read and complete the following form.

Information sheets: You would already received information sheet from your sending organization. If not, please contact your sending organization.

Please read each sentence carefully. It is very important to understand the background and aims of the project. Some projects require you to bring some information from your country for the study part (e.g. environmental situation, plans for creating an eco-village, etc.). Preparation and the information or materials you may contribute will make a big difference in creating fruitful project.

Email:

Project code and name:

Your Name-Surname:

Your Project Duration:

< THE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION >

INSURANCE

Volunteer need to prepare Travel Insurance by yourself before departure from your country.

I understand < THE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION > about "Insurance"

PROGRAM LANGUAGE

All participants are required to speak English and some Thai during the program as a common language (unless noted differently in the project description). Also, please try to speak Thai with the local people! Even if only to say "Sawasdee Krub/Ka", local people will feel that you have made an effort. Locals may be shy of foreigners at first, so a friendly attitude is very important.

I understand < THE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION > about "Program Language"

ORIENTATION & EVALUATION

ON ARRIVAL PROGRAM:

You are expected to arrive 1st of the month to start 5 days orientation program at the hosting project

EVALUATION:

There will be midterm evaluation during the project with MLTV coordinator.

And before departure Thailand you should fill in final evaluation form online which you will receive the online form from MLTV coordinator by email.

You will be requested to write the storytelling, short report, cartoon, video clip, info.graphic, graphic design, drawing, or many media you like before you leave the project. Your storytelling will be published in VSA Newsletter. Your experience will be a rich story for other coming volunteers.

I understand < THE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION > about "ORIENTATION & EVALUATION"

Volunteer Acceptance Form

VISA TO THAILAND

You will apply for Non-Immigrant Type "O" Chairity. VSA will send all related documents to the sending organization.

The visa can be validated 90 days for 1 round, if the volunteer stays more than 3 months, the volunteer will

extend visa in Thailand's neighboring country close to the project site.

Please prepare the document on the Thai consulate website in your country

I understand < THE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION > about "VISA TO THAILAND"

COOPERATION

The qualifications of volunteers are as follows

- 1.High motivation for voluntary work (Special skills or physical strength are not necessary)
- 2.Responsibility to follow the rules of VSA and the hosts, and to cooperate in the smooth running of the projects
- 3.Best efforts to understand and respect the policies, ways, and culture of VSA, the hosts and other volunteers
- 4.Aged 18 or over with good physical and mental health (there are some cases where we can accept persons under 18)
5. Open-minded and an effort to make friends, try to speak English in the group and Thai with the locals as much as possible
- 6.Ability to adapt (and enjoy!) simple living conditions (you may eat rice in almost every meal.

I understand < THE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION > about "COOPERATION"

PRIVACY AND SECURITY POLICY

Activities Pictures

In some case, VSA will use the activities pictures, video, story and any other information Technology which may display your appearance in the pictures.

All pictures, videos or any other VSA devices will be only used for promoting International Voluntary Service which is not a business purpose.

Identification Document collecting

VSA need to collect Identification Documents of incoming and outgoing volunteers for security and criminal protection.

All documents either digital or physical copy will not be publicized out of the organization.

I understand < THE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION > about "PRIVACY AND SECURITY POLICY"

THE CONFIRMATION FORM

I hereby confirm my participation with the agreement to "The Conditions of Participation".

Signature:

Date / Place:
