

Opium cultivation on YA-PO-KEE and MOR-JOR-LOR-KU

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ABSTRACT

During the past 5 years, opium cultivation increased annually on Ya-Po-Kee and Mor-Jor-Lor-Ku mountains in Tambol Baan Tub, Amphoe Mae Cham, Chiang Mai Province. The total number of family that cultivated opium on the two mountains increased 3.5 times, from 30 to 105 families. The estimated land area of opium cultivation increased 4 times from about 70 to 280 Rais. The Karen is the principle group that constituted the change. Next to them is the low land Thai. The number of family of the Karen and Thai increased about 10 and 5 times respectively. The average land area of cultivation per family of the H'mong is probably the largest and increased annually from about 2.5 to 5.5 Rais. The apparent motivation of the increase cultivation is the rapid opium price escalation.

The findings indicate that the target population for community development aiming at reduction of opium production has to include all inhabitants of the opium cultivating area that have poor living condition regardless of ethnicity. Primary concern should be placed on the group that has the lowest economic status. The success of the community development aimed at reduction of opium production need strong support from intervention programmes focus on the reduction of economic gain from opium cultivation.

Key words: Opium cultivation, Chiang mai province, Rapid opium price escalation.

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