

## **“Understanding Development in Myanmar” Research Fellowship Program 2013-14**

*Administered by:*

The Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD);  
Faculty of Social Science; Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

### **Information Sheet for Research Fellows**

**Welcome.** Congratulations on being selected as a research fellow with the “Understanding Myanmar’s Development” fellowship program. Funded by the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), our goals are threefold:

- To build the skills and strengthen the capacity of junior and mid-level researchers from Myanmar;
- To increase understanding about ongoing development processes in Myanmar;
- To promote scholarly exchange concerning development issues among researchers from Myanmar and Thailand and beyond.

In the next twelve months you will be pursuing a challenging research project. Please understand that the RCSD is not *hiring* you to do this research, but rather inviting you to participate in an educational process that will involve training workshops and interaction with one (or more) intellectual “mentors.” It is *your* project, but we expect you to listen and be receptive to suggestions from others. We will also learn from you. At the end of the research period you will produce a final report, a “Working Paper,” that will be published in your name under RCSD auspices. It is our goal that the relationships we establish this year will lay the groundwork for future intellectual collaborations.

**Activities.** We have planned several workshops for you over the course of the fellowship period. Some will be held in Chiang Mai and some in Yangon. The first workshop (in Chiang Mai) will be 10 days and subsequent workshops will be shorter. At these workshops you will present orally on your progress and receive critical feedback from faculty mentors and your peers. We will discuss topics related to your projects including: revising your research proposal; research methodologies; analyzing your data; presenting your research findings; writing social science.

**Mentoring.** Each research fellow will be linked with a mentor who has some expertise in the area with which the fellow is concerned. The mentors will come from our faculty at Chiang Mai University or other Thai institutions. We expect you to maintain close email contact with your mentor, telling him or her how your work is going. Of course, it is your project. We expect you to work independently and learn-by-doing, but mentors will offer guidance and feedback as your work proceeds. Your mentor will also suggest some academic literature for you to read to deepen your understanding of your research topic. We expect that the mentors will visit their fellows at the field research sites in Myanmar at least once during the year.

**Fellowship awards.** Fellowship awards will vary depending on the scope of your project and the budget you submit: between \$1600.00 and \$3200.00 USD total for

the year. In addition to money for research expenses, all fellows will receive a monthly stipend of approximately \$300.00 USD/month. You will receive the research funds and monthly stipend in installments. Each installment is contingent upon your submission of progress reports, as detailed in the schedule below. The final funds will be distributed to you after you submit your final, revised “Working Paper” (subject to final approval by the Project Director.)

The **schedule** for dispersing funds is as follows:

**October 2013.** Fellows will receive 30% of their research grant and 80% of four months of stipend (for the months October, November, December and January).

**End-January 2014.** Upon submission of “Progress Report #1,” fellows will receive another 30% of their research grant and 80% of four months stipend (for the months of February, March, April and May).

**End- May 2014.** Upon submission of “Progress report #2” fellows will receive another 30% of research grant and 80% of four months stipend (for the months of June, July, August and September.)

**August 2014.** Third progress report is due: the first draft of your final paper. (No funds dispersed at this time.)

**September 2014.** After you complete your project and your revised “Working Paper” is accepted, you will receive the remaining funds, i.e. the remaining 10% of the research money, and the remaining 20% of the stipend.

**Meetings and workshops.** (Tentative schedule.)

**1<sup>st</sup> Workshop:** September 29 – October 10, 2013. Location: Chiang Mai, Thailand  
At this workshop we will discuss (1) revising your research proposal; (2) research methods; (3) general theoretical concepts in social science; and (4) planning a budget. Time will be set aside for revising your proposals and budgets, and for visiting the library. The output of this workshop will be a fully revised research proposal, with a detailed budget. Your grant award will be determined after you submit your budget.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop:** end-of-January 2014. Location: Yangon, Myanmar  
Progress report #1 is due. In this report, you will discuss the data you have collected to date, any challenges you encountered in the process, and your plans for the next months of data collection. You will present this report orally to the other fellows to solicit their comments and suggestions.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop:** end-May 2014. Location: Yangon, Myanmar  
Your progress report #2 is due. This will include preliminary analysis of your data. The focus of the workshop will be research *analysis*. As before, you will present this report to the group to solicit their comments and suggestions.

**4<sup>th</sup> Workshop** Date: August 2013 Location: Chiang Mai, Thailand  
Progress report #3 is due. This is the first draft of your final report. You will discuss

*all* the data you have collected over the course of the project and the conclusions you are drawing. The focus of the workshop is writing social science.

**Final Report** due: Sept 30, 2014. Your final, revised report on your research project will be submitted as a “Working Paper.” The document must be approved by the Project Director.

**Additional events:** there may be other seminars or conferences during the program year either in Thailand or in Myanmar. We will let you know as the events arise and invite you. Also: if you need to travel to Thailand to meet with your mentor and/or use the library facilities at Chiang Mai University that can be arranged. We will cover travel expenses and accommodations for these trips and provide you space to work at the RCSD office.

**Logistical matters.** We expect research fellows to manage their own visa applications for travel to Thailand. We will send a formal invitation letter that you can use for the application. We will make arrangements for your travel and accommodations in Chiang Mai for the first workshop. For our later workshops in Yangon, we will cover travel and accommodations for fellows who do not live in Yangon.

**Communication.** You may encounter difficulties that hinder your progress on your research project. Our main request is that you **please communicate with us** about what is going on. We will work with you.

## **Contacts**

1. **Chayan Vaddhanaphuti**, PhD. Program Director. **Aj. Chayan** is the Director of the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD) at Chiang Mai University. He has decades of experience in International Development Education and has trained researchers throughout the Greater Mekhong Subregion (GMS). He will share his experience and knowledge with us at our workshops.  
Email: *ethnet@loxinfo.co.th*

2. **Jennifer Leehey**, PhD. Program Coordinator. **Dr. Jennifer** is your primary contact for most matters related to your fellowship. She is an anthropologist with experience conducting social science research inside Myanmar. She will plan the workshops and monitor the progress of all the research fellows and will offer advice about the research process. She hopes to visit each of you at your research sites at least once during the year (if possible). Email: *jennifer.l@cmu.ac.th*

3. **Punjawatcharee Noonrawd** (“Khun Five”). Program Officer. **Khun Five** is responsible for all logistical matters related to the program, including letters of invitation (to get visas), air tickets, accommodations, and so on. She oversees the budget and the dispersal of grant money to each of you.  
Email: *fivehaha@gmail.com*

We look forward to working with you through the coming year !