

*"I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons."*

PSALM 69: 8

## Searching for Identity and Citizenship

**T**he Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) was started by missionaries in the early 1800s. Now it has more than 900 churches nationwide, and 150,000 members. Global Ministries partners with CCT to minister to the 1.2 million people in Thailand who belong to ethnic minority groups, such as the Karen, Hmong (Meo), Yao (Mein), Akha (Egaw), Lahu (Musoe), and Lisu.

Many hill tribe people, although they were born in Thailand, do not have birth certificates, meaning they have no citizenship, no identification documents, and no legal identity. The lack of citizenship means that these ethnic minorities are considered illegal aliens in their own land and have little access to basic services like education and health care, employment, and the right to own land.

Searching for Identity and Citizenship for Ethnic Minorities in Thailand is a new project by CCT. Nine volunteers help villagers apply to become Thai citizens. The project expected 100-200 individuals to receive citizenship documents in the first year of the project. As of August 2010, almost 1,000 people had filed for citizenship. Of those, 210 had been granted citizenship and an additional 776 were registered and waiting.

Among the 210, Mayuree and her three younger sisters recently became Thai citizens. Their father and mother had obtained citizenship years ago but, due to the lack of education Mayuree's parents did not know how to register their children. Mayuree said "I am very happy to receive the citizenship. I am a Thai now. I am happy because I can go to school and obtain public services that other Thai people receive."

*Please pray for this new project, and the impact it has on improving the lives of so many.*

*Global Ministries works with the Church of Christ in Thailand to fund the Citizenship project.*



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