

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF MENGLA COUNTY

3.1 Brief Introduction of Mengla County

Mengla County, in Xishuang Banna Dai Nationality Autonomous Prefecture, is located in southeastern Yunnan province China, and shares a 677.8 km border with Lao PDR and a 63 km border with Myanmar. The Mengla County has an area of 7,056 km² with 13 township level districts. The total population is 202,973, of which 103,304 were men and 99,669 were women (Mengla Health Bureau 2006). There were 32 ethnic groups in this county, five of which has more than ten thousand people, including ethnic Han, Dai, Hani, Yi and Yao (Chinese Fourth National Population Fourth Census 1990). According to a report from the Mengla County Annuals, this county was named and renamed several times from 1927-1960. Mengla as a county was established by the Kuomintang government in 1927, and named as “Zhenyue County”. In 1949, when the Chinese government was established, this county was renamed as “Mengla County” in 1960.

3.2 Economic Development in Mengla County

According to studies on sex industry in many parts of the world, the thriving sex industry has resulted from numerous social changes that were associated with economic development.

Mengla was mainly an agricultural county with the majority of the people supporting themselves by growing rice, corn, tea, rubber and bananas and a few of the ethnic groups depended on hunting in the remote mountainous areas. Before 1949, Mengla was called “Zhenyue County” which was under the domination of the Kuomintang government. The executive and commercial center was in the Yiwu Township which was located north of this county. During that time, Mengla was very poor and an undeveloped area, because of native warfare and natural disasters which took a significant toll on the Mengla people’s life. Most of the agricultural fields were occupied by the local ethnic group’s leader –Tusi. Mengla people were exploited

heavily by Tusi and the Kuomintang government. The local economy was still in a period of labor exchange. For example, three eggs could only be exchanged for one pin from the tailor; and one pig could only be exchanged for one Sun Yat Sen uniform during the market days.

From 1950s to 1970s, Chinese authorities had abolished the Tusi privileges and returned the fields to the Mengla people. The executive and commercial centers were moved from Yiwu Township to Mengla Township. The center of the Mengla Township was developed as an urban district in the following years. In addition, some national farms were established which helped to improve the life of the local people and economic development in the area.

After the reform movement in 1978, which moved China towards a market-oriented economy, agricultural and industrial areas developed significantly in Mengla County. Many factories, such as sugar factories, rubber factories, tea factories were established in this area. According to the Mengla County Government Official Report, economic development in Mengla grew drastically after 1949. In 1949, the Mengla County GDP was only 3,210,000 Chinese Yuan, but it reached 2,420,000,000 Chinese Yuan in 2006. The urban per capita disposable income of residents was 6,124 yuan in 2003, whereas this number was 7,388 yuan in 2006. As we can see from Table 3.1, the GDP of these industries increased from 2003 to 2006.

Table 3.1 Economic development in Mengla County (Million yuan)

Year	County GDP	The primary industry GDP	The secondary industry GDP	The tertiary industry GDP	Gross Agricultural Output Value	Gross Industrial Output Value
2003	1,460	710	170	580	790	170
2005	1,951	934	329	687	1,448	276
2006	2,420	1,050	590	780	1,750	640

(Source from Mengla County Government official report 2004, 2006, 2007)

Moreover, the consuming capacity of Mengla people became improved in recent years. From the Table 3.2, the total retail sales of consumer goods were

350,000,000 yuan in 2003 and increased to 530,000,000 in 2006. The per capita net income of farmers was 2,251 yuan in 2006 an increase of 26.4% from 2003. The urban per capita disposable income of residents was 7,388 yuan in 2006 which increased by 20.6% from 2003.

Table 3.2 Consuming capacity of Mengla people in 2003, 2005 and 2006

Year	Total Retail Sales of Consumer Goods (Yuan)	The per capita net income of farmers (Yuan)	Urban per capita disposable income of residents (Yuan)
2003	350,000,000	1,781	6,124
2005	468,940,000	2,021	6,790
2006	530,000,000	2,251	7,388

(Source from Mengla County Government official report 2004, 2005, 2007)

The process of urbanization in Mengla County accelerated quickly. The total population was 22,311 in 1948 and this number increased to 202,973 in 2006.

Moreover, Mengla urban district has changed a lot in recent years. In 1989, there was only one street with several old buildings and about 10,000 people in this district but by 2006, there were four main streets with modern buildings and more than 30,000 residents. Various schools were set up, the health and hospital system was improved and many hotels, restaurants and department stores were created.

3.3 Mobility of Migrant Population in Mengla County

In response to economic development and local infrastructure construction, the mobility of the migrant population increased considerably in recent years in Mengla County.

Firstly, local infrastructure construction brought plenty of construction workers, truck drivers and traders to Mengla County. Since 2004, a super highway has been under construction which will bypass Mengla County and link Kunming, China to Bangkok, Thailand. The cross national construction sites offered job opportunities that attracted a large number of young people, many of whom migrated from poor rural areas of nearby regions. These construction workers comprised one of the key mobile groups along with truck drivers, transport workers and itinerant traders.

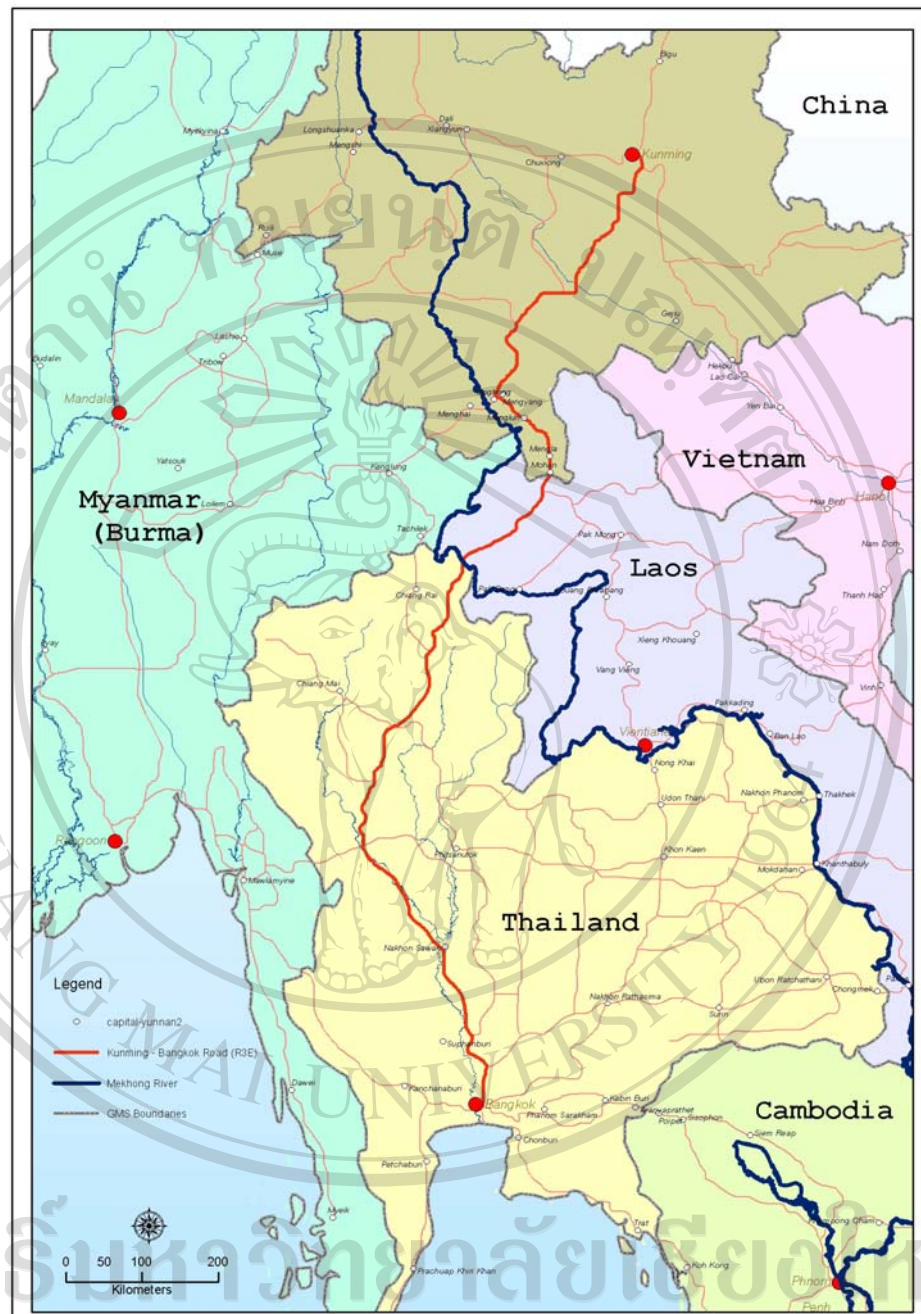


Figure 3.1 Super Highway from Kunming to Bangkok

(Source: Liwa Pardthaisong-Chaipanich 2007)¹

Secondly, with the rapid economic development in this region, many traders

¹ Liwa Pardthaisong-Chaipanich (2007). Paper presented at the Regional Academic Seminar on "Changes and Challenges in Greater Mekong Sub-region". Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. 17-19 January.

and businessmen, most of them from outside of Xishuang Banna, conducted various commercial activities in Mengla County, such as establishing rubber and tea factories, opening restaurants, hotels and other shops which resulted in a border trade boom and led to an increasing number of migrants. Because Mengla is a border county, there were many cross country travelers every year who crossed Mengla while traveling to Laos, Thailand or other cities in China. Many of these travelers tended to stay at Mengla for a while before continuing on their trip. At the same time, some smugglers crossed the border illegally to smuggle woods, rare animals and drugs. These people were not likely involved in the statistics collected by Mengla County Family Planning Commission. Thirdly, in recent years, the Mengla urban area has become a transportation center linking Yunnan with other Mekong countries. There were two bus stations in Mengla urban city, one of which was a long-distance bus station. People could travel to more than 24 different cities both in China and Lao PDR from this bus station, which included Kunming, Yuxi and Namtha, and Vientiane. The other one station was short-distance bus station. Here, local people could go to different townships of Mengla and other counties in Xishuang Banna. There were more than 300 vehicles departing and arriving at the two bus stations. Some travel distances include: 868 km from Mangla City Urban to Kunming, 172 km to Jinghong, 58 km to Mohan port, 110 km to Guanlei port, 114 to Namtha Laos, 675km to Chiang Mai Thailand, 448 km to Chiang Rai, and 230 km to ‘Golden Triangle’.

Table 3.3 Number of Migration Population in Mengla County

Year	Total Number of Migration Population	Number of Immigration	Number of Emigration
2004	14592	8414	6178
2005	20798	17488	3310
2006	24751	20772	3979
2007-March	26581	20681	5900

(Source from Mengla County Family Planning Commission 2007)

According to statistics collected by the Mengla County Family Planning Commission (Table 3.3), the migrant population increased significantly from 2004 to 2007. As we can see from the above table, there were only 14,592 migrant people in

2004, and this number increased to 26,581 up until March 2007 in Mengla County counting for 13 % of the total population of Mengla.

3.4 Historical Development of CSWs and Sex Industry in Mengla County

The history of CSWs and sex industry in Mengla County had been been as significant as in central China. Before 1949, Mengla was an undeveloped area made up of many ethnic minority villages. People lived in villages which were relatively isolated from modern society. Few people heard about the sex industry and CSWs in this remote area. After the 1980s, with the Chinese economic reform movement and open policy, many people who came from Sichuan, Hunan and Guizhou provinces flowed into Mengla to be involved with the border trade involving such elements as construction, transportation, clothing, food and living commodities. In the meantime, some restaurants, hotels, and markets were developed in the Mengla urban area which started to involve some CSWs. According to my interviews with local senior residents and officers of the Mengla Police Station, this was the first time CSWs emerged in the Mengla urban area.

At the beginning, only several big night clubs and discos had CSWs. In the 1990s, border trade and commerce rapidly developed and urbanization in Mengla was accelerated. Many CSWs poured into Mengla where night clubs, hotels and discos mushroomed in urban area, and some CSWs were found in roadside shops in marginal urban areas as well, such as barber shops and massage parlors. However, as CSWs were illegal in China, the Mengla police station conducted regular patrols of entertainment areas and used a strong presence as a deterrent measure against CSWs. Many entertainment places which involved CSWs were closed and reorganized by the local government. After that, some CSWs left Mengla County, and some tried to work at entertainment area as waitresses as “invisible” CSWs in order to prevent themselves from being arrested by policemen. From 2000, under Chinese social and economic conditions, sex industry again flourished in Mengla. Hotels, bars, nightclubs, pubs, entertainment centers, massage parlors, and beauty salons provided convenient locations for CSWs to meet their clients. Particularly, within the five year period of 2002-2007, sex industry was booming in this county and a variety of venues became available for CSWs in Mengla. CSWs not only were found in KTVs, hotels

and barber shops, but also some street-based CSWs were emerging in the bus station and commercial areas of Mengla City. According to statistics of the Mengla Health Bureau and data from my research, there were about 200 CSWs in the Mengla urban area in 2006 and this number increased to around 300-410 by September, 2007. There was never an official report about the history of CSWs and sex industry in this county as it was illegal. Some local key informants provided valuable information in describing the history of CSWs in Mengla.

“The Chinese government has always taken a strong attitude against the sex industry, so there was not a red-light district for a long time in Mengla County after post-liberation. Up until the end of 1992, a number of Guangdong, Guangxi foreign businessmen begin to cross the Mengla border to smuggle vehicles, and many outsiders came to Mengla looking for jobs which stimulated the local economic development. A number of firms emerged here. Entertainment areas were also developed. CSWs initially worked in a number of big nightclubs, because they could earn more money there, as well as the bosses of these night clubs were influential and could protect these CSWs from harassment by pimps, clients and policemen. In the meantime, these night clubs paid various taxes to local government, so the government did not take strict inspection measures. From the end of 1992 to 1993, this entertainment area reached a peak period; large numbers of CSWs poured into Mengla County and gathered in the nightclubs. The most famous one was “Bamboo Park Night Club”, CSWs provided sexual services at a cost that is slightly higher than current rates: one time sexual service cost 150 yuan, and over night service was 300 yuan. Most of CSWs came from Sichuan Province, Guizhou Province and Chongqing Province. At that time most of the rich men in Mengla were smugglers or businessmen associated with smuggling. A sentence was very popular among CSWs: “the clients are rich and naive here, come quickly please”. After 1994, the government adjusted their strategy to crack down on smuggling activities, and regulated cross border trade. Some

firms and companies also were closed, the nightclub business began to receded, many CSWs had to find a way out, and some of them were reduced to beauty parlors and massage shops along the road.” ---a boss of a former night club.

3.5 Causes of the Booming Sex Industry in Mengla

Firstly, local perspectives involving sexuality had changed with social development. Mengla County belongs to Xishuang Banna Dai Autonomous Prefecture. Dai people have a long history of being the dominant ethnic group in this area. This ethnic group influenced other local ethnic groups with their language, religion, folk customs, norms and ideas about sexuality for thousands of years. Dai people were Buddhists, in the past, acts of sexual promiscuity were seldom heard of and Dai people did not visit CSWs. The ‘Tusi’ people were named leaders in Mengla County and they became responsible for governing this area. Only Tuis had the right to buy beautiful women with money as their extra mistresses while Dai residents were monogamous. Traditional Dai women believed in chastity and fidelity to their spouse and sex outside of marriage was considered to be a bourgeois transgression. They thought CSWs were a group of immoral women who were evil and they would break up families while bringing dirty infectious diseases to other people. They especially thought that CSWs would make men become bad and lead them away from their families.

Moreover, other ethnic groups in this area had to follow the Dai people’s regulations regarding sexuality. However, traditional sexuality became influenced by events occurring in the 1990s. The rediscovery of sexual freedom during the period of economic reform contributed to the growth of the commercial sex industry. More and more people came to Mengla for business and travel and they brought new perspectives relating to sexuality to the local area. The traditional sense of shame no longer existed among this new generation of young men and women. Sex outside of marriage, sex before marriage and multiple sexual partners were accepted by an increasing number of local young people. Sex toys that would have been unthinkable to sell in former times, but they were openly sold in the “medical equipment store” since 2000. Nowadays, some young men maintain the idea that if a man never visits a

CSW, then he is not a real man. More and more local ethnic young women and men love each other freely and openly. They feel that it is normal to experience sexual intercourse during festivals before they are married.

Secondly, based on Chinese Taoism ideas about human sexuality, CSWs are accepted by some people. This traditional viewpoint about sexuality divides men and women into the “*yang*” and the “*yin*”. Women are said to have an inexhaustible supply of *yin* essence, while men have a limited supply of *yang*. It is forbidden for men to use up their *yang* essence without acquiring plenty of *yin* essence. That means that before a man is allowed to ejaculate, he has to prolong ejaculation, making a woman orgasm several times to acquire her *yin* essence. If a man ejaculates or uses up his *yang* essence without taking any *yin* essence it is said to cause him health problems and even death. Many Chinese people believe that *yang* can nurture their life and make them more prosperous. Some men try to take the *yin* from women to boost their *yang*. Therefore, CSWs are accepted by some Chinese men. Men think that they can gain more *yin* from CSWs than from normal women. The belief is that women that has sex with many men have acquired more *yang* essence and thus, they can give a patron more *yang* essence than he had lost.

Last but not least, from various introductions by the media, Xishuang Banna Dai Nationality Autonomous Prefecture became one of most famous tourist places in China. Attractions such as the tropic forest, ethnic minorities villages, beautiful landscape, cherished animals and plants are always shown in various paintings, pictures and TV shows. Another particular popular attraction is the Dai girl. As is well known in China, Dai women has a good figure, very feminine, are good at singing songs, dancing and taking care of their family. Hence, some male visitors are very interested in Dai women. And local entertainment sectors try to attract more clients with the introduction of Dai CSWs. More often than not, at night time in Mengla, a local taxi driver comes forward to recommend male clients to visit Dai CSWs in order to earn a larger taxi fee. They boast that “*Dai CSWs are a very special minority CSWs and different than girls in other cities. Dai CSWs are wasp-waisted, busty and sexy. It will be pity if you travel in Mengla without trying Dai CSWs*”. Based on this point, many other ethnic CSWs pretend to be Dai girls in Mengla in an aim at luring more clients and earning more money.



Figure 3.2 Dai Girl and Xishuang Banna

3.6 Mengla Government Responds to CSWs and the Sex Industry

Following the Communist Party of China's victory in 1949, like other local governments in China, the Mengla Government Authority was delegated with the task of eliminating CSWs though they did not find any CSWs during that period. By the early 1960s, this policy had basically wiped out any visible form of the CSWs from China. In order to manage social issues caused by CSWs and the potential public health threat, in 1979, the Chinese national legislature disseminated the first penal code reinstating the illicit nature of sex work by emphasizing criminal penalties against coercing women for CSW for profit, especially when violence was involved. Because of this, the Mengla government had been carrying out a strict crackdown on CSWs when CSWs emerged in the Mengla urban area during 1980s.

Until the beginning of the 1990s, the sex industry was thriving in Mengla which had coincided with Chinese marketing economic reform. During that period, the Mengla government was busy incorporating economic development and infrastructure construction. They were also preoccupied with various criminal activities in the Mengla border area, such as smuggling and trafficking, which

required a lot of time and human resources from the local police station. This resulted in a weakened force working on trying to crackdown on CSWs and the sex industry seized the opportunity to develop quickly.

Nevertheless, the 1997 revised penal code reiterated the same line of control measures with the additional provision that made it illegal for those with STI and HIV to work as a CSW or patrons. The local law enforcement of the Mengla government also launched numerous campaigns to eliminate commercial sex in the urban area. From 1980 until 2007, the Mengla police station carried out periodic crackdowns on entertainment areas and some CSWs were arrested which was known as the “Saohuang actions” in China. During this period, some night clubs and hotels were closed for awhile. However, these actions could not eradicate the sex industry from Mengla completely. In response to the “Saohuang actions”, all of the entertainment sectors with CSWs created a strategy to counter government policy and actions. On the surface, these entertainment sectors were not open-door brothels, but performed functions similar to hotels, KTVs and barber shops. These business fronts combined their normal services with commercial sexual service. Meanwhile, these entertainment sectors paid monthly taxes to the Mengla government which contributed to the local economic development.

Therefore, the Mengla government usually did not enforce this law, and the sex industry can keep existing in entertainment areas. In order to thwart various inspections and activities from high level government authorities, the Mengla government would inform all of the entertainment sectors, such as KTV bars and barber shops, to hide their CSWs or close their unit for a while when high level government official activities were carried out in Mengla County. Similarly, if “Saohuang action” was organized by a higher authority, the Mengla government had to send policemen to inspect entertainment areas and try to arrest CSWs.

3.7 AIDS Problem in Mengla

Up until June 2007, there were a total of 812 reported people living with HIV⁺ in Xishuang Banna, of which 104 cases were found in Mengla County, 371 cases in Jinghong and 337 cases in Menghai County.

Mengla’s AIDS epidemic began in 1995, and the HIV prevalence has

increased yearly. A total of 104 cases were reported by the Mengla County Center for Disease Control (CDC) in July 2007, of which 13 led to death. Among the 104 cases, 54 were male and 50 were female; 83 cases were local people and 21 cases came from outside of Mengla County. The oldest AIDS patient was 81 years old and youngest one was two years old. About 70% of the cases were associated with sexual transmission, while 2.9% was associated with mother to child transmission, 3.8% were associated with drug use transmission and the rest were not recorded in the local CDC. As we can see from the following table, 63 AIDS patients were between the age range of 25 to 44 who were sexually active.

Table 3.4 Age Distribution of AIDS patient in Mengla County

Age	Number of AIDS Cases	Rate of AIDS Cases	Number of Death by AIDS
2—9	3	3%	2
10—24	20	19%	1
25—44	63	61%	5
45—59	7	7%	4
60—74	10	9%	1
75 ~	1	1%	0
Total	104	100%	13

(Source from Mengla County CDC July 2007)

From Table 3.5, 82 cases of AIDS were found from 2005 to July of 2007 which counted for 78.9% of the total number of cases. At least two reasons may explain this significant increase in AIDS case numbers during this period. First, there were many people who had HIV infection already, but they did not realize they were infected until part of them joined the HIV tests from 2005. And the Mengla County CDC enlarged the range and increased frequency for HIV test from 2005, which may have involved more participation in HIV testing. Second, from 2004 to 2007, the Kunming to Bangkok super highway was under construction which necessitated a large influx of construction workers to Mengla and they may have brought AIDS with them from outside areas into Mengla.

Table 3.5 AIDS Cases Diagnosed by the Mengla County CDC

Year	Cases
1995-1999	7
2000-2004	15
2005-present	82
Total	104

(Source from Mengla County CDC July 2007)

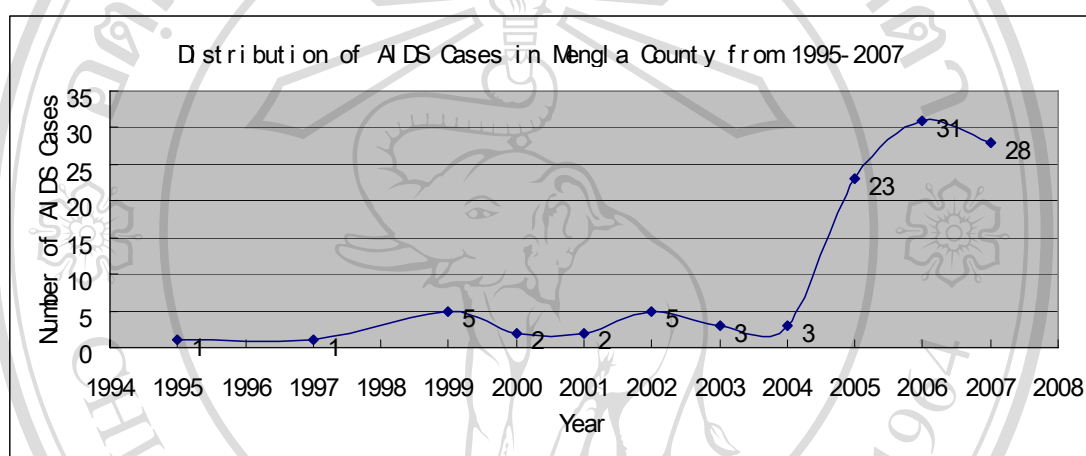


Figure 3.3 Distribution of AIDS Cases in Mengla County from 1995-2007

From 1995 to 2000, most HIV positive cases were only found occasionally in Mengla. Some patients were ill and could not recover through various treatments in the local hospital. Then they were found to be HIV positive after blood testing their from the prefecture or provincial hospitals. Mengla County CDC began conducting HIV/AIDS surveillance in 1990, but this surveillance was less comprehensive and provided little information on general population trends, although this was being improved. There were a total of 9,369 people who joined the surveillance testing from 1990 to July 2007. Most of the sources of HIV testing depended on nine different factors, such as, voluntary testing and counseling in the local CDC, blood testing when people visited the doctor in hospitals, regular testing before women delivered in hospitals, among others as highlighted in Table 3.6.

In conclusion, the sexual transmission of HIV/AIDS now has the potential to become widespread in Mengla County. A number of reasons could be accounted for 70% increase in the number of HIV positive cases relate to sexual contact in Mengla

County (Mengla Health Bureau, 2007). First, the Kunming-Bangkok superhighway and opening of international ports brought a sizeable population of young sexually active migrants to Mengla. Further, changing sexual behavior and relevant norms were accepted by most of local young people in the recent years. Particularly, the prevalence of widespread prostitution in Mengla became the bridge in which the sexual spread of AIDS filtered into the general population. In addition, the lack of knowledge about transmission routes and even more deficient perceptions of self-risk among the general population contributed to the increase in sexually transmitted diseases in remote rural area (Asian Development Bank, 2003).

Table 3.6 Source for test of HIV positive cases in Mengla County

Source of Sample	Person number	Male	Female
Voluntary testing and counseling	25	15	10
Blood testing when people see the doctor in hospital	24	17	7
Regular testing before delivery	11	0	11
Physical check-up at custom	7	7	0
Sentinel surveillance	2	0	2
Testing before operation in hospital	1	1	0
Testing in jail	2	1	1
Testing for Unpaid Blood Donors	1	0	1
Testing before marriage	3	2	1
Others	28	11	17
Total	104	54	50

(Source from Mengla County CDC July 2007)

3.8 Responding to AIDS Problem in Mengla County

Less than 20 years ago, HIV/AIDS might not have been present in this prefecture. Local people were blind to the phenomena and a misunderstood about AIDS. People just heard through the mass media that HIV/AIDS caused from America and Europe as well as thought there were very few people living with AIDS in China. During that period, in many Chinese minds, AIDS was not only a horrible infectious disease which caused death, but also a dirty disease because it was associated with visiting CSWs and fornication. AIDS was even considered as an immoral disease; consequently people who were infected with AIDS should have been punished. If someone got AIDS, he/she and his/her family should be isolated, because everything they used and touched must be tainted with the AIDS virus. When they died, their body and their possessions had to be burned and then buried so the AIDS virus could be disinfected.

In 1991, in Xishuang Banna, the first AIDS case was found in a person from Myanmar who came to Xishuang Banna for business. A year later, the first local person was found to be AIDS positive from Jinghong City. The local people started to fear AIDS as they realized this horrible disease was so close to their life. People thought AIDS was a type of strong virulent disease and other people could be infected very easily by just contacting an AIDS patient. An AIDS patient was thought to experience a very horrible death. When this disease was in its last stages, the patient could be seen decaying from head to toe with extraordinary pain. In addition, some local hospitals refused HIV/AIDS patients because they could not treat this disease, and other patients would not go to this hospital fearing they would be infected by the AIDS patient. However, because there were so few AIDS cases, it did not arouse an awareness of the predicament in the Mengla County authorities.

After 2000, with AIDS growing rapidly in China, a State Council Working Group on AIDS (SCWGA) was established, elevating the importance of the AIDS issue to the national level. Within this political environment, Mengla authorities started to pay more attention to the AIDS problem. On the one hand, the Mengla government was very sensitive to share information about AIDS prevalence with others, because Mengla was a tourism area and economic development was relatively slow in China. The Mengla government worried that the prevalence of AIDS would

instill a panic amongst travelers and people whose investments would improve the local economic development.

On the other hand, the Mengla authorities had taken active measures to respond to the problem of AIDS. The Department of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control was set up in Mengla CDC and the system of HIV surveillance was improved from 2003. Moreover, one of the vice heads of the county and one of vice directors of the Health Bureau were assigned to be responsible for the Mengla Working Committee for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control in 2003. Depending on this leadership, an office in local health bureau was set up and two full time officers assigned to work for this committee. Since 2004, the Mengla Authority had budgeted 50,000 yuan to the local Health Bureau for AIDS Prevention every year.

In the meantime, some international foundations, such as the Rockefeller Foundation and United Nation Children's Fund, had given financial support to the Mengla Health Bureau which aimed at strengthening AIDS prevention in rural areas. Mengla Health Bureau carried out a series of AIDS prevention activities and called upon all of Mengla's people to fight against HIV/AIDS. First, the Mengla Health Bureau organized AIDS prevention trainings for various township authorities and other government sectors from 2004. Second, various booklets with information about AIDS prevention were distributed to residents in the county area. Third, professional training on infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS for medical staff was carried out. Fourth, implementation guidelines on condom promotion for preventing HIV/AIDS were conducted in the entertainment area. Although Mengla Authorities held a positive attitude towards AIDS prevention, all of the above measures were only taken by the local Health Bureau.

From 2003 to 2004, two influential policies were fortified respectively by the Chinese National Government and Yunnan Provincial Government. First, in late 2003 a new national policy, the "Four Frees and One Care" policy announced the provision of free antiretroviral (ARV) drugs for all rural residents and poor people in cities, free counseling and testing services, free treatment for pregnant women and testing for their babies, free school fees for children affected by HIV/AIDS, and financial support for affected families (State Council AIDS Working Committee 2004). With this policy, the Mengla government recognized the need for treatment and care, not

only as a means of improving the lives of people and functioning of communities affected by HIV/AIDS, but also as a means of preventing further transmission of the disease. Second, the “One Measure and Six projects” was issued in an attempt to promote HIV/AIDS prevention and control in Yunnan Province 2004. “One Measure” represents an important breakthrough in terms of condom promotion, methadone maintenance, needle exchange, and providing legal support for effective intervention. “Six Projects” closely integrates the key components of comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention and care into one system, reflecting the combination of crackdown and guidance, synergy between preventions and care, and clear responsibilities across different departments. This reversed a passive approach in Mengla County that the health care sector alone implements the response to HIV, and took all responsibilities. According to “Six Projects”, from 19th December 2004 to 20th February 2005, a comprehensive HIV surveillance program was implemented among vulnerable groups by multiple government sectors including the Police Station, Administration Bureau of Industry and Commerce, Family Planning Commission, Health Bureau and County Hospital etc. This surveillance program collected 834 blood samples from several vulnerable groups including the female staff at entertainment areas, drug users, jail prisoners, STI patients and pregnant women in hospitals. Two people of the 834 participants were found to be HIV positive, one was a prisoner and the other was a female worker in the entertainment area. Neither of them were local people.

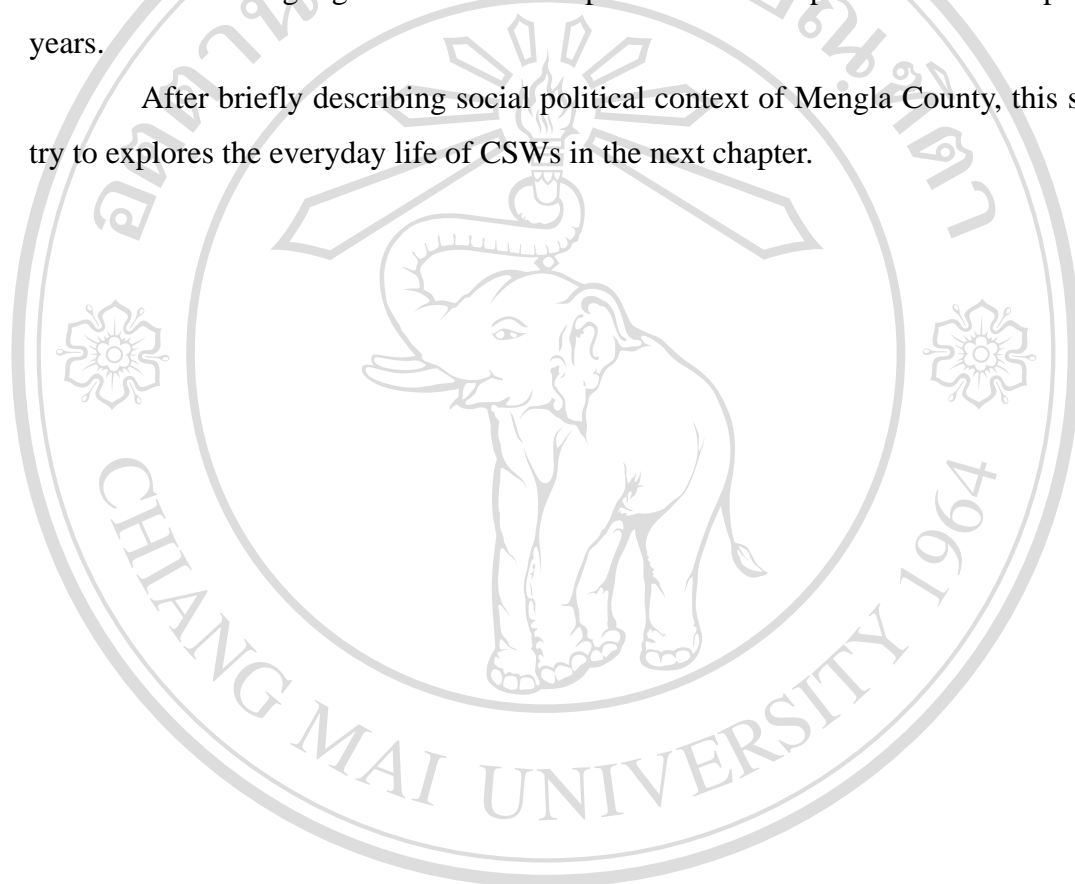
Although the Yunnan Provincial Government called on government departments to work together to prevent HIV/AIDS, the main task of AIDS prevention was still undertaken by the Mengla Health Bureau. Other governmental departments were not very active in AIDS prevention, as they held onto the idea that the AIDS problem was a health problem which was the responsibility of the local Health Bureau exclusively. Moreover, the budget for AIDS prevention for these departments was limited.

3.9 Summary

This chapter describes social political context of Mengla County. It starts with a brief introduction of Mengla County in south of Yunnan Province which includes social context of economic development and mobility of migrant populations

in the border area. Then within this social context, the sex trade and sex workers as a social phenomenon were discussed, especially, the causes of its explosive growth and the local government's response. AIDS as a social problem was depicted about in term of prevalence in Mengla County. There were only 22 AIDS case before 2004, while this number was increased by 104 until July of 2007. Eventually, this chapter describes how Mengla government has responded to AIDS problem over the past 14 years.

After briefly describing social political context of Mengla County, this study try to explores the everyday life of CSWs in the next chapter.



ลิขสิทธิ์มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่

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