

THE COMPANION BOOK FOR FIELD TRIPS

WORLD CONFERENCE ON
HEALTH PROMOTION
25-29 AUGUST, PATTAYA, THAILAND



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Introduction

As part of the 21st IUHPE World Conference, 12 field trips have been offered for interested participants on 25 August 2013 from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm. The purpose is to showcase best practices of health promotion in Thailand. We also hope that each trip will provide you with an opportunity to have an interactive discussion with health promotion prime movers in the field. Some trips will take place in Pattaya city; while the rest will be in neighboring cities/provinces that are within close distance to Pattaya. Various settings such as hospitals, elderly health services, local communities, and the workplace will be visited.

Route 1: Sawangkanives

Theme: Sawangkanives (Homes in Heaven): The Best Investment for Future Health

Founded by the Thai Red Cross Society but funded by residents, Sawangkanives is an elderly healthcare facility with an innovative financial model. The word “Sawangkanives” means “homes full of comfort and happiness like living in heaven”, which reflects how the residents live there. The facility, particularly designed for the safety and comfort of senior citizens, lies in a beautiful quiet area of Samutprakarn province near Bangkok, Thailand. A qualified healthy-Thai person, who is at least 55 years old, will pay around THB 800,000 (USD 27,000) entry fee to obtain a non-transferable right to stay in a studio unit. Each month they pay THB 2,500 (USD 80) for services. Once situated in a new home, each resident enjoys 24-hour standard healthcare services, referral systems, day care, and recreation opportunities, such as exercising and travelling – all are available at a reasonable price. For example, after breakfast, a 65-year-old grandmother may stroll in a garden, catch a taxi to the Ancient City, spend an afternoon by the beach at Bangpu and/or play with grandkids in Bangkok before going back to

Sawangkanives in the evening. The facility is more than a place to live: it becomes a thoughtful choice for a senior citizen who wants to live a self-reliant life. When a resident gets sick and is unable to take care of himself or herself, one live-in caregiver is allowed. If a resident needs to move to a long-term care facility, he or she will be reimbursed 40 percent of the entry fee after a new supporter occupies the room.

Route 2: Thai Kriang Community

Theme: Best Investment for Health of Thai Kriang Community: Braveheart Lady of the Poor and Gender Inequity

The “Iron Lady” leads street protesters composed of 5,000 female workers who were laid off from a garment factory. The “Iron Lady” is an intimate portrait of Arunee Sritho. Coming from a modest and relatively unknown background, Ms. Sritho has smashed through barriers of gender and inequity of human right to be heard in a male dominated culture in Thailand. Over decades, she has worked for strengthening community and best investments for health in the Thai Kriang community. Her voice has been instrumental in driving national health policy for the poor and addressing gender inequity. Having a brave heart and being a talent leader, Ms. Sritho has been honoured by the Human Rights Commission of Thailand. She has been successful in advocating for anti-drinking violence and alcohol cessation, national health policy development for illegal labourers and community savings account.

Route 3: Bang Prong Community

Theme: Stakeholders’ collaboration for mainstreaming policies to protect community by using: Cultural Conservation and Solid Waste Management

Bang Prong Community in Samutprakarn province is an excellent example of how people simultaneously strengthen their own community and also conserve

Thai culture. Unlike other policies which are top-down, the needs of people in this community have driven the wheel of development. After realizing that their children and youth would inevitably be influenced by modernization, community leaders co-operated in initiating several projects to prevent problems such as drug or alcohol abuse, etc., which often occur during social change. Besides preventing problems, the programmes also aimed to conserve Thai traditional arts, including Thai dance, mask dance (*Khon*), martial arts, and music and financial support from various organisations was obtained. As the projects showed positive effects on the local community's health, greater cooperation and appreciation from every sector including academic, public, and government bodies was forthcoming. The elderly are proud to convey Thai culture to the young generation, whereas the children acquire more skills through creating and maintaining useful activities in the community as well gaining enjoyment. Programmes have been successfully extended to encompass other aspects of health and environment, such as waste management. This community level success has influenced provincial health policy leading to the Samutprakarn Model developed by the Health Assembly in Samutprakarn Province starting in 2004. Currently, this successful bottom-up policy-making practice is being expanded to encompass issues such as food safety, teen pregnancy, diabetes, etc. The practices learned by the assembly in Bang Prong may provide a good model for developing other communities.

Route 4: Ban Bueng Municipality

Theme: Affordable Elderly Care Managed by An Elderly Group

Ban Bueng Hospital in Chonburi Province provides an elderly facility managed by a group of senior citizens. There are many activities which maintain active roles of elders and encourage get together such as Angklung performance, Tai Chi, Rod exercise, and Thai Massage. The hospital supports knowledge dissemination and provides technical assistance to initiate the elderly care facility,

which is complemented by a trained elderly group who operates the facility to help other aged people. The idea is to establish an affordable elderly care for low-income communities and strengthen the role of elders in health promotion programming.

Route 5: Dusit Thani Pattaya Hotel and The Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities

Theme: Environmental and social sustainability hotel and capacity building centre for disabled people **Dusit Thani Pattaya Hotel**, located on a long stretch of beach at the northern tip of Pattaya, is a five star hotel in Pattaya with a commitment to improve environment. The administrators and staff continually implement and upgrade the hotel's environmental management systems. In 2013, the Dusit Thani Pattaya Hotel became an environmentally-friendly hotel and received the Certificate of Five Leaves from the Green Leaf Foundation (Thailand) in recognition of the excellent management of its green initiatives and practices. It also received the Silver Certification Status from Earth Check after sustaining its first Silver Status two years ago. These accolades serve as evidence of their vision and standards of excellence for their efforts in preserving the earth's environment. The Certificate of Five Leaves is the highest recognition that signifies outstanding performance and the hotel has been enjoying the accolade since 2003. It also initiated an environmentally sound programme 'from the back to the front of the house' that focuses on using local products and local services.

The Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities or Pramahathai Foundation, located in Pattaya, is a center that places emphasis on building capacity and capability for disabled people. The centre has different capacity building programmes, such as: 1) a vocational school for disabilities, 2) an employment centre which provides suitable work, training, and useful advice, 3) accommodations while seeking work, 4) a service call center for mobile phone companies, 5) the Freedom Solution Company – an IT service which applies a

concept of social enterprise, and 6) a needs development centre for children with special needs. It is one of the best disability centres in Thailand that not only provides jobs and educational opportunities, but also develops the full potential of disabled people and children with special needs, which enables them to live in society and lead good lives. It is also an organisation that plays an important role in developing national policies and collaborating with other governmental organisations, as well as other institutes to change or develop regulations and facilities for disabled people in Thailand.

Route 6: Pattaya City

Theme: Implementation of Pattaya Healthy City Concept

As Pattaya City plays a vital role in economic contribution for Thailand's tourism, the city has initiated several policies to develop Pattaya to become the world livable tourist town. Moreover, because of the increasing number of residents and tourists annually, it is necessary that Pattaya City provides enough healthcare service to supply increasing demand. Pattaya City recognizes the importance of the situation and realizes the necessity in sufficiently being responsible to take care of the health of residents of Pattaya City. Presently, the local government has implemented the Pattaya Healthy City Concept to improve the health and well-being of its residents. A number of initiatives and projects have been implemented such as "Home Service Doctors and 20,000-bed-capacity Pattaya Hospital", renewable energy development, community solid waste management, and green hotel promotion. The goals of these initiatives are to bring Pattaya City into balance and promote the happiness of residents.

Route 7: Asia Precision Company Limited

Theme: Happy Workplace

Asia Precision is a private company that shows concern about its workers beyond a typical welfare attitude. The company believes that creating comradeship among

its employees in a caring environment will bring about a happy workplace. This condition will, in turn, benefit employees, the company and society. The company improves the employees' quality of life through various healthy activities such as physical exercise, providing organic lunch, caring for each other and volunteering in communities and schools, such as running the Opened Factory for Community Engagement project. For example, employees have a chance to learn the King's Sufficiency Economy Model in the learning center. Furthermore, they donate money and give monthly scholarships to students, help build a library, plant and grow food for lunch of students, etc. All these good activities aim to encourage people who want to share to others and show gratitude to their mother's land, Thailand.

Route 8: Mabtapud Hospital

Theme: Best Investment for Improving Well-being in High Health Risk Area – Mabtapud Industrial Estate, Rayong Province

Mabtapud, the biggest modernised industrial estate in Thailand and the hub of refineries, petrochemical factories, and power plants, is the area with greater risk for industrial pollution. Mabtapud Hospital, located in the area, works collaboratively with the community and industrial sectors to promote health in both industrial employees and dwellers. Chemicals, especially chlorine, cumene, and ammonia, are susceptible to leaks in this area. Occupational health and safety appear to be another challenge. The hospital has introduced a “walk to survey” and “behaviour modification” projects for employees in the medium and small industries to assess occupational health risks and set up a physical check-up as well as individual behaviour improvement plans. To increase accessibility of people in the area for medical services and to prevent them from delayed diagnosis, the hospital also works proactively to provide monthly mobile medical care in the community, with a main focus on medical screening, treatment, and Thai alternative medicines. These include using Thai herbs to

detoxify harmful chemicals in the body, nose irrigation, and massage to reduce muscle strain. The mobile medical care has effectively processed in all 38 communities in Mabtapud area with funding support from the Community Alliance Group, which is founded by five big industries as a part of Corporate Social Responsibility. In addition, the Mabtapud health database including environmental monitoring data, employee health data from the plants, and community health data is created to help understand the impact of environmental pollution on health.

Route 9: Khao Chamao Preservation Group

Theme: Youth Investment for Superlative Future Benefits

Inspired by a Thai woman who was born and grew up in the countryside in Khao Chamao district, Rayong province, eighteen years ago, a small book rental store was opened in community right after her graduation from Bangkok. Her bookstore became a weekend venue for children and provided an opportunity for her to introduce other creative recreations. Its purpose has been to instill a sense of homeland attachment among the young generation via those activities. Her strong efforts and commitment to the homeland was the origin of national renown today. “Good seeds will sprout and grow well anywhere they fall” is the belief behind the project. Under the concept of an appreciation of traditional cultural heritage and one’s own root and social awareness, three main intellectual activities have been developed, which are aimed at encouraging children to be able to determine their own lives in appropriate ways. These activities include the first set of the necessary skills that children need to know, consisting of recognizing their own communities in regard to community history, social capita, local wisdom, and community problems. The second set of activities important to children’s knowledge consists of increasing social awareness, informing social situation, and analyzing social problems. Self-interest activities are the final set of activities that children can choose to learn based on their personal interests. These include learning traditional and modern arts, joining field trips, and attending

career training events. Since children's life skills have been promoted in line with homeland appreciation and commitment, youth migration to big cities for better job opportunity has gradually reduced eventually.

Route 10: Ban-Song Municipality

Theme: Best Investment for Healthy Community

Ban-Song Municipality was established as a small local administrative organisation. It was developed based on four basic principles: including A) "transparent and participatory management", B) "being a good example and a good role model", C) "potential development of the people in the community" and D) "put the right man into the right job to strengthen the community". The collaboration of community residents, referred to as: "healthy community system management by the community" has resulted in successful development, which is well-known in many aspects. One of the highlights of Ban-Song Municipality is the community savings group known as the "Community Fund Management Bank". The group had only THB 5,000 (USD 170) when it was firstly established, and currently it now manages more than THB 20 million (USD 670,000) and finances a community welfare programme that provides good benefits to its members. The important feature of the Bank's success relies on the active involvement of local authorities who support the programme. Collaboration between community and local government has been able to sustain the programme and improve the community's standard of living. Furthermore, the social capital of Ban-Song community has served to facilitate a mutual and collective drive for action, strengthen community residents and improve their quality of life. In March 2013, Ban-Song Municipality had a great honour to welcome Princess Mathilde of Belgium for a visit to this public health model of community health development.

Route 11: Ratchasan Hospital

**Theme: Integrating Compatible Conventional and Alternative Medicines:
Turning Bad Investment into a Good One**

Ratchasan hospital is a resort type hospital. Most areas of the hospital are organically planted with various kinds of herbs. It has been acknowledged as a model hospital providing holistic health care services with integrated conventional and alternative medicines. In the past, the hospital faced many challenges. It was almost closed by the central government policy because of misinvestment. In 2008, the hospital only had treasury reserves worth USD 6,500. The hospital management team and staff investigated weak points and then significantly reformed the services and policies with an aim of reducing overall expenses and promoting holistic health. They have initially decided to integrate alternative medicine with conventional medicine to prevent and treat chronic illnesses. Currently, several types of alternative medicine are provided such as herb therapy, osteopathy, Thai massage, nutritional therapy, detoxification, meditation therapy and art therapy. It is important to note that during the reform period, funds and support were sought from other institutes and donations to launch projects and renovate the hospital. The staff also worked collaboratively with their health networks to promote health promotion policy. As a result, the hospital saved money, gained more profits and established strong relationships with people in the community. Nowadays, the number of service users coming from both inner and outer responsible areas is continuously increased. The staff positively changed their attitudes towards the reformed health service system and promotion of their own health. They have decreased risk behaviors by quitting smoking, doing exercises and eating healthy food. Importantly, they provide health care services for their clients with happiness and a positive attitude.

Route 12 : ThaiHealth Center

Theme: Innovative Financing for Health Promotion in Thailand

A visit to the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth) is not just an ordinary visit to a headquarters of an agency that plays the major role in facilitating health promotion movements in Thailand during the past 12 years. Since the establishment of ThaiHealth in 2001, the agency has been growing considerably in developing strategies, strengthening partnerships, and advocating policies in health promotion. Agency staff members have been working closely with collaborations in order to make changes from grass-roots to the policy levels. ThaiHealth office, so called “the Green Building” which is located in the heart of Bangkok (<http://en.thaihealth.or.th/contact>), was integrated of its creative space design, health promotion exhibitions, resource center, and health partnership presentations which will provide a clear understanding in the holistic approach of health promotion (physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being).

For more details, participants can find from other parts of this book and from discussing with personnel at the field sites.

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Innovative Financing on Health Promotion and the ThaiHealth Center



Innovative Financing on Health Promotion and the ThaiHealth Center

Sinsakchon Aunprom-me

Viliporn Runkavatt

Thailand has always been seeking for innovative approaches in health promotion which eventually led to the establishment of Thai Health Promotion Foundation in 2001. Ever since, it has become a catalytic source of finance for a number of health promotion programs such as reduction of tobacco and alcohol consumptions, improving physical activities, food safety, prevention of road accident and child obesity.

Thai Health Promotion Foundation: Missions and Strategies

Thai Health Promotion Foundation, also known as ThaiHealth, is an autonomous state agency. It should also be noted that the term 'ThaiHealth' itself has an inclusive meaning. It does not only refer to the secretariat office but also includes its partners who share common interests in health promotion. It has often been referred to as a model of sustainable financing for health promotion. Major source of ThaiHealth's revenue collects from the 2% excise surcharge on alcohol and tobacco. In 2013, its budget was 4.7 billion baht (approximately 150 million US dollars). It, thus, becomes a model of sustainable financing for health promotion.



THAILAND: A WORLD LEADER
IN HEALTH PROMOTION

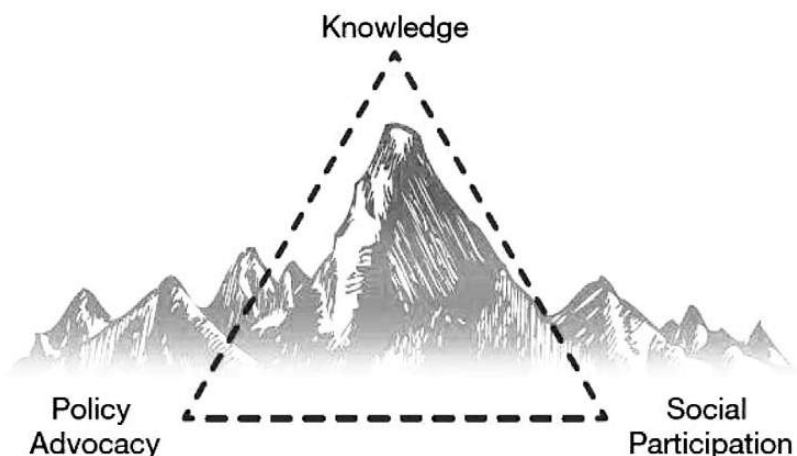


Given a sizable amount of budget, ThaiHealth is undoubtedly seen as a major source of catalytic support for health promotion interventions in the country. Dr. Krissada Ruangarrearat, CEO of ThaiHealth, said in an interview that ThaiHealth uses evidence-based information to analyze gaps for health promotion intervention, then allocates budgets to various entities that share common interest in health issues and supports for collaborative interventions to solve the problems. He further insisted that “changes in health behavior will be sustainable only when they suit people’s needs.”

ThaiHealth’s role is to induce changes in health risk behaviors. The agency’s mission is ‘to inspire, motivate, coordinate, and empower all sectors in a bid to enhance health promotion capability as well as healthy society and environment’.



Dr. Krissada Ruangarrearat
CEO of ThaiHealth



From the beginning, ThaiHealth's main strategy is the three-power strategy known as *"Triangle that Moves the Mountain,"* a concept initiated by Professor Dr. Prawase Wasi¹. The mountain is a metaphor for any difficult tasks which could be achieved if using the three powers i.e. knowledge, social participations and policy advocacy. In addition, ThaiHealth has employed specific strategies such as building capacity of people and organizations, stimulating health promotion innovations and social innovations, strengthening community's capacity and ownership, devising systems and social mechanisms that foster health, and developing media literacy in relation to health promotion, and healthy public communication. Implementing these strategies requires addressing complex health challenges through an integrated policy response from various public agencies. It is also required to focus on the social determinants of health and health inequalities. ThaiHealth, thus, follows health-in-all-policies approach in its working model. Furthermore, it uses social marketing approach to induce behavior change and to mobilize social support for health-promoting policies.

¹ Dr. Prawase Wasi is the Ramon Magsaysay Award recipient in government service in 1981. He is an emeritus professor of medicine at Faculty of Medicine, Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University. Dr. Wasi is a medical doctor and activist in public health and education. His works in public health and education have a profound impact in health care reform in Thailand.

Thai Health Promotion Foundation: Governance and Granting Mechanism

The Executive Board is chaired by the Prime Minister, and the Minister of Public Health is the First Vice Chair. The Board members consist of nine high-ranking government representatives, from all sectors relevant to health promotion, and eight independent experts. The Board also appointed seven plan administrative committees (PACs) to supervise the execution of ThaiHealth's programs.

Generally, the funding source of ThaiHealth is an “innovative financing” mechanism for health promotion; for the reason that a levy on tobacco and alcohol itself guarantees financial sustainability to support health promotion interventions. It is also an effective measure to reduce cigarettes and alcohol consumptions, through health promotion interventions. Furthermore, ThaiHealth's granting puts in place a consultative process for proposal development then a reviewing mechanism.

The ThaiHealth Center: A Model of Green Building

The ThaiHealth Center is a six-story building with two-story cellars. Two floors of the building are office area while the rest is dedicated as a learning center for



Green Building, Green Living for Green Society



general public. It is an energy saving building with environmentally friendly purpose (hence the name “the Green Building.”) This is in accordance with the leadership in energy and environment design (LEED) at the platinum level. The Green Building is designed and constructed by using the combination of modern technology and the selection of natural materials which can be recycled. Besides, natural resources must be utilized effectively and the atmosphere must be harmonious with nature. In fact, the building is a place for interaction creating the power of learning on healthy life. Most importantly, everybody can equally access this learning center.



Collective Impact of Health Promotion

“Collective Impact” approach is one of the core values of the foundation. Thus, ThaiHealth emphasizes on a partnership approach with public agencies, whether from government departments, local government authorities, NGOs, communities as well as private for-profit organizations. The ThaiHealth’s fund is distributed among 15 plans, ranging from tobacco and alcohol control to health promotion in communities, social marketing, supportive system and the ThaiHealth Learning Center. Each year, ThaiHealth grants more than 1,000 programs/projects; samples of programs are provided below:



Tobacco Control

Tobacco Control

There has clearly been an expansion in the number of active partners in controlling tobacco consumption including newly established institutions like Tobacco Control Research (TCR) and Knowledge Management Centre and The National Quitline. The National Tobacco Control Committee has made continuous progress in many legislative missions such as increasing number of public places that ban smoking including pubs and bars, open-air markets and restaurants; increasing a size of pictorial warning sign on cigarette packs.

Alcohol Control

A strategy similar to the tobacco control strategy has been employed in solving the problem of harmful use of alcohol by ThaiHealth since 2002. ThaiHealth provides continuous support to the National Committee on Alcohol Control, the Centre for Alcohol Studies, and the Stopdrink Network. These agencies are the prime movers in execution of the National Alcohol Control Strategies, starting from knowledge generation, social mobilization, and policy advocacy .



Road Safety and Accident Prevention

ThaiHealth has been implementing several measures on road safety, in collaboration with public agencies such as Ministry of Transportation, Royal Thai Police, etc. Furthermore, it also conducts a media campaign during the major festivals to raise public awareness of the seriousness of road accidents.

Combating Obesity

Obesity is one of the issues the agency focused on in a bid to campaign for good health. “Khon Thai Rai Poong”, or Fatless Belly Thais is a campaign to encourage weight loss. ThaiHealth and its partners such as the Ministry of Public Health, the Royal College of Physicians of Thailand, the Nutrition Association of Thailand, the Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, the Sports Science Society of Thailand, sponsor a television program, the Thai version of “the Biggest Loser,”



Kon Thai RaiPoong



Inspiring Exhibition at ThaiHealth Learning center

aim to disseminate knowledge about health problems caused by obesity and bad eating habits. Physical activity is healthy behavior. Some exercises that have been introduced to Thai people are aerobics, jogging, Tai Chi, Yoga, rubber bands, and the famous aunt Boonmee's long stick exercise. The variety of exercises introduced is for people with different conditions, genders, and preferences.



Everyone in Thailand has capability, lives in a society and environment conducive to good health

Conclusion

Since the establishment in 2001, ThaiHealth has worked with all sectors and settings that have an impact on health status. It provides a platform for strong collaborations among various stakeholders especially, local governments and communities. It uses social marketing aiming at improving health literacy and creating social norms that value healthy behaviors. ThaiHealth adopts knowledge-based approach and promotes innovation when implementing health promotion programs/projects.



Innovative financing model in Elderly Healthcare Services





Her Royal Highness Princess Mahachakri Sirindhorn, the initiator of Sawangkanives.

Innovative financing model in Elderly Healthcare Services

Kamolrat Turner

Prangthip Thasanoh Elter

Sawangkanives means “home in heaven” in Thai. The description of this residence complex for the elderly is exactly how the home in heaven should be. Surrounded by big shady trees and lush green space and located in an ideal location close to the Gulf of Thailand, this elderly home is equipped with facilities, activities and most importantly healthcare services for the ageing residents.



Sawangkanives, “home in heaven”



Sawangkanives surroundings



Sawangkanives Housing Project was established by the Thai Red Cross in 1996 following the initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Mahachakri Sirindhorn, who is concerned about the growing number of ageing population in Thailand, said Dr. Nart Fongsmut, the project director who is a medical doctor and a member of Sawangkanives administrative board.

“Sawangkanives offers the elderly an innovative saving package in a form of property and health services,” Dr. Fongsmut said.



Dr. Nart Fongsmut, the project director of Sawangkanives

Unlike most elderly in Thailand, these senior citizens can live happily without worries about being a burden for their families.

Health services are available for the senior residents 24 hours. Counseling and physical therapy by nurses from the Thai Red Cross and the Center of Rehabilitation are on site. Each resident will also get annual medical checkup for free. In case of emergency, residents will immediately be referred to the nearest hospital for treatment.



Facilities at Sawangkanives

Thailand is going towards ageing society since there are up to 9.3 million people over 60 years of age according to the study by the Institute of Population and Social Research of Mahidol University. The number could be over 12 million, or 20% of the total population within the year 2032. To cope with the issue, Sawangkanives introduced the residence project located in 23 rai plots of land (1acre:2.529 rai) in 1996. A total of 168 housing units were available during the first phase. The project received a positive response from middle-class senior elderly. Up to 300 units were built soon afterwards in the second phase. Sawangkanives project targets middle-class Thais aged 55 years old or older. The majority of current residents are female.

The best investment for ageing population

Sawangkanives aims at providing an alternative healthy lifestyle and health care services to the middle-class senior citizens. However, Dr. Fongsmut said any person interested in living at this place should start planning and savings as early as they could. The thing is each resident needs to pay a minimum of 850,000 baht as an admission fee. With this fee two persons will have the right to live at the housing project until the end of their lives. The resident cannot sell this property but one of his/her significant others can be put as a co-contractor and has the right to live there after the main contractor passes away.

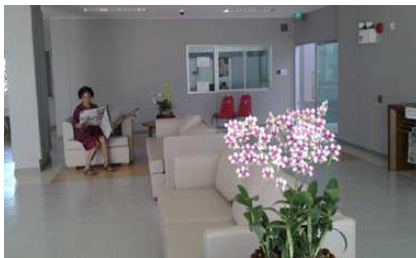
Dr. Fongsmut suggested that a total of 3-5 million baht should be prepared for living at Sawangkanives. A service fee of 2,500 baht/month/unit will be paid to the project. The fee will be primarily for facilities, daily activities and most importantly elderly care. An amount of 15,000 baht per month per person will be also needed for other living expenses. In case of health problems, which may not enable the resident to live by themselves, he/she will receive 40% refund of the total payment, she said.



Usa Rachpreecha, a general manger of Sawangkanives who has experience in providing care to the elderly.

Ms. Usa Rachpreecha, a general manger, who has been working at Sawangkanives for nine months after retiring the position of director of nursing of Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital, said all facilities were elderly friendly-designed. The front door of each unit is wider than a regular door. To protect residents from falling, each building floor is made of non-slippery materials. Emergency buttons are also available at the restroom.

A variety of activities in Sawangkanives fulfill the life after retirement. Residents can borrow books and in-house journals are available at the library for reading. They can also participate in dance classes, enjoy sports such as swimming, or spend time singing with friends at karaoke room at all times, she said.



Relaxing common room



Safety bathroom



Fitness room



“Living here is convenient, quiet and safe. The place is near the market and temple and that I can go shopping or make merit anytime I’d like. I am not lonely because I can also socialize with other people my age. I’m really happy,” said Mr. Saung Pawaputanon Na Mahasarakarm, an 86 years old male resident, who has been living at Sawangkanives for eight years.

Ms. Wiriya Jullamoke, a 75 years old female resident who has been living here for 9 years also said she loved sightseeing. She could go to a resort town of Bangpu beach and the Ancient City which are located nearby.

Going towards integrated elderly care center

Although the project received a positive response from the targeted senior population, Dr. Fongsmut said there was still room for improvement.



This vehicle takes the residents out to the main road.

Future projects would focus on enhancing quality of life among the elderly through services, teaching and research. A project on pet therapy and a training course for caregivers of the elderly with dementia would also be adopted for practice at Sawangkanives, Dr. Fongsmut said.



Socializing with people in the same age

Best Investment for Healthy Community: Baan Song Style



Best Investment for Healthy Community: Baan Song Style

Sunanta Thongpat

Kanokwan Wetasin

Unlike urban areas in Thailand, Baan Song Sub-district is just an ordinary rural community where thousands of residents are lacking all kinds of material comforts. Non-asphalt road passing through the community have never been completely constructed. Tap water is not even available.



Beautiful rice field around the community of Bann Song

This is all in contrast to the services provided to the larger urban areas in Thailand.

However, Baan Song residents are happy with their lives following their ancestors' footsteps. Gross Domestic Happiness of people in the community is the major achievement of sustainable community development. Baan Song has become a model of the healthy community system management for neighboring communities.

Small yet Self-Sufficient Community

Located in Panomsarakham District, Chachoengsao Province, Baan Song was originally called "Baan Chong". Baan means village in Thai. It was once regarded as the main route for cattle trade between the Northeast and the East of Thailand.

Later the village name was changed to Baan Song to honor the first chief of the village whose name was “Khun Song”.

About ten thousand residents from different ethnic groups live peacefully in Baan Song Sub-district comprising 14 villages. Thai Puan is one of those ethnic groups strictly following their culture and using their own language until now.



The young and talented of Baan Song Leader

Baan Song residents usually earn income from rice and fruit farming, and livestock husbandry. Capitalism, however, has become more influential to everyone’s life including those at Baan Song than in the past. Local people can no longer put their lives on the uncertain income from agricultural products. As a result, many community residents have to seek jobs in big cities to support their families, especially for education and health.



Somchai Chanthammaphitak, mayor of Baan Song subdistrict is presenting the community development plan to community council and provincial staff

As a local resident, Mr. Somchai Chanthammaphitak, mayor of Baan Song Sub-district, witnessed the financial and social issues at the community over years. He believes the situation has changed for better.

“The financial situation at Baan Song is different from the past. Our residents have



Senior people of Thai Puan ethnic group gather at a traditional ceremony.

better financial security because we focus on human resource development. If our residents are developed physically and mentally, then they can be successful in everything they do,” Somchai said.

Young and talented chief of Baan Song Sub-district has believed in the strength and potential of Baan Song residents to develop their own community. He encourages them to join a community development project called “The development of local government’s network or healthy community management project”. Initiated by the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, this development model is aimed at building the capacity of local residents in



Fishing tools used by Thai Puan in the past



Local people of Baan Song gather at a traditional ceremony

managing their communities, to improve their quality of live, and to work towards sustainability, following His Majesty the King's Self-sufficiency Philosophy.

Unsurprisingly, community residents actively participated in many community projects. Villagers are kept informed about proposes and on-going projects. Village assembly meets when there is any decision-making issue to be considered.

Baan Song community leader said it did not take long for its residents to learn and put such model into practice based on four basic principles transparency, exemplar, capacity building and human resource management. Transparent is essential. Everyone at the village assembly is equal. They respect each other.

In addition, each community leader should be a good role model and work to protect the benefits for each of the villages and the community as a whole. Belief in community people's capacity to learn and improve through skill training etc. was also important. That way, leaders would also be able to put the right man in the right job, Somchai said.

The Baan Song Social Fund project and the community fund management of Nong Song Hong Village - are two outstanding examples of how local community could become financially secured.

Baan Song Social Funding

This collaborative activity has brought wellness and improved prosperity to the community. Mushroom farmers are among a group of villagers that receive benefits from the social fund.

“For us, mushroom farming can bring not only good health but also sufficient income to support our families,” said Mr. Anucha Pitprayoon, the mushroom farming group treasurer at Baan Song community.

However, success did not come overnight. The group did not have the know-how for mushroom farming and that they learned the skills from provincial agricultural staff. Having only 12 members at the beginning of the project, each of them started the learning process by growing mushroom at their housing compound. After many trials and errors, the group learned that a cooperative system of working was the best way to manage mushroom farming, and to negotiate for pricing and marketing, Anucha said.



Mushroom farming at Baan Song. The community can supply two of three tons of daily mushroom demand in the market



Mushroom product at Baan Song



Members of mushroom cooperative center are ready to send their products to market.

At present, there are 275 members with the capacity to produce up to 2,000 kg. of mushrooms each day. Anucha proudly said that mushroom supply from his community could almost meet the daily mushroom market demand of 3,000 kg per day.



Community Bank at Baan Song is established to solve financial problems among local residents.

Mushroom farming has also created increasing jobs and income for Baan Song residents as well as people from nearby communities. With savings and emergency loan funding management, all cooperative members could earn enough to support their families. As a result, they can now live with their families and no long have to leave their families and communities for temporary labor jobs elsewhere in Thailand.

“Here at Baan Song, everyone shares the ownership of mushroom farm. We have pride and dignity. Most importantly, we don’t have to leave our families. We cannot ask for more since we have healthy and sustainable community here with us,” Anucha said.



Book banks distributed to members of Baan Song Community Bank

Another example of a community project is the community bank at Nong Song Hong village. Nong Song Hong Village was once regarded as the poorest village in Baan Song District, lacking all kinds of basic infrastructure including tap water and electricity. The only way to reach this remote community was travelling via a narrow non-asphalt road. Because of the poverty in this area, local people had to depend on loan sharks. However, the high interest rate to secure these loans caused them in debt. They had to sell their land plots to pay their debts.



Information sharing session presented by staff and members of Baan Song community bank

Seeing many residents suffered from high debt, the village head Mr. Chaluy Cheunon and some of his villagers came up with the idea to set up the community fund in 1993 to solve financial problems and to support sustainable occupation in the community through a micro-credit program.

Mr. Chaluy said he and his team sought assistance from private bankers to guide them on how to manage the community fund at the beginning and train staff to operate a so-called “community bank”.

At present the community bank can offer members savings program, micro-credit program with a low interest rate of 12% per year; welfare for special circumstances such as birth, illnesses and death of family members and donation for community services.

Based on three working principles of honesty, transparency, and commitment, Mr. Chaluy proudly said that Nong Song Hong community bank has grown from a few members to just over one thousand members from the village itself and nearby communities and generates up to 35 million baht fund with up to two-million baht cash flow on a daily basis.

The micro-credit loan and other funding programs available also enabled local residents to have financial security and a better quality of life. Village members can work in their own communities and no longer have to leave their families to work as temporary labors in big cities.

Epilogue of the Best Investment for Healthy Community

The collaborative activity of people in the community calls ‘the healthy community system management’ a successful development program. The community projects at Baan Song Sub-district have been recognized by local, national, and international institutions. Local people continue to work

with government authorities to look for opportunities in an effort to improve their quality of life and to overcome the vicious cycle of poverty, illness and underprivileged following His Majesty the King's Self-sufficiency Philosophy.



Provincial agricultural staffs are teaching local farmers how to use fertilizer for rice farming at Baan Song community



Local residents of Baan Song Sub-district are working together on a community development project.



Baan Song Community Learning Center operated by local residents to share knowledge for visitors.

Youth Capacity Building for Sustainable Community Development



Youth Capacity Building for Sustainable Community Development

Pornruedee Nitirat

Thongsouy Sitanon

Any visitors coming to Khao Chamao preservation center will be greeted by green, lush and cool weather all year round in spite of drenching heat during the summer time.



Khao Chamao-Khao Wong National Park



Khao Chamao-Khao Wong National Park

Numerous big trees and vast green space provide shade and cool down the center especially in the entrance hall, which is made of clay. In fact, it is a youth venue. Many houses made of clay can also be seen around the center. The person primarily responsible for the outstandingly green and peaceful environment at the Khao Chamao preservation center is Ms. Bupatip Chamnil.

“Khao Chamao is not only just a birthplace. My whole spirit is here,” said Bupatip, or Fab as she is called by her families and friends.

Being a nature lover, the 46-year-old female resident-turned-activist founded the environment protection center in 2005 with her major goal to bring back a good nature environment for her community.



Ms. Bupatip Chamnil

Soon after withdrawing from her studies in 1993, she returned home and found that many things had disappeared from her community. Building and factory construction replaced green rice paddies, which used to be her playground. None of the buffalos, once the most common cattle in her community, could be seen.

Since university year Fab has been active in natural protection. She adopted the knowledge and experiences learned when she volunteered in several social and rural development projects. Fab used these experiences to revive nature and traditional activities in her community.

At first, she noticed that children in her community had no after school extracurricular activities and during weekends. Most of them spent time watching

TV and playing computer games. In addition, young people did not feel that they belonged to their hometown. They moved to big cities for better job opportunities. Fab realized that the situation needed to be fixed before the community would be deserted in the long run. She therefore came up with an idea to open a small rental bookstore on her family property, to promote reading habits among children at the community.



Old book store

Children would receive an extra documentary book for every five books they rented, she said. Undoubtedly, her small activity became very successful. The community bookstore was crowded with children especially during weekends and suddenly became a venue for children to get-together. The number of

kids visiting the bookstore continued increasing, Fab proudly said.



Children activities



Children activities

To strengthen youth capacity and development, Fab persuaded local teenagers to get more involved in various community-oriented activities such as picking up trash around the villages, cleaning graffiti in the cave, drawing, organic vegetable and rice farming, etc. However, one of the most successful activities in the community was building houses made of clay. Fab said she taught children to build clay houses, which were both affordable and environmentally friendly.

“All the activities are organized not only to keep the community clean, but also to enable these kids to absorb a sense of community ownership,” she said.



Community participation



Organic products of community



Growing rice in the field

‘Rak Khao Chamao Youth Group’ is a clear example of Fab’s hardwork. Children came together to carry out social activities every weekend to take care of their own community. Children are like small seeds, if we plant and take care of them well, they will grow up strongly. Adults like us have duty to make sure that these seeds are properly taken care of, so they will be strong anywhere the plants grow,” she said.



Youth camp



Youth camp

Fab also believed it was crucial for adults to enable young generations of Khao Chamao to be equipped with “outside school” knowledge and skills necessary to prepare themselves to become adults in a fast-paced world. Participating into social activities is one of the key things that enable these kids to learn about challenges facing their communities. Adults should also give them opportunities to help seek ways to solve problems together.

To do so, she helped organize a monthly community meeting aimed at encouraging local residents to share their knowledge and experience on current issues. One example discussed was a topic of free trade agreement (FTA), its relationship to agricultural sector and local farmers. Adults are also equipped with knowledge via participatory process. Some of them are also invited to share their expertise in other communities, she said.



Youth camp

Youth development projects initiated by Fab undoubtedly received public attention. Private companies provided funding for her field activities, while Thai Health Promotion Foundation also provided funding to her team members. She and her team are proud that years of hard work have paid off and contributed valuable outputs for children and her community.

Gift, a 24 year-old- youth of the Khao Chamao district, said she participated into an annual camp for kids organized by “Auntie Fab”. Traditional Thai medicine was a topic during her year. She learned about herbal medicines from local healers, and she was very much inspired by the local wisdom. Gift said she decided to study alternative medicines at the university and she would soon return to work in her hometown.

“Thanks to Khao Chamao youth center as well as Auntie Fab and her friends.



Training each other



Elderly pride



Local belief

Children like me can be a part of community effort in preserving traditions and ways of living for generations to come,” she said.

Fab however conceded a lack of support from local government was challenging her community development projects. For instance, there is no local policy on game outlets control at the community. Rules and regulation should be put in place to limit age of game players and operating hours.

Family support and educational system which force children to study more at classroom than field activities are also key challenging factors for her youth development project, she said.



Ms. Bubpatip Chamnil

Fab still hopes her project will be integrated into the national education system as an alternative weekend school curriculum for the benefits of Thai youth as a whole and sustainability of youth development in the long run.



Community's Self Financing of Health Promotion Activities: The Iron Lady of the poor and gender inequity



The weather extreme of draught has threatened the crops. That prolonged draught has forced female farmers to leave their farm to work in larger garment factories nearby. In 2000, about 5,000 Thai Kriang workers were laid off and have been not covered by the national health security scheme. The majority of the unemployed are now living in the Thai Kraing community.



Bhumibol Bridge



Bhumibol Bridge landscape

These unemployed workers have received neither governmental assistance nor support nor health care services. As a result, they have struggling in their everyday lives. It may also cause more serious conditions both physical and psychological problems including stress, alcohol abuse, and domestic violence. In many families, both couples are unemployed. Males particularly have been a lot of stress as they are the pillar of the family. The unemployed males are drinking to excess. This caused domestic violence of spouse and children who are verbally and physically abused.



Demonstrations to stop violence

"I thought that alcohol would make me stop thinking about jobless and financial problems. I'm frustrated as I cannot bring home the bacon. I drink too much as a way to cope with stress and anxiety"

"One day, my daughter told me not to pick her up at school. That's such a shame. Since then, I decided to quit drinking." said a man who wished to remain anonymous

The Iron Lady Group – the driving force behind the community

To help solving the community's domestic violence, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the government and the community should give members consultation and support.



Ms. Arunee Sritho



The Iron Lady Group members

Ms. Arunee Sritho, the Iron Lady Group leader, recognized the need to stop domestic violence in order to protecting their right of women and children's privacy. To help solving the problem, the group of female members led by Arunee decided to hold a rally to push pressure on males in the community to stop drinking and abusing women and children. Home visit to female



Driving force behind the community

victims is also another measure of the group's activities. It aims at giving males emotional support to quit drinking. Follow-up visits have been made periodically to give them further support. After the drug users have received treatment at Wat Tham Krabok in Saraburi province, many of them who successfully recovered from drug and alcohol addiction return to normal lives. Some of them became volunteers to give back to the community.

Stop Alcohol Use, Begins with Family Tie

Arunee believes that strong family tie among members would help to stop males becoming drunker; as a result, she and her team have built up a network of volunteers who are successful addicts in recovery. The volunteers have shared their bad experience about drugs and alcohol use to the users and encourage them to quit. The campaign is very successful as it helps the addicts to become successful in recovery. Then they set an example for other members to follow.

Family camps have been arranged to help strengthen family tie among members as good family relationship can help boost males' confidence, thereby successfully quitting drugs and alcohol use as well as domestic violence. All family members are happy.

Arunee has also encouraged the youth in the community to take part in many campaigns and activities such as developing plans, monitoring alcohol vendors and so on. This is to boost their confidence. By doing these activities, they can learn to promote good health among community members, to give support, to help members and to work hand in hand with NGOs.



Youth activities to stop violence



Hold street rally to stop violence

From Grass Root to National Health Policy

The Iron Lady Group continues working on human right protection for the poor and underserved people that pushes impact of actions at large scale; for instance, health insurance for the out-of-law domestic workers and the 90-day leave for giving birth.



Out-of-law domestic worker



Arune on TV talk about the out-of-law domestic worker

Most laid-off workers find new careers that can work at home such as sewing rice sack, hand towel, clothes. It is called “out-of-law domestic workers”. These workers have been not covered by the national health security scheme. While the hire depends on the number of pieces of work; the more they produce, they get more earnings. As its consequences, long hour working at home makes them to pay for health care. No lawsuit conserves for the out-of-law domestic labors. Arunee seeks out for their right of the national health security. The Iron Lady Group handed with NGOs urge the government to solve this problem until the national health social security organization has approved the law for the out-of-law domestic workers.

The pregnant employee right to take maternity leave is the most successful action on pushing national health policy into practice. As inequity of gender in Thai society, the Iron Lady Group and her networking organizations hold the protest for women rights so that lawsuits of labor have been revised for the pregnancy. Hereby all employees on pregnancy have the same right to take maternity leave for 90-day and get the salary.

Girls to Teen Mom is Becoming Big Problems

According to recent UNICEF statistics, among 13 million births from women aged less than 20 years each year, more than 90% of these births are in the developing countries, including Thailand. In 2008, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand has reported that 13% of women aged less than 20 years old gave the first baby. Although national birthrate is decreasing, teen births are rising sharply. Out of every 1,000 live births, 54 live births are the teen mothers aged 15-19. Compared to 2010, the live births of Thai teen mothers aged 15-18 increase 43 percentages in 2011. The highest risk is maternal death in young girls.

The Thai Kriang community’s problem includes teen mother. First sex activity in Thai adolescents greatly increases, at the average age of 15-16. Compared to girls (12%) at the same age, boys (21%) have greater rate of first sex activity. High rate of first sex activity is risk factor to teen pregnancy. Such situation creates sexual

risk behaviors, physical and sexual abuse, and sexual-transmitted diseases. Teen pregnancy makes the girls struggle in their futures as many of them have to quit school and to become mothers. Teen pregnancy contributes to higher prevalence in adolescents living with single parent, due to parental separation. To cope with these problems, Arunee seeks help from Bangchak Hospital to work on contraceptive plan, family planning, and sexual-transmitted diseases including HIV.

With inadequate knowledge about sex, the rate of unplanned pregnancy has been on increase. This is supposed to be terminated in hospital. But abortion is illegal in Thailand, with the exception of the mother being raped or less than 15 years old. Before it is too late, Arunee starts teen pregnancy prevention by collaborating of home, community, and hospital. As the parent takes the girl to consulting Arunee, professionals at hospital engage the girl in nonjudgmental discussions about responsible sexual behavior and advice about different kinds of the birth control. The victims are being helped with sexual-transmitted infections. At least, none of adolescents has sexual disease infections, and pregnancy in adolescents is hardly seen in those cases.

Smash through Barriers of Gender Inequity in Thai Culture

Another important problem of the Thai Kriang community is gender inequity that is reflected in the rate of wage. Males in all positions have higher rate of wage than females. A large number of female members who earn less asked for a pay rise from their employers who refused to do it and said that males and females would not be given the same rate of wages. Female members think that they are treated unfair when it comes to wage rate.

Males are often selected to become the leader of the Thai Kriang labor union. However, male leaders lack communication and people skills. This often causes conflicts between the employer and employees and other members particularly females. Male leaders tend to be aggressive and quick tempered. Arunee is

selected to become the first female leader of the Thai Kriang labour union when the male leader resigned. She helps solving the unfair rate of wages and most union's members are satisfied with the new rate of wage.



Arunee holds the protest

Arunee who worked for a garment factory in the Thai Kriang community believes that female can be the good leader. She took part in 14 October 1973 protest where she had learned that voice of union member is powerful. She has strong sense of leadership and strong communication skills that make her become a good negotiator.

"I believe that females can also be the good leader as we are gentle, patient and flexible. We, women are the driving force behind the Thai Kriang community. We are more than just colleagues. We are friends. As we have strong bond, we hope to have a brighter future." Arunee said.

The Iron Lady Group tried to negotiate with the Chinese owner about minimum wage increase but it didn't work. The Chinese owner placed great emphasis on factory expansion in order to increase its productivity, instead of welfare of the workers. As a result, the workers were not happy with that. They decided to hold a protest and stayed at the factory premise for three months.



Street protestors, sit down strike in the factory

The Iron Lady Group thought they are victims of the unfair judgment. So, they continued holding the protest in front of the factory.

The government paid no attention to the demonstration over the past three month. The Iron Lady Group decided to lodge a complaint about their low rate of wage with the government. A meeting between the factory owner, the workers, and the government's representatives was arranged but it did not work. The owner did not give any compensation to laid-off staff. And it seemed that the government has no tangible plan to handle with the problem.

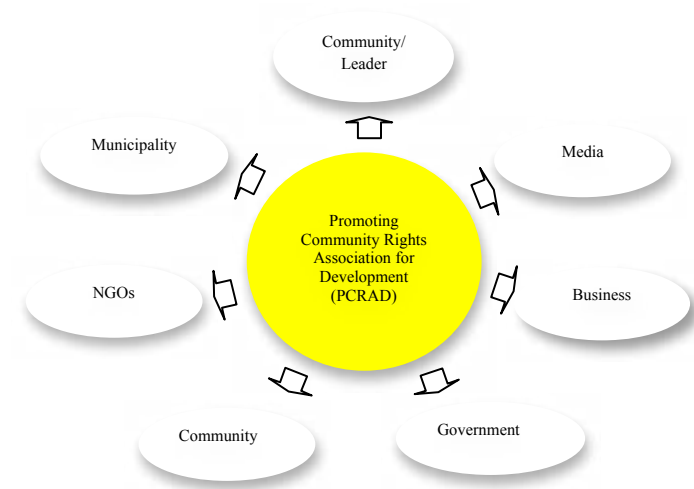
At least, the government offered training sessions for laid-off workers in order to give them necessary skills for their future career. And the Minister of Labor visited the Thai Kriang community to make sure that members got what they needed. The community's members had learned a lot over the past years. Many of them were unemployed but they were still positive in lives. They try to save money every month for community development and quality of life.



New careers

Key of Success

Success in the right protection for women and child depends on non-government organizations, government, and community support. The community-based prevention programs should be delivered to targeting people.



Collaborating organization for Promoting Community Rights

Health Promotion for All at Samutprakarn Province



Health Promotion for All at Samutprakarn Province

Suparpit von Bormann

Jintana Artsanthia



Cleaning can be such hard and tedious work. However laughter and smiles can be seen on the children's faces as they paddle their plastic boats in the drenching heat of summer to pick up garbage in Bang Prong canal.

Paddling a boat is a simple activity which effectively unites the young as they join hands to save the environment. Children aged between 8 and 18 years old frequently join in this activity with the Bang Prong community. The twice monthly canal cleaning project to revive the community canal, once regarded as the main local transportation route, is popular among both the young and their parents

alike. So far there are around 30 young members involved and the number continues to grow.

Thanks to the efforts of this group, Bang Prong canal is clean again. Crabs, fish, shells, and shrimps can once again be caught by local residents for food.

Canal cleaning is one of several activities initiated by 49 year old Miss Sasitorn Srikhiew. Sasitorn, a resident of Bang Prong community, always encourages the young in the community to put themselves out for the public benefit and never forget their community roots. Currently, the head of the Social Welfare Office of Bang Bor District, she finished her master's degree in social development at the National Institute of Development Administration. Although she is not officially responsible for Bang Prong, it is her birthplace and she loves it. Concerned about the future of Bang Prong, she tries to empower the youth to develop themselves and thereby their community.



Ms. Sasitorn Srikhiew
The strong community leader
and facilitator

Sasitorn has enjoyed support from other community leaders such as 69 year old Mrs. Boonchuay Thongchoo, who is well respected by all community members. Boonchuay completed her vocational certificate 50 years ago, at a time when most girls still did not have any chance to go to school. For that reason, she determined to help other people in her community to have a better life and preserve their culture at the same time. She is a volunteer worker and represents various local charitable organizations. Sasitorn and Boonchuay set up the youth development center in 2003 and have continued to introduce social activities for the young ever since.



Mrs. Buunchuay Thongchu
The strong community leader
and facilitator

“Our aim is to prevent children from involvement with drugs and alcohol which are problems of increasing concern among teenagers nowadays”, said Sasitorn.



Part of team members who strengthen Bang Prong community

In 2007, Sasitorn had the opportunity to participate in a training program on children and youth empowerment created by Dr. Suriyadeo Tripathi, director of the National Institute for Child and Family Development. She learned how to conduct child development surveys and explore community assets from a youth perspective.



Children are doing survey on community assets from their perspectives



Youth team leaders are planning activities for Bang Prong based on data from the survey

Creative Activities for All

After conducting a survey, Sasitorn realized that there were inadequate activities for children in Bang Prong community. She helped the children themselves come up with an idea to organize a new type of activity in which both children and adults in the community can participate. The festival called Ruam Pol Khon Sarng San is organized annually for local residents of all ages to join creative activities including Thai dance, Tom Tom drumming, and swordplay. The festival receives support from the provincial youth council and related governmental departments.



Children enjoying Thai dance and Tom Tom Drum



Thai traditional performance: Khon dance

Children were encouraged to practice Khon (mask dance), a sophisticated Thai traditional performing art which is both very beautiful and challenging. This delicate and gentle type of dance still needs physical strength and a lot of training to look elegant. Thai boxing (Muay Thai) is popular among young boys. They practice Muay Thai at various levels after school. Support from everyone and the determination of the children help the success of this activity.



Muay Thai, one of the activities for Bang Prong youth

Younger children enjoy making Thai toys and kites, Puang Mahode, and garlands for religious ceremonies. They also enjoy preparing a walk way made of coconut shells abundant in the community to act as foot reflexology equipment. This local wisdom helps rehabilitate patients with paralysis and can also be used for foot massage and improving blood circulation.



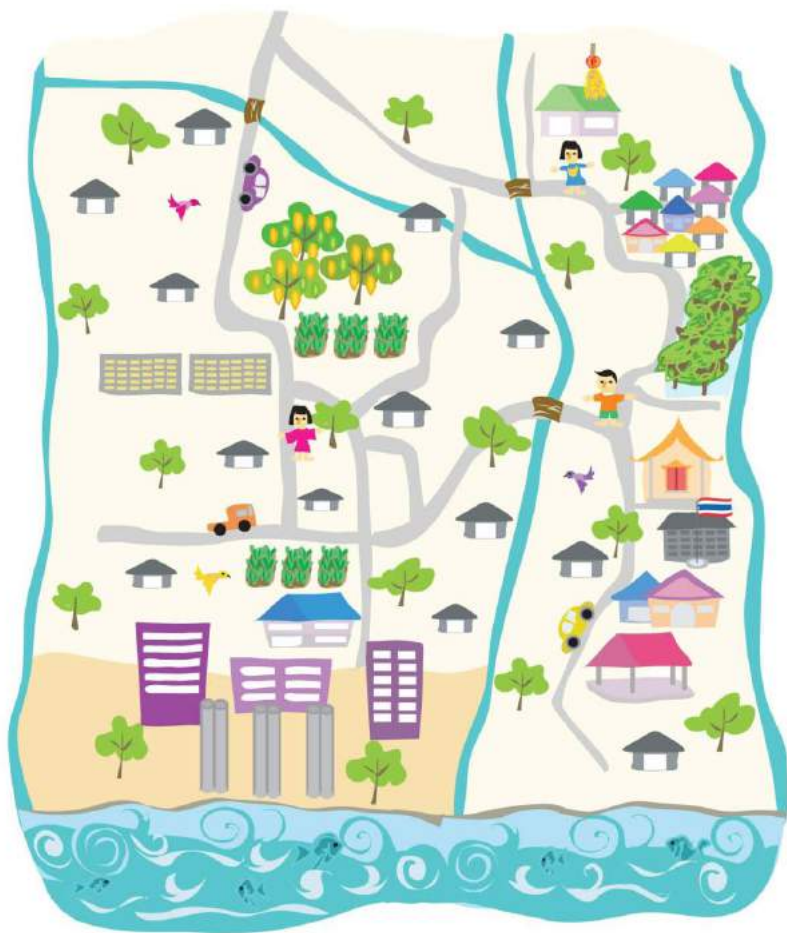
Children making Puang Mahode, traditional garland for religious ceremony



Children are helping adults to make a walkway from coconut shells for foot reflexology

The mini marathon is another big annual event in Bang Prong District. People from all levels in the community are involved in this activity aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle and honoring their beloved Majesty the King. The children work hard to plan and check the “geographic details” of the town. They have to survey the running route and draw a map. Officials and equipment needed for organizing a marathon are made available by Samutprakan province running club.

แผนที่ชุมชนบางปรอง



Bang Prong community map

A total of 230 marathon runners with ages ranging from 7 to 68 years old participated last year. These are just some of activities aimed at promoting physical and mental health for people of all ages in the community.



Bang Prong mini marathon project

“Activities at Bang Prong promote good relationships between children and adults. Although Bang Prong community is small, people’s hearts are not. Adults help us develop youth leadership and encourage us to do good things for our community and others,” said Miss Wimol Jaidee, president of Bang Prong Youth Club. “I will pass these good things we have learned on to younger generations in turn”.



Ms. Wimol Jaidee
The president of youth centre



**Ms. Pornpen Thienpaisal and
Mr. Thanawat Manomai,**
key persons in youth centre

Samutprakarn Health Assembly

Unlike other communities which are dependent on top-down policies, Bang Prong community is driven by the needs of community residents. This bottom-up policy leading to the community's good health and greater cooperation is appreciated by every sector including academic, public, and government. The senior citizens are proud to pass traditional Thai culture to the younger generation, whereas the children learn skills from participating in health promotion activities organized at the community.

In 2004, Samutprakarn Health Assembly was developed based on the bottom-up administrative model of Bang Prong community. This provincial health assembly also works on other social issues such as diabetes among the elderly, food safety, teen pregnancy etc. Other communities in the country also visit Bang Prong community to learn about health assembly concepts, so they can adopt similar models to build up a healthy community in the future.

Samutprakarn Health Assembly enables individuals, community and public sectors to exchange knowledge and learn with each other about the core causes of community problems. Self management activities such as paddling for garbage cleaning in canals inform public health policy and have become the Samutprakarn model. This model enables the long term development process", said Mrs. Tipaporn Sungkapan, coordinator of Samutprakarn Health Assembly.

Bringing Smiles and Good Health to Workplace



Bringing Smiles and Good Health to Workplace

Sukjai Charoensuk
Sirikul Karuncharennpanit

It's the beginning of the monsoon season which is the time for rice farming in Thailand. Green rice paddies are seen almost everywhere in the country's central region including the learning center of His Majesty the King (HMK) Self-sufficiency Philosophy (the concept of self-sufficiency economy introduced by King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Thailand) situated in Chonburi province's Nhong Kha Yard sub-district. People with colorful outfits are working hard in the rice field. In spite of scorching hot weather, smiles can be seen on their sweaty faces. People may think they are farmers, but in fact they are employees of Asia Precision, a machinery factory.



Working in a green rice field



Nhong Kha Yard learning center of His Majesty the King self-sufficiency philosophy.



Nhong Kha Yard learning center of His Majesty the King self-sufficiency philosophy.



Asia Precision has been recognized as a happy workplace from Thai Health Promotion Foundation since 2012.



Happy workplace award

At present, there are more than 800 employees working here. However they are not only work on producing compressor and machine parts for exporting worldwide, but also spend time on other social-oriented activities such as rice growing, building schools and blood donation.



Asia Precision company

“It is the company policy that quality of work depends on good environment and happy employees,” said Mr. Samrit Sawangkum, Asia Precision executive who is the key person in creating this happy workplace.

Mr Samrit Sawangkum,
an Asia Precision key person
for building happy workplace



Initiation of the rice growing project was aimed at enhancing teamwork among employees and building career capacity.

Since most of the employees have roots in agriculture, particularly from the Northeast, Samrit believed it would be useful for them to participate in agricultural activities including rice growing, vegetables and poultry farming etc. by following HMK Self-sufficiency Philosophy. “These agricultural activities could be their future career in case they no longer work here and return home upcountry,” he said.



Activities at Nhong Khayard learning center



Activities at Nhong Khayard learning center

Workers also extended their agriculture knowledge and skills to nearby communities. Mr. Somkid Butsanom, a headmaster of Wat Klang Khlong Luang school, said Asia Precision staff volunteered to teach students how to do mixed agricultural farming similar to the learning center so they could help their parents work at home. He was also grateful for the staff's generosity in giving scholarships to poor students. Some staffs also donate books for the school library so that kids would have good reading materials at hand.



Mr. Somkid Butsanom, headmaster of Wat Klang Khlong Luang school



School bicycle with water pumping system

Overcoming the economic crisis with HMK Self-sufficiency Philosophy

Prior to becoming a happy workplace, Asia Precision was almost shut down during the economic crisis in 1997. Almost 70% of orders were canceled and there was a question for all employees “what are we going to do?” There was no bonus, nothing for them to bring back home for Christmas and New Year.

Nevertheless, the company was able to survive the crisis mainly due to its policy in accordance to HMK Self-sufficiency Philosophy. The company never depended on loan money or raw material stockpiling. Employees did not have to work overtime, Mr. Apichart Karoonkornsakul, the president of Asia Precision said.

In spite of economic crisis, Apichart believed there was always an opportunity. He learned that the Department of Industrial Promotion (DIP) provided

organizational development projects to help local entrepreneurs recover from the crisis. There he could learn about human resources development to support the creation of a happy workplace at his factory.



Mr. Apichart Karoonkornsakul

Having been asked what are the keys of success in creating a happy workplace at Asia Precision, Apichart said an awareness of executives, a variety of activities provided for workers, and participation of all groups in the company were the keys.

The company also has adopted the King's speech and remarks about being discipline, harmonious, sacrifice, moral, and grateful for developing human resources and organization.

"Fifteen years later, the company still benefits from this happy workplace environment since all workers are still with me and have committed to the company" Apichart said.

Mr. Prayad Ngon-Chalee, a worker who has been working at Asia Precision for over 15 years, said the reason he is loyal to the company is because the owner treated employees like family members.



Mr. Prayad Ngon-Chalee

Staff representatives of all levels also sit in the company committee to ensure that the factory will not only be a “happy workplace” but also “the second happy home” for them in the long run.



Activities at Asia Precision

The Challenges of Health Promotion in Pattaya



The Challenges of Health Promotion in Pattaya

Achara Suksamran
Yupaporn Trirapaiwong

From a small fishing village on the Gulf of Thailand, Pattaya initially grew up as a peaceful rest and recreation beach town half a century ago, before becoming a bustling city and gaining reputation as a nighttime entertainment city. But things are changing. Pattaya is trying to build its name as “the world livable tourist town”.



Mayor of Pattaya City,
Mr. Itthiphol Kunplome

Looking for a tourist destination? Pattaya has them all regardless of natural and cultural attractions, recreational activities or entertainment night spots. For those who love nature can visit the biggest and most beautiful botanical garden in Southeast Asia at Nong Nooch Tropical Botanical Garden. Khao Kheow Open Zoo makes visitors feel like they are in the jungle. Beach-goers cannot miss Jomtien beach and Koh Laan. Those who enjoy cultural attractions will be delighted with The

Sanctuary of Truth, Mini Siam, Wat Khao Chee Chan, and Viharnra Sien, for instance. These attractions have different styles of magnificent architecture. Visitors can experience shows by lady boys at Alankarn, Tiffany, and Alcazar.



Pattaya Tourist Attractions
Jomtien beach



Pattaya Tourist Attractions
Nong Nooch Tropical Botanical Garden



Pattaya Tourist Attractions
The Sanctuary of Truth



Pattaya Tourist Attractions
The Four Regions Floating Market

As the city grows rapidly, various social problems have followed. While Pattaya has become the home for many groups of people—local residents, migrant workers, tourists, long-term expatriate visitors, foreign-retirees, the city currently faces a number of challenges and problems, including environmental pollution, drug use, cultural issues, prostitution, illegal workers and the homeless.

Mr. Itthiphol Kunplome, the mayor of Pattaya City admits Pattaya is known as the city of five “S”, standing for sea, sand, sun, service and sex. However, the last ‘s’-sex tourism needs to be changed. Red-light attractions like beer and go-go bars will soon be confined to the city’s central and southern areas. The mayor has embarked on a plan to substitute the stereotype five “S” with “E”, for entertainment and environment. He intends to adopt his experience during education abroad and serving as politicians to develop Pattaya as “the World Livable Tourist City”.

Itthiphol conceded that, “it was challenging to run this city due to diversity and complexity of this society. Cooperation, negotiation, and law and order have to be put in place”. To put the policy into practice, however, good governance, participation, and risk management are also crucial. Team work is also important.

It is a fact that the population of Pattaya is increasing each year. Pattaya City has four sub districts with a total population of 122,103 (as of December 2012). This is not including a non-registered population of about 400,000-500,000 who reside in the city (Annual Report of Pattaya City, 2012). Since the city is required to prepare public health facilities and health care providers to meet the demand, a project to build a 20,000 bed-hospital has been initiated.

As Pattaya City strives to develop quality of life for Pattaya people, health promotion and disease prevention are major policies of the city which are under the responsibility of the Pattaya Health Promotion Section.



“I was born in Pattaya. I will be dedicating my work to develop my birthplace”

Health Volunteers: Key to Community Health Promotion in Pattaya

Community participation plays a major role in primary health care policy and health volunteers are the key persons to work with health personnel in the solution of common, local health problems. People in Pattaya City are faced with chronic diseases caused by their health behaviors and lifestyle and they need information from health personnel to improve their practices. The city recognizes the importance of empowering the health volunteers as they act closely with the people in the community so that they can look after individuals, promote health, and establish themselves as role models and consultants for primary health care. With increasing urbanization of Pattaya City, the role of the health volunteers will need to adapt to the changing needs of the community it serves.



Pattaya Health Volunteers

To promote health and well-being in Pattaya, the involvement of community members is important. Health volunteers and community leaders are keys to the success of community projects.

“When the city needs support we always receive great support from the mass of people especially health volunteers. They would work collaboratively with the government, civil sector and private sectors,” said Itthipol.



Pattaya Health Promotion Staff

Pol.Capt. Pornpana Chokthai, head of the Pattaya Universal Health Care Coverage Fund department, says: “Although working with the community is challenging, we are fortunate to have potential health volunteers. They help us plan for home visits because they know which patients are sick and who has been most looking forward to our visit, so that our staff’s time in the village is maximized. We also have great partnerships with the health promotion team from Banglamung Hospital, community leaders, and schools.”

One of the most successful community projects is ‘the potential development project initiated by Diabetes and Hypertension Club of Soi December 5th community’. The project was proposed by the Chairman of the club, Mr. Sarawut Lawhemee to Pattaya City and funded by Pattaya Universal Health Care Coverage Fund. More importantly, the Soi December 5th community also has gained its reputation for being a strong community.

As the Diabetes and Hypertension Club does not yet have an official place for club’s activities, Baanrod fai School offers its meeting hall for monthly activities of the club. Once a month, Baanrod fai School would be busy with members of the club, health volunteers and clients coming for health screening, treatment, exercise, and peer counseling.



Activities of Diabetes and Hypertension Club at Soi December 5th community

As usual, Mrs. Somnuk Bangyai, a Pattaya health volunteer, is giving counseling to several clients. Having been diagnosed as having diabetes for about 18 years, she has been volunteering as a peer counselor at the Diabetes and Hypertension Club of Soi December 5th community for many years.

“I like to share my experience with others whenever I can. There are both people who follow what I suggest and those who do not. For me, living with Diabetes Mellitus is not too difficult. Actually we can eat everything. Nothing is prohibited. We only know how to eat by knowing yourself how much you should eat,” said Somnuk.

Mrs. Sasima Nutnabee, a Muslim woman aged 48 years who was diagnosed as having Diabetes Mellitus two years ago has just finished her counseling session with Mrs. Somnuk. She comes to check her health at the project regularly. She confirms that she has learned a lot about how to take care of her health as suggested by Somnuk.

Lt. Lapatrada Satharakul, a nurse practitioner and staff member of Pattaya Universal Health Care Coverage Fund department also adds that Pattaya has 230 health volunteers and most of them have been trained for peer counseling. Each of them will be supervised by professional nurses.

It is obvious that health volunteers and community leaders are the keys to success of many of Pattaya’s health promotion projects. However, a number of health volunteers admit that working with the community is not easy. They have numerous tasks. Some volunteers might take many different roles or wear many hats in their community.

Mrs. Nithra Ngampiam, the Chairman of Pattaya Health Volunteer Club indicates that, “A health volunteer has to be selfless and service minded. It is also important



Mrs. Nithra Ngampiam,
Chairman of Pattaya Health Volunteer



Mrs. Rattana Jangchai
Health volunteer (Center)

to be positive and considerate because we work with many different kinds of people.”

Similarly, Mrs. Rattana Jangchai, a health volunteer and a member of Women’ Development group also adds, “A health volunteer has to be patient and enduring. More importantly, we must be optimistic”.

Presently, Pattaya City has a number of successful stories. A number of projects have been initiated to promote health and well-being of people at all ages. Those health promotion projects will not be successful if there is a lack of cooperation and collaboration from Pattaya health volunteers. The power and the strength of the Pattaya health volunteers and community leaders are certainly something that Pattaya City should be proud of.

Cultivating Green Hotel Concept



Cultivating Green Hotel Concept

Panarut Wisawatapnimit

Pratsani Smith



The Dusit Thani Pattaya and Cooperate Organization held an activity “Love the Sea Save the Beach”



Administrators and Staff of the Dusit Thani Pattaya participating in activity to clean Pattaya Beach

It's 11 A.M. with the temperature up to 40°C in April really discourages people to go out of air-condition room. However the drenching heat cannot stop these 200 people walking along the famous Pattaya Beach collecting garbage and promoting "green campaign".

This activity reflects collaboration between many corporate organizations including the Dusit Thani Pattaya, Thai-operated hotel and resort group, to sustainable good environment and social responsibility.

"Our lives depend on the Mother Nature. We all have duties to take care of our nature and environment," said Mr. Chatchawal Supachayanont, general manager.

Chatchawal has adopted the environmentally-friendly concept to put in practice at the hotel for more than 20 years, making the Dusit Thani Pattaya reputable for the model of "green hotel".



Front Side of the Dusit Thani Pattaya



Front Side of the Dusit Thani Pattaya



Back Side of the Dusit Thani Pattaya (Beach Side)

Sustainable environment needs long-term investment

The Dusit Thani Pattaya believes in investment in raising environmental awareness among hotel staff and the society.

“There is nothing better than investment in people. However raising public awareness on sustainable environment takes time,” Chatchawal said.

In 1998, the hotel piloted the green hotel concept following standards of the Green Leaf Foundation. To sustain environment and promote good health among staff, he classified environmental-related work at the hotel into nine categories—smoking, water, corporate social responsibility initiative, health, energy, air and noise pollution, garbage and fertilization, health spa, and international relations. Director of each department could independently develop projects and campaigns to meet the hotel’s environment-oriented policy, while staff could also propose ideas to their supervisors, Chatchawal said. He is a consultant and a supporter of all activities while Mr. Prawes Akanimart is a chairman of environmental mission.

Such “bottom up” strategy boosted staff morale, loyalty and participation into activities.

Mr. Arum Chaisomsri, manager in training, gave an example of initiative projects that were Green Earth Creating held in June 2012 for promoting and increasing staff awareness on environment. The main activity is a competition on creation of recycled and reused materials. In this event, two staff who created a shopping bag that made from blue jean pants and made from detergent packages won the Green Earth Create Award last year. These activities promote innovative and creative ideas among staff as well as motivate them to recycle things that reduce

using natural resources. Consequently, it enables them to be more concerned about environmental protection.

The hotel also promotes “Pattaya Car Free Day”, a yearly corporate social responsibility activity aimed at promoting local people and tourists to ride bicycle in Pattaya City to reduce traffic and air pollution.

Used office paper and documents were also collected for donating to a blind school for making Brailles. These activities directly and indirectly develop environmental and public consciousness among hotel staff and the communities. The hotel also encourages other hotels and local organizations to carry out the corporate social responsibility projects for promoting environment sustainability.

Investment in Environment for Good Health

Smoking cessation campaign is an evident example showcasing the positive impact of investment in environment on public health. In order to meet the health promotion standard of the Green Leaf Foundation, the hotel encourages staff to stop smoking mainly because of the effect of second-hand smoke on the environment and health.

As the Thai Hotels Association director of environment, Chatchawal said he encouraged his staff of all levels to stop smoking by explaining smoking disadvantages. He even drove to town just in order to buy candies for his staff so that they would stop smoking.

The so-called “Dusit No Tobacco Day” is also held annually on May 31 to mark World No Tobacco Day. Hotel staff who can stop smoking successfully will get a certificate.

However, Arum conceded about 6% of the total 545 staff still smoke. Smoking area is limited at the hotel compound, but still provided for staff and customers. The number of smoking rooms is also decreased to less than 20% of the total 457 rooms.



Smoking Area for Hotel Guests



Dusit Thani Pattaya Organic Garden

“We believe that good working environment makes our staff healthy and happy, resulting in high productivity for our hotel and society,” said Chatchawal.

Ms. Chontida Jamsawan, Front Office Manager, who has been working at the hotel for seven years, said she felt relaxed, while on duty because of vast lush green space unlike other hotels and high rises in Pattaya City.

Organic garden was her favorite. Chefs could pick fresh vegetables for cooking at all times, she said.

Mr. John Kerry, a hotel guest from England, said he was impressed with indoor garden, small fish pond, and man-made waterfall. Such green, energy-saving atmosphere made him feel like “home” and undoubtedly, this feature will attract guests all over the world to stay at the hotel.



Indoor Garden



Indoor Garden



Man-made Waterfall
in Indoor Garden

Undeniably, luxury hotels require much electricity usage and spend huge investment on facilities such as air condition, power system, laundry, and so on, to optimize customers' satisfaction.

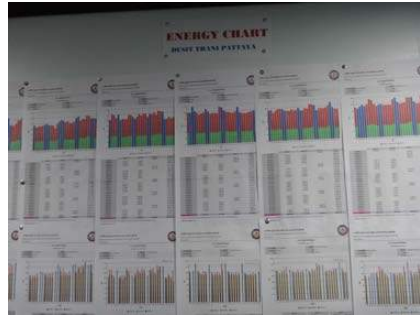
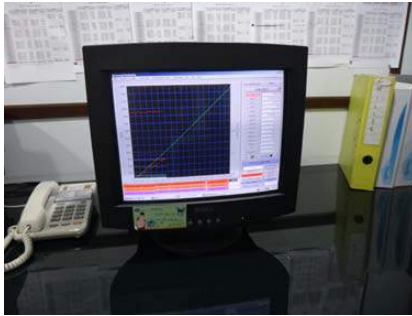
Mr. Teerasak Chuenchob, director of engineering, said an attempt to reduce cost and save energy while maintaining customer satisfaction remained a challenge for hotel and service industry including the Dusit Thani Pattaya.

To reduce energy consumption, Teerasak said he aimed at reduce electricity usage at the hotel to less than 600,000 units per month. At this amount, it costs the hotel about 2 million baht per month.

To meet the target, each hotel department would receive a report on electricity usage, allowing the department head to track the record.



Engineer Monitoring Electricity Usage



Energy Chart

Bakery activities are rescheduled to off-peak hours to reduce electricity cost. Electricity usage at the hotel is at its peak hours between 9 A.M. and 10 P.M., said Teerasak.

Incandescent light bulbs were replaced with compact fluorescent since it could help save energy by 81% or about 68,200 baht per year. A new technology was also adopted for reducing the use of water, chemicals, oil, and electricity. The hotel could save cost by 42,556 baht per month, said Teerasak, monitoring electricity use at the hotel.

Chatchawal said he was satisfied with the impacts of saving energy consumption of the Dusit Thani Pattaya in general.

The Five Green Leaf Certification and the Health Promotion Award for 10 consecutive years from the Green Leaf Foundation, an award from the Ministry of Energy's department of alternative energy development and efficiency, ASEAN Green Hotel Awards, and Certification in Silver level of Earthcheck Company Standard are among the confirmations certifying successful endeavor to sustainable environment and good health promotion promoted by the hotel.

“For our plan in the future, the Dusit Thani Pattaya would like to be important part of the Green Leaf Foundation by caring for the environment and serve as a good model or display best practice of Thailand as eco-friendly hotel,” said Chatchawal.

Investment in raising public awareness on environmental protection is challenging for hotel industry. The Dusit Thani Pattaya is one of the best examples showcasing possibility of promoting good health through taking good care of the environment.



Green Hotel Concept at the Dusit Thani Pattaya by Green Leaf Foundation

PhraMahathai Foundation: A Brighter Future for People with Disabilities



PhraMahathai Foundation: A Brighter Future for People with Disabilities

Pratsani Smith

Panarut Wisawatapnimit

The Redemptorist Vocational School for People with Disabilities, Thailand's only vocational school for the disabled, was established in 1982 by Ray Brennan, also known as "Father Ray" among Thai people and the Christian community in the country, following his intention to improve the welfare of the disabled.



The Redemptorist Vocational School for People with Disabilities



Father Ray



Director Udomchok Churut (Left)

At the beginning, a total of 10 disabled people from Srisangwal School, under the Foundation for the Welfare of the Crippled under the Royal Patronage of the late Princess Mother of Thailand, were selected each summer to receive scholarships and to stay at the school campus in Pattaya City. They were trained in occupational skills such as beekeeping, ceramic tile-making, computer and electroplating and received support for tuition, food and accommodations. After several years of trial and error, the school was formally registered as a vocational school for people with disabilities in 1985, said the school director Mr. Udomchok Churut.

Udomchok was also one of the 43 students in the first group and said that computer and electronic engineering programs were offered at the school. He proudly said that all of his classmates were employed by big companies and worked with colleagues in their fields without difficulties.

For twenty eight years, the school under the Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities, also known as the PhraMahathai Foundation, has helped over 3,000 young disabled Thai students to achieve academic excellence.



Joining the National Skills Competition for the Disabled

Students have won many awards in both national and international competitions in the field of computer programming and others such as sports. Also, the information technology systems developed by disabled students at the school were adopted for use by both public and private sectors for managing criminal records, GPS tracking for patrol police and data processing systems.



Activities with Visitors

One outstanding graduate of the school is Mr. Narong Kaesanan. He was born paralyzed because of polio. He had to work harder than his siblings in a bid to get into schools or socialize with classmates, mainly due to the stigmatization of people with disabilities.

However, the 36-year-old native of the Satun province in the South never let his physical disadvantages get the best of him. Thanks to the PhraMahathai Foundation, Narong has been able to turn his disabilities into motivation for the sport of weightlifting. In 2003, he was listed on the Thai national weightlifting team for the South East Asian Games (SEA Games). He won a bronze medal for the country that year. Later, he also joined the Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled



Narong with his Medal



Narong with his Friend

(FESPIC), the biggest multi-sports games in the Asia and South Pacific region, where he won two bronze medals in 2006 and 2010; and the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing, where he also won bronze medals for the country in men's 56 kilogram weightlifting class. Narong has become a hero, especially among the disabled. He will always be grateful for the place that gave him a chance to prove himself.

“Father Ray always believed that the disabled can be more than just beggars along city streets. They can be helped to hold their own and live their lives with others in society,” said Mr. Sumet Phonkacha, coordinator of the PhraMahathai Foundation.

Besides the vocational school, the foundation supports people with disabilities through a center aimed at providing career guidance, short occupational training programs on the computer, bakery, recycling waste materials and customer service and job seeking for the disabled. Nearly 3,000 disabled sign up for these career services. A call center also operated for receiving complaints about stigmas among the disabled and to protect the rights of the disabled.



1479 Hotline
for the Disabled

PhraMahathai Game



Affordable Elderly Care – Ban Bueng Model



Affordable Elderly Care – Ban Bueng Model

Anchaleeporn Amatayakul

Peranan Jerayingmongkol

In 2025, 20 % of the total 65 million Thai population will be over 60 years following a study by the Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development Institute. Retired and unemployed, many of them suffer from physical and mental illnesses such as Alzheimer, Arthritis, Depression, Dementia, Diabetes and Osteoporosis. These health problems require family care.

With over 1,800 senior residents, Ban Bueng Municipality in Chonburi Province is well aware of the importance of elderly care since over 350 of them have chronic diseases such as Diabetes and Hypertension and hundreds of them need health care assistance at home, said Miss Pornpen Pattarakorn, head of Ban Bueng Municipality community medical care unit.

Realizing that nobody would understand the elderly need as much as the elderly themselves, the municipality enabled a group of senior citizens led by Mr. Sukhon Awutnak to manage facilities provided for the elderly.

“Seeing my friends happy and healthy makes me feel happy too,” said Sukhon, founder of the “TomTom” elderly club. At the age of 67, Sukhon is still healthy and actively dedicates himself to promote good health and happiness for other local senior people at the community.



Making flowers from Pandanus leaves



Making Sandalwood flowers



Angklung Club



Tom-Tom Club



Traditional Thai music Performance

Ban Bueng's TomTom elderly group began in 2003. At first, a small group of 6 members got together at Sukhon's place where his family played TomTom musical instrument. Later there were 30-40 members of TomTom elderly group carried out activities such as waste bank and recycle things. They have been gathering at Ban Bueng Municipality. At present, there are more than 1,000 members with various activities from traditional music to Tai Chi classes available for the senior members, which are supported by Ban Bueng Municipality.

"Our main idea was to establish an affordable elderly care for low-income communities and strengthen the role of the elderly in health promotion program," Sukhon said.

Thanks to strong collaboration at all levels of Ban Bueng municipality, the group received support from the municipality office and district hospital on venue and elderly care training. After completing a 2-day training program, which the elderly were trained about elderly care, health problems related to the elderly, daily living care, health screening, and elderly rights. The members would be



Nobody Would Understand the Elderly Need
As Much As the Elderly Themselves



Home Visit the Elderly Who Could Not Join the Activities due to Illnesses and Disabilities



Mr.Sukhon Awutnak founder of the “TomTom” elderly club and the president of elderly club at Ban Bueng Municipality

equipped with knowledge and skills essential for taking care of other senior people at their communities with health care profession assistance. These senior volunteers also paid home visit every Sunday to the elderly who could not join the activities due to illnesses or disability.

Once a month the senior residents of Ban Bueng come to meet each other at the elderly group center located at Ban Bueng Municipality. They talk and share updates among the members. Youth also join in the activities at TomTom club. The meeting is one of the most popular activities joined by the young and the elderly.

“We’re proud that we can pass traditional culture to the young generation through music,” Sukhon said, adding he also came to the club every Saturday morning to meet other senior residents and youth to play musical instrument. After finishing these activities, he felt relaxed and happy.

“I never played any instrument before. After joining the club, I am so proud of myself that I can play music with others. It is such a wonderful feeling,” said Mr. Daen Daungpech, a 72-year-old club member.

Collaboration at all community levels crucial for sustainable elderly care

As a public health officer at Ban Bueng hospital, Pornpen, usually takes care of the elderly patients coming to the hospital. Having TomTom elderly club established at the community, the 55-year-old, and the local resident of Ban Bueng, health staff saw an opportunity to help enable senior residents and their families learn how to take care of their aged members, resulting sustainable elderly care and reducing hospital workloads.



Miss Pornpen Pattarakorn, the Second from Left, Head of Ban Bueng Municipality Community Medical Care Unit and Sukhon Awutnak, the Fourth from Left, the President of Elderly Club at Ban Bueng Municipality



Miss Pornpen Pattarakorn earned the outstanding Community Participation from Thai Health Promotion Foundation in 2012

Pornpen has been working with the elderly for over 20 years. She started from providing mental care for the elderly. Seeing smiles on the elderlys' faces makes her feel very happy. Her dedication and service mind earned herself many awards such as the Outstanding Community Participation from Thai Health Promotion Foundation in 2012, the Outstanding Community Participation for Taking Care of People with Disability and Disparity, the Outstanding Woman for Development Award in 2011, the Outstanding Woman for Community Management Award in 2010, the Outstanding Nurse for Primary Care Service Award, and the Outstanding Government Officer Award in 2009.

Ban Bueng Municipality also supported the elderly club on arranging English-language and inter-personal relationship classes for both the elderly and health staff, so they will understand each other, leading effective municipality services for patients particularly the elderly, she said.

With a variety of fun activities, TomTom elderly group undoubtedly deserved many awards, including the Outstanding Health Promotion Community from Ministry of Public Health in 2011 and the Role Model of “Healthy Community” awarded by Burapha University.



Mr. Surasit Kungwonkit, Mayor of Ban Bueng Town

Mr. Surasit Kungwonkit, Mayor of Ban Bueng Town, said that he planned to adopt the mobile technology for assisting elderly care. Senior residents at the community would soon be given a simple cellphone for contacting families and health care providers during emergencies in 2013.

Improving Occupational Health at Mabtapud Hospital



Improving Occupational Health at Mabtapud Hospital

Supaporn Wannasuntad

Orarat Wangpradit



Oil refinery at Mabtapud Industrial Estate

Regarded as Thailand's biggest petrochemical hub, Mabtapud Industrial Estate is highly contaminated by volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including benzene, butadiene, and dichloroethane following the Pollution Control Department.

The Department of Disease Control also reported that from 1993-2005 bronchitis and lung cancer were commonly found among people living in Rayong province, especially Mabtapud area. Pollution continues affecting health of people living in this area. An Increasing number of people are suffering from pneumonia and respiratory system.



Tanks containing petrochemicals such as Mixed Xylene and Butene are commonly seen at Mabtapud Industrial Estate



Flare stack of petrochemical manufacture at Mabtapud Industrial Estate

In a bid to solve chronic health problems, residents, government, and industrial sectors seek ways to harmonize industrial estate with good health and well-being of the community. One of the solutions is to set up a hospital specializing on occupational health in Mabtapud area.



Mabtapud Hospital



Physical check-up service of Mabtapud Hospital

Mabtapud Hospital: A Research Center for Occupational Health

Mabtapud Hospital is a community hospital providing occupational health services to estimated 200,000 people in the Mabtapud Industrial Estate and nearby area. The hospital was expanded from 30 beds to 200 in 2011. The Institute of Occupational Health was also established in order to be a training center and cooperate with Disease Control Department, Health Department, and Medical services Department under the Public Health Ministry. The mission of the institute is to assess health impact and deal with chemical-related disaster or contaminated environment. The industrial estate also contributed 200 scholarships for nursing study at the hospital and nursing colleges in the eastern region. These nurses will work at the hospital after completion of their studies.

Challenge of Improving Occupational Health in Mabtapud



Dr. Supachai Aeamkulworapong providing physical checkup as a part of mobile medical clinic screening service



Mobile medical clinic screening service

Following the hospital report in 2011, the top five diseases among out-patients were related to respiratory system, circular system, metabolic and endocrine system, gastrointestinal system, and infection, respectively. Pneumonia was also the top of five common diseases diagnosed among in-patients.

Although respiratory symptoms is the most common illness founded in this highly-polluted area, there is not enough evidence to confirm that it is the result of industrial pollution, said Dr. Supachai Aeamkulworapong, deputy director of Mabtapud hospital. More in-depth research on the impact of industrial pollution on illnesses of the residents is needed, he said.

To fulfill research limitations, the hospital started a project called “Periodic Health Check Up and Surveillance” in 2010 for conducting physical screening to early detect health conditions of people living in Mabtapud area by setting a goal of 15,000 persons each year. Mabtapud hospital also set the mobile medical clinic



Mobile medical clinic screening service



Physical checkup program for the employees at Mabtapud Industrial Estate

which operates every two weeks and goes to all 38 communities in Mabtapud area for dental care, physical screening, health promotion, medical treatment, and Thai traditional medicine.

The physical screening includes complete blood count, sugar level in blood, test on liver and kidney function. Urinary test and lung X-Ray for heavy metal and benzene exposure diagnosis. Petrochemical companies in the industrial estate support cost on health screening service as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Result showed that a limited group of people living in Mabtapud area was exposed to heavy metal and benzene, Ms. Marissa Kongsombatsook, an occupational health nurse at Mabtapud hospital said.



Physical checkup program for the employees at Mabtapud Industrial Estate

Of the total 45,000 residents participating in the health screening project during 2010-2012, some of them were diagnosed having low level of heavy metal contamination in blood and urine. In 2012, the percentages of residents having lead, arsenic, and mercury contamination over limit values were 2.4, 10.2, and 14.0, respectively.

Mobile medical unit team would explain to the residents that they may be exposed to heavy metal from seafood products. The occupational health team would also further investigate into the source of the problem.

However, Marissa conceded that it was challenging for her team to work in this “divided community”

“Our team is a buffer between the residents and industries. The resident thinks that we don’t tell them the truth and we take the industrial site. In fact, we’re here to help them. The air we breathe is also the same,” she said.

Another hospital strategy is to develop health surveillance system for Mabtapud residents. A hotline number, 038-684444, is also set up for reporting accidents such as chemical leakage and pollutants.



Chemical disaster practice

Hospital staff also trained health volunteers of each community how to observe chemical leak and rapidly report an incidence to the hotline center.

Another challenge is promoting health and well- being of industrial employees. Big companies may afford to provide health checkup for their employees. However the hospital will assist medium to small factories in arranging physical checkup program and promote good eating habits among their employees. However many companies still refused to allow the hospital team involve in their businesses, she said.



Emergency service for the victim of chlorine leak



Emergency service for the victim of chlorine leak

Chemical disaster management is also a major responsibility of the Maptapud Hospital. Inevitably, chemical leakage incidents were always reported at the industrial estate. Among the big incidents were sodium hypochlorite leakage in 2011, chlorine and cumene leaks in 2008. Almost 500 residents and employees were variedly affected from these leaks. Stinky smell of the chemicals was the first sign, following by difficult breathing and unconsciousness due to the shortness of air.

Maptapud Hospital took care of large number of victims from the chemical disaster and preventing people around the disaster area from chemical exposure. “We have learned from those chaotic incidents that we have to be prepared for health emergencies which may occur anytime.” said Dr. Supachai Aeamkulworapong.

The hospital also organized and trained hospital staff at all community hospitals in Mabtapud area on chemical disaster management. Mobile medical unit would be working in the aftermath of the incident to detect and investigate an effect of chemical leakage on people living around the disaster area, he said.

Supachai, also an expert on disaster management, said he was concerned about chemical exposure among children and the elderly. The hospital planned to conduct a study on a long-term impact of chemical exposure on children and elderly health. Budget shortage remained a challenge for the hospital.

In his opinion, the Mabtapud industrial estate should be a special administrative area, so authorities will have full authority to work with industrial estate and come up with effective measure to promote green community and sustainable good health in the long run.

Integrating Traditional Alternative Medicines into Health System



Integrating Traditional Alternative Medicines into Health System

*Wilaiporn Khamwong
Suree Khantaruksawong*

Although Ratchasan Hospital is not far from Chachoengsao's Phanomsarakham district center, it is surprising that only private vehicles can reach this community hospital.

Built in 1992, the 10-bed hospital provides health care services to 12,740 people in the district. In 2001, a universal health care coverage scheme was firstly launched to provide health care services for about 47 million Thai populations who are not listed under the civil service medical scheme and the social security scheme. Most of them are children, the elderly and the unemployed.



Hot and drought in the summer, and no public transportation service

More than 70% of the clients coming at the hospital were on the list of universal health care scheme.

Since the main income of the hospital came from the annual budget per capita, an increase in medical expenditure due to increasing number of patients caused financial burden to the hospital. The hospital had an annual income only 7-9 million baht (US\$230,000-300,000) which was insufficient for operating expenses in providing health care services and salaries of medical doctors, nurses and health staff.

In 2002-2003, Provincial Chief Medical Officer decided to reduce staff at the hospital and provide only emergency health care services. There was no medical doctor working full time at the hospital. Only medical doctors from Phanom Sarakham Hospital work on shift. The hospital was almost shut down due to lack of financial resources. Most hospital



Abandoned hospital buildings

buildings were abandoned and become only a storage area for document and unused equipments.

In 2008, the hospital, led by a director Dr. Anucha Apasawat, was reopened for business and provided full health care services.



Anucha Apasawat, MD, the director of Ratchasan Hospital

During that time the hospital had only 200,000 baht (US\$ 6,500) financial reserves. Hence, he decided to focus on reducing expenses and increasing the income by adopting the use of alternative herbal medicine, holistic and therapeutic health approaches into the health services.

Herbal drugs and traditional therapeutic treatment such as acupuncture and osteopathy for joint and muscle pain relief received positive responses from the local people. If the people are listed under the universal health care coverage scheme, the civil service medical scheme or the social security scheme, they do not have to pay for medical services. However, they will have to pay for prescribed herbal medicine. During that time, herbal drugs were considered as alternative medicine and had not yet been listed in the national drug list.



Nakharin Polsuwan, an alternative medicine doctor

Prior to putting an idea into practice, Dr. Apasawat said he met Mr. Nakharin Polsuwan, a new graduate with a degree of Applied Thai Traditional Medicine from Mahidol University, at Ratchasan Hospital in 2008. Mr. Polsuwan and his friend came to the hospital to apply for a job. After learning about the hospital situation, Mr. Polsuwan volunteered to work as an alternative medicine doctor and eventually helped the hospital survive financial crisis.

“I would like to help the hospital and patients by putting my knowledge into practice,” Mr. Polsuwan said.

At the beginning, some staff disagreed with these new policies. They questioned whether herbal medicine should be used together with conventional medicine. The thing is at that time most herbal medicine had not yet been listed in the national drug list.

Dr. Apasawat then invited experts in alternative medicinal treatment to provide hospital staff knowledge about herbal medicine. Later he included the use of traditional herbal drugs into the hospital's strategic and annual work plan.

In a bid to fully promote the use of alternative medicine at the hospital, both the director and staff were trained on herbal medicinal use, meditation, osteopathy and acupuncture by the Department for Development of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine.

Unlike other hospitals, outpatients coming to Ratchasan hospital can choose between conventional or alternative medicinal treatment.

“We intend to use herbs and other kinds of alternative methods only for the therapeutic purpose following His Majesty the King’s Self-sufficiency Philosophy, not for profits,” Dr. Apasawat said.



Examples of alternative medicine services at Ratchasan Hospital



Examples of alternative medicine services at Ratchasan Hospital

Currently, several types of alternative medicine such as herb therapy, osteopathy, Thai traditional massage, nutritional therapy, detoxification, meditation and art therapy have been included into Ratchasan hospital services.

In addition, herbal medicines were also used as alternatives for chronic illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension and cancer together with conventional medicine. Dr. Apasawat said he planned to expand and integrate alternative medicine into all hospital units including dental clinic and emergency rooms. Healthy food menu and special diets for staff and patients are also available at the hospital canteen.



Providing healthy food menu for patients and staff



Ratchasan Hospital's botanic garden as a learning resource

Surrounded by bamboo forest, Dr. Apasawat also promotes the “green hospital” policy by developing botanic garden at the hospital’s 20 rai plot of land. It has become a learning resource for various kinds of herbs supported by Khao Hin Son Eastern Botanic Gardens, a royal project under His Majesty the King patronage.

The hospital has only three air-conditioned rooms. The director said he spent only 12,000 baht (US\$ 400) a month on electricity bill compared with other hospitals, which have to pay ten times more.

Having few air-conditioned rooms is beneficial for controlling infectious disease widespread such as tuberculosis at the hospital is zero, compared to other hospitals facing the “super bug” problem due to heavy use of air conditions, he said.

Hospital staffs work collaboratively with their health networks to promote the use of alternative medicine and holistic health promotion. They set up health promotion clubs. Aerobics, hula-hoop, badminton, bicycle, soccer and dancing are all available for staffs to participate after work and keep records to monitor the effectiveness of their exercise. The hospital also takes care of staff health. Those having hypertension, high cholesterol and overweight problems will receive special care. Besides, meditation classes and sessions with religious experts, the staff also meets with mental health experts. These mental health experts guide the staff on how to think positively about these issues and work with happiness.



Health promotion activities for staff

The hospital also received funding from Thai Health Promotion Foundation to renovate the hospital and support its holistic health activities.

Nowadays, Ratchasan Hospital has a resort-like atmosphere. Big shady trees and aromatic smell of herbs welcomes patients from the hospital entrance. The hospital was also certified the excellent hospital in terms of cleanliness, safety and good environment.



A resort-like hospital covered with green areas and granted awards in terms of cleanliness, safety and good environment



Nuanchawee Sittisom, an alternative medicine doctor

Ms. Nuanchawee Sittisom, an alternative medicine doctor, said she enjoyed working in the green atmosphere. “Having a lot of trees can help us reduce stress.”

Ratchasan Hospital, once on the verge of bankruptcy, can generate over 8 million baht (US\$ 266,000) annual income. Hospital clients are highly satisfied with health care services. Many come from other provinces. Hospital staff changes their attitude towards alternative medicine and aware of holistic health benefits. “In spite of being only a small community hospital, I am proud that my work can help promote alternative medicine and good health among community people and beyond,” Dr. Apasawat said.

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