

# Approach to Community Welfare Management for self-reliance of Prue Kan Tawan-Aog Community, Prue Yai Sub-district, Khukhan District, Sisaket Province

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## Abstract

The objectives are; to study community context, issues or problem and the community's needs and/or demands, and to study the self-reliant Community Welfare Management approach of Prue Kan Tawan-Aog Community. Employed qualitative method emphasizing on 30 key informants and 15 focus-group participants, data analysis was processed in logical and concept coupled with theoretical context description and descriptive analysis. The findings are: Prue Kan Tawan-Aog community, Prue Yai Subdistrict, Khukhan District, Sisaket Province, in the part of background and general data and information, it was settled down 300 years ago, by now it has 114 households, 596 in population. The main occupation is agriculture plus some vocational groups. In the cultural, beliefs and collective wisdom dimensions, it is found active traditional healers, Saen Don Ta tradition, Ram-mae-mod tradition, Rangsong ritual and local traditions such as PuTakudsan. Community issues, challenges, needs and demands were found; online/cyber game addiction causing chores unhelpfulness, lacking community participation amongst young community members, a few organic agricultural activities and lacking continuation of promotion and development of vocational income earning. Their demands included promotion and development of community members' vocations, group organizing and community welfare management and welfare programs. Approach in community welfare management found in 5 categories; family, community, children and youth, elderly and community occupations.

**Keywords** : Community welfare, Community self-reliance, Occupation group, Sisaket

## Introduction

The Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan described about Creating a Just Society and Reducing Inequality. Emphasizing on quality of public services both in education and health care targeted at the disadvantaged and those living in the remote areas. The fair allocation of livable land with support for job and income generation as well as productivity enhancement for the disadvantaged, women, and the elderly. Moreover, the distribution and coverage of public services should be improved in terms both of quantity and quality. The strengthening communities to support development should be fostered through the promotion of community entrepreneurship and vocational training centers, the encouragement of communities to provide their own welfare programs, and the creation of land distribution and management system. The key goal is to raise the income levels of the 40 percent of population with the lowest incomes. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development, 2017: 4)

Thai general society root down in mutual-support culture having their communities as the centers relying on beliefs and local wisdom for solution. It is considered natural community welfare based on compassion and care in mutual respects and

supports among humans and between humans and nature. Changes in entire societies system, community role in mutual support has been declined. Nevertheless, the worst economic crisis in 1997 indigenous figures aspired to revive the common value system, strong social and financial capitals that still existing and functioning in communities like saving groups, community entrepreneurs' financial organization, religious group, and natural resources management organizations, for instance

Community welfare policy implementation developed on the subdistrict welfare funds of which conceptually aimed to found community security as '*Worth giving, taking it with dignity*'. It was started in Thai social security system in 2004 from the network of community welfare mobilization. In order to find a new form of community welfare management, a strategy was designed to support community welfare system and to extend whilst develop community welfare strongly and sustainably. Supporting in PM. Thaksin Shinnawat's government by his poverty tackle master policy, the long-term action, in the form of The National Center of Poverty Tackle (NCPT) working by the Community Organization Development Institute-CODI (Public Organization) under Ministry of Social Development and Human

Security-MSDHS, led to subdistrict community welfare funds establishment. In the early mobilization step, supports implemented in 14 locations of social welfare funds. Later in 2005, a budget allocation allowed to develop and added into the funds when Mr. Phaiboon Watthanasiritham was the deputy PM and the Minister of MSDHS. In the extension of the policy implementation, 191 subdistricts have their community welfare funds launched.

During the year 2015-2020, Thailand's strategy aimed to process toward '*Stability, Prosperity, Sustainability*'. PM General Prayut Chan-o-cha and his cabinet declared their policy in the National Parliament on 12 September 2014, in the No. 3 Minimizing Inequality and Maximizing Public Services Accessibility and Opportunity. In line 3.3 Social security system development, saving and community welfare have been focusing to ensure greater efficiency and sustainability. In the policy declaration by Police General Adul Saengsingkaew, Minister of MSDHS added the line 4.3.1 Underlines the community organizations and networks development together with line 4.3.8.1 Support community welfare management to construct community members' security covering life-long needs. It has been made to ensure all community members are treated equal in the mutual supports via the subdistrict welfare management established. It emphasizes by

covering wider range community members and develop administration and management of the fund. The ministry promotes continuously of subdistrict welfare funds to all subdistrict to serve all community. The national development far vision and tangible government policies including to policies implementation and ministry's regulations altogether reinforce and motivate comprehensive community welfare management and development toward the strong base and sustainability as determination. (Community Organization Development Institute-CODI (Public Organization), 2016)

Sisaket is a province in the Northeastern region and grouped with other provinces as the lower Northeastern provinces group to enable to implement by a set of policies and as goals of development plan by the concept of 'Value-building agriculture, Logistic center, Creative tourism, Linking regions together'. There are 5 success or achievement indicators for 5 aspects of these provinces in the group. They are 3 % increment of GMP at the end of the plan and the Gross Provincial Cluster Product : GPCP of non-agricultural sector must increase 3 % . Revenue from tourism sector must increase 2% and rate of forest area increase 0.20% at the end of plan. Population of all age live in better quality of by 10% at the end of plan.

(The Office of Strategy Management for Lower Northeastern Provinces 2, 2023) Sisaket is diverse by cultures, traditions, identities, values and beliefs. The area has long history and comprise with 4 ethnical groups; Lao, Khmer, Kui and Yer. The research described PrueKanTawan Aog in Prue Yai Subdistrict, Khu Khan District. The community has 546 in population. It is a small community with outstanding character as a harmony, high level of community participation, expressively in compassion and mutual supports amongst community members. It is one of ancient communities. It is important that this community fully apply the King's knowledge and HM the King's concept plus the award winner for the top of village following the Five Precepts according to the Buddha's teaching in 2017. The community leaders are well-known for strong leadership and the concept

to provide social welfare to all; from birth to death. They are working toward sustainable and self-reliant concept in every community program to maintain their happy, normal way-of-livings by not heavily rely on government offices alone.

From the reasons above, the community are so attractive to the researcher to study about their general context and condition, issue or challenge/concern and need or demand in the community's conditions to understand the approach to community welfare management for self-reliance in order to have community model for other communities to learn about it and support development agenda in the provinces group-Lower Northeastern Provinces 2 focusing in all for better quality of life.

## Research Objectives

1. To study context of Prue Kan Tawan Aog, in Prue Yai Subdistrict, Khu Khan District, Sisaket Province
2. To study issues and/or challenges and needs or demands of Prue Kan Tawan Aog, Prue Yai Subdistrict, Khu Khan District, Sisaket Province
3. To study approach to community welfare management for self-reliance of Prue KanTawan AOg, Prue Yai Subdistrict, Khun Khan District, Sisaket Province.

## Research Methodology

### 1. Scope

1.1 Area scope: Prue Kan Tawan-Aog community

1.2 Target population and key informants

1.2.1 Target groups; community leaders, community members and community wisdom figures

1.2.2 30 key informants comprised of 5 community leaders, 5 community wisdom and respectable figures, and 20 general community members.

1.3 Content scope: General condition of the community, issue, challenge and concern in the community, needs and demands by the community and approach to community welfare management for self-reliance.

### 2. Research methodology

It was designed to implement as qualitative research by specific area for the research in order to reflect all in-depth information and detail of pictures of the research target mentioned above. The researcher employed these target groups and key informants.

2.1 Target group: qualitative methodology designed to reflect all details and pictures in the scope area for the research purposes. The target groups are community leaders, general community members, and

respectable community wisdom figures in PrueKan Tawan Aog community.

2.2 Key-informant: It was designed in methodology to have the community leaders in consistent with the leader qualifications like leadership, active, community dedication, function or roles taking, well and correctly informative in order to collect deep, diversity and wide-range of the information about their community. The target groups are categorized in 3 groups (Table 3.1)

5 community leaders who characterized as community leaders in these following qualifications; dedication, informative and respectable leadership, for instance

5 community wisdom figures who are well respectable by general community members. They have these qualifications; knowledgeable or widely known as intelligence figures in communities, long-time experienced, broadly informative covering all about the community and dedicatedly acceptable by the community.

20 general community members in these qualifications; regularly participate in community activities, showing compassion to others and ready to be collaborative in levels.

**Table 1** Key Informants

| Key informant  | (n=30) | Percentage(100.0) |
|----------------|--------|-------------------|
| leaders        | 5      | 16.0              |
| Wisdom figures | 5      | 16.0              |
| Members        | 20     | 68.0              |

### 3.Collection tools

The researcher employed qualitative methods considered researcher-self as the most important tool for in-depth interview techniques and in focus group working. The reason is to access to reliability of the information, the interview done and needed all triangulate checking and repeatedly checked by all techniques. The researcher employed both in-depth interview and focus group applying these guidelines;

3.1 In-depth interview guidelines divided into 3 parts:

Part 1. General and base line data about key informants like gender, age, religion, family status, role in community participation and position or assignment.

Part 2. General condition and context of the community which is consisting of history and background, way of life, culture, belief, economic situation, and others.

Part 3. Issues, challenges, needs and demands: Community's issues, concern or challenges/deficiency/needs/demands any community concerns that reflected from

community sectors including their occupations and making a living including their living stability and security and so on.

3.2 Focus group guidelines: divided into 2 subparts.

Subpart1: Approach to community welfare management for self-reliance in the families, children and youth, elderly and occupation

Subpart 2: Recommendations for welfare management particularly for Prue Kan Tawan Aog community for self-reliance

### 4.Data and information collection

#### 4.1 Field Study

Observation: Community members participation in community activities.

In-depth interviews 30 key informants; 5 community leaders, 5 community wisdom figures and 20 general community members. They were interviewed by the interview guidelines designed on general data and significant information particularly on community concern issues, and or problems/ challenges including needs and demands. Approach to community welfare management toward self-reliance was the core questions and responses to reach the objective 1 and 2.

4.2 Focus group: dialogues in focus group made to approach in community welfare management for self-reliance particularly for Prue Kan Tawan-Aog

community from 4 community leader, 4 community wisdom figures and 7 community members, 15 in total.

### 5.Data analysis

The researcher employed descriptive analysis from qualitative data collection using in-depth interview techniques, participative and non-participative observations, and focus group. Triangulation techniques applied to find reliability; variousness in key informants, times,

locations to see data and information discrimination and sameness. The content and context analyzed in consistent with concepts, theories toward interpretation of the data and information.

Moreover, document content analysis interpreted according to its context or data environment to comparatively review any variation for the correctness of the objectives determined in studying.

## Results

### 1. Context of Prue Kan Tawan Aog, Prue Yai Subdistrict, Sisaket Province

Prue Kan Tawan Aog Community, Prue Yai Subdistrict, Khu Khan District, Sisaket Province, its context is;

**1.1 The community history and background:** the community was settled down 300 years ago. It was called 'Ra-mea' in Khmer dialect, in Suay dialect means 'Kan' later slightly to Thai in 'Pa' (forest or woods) and in Khmer dialect means 'Prai' -all these words came to the name 'Prue Kan'. The story told by their parents is about Mr. Wong and Mrs. Khan and their children was one of a few families living here when they settled down, later the names of Mr. Prak and Mrs. Aow come in the longer story. That is the reason their last names or surnames are mostly Wongkhan and Prueprak. At present,

Prue Kan Tawan Aog has 114 households, 596 by population; 286 male, 310 female.

**1.2 Geographical condition:** It is flat land with small upland alternately between that low flat land. This is good for twice a year rice farming, horticulture, and crops fields. There are Huay Sala reservoir, natural water sources; Huay Prue Kan, Huay Sala and Nong Kud SanDan.

**1.3 Occupations:** Most population work in agricultural sector but there are some vocational groups such as Mud Mee(Ikat fabric) weaving group. For agricultural groups, there are mushroom cultivation group and Mango Orchard Group.

**1.4 Culture, Beliefs and Local wisdom:** There is a traditional medicine indigenous or traditionally medical practice-who is Mr. Surin Sudsang. A ritual performer and arranger-Mr. Srimaung Wongkhan. A

Brahmin performer who is Mr. Leum Prueprak, and Mr. Sawat Wongkhan- a Brahmin for religious ritual.

Annual traditions and festivals are; SaenDonTa in the 10<sup>th</sup>. lunar month-for ancestor worshipping, Ram mae-mod tradition is mediator rite as tradition belief as home care. Khaw Phansa Candle Procession cerebation is Buddhist's Lent Day. Songkran festival is marking the day for senior or elderly gratitude cerebation day or water festival. Loy Krathong festival and community tradition-PuTa-KudSandan.

## 2. Issues and needs of the community

Issues/challenges and needs/demands found in the analysis in short.

### 2.1 Issues/challenges/concerns :

Online or cyber game addiction amongst children and youth causing helpless and irresponsibility at homes and schooling. Children and youth have lessor none participation in community activities. Therefore, most of participants are women and elderlies. Organic agriculture is not popular so a few farmers work on it. Collaboration amongst generation is less than expectation. Community leaders, young and senior community members have less collaboration and less promotion in community's occupational groups in continuation and sustainable means.

**2.2 Needs/demands:** The community members raised their concerns and needs as following. Promotion and support on occupations and sustainable income generating activities. They ask to have mutual, immediate helps and long term supports within their own community as social immune system to enable long term and life-long reliable welfare for all and in their own capacity, self-reliance, and mutual care and support system.

## 3. Approach to community welfare management for self-reliance by Prue Kan community

Results analysed from focus group discussion outputs, can be categorized into 5 points.

**3.1 Self-reliant community welfare management:** In establishment strong base self-reliance, saving group for family saving campaign; 'One day, One baht' for each family member to enable each family to commit to long term family financial program and earn community credit and sustainable, mutual support from the rest of the community working with the smallest unit in the community--family.

**3.2 Approach to community welfare management for self-reliance by Prue Kan Tawan Aog:** Approach to self-reliant welfare management aimed to provide social welfare to low income population in the community



to enable them to improve earning capacity and have better access to needy farm inputs like organic fertilizer purchasing and organic fertilizer making in this agriculturist community to campaign on self-reliant, low-cost farming and less dependency on high cost chemical fertilizer and building sustainable organic fertilizer fund to support low income farmers' families.

**3.3 Approach to self-reliant community welfare for the community to tackle children and youth issues:** In battle early school quitting amongst students from low-income families, scholarship fund was established to support longer time in school and any education needed by good students in low-income families who commit to community activities a present. The scholarship hand in to these good students twice a year on the Mother's Day and Father's Day.

**3.4 Approach to self-reliant community welfare for the community to tackle elderly issue:** One of many issues and concerns is to support good health elderlies to keep on their productivity to support their families. The elderlies who can work on small scale income generating activities like mushroom growing and Gab fabric weaving in these groups' activities are financial supported to keep them with income capacity development. And it is good for their time

spending with community society, to have less abandon elderly in low-income families and to keep more family members in family productivity and income earning.

**3.5 Approach to self-reliant community welfare to tackle shortage invest money for low-income families:**

Occupational groups aimed to improve income earning capacity and sustain self-reliance such as mushroom farm by promote not only to sell the farm produce but to enable the mushroom farmers to sell the mushroom spawn to increase farm sale and have young and senior community members involvement in the mushroom farm extension and group involvement. It is an example of improvement of the stability of the occupation via mutual supports.

One of many occupational groups is Gab fabric weaving that have young people involvement by training to weave it and develop the product to sell it for additional family income. And to narrow the gap between the older generation who working on it for a long time and have more young members to assist in product development after training and learning to earn some more family income. The earnings by group working

equal to mutual supports and keep it work within their community by their own potential and as self-reliance.

## Conclusion and Discussion

### 1. Prue Kan Tawan-Aog community, Prue Yai Subdistrict, Khukhan District, Sisaket Province: context

Prue Kan Tawan-Aog community was settled down more than 300 years ago. In Khmer dialect called ‘Ra-mea’, ‘Kan’ in Suay dialect, slightly twisted of word to Thai in the meaning about ‘Pa’ (forest or woods) and in Khmer ‘Prai’, all these words came to ‘Prue Kan’-calling for their community. Physical characteristics is flat land mix with hilly land which is excellent for twice-a-year rice farming, horticulture, and field crops plantation. Most are agriculturists and there are vocational groups like Mud Mee (Ikat) silk textile weaving, mushroom farming. There are old cultural belief and practices functioning as community mentors and traditional healers; Mr. Surin Sudsang-ritual performers, Mr. Srimuang Wongkhan-Brahmin ritual performer and Mr. Luem Prueprak-community mentor. Annual traditions still function like SaenDonTa-in the 10<sup>th</sup> lunar month in memorial of their ancestors and worshipping holy spirits, including to Ram-maemod traditional ritual, for example.

The community’s character is highly cooperative and active vocational organization and grouping as in accordance with the study of Community Organization Development Institute (2016). In the institute important conclusion narrated that community welfare which is based on the existing Thai’s cultural way-of-life allowed the community to manage mutual helping as the center of the supports. Religious belief and local wisdom that community members can rely on in problem solving is already natural community welfare system. All is based on mutual respect and compassion amongst humans and between humans and nature. When social changes in the globalization and faced the worst situation in 1997 crisis, local wisdom in community turned to old value and communityship revival in finding the strong social capital still exist and that is mutual supports all aspects needed in community living. It is when social welfare went to community in the form of saving group, community financial organization, community entrepreneurs with beliefs in religion and natural resource management, for instance.

## 2. Problems, needs and demands of Prue Kan Tawan Aog Community

Cyber or online game addiction amongst young people affecting community participation, obviously and negatively, in term of less time in all generations interaction and activities involvement. Constant support to vocational groups is insufficient. The community's needs are vocational promotion to increase family income and support vocational group working to back up self-reliance of community welfare fund as they considered it is the only way to minimize outside support. And contribution from groups working covers to all welfare demanded in wide range of generations from small children to elderly and achieve self-reliance of the community welfare management fund.

The reason is each community has its own issues or challenges and needs or demands. It is the community's context that relate to how the self-reliance fund management could be successful and sustainable. The community must work to find out its own issues and challenges in order to design its own best resolution and manage their own proper welfare program. It is in accordance with the study by CODI (2016). In the significant findings, it concluded one of many subdistrict welfare funds is the Phayakhan Subdistrict welfare fund organized

to respond to the community concerning issues such as children and youth, elderly, underprivileged, disabled, people in general. Phayakhan Subdistrict welfare fund organized to process need assessment and problem survey to understand children and youth issues and elderly issues. They found the risk groups in children and youth and health issues in elderly both physical and mental health. Moreover, family income earning is a threat and economic challenges are heavy. Family income is limited whilst the cost of living is uncontrollable. The Phayakhan Subdistrict welfare fund organized to solve children and elderly issues focusing on good quality of life in health care and educational opportunity challenges. By providing health care services to every community member from their first-day birth to all age, not excluded elderly health in consistent with the fund's potential. It built collaboration with state sector, local administrative organizations, and other development organizations in the basic welfare organizing covering all concerns from birth, aging, public health, and decease ceremony. The fund initiated new forms of welfare to upgrade community members' quality of life in consistent with the community context. In the same time, community organized its own program to ensure members benefit receiving and learning to be a strong community-based organization.

Attached to self-reliance, decent participation, human dignity and understanding in the meaning of community welfare fund, Phayakhan community members viewed the fund as merit fund for mutual supports. It is long term and stable supports to all for better quality of life and life security diverse and vary by needs in ages but fair to all.

### **3. Approach to community welfare management for self-reliance of Prue Kan Tawan-Aog community**

Approach to family: community saving to all family was promoted by the one day-one baht campaign to build long-term saving scheme based on numbers of family members to raise awareness and participation to all family members. The smallest part of the community is a family therefore each must have a will to engage in the program. The approach of the fund management prioritized the low-income families as the first target. The fund managed to provide opportunities to low-cost farm input such as organic fertilizer via their community's fertilizer fund group. In the same time the group promote organic fertilizer making to encourage to change their chemical farm to organic farm. By doing this these low-income farmers can reduce their farm cost and less health risk. In children and youth issue, the community organized children and youth welfare program, firstly promote schooling fund prioritized the poor

families' good students as first target particularly those who devote time in community's activities and participation. They are provided schooling money twice a year on the Mother's Day and Father's Day schools' fair and cerebration. And for responding to elderly issue and concern, good health elderlies were encouraged to participate in vocational promotion group to enable them to earn from their potential and developed capacity in the group capacity promotion programs. Building sustainable and accessible social welfare for elderly by their own community organization via income generation program improve both physical and mental for elderlies. The last approach in occupation is income capacity improvement which is group organizing underlined self-reliance and it is true community-based organization. One of the occupational groups is mushroom farming. The mushroom farmers in the group sell not only their mushroom but enable to sell mushroom cultivating spawn or mother spawn to other farmers. These mushroom farmers as well act as instructor to young and old community members who want to earn extra income at home by small-scale mushroom farm. It based on mutual support for new mushroom farmers and increase capacity in making a living. One of vocational group for extra family income is 'Gab' textile weaving. The Gab textile weaving

group not only produce Gab textile to sell it but transfer weaving techniques to young community members to train them to produce it and sell it as extra family income. The young community members learn to weave Gab, local textile, to gain knowledge & experiences and skills in local textile and sell their product to earn more income for their families. Groups working with generation in all ages and genders aiming to upgrade skills and income capacity improvement. All activities responding to the community issues and concern and build long term, self-reliant welfare fund. It is developed altogether to found community welfare fund very well.

The core reason for the community is the approach to construct self-reliant community welfare fund. The welfare program delivered to all community members; ages and genders, to generate and improve their income earning. Therefore, they can sustain the fund. It is in consistent with the research by Watcharaphorn Chanthanukul and others (2016) concluded that sustainable, community-based, social welfare and social security rely on these following implementations; occupational promotion

and support, welfare shop services and management, income generation supports, sufficiency economic life style enhancement, and arts, cultural and local wisdom conservation, and promotion.

#### 4. Recommendations

##### 4.1 Self-reliance in community welfare management

Community welfare need to have tangible results for example; vocational supports or sustainable income generating activities for individual and community organization. And welfare management should be a group organized in tangible outcomes to raise community members' trust and mobilize community members' participation to have communityship taking responsibility in the growth and development and nurture positive relationships.

##### 4.2 For future research and study

Model construction for self-reliant community welfare should be studied to enable mutual learning among community organizations and developed community participation toward sustainable community welfare services.

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