

Bringing poor communities and cities together to forge city-wide solutions to problems of housing, land and basic services in Thai cities :

The *Baan Mankong Program* was launched by the Thai government in January 2003, as part of its efforts to address the housing problems of the country's poorest urban citizens. The program channels government funds, in the form of infrastructure subsidies and soft housing loans, directly to poor communities, which plan and carry out improvements to their housing, environment and basic services and manage the budget themselves. Instead of delivering housing units to individual poor families, the Baan Mankong Program ("Secure housing" in Thai) puts Thailand's existing slum communities - and their community networks - at the center of a process of developing long-term, comprehensive solutions to problems of land and housing in Thai cities.

As part of this unconventional program, which is being implemented by the *Community Organizations Development Institute* (a public organization under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security), poor communities work in close collaboration with their local governments, professionals, universities and NGOs to survey all the communities in their cities and then plan an upgrading process which tries to improve all the communities in that city - *all of them* - over the next few years. Once these city-wide plans are finalized and upgrading projects are selected, CODI channels the infrastructure subsidies and housing loans directly to communities.

This housing experiment in Thailand is the result of a process which has been developing over the past ten years, starting with the building of wide-scale community savings activities, then the formation and strengthening of large-scale networks of poor communities, and finally using these people's managerial skills to deal with housing problems at city scale. But Baan Mankong is possible with the commitment on the part of the central government to allow people to be the core actors and to decentralize the solution-finding process to cities and communities.

Putting partnership into practice . . .

By creating space for poor communities, municipalities, professionals and NGOs to look together at all the housing problems in their city, Baan Mankong is bringing about an important change in how the issue of low-income housing is dealt with: no longer as an ad-hoc welfare process or a civic embarrassment to be swept under the carpet, but as an important structural issue which relates to the whole city and which can be resolved. The community upgrading program is helping to create local partnerships which can integrate poor community housing needs into the larger city's development and resolve future housing problems as a matter of course.



More than just physical upgrading is possible :

People-driven upgrading can be a powerful means of bringing structural change to poor communities. The Baan Mankong program is working to promote a much more comprehensive and holistic kind of community development, which tries to bring about improvements to many aspects of people's lives, including infrastructure, environmental improvements, social development, social facilities, markets, income generation, welfare, etc.

Baan Mankong

An update on **CITY-WIDE UPGRADING** in Thailand

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Thai government commits to city-wide upgrading with a big, 4-year budget infusion . . .

On August 2, 2005, the Thai Government approved a four-year budget to support the continuation of the Baan Mankong community upgrading program, to be implemented in 200 cities around Thailand between 2005 and 2008. The program has set a target of upgrading the housing and living environments of 300,000 families in 2,000 poor communities. The Baan Mankong program is a city-wide, "Cities Without Slums" housing development process, in which communities are the key actors in developing collective plans to upgrade their houses and settlements, in close collaboration with their municipal governments and other local development agencies. The government will provide a total budget of about US\$ 470 million to CODI for the infrastructure subsidy and housing loan interest subsidy. CODI will provide housing and land-purchase loans to communities from its own revolving fund, and will link with commercial banks to negotiate more community housing loans later on.

The government's total subsidy works out to about US\$ 1,650 per household, which covers infrastructure, social and economic facilities, local management and administrative costs, a 2% interest rate subsidy on housing loans, and all the expenses involved in capacity building, learning, meetings, seminars and exposure trips. This subsidy represents about 25% of the total upgrading investment, to which communities will contribute 65% (mostly in the form of housing loans and labor) and the local authorities will contribute the remaining 10%. This initial investment in physical upgrading and secure tenure will generate economic spin-offs and asset creation worth at least three or four times as much in the poor households in these communities, and in their extremely local community economies.

To reach this huge scale in four years (which represents about half the country's existing slums), the program has been designed in such a way as all the existing slums in each city will be included, and will work together with city authorities through all the steps: surveying, setting up saving groups, making upgrading plans, negotiating or searching for alternative land, organizing local task forces to assist the communities, linking with universities and local NGOs. The goal is for each city to come up with a plan in which all the existing slums in the city will be upgraded within a period of about three years. During this time, all the development actors in the city - particularly communities - will all be workers, participants, observers, learners and advisers in this inclusive, city-wide process.

Since the first ten pilot upgrading projects were approved in 2003, the Baan Mankong program has grown to cover 140 cities and districts in 57 provinces (out of the total 76 in the country). 304 projects have been approved, covering 29,054 families in 415 communities. In about three quarters of these cities, squatters or communities under serious threat of eviction have been given first priority for upgrading or negotiating for secure alternative land. And in these upgrading projects so far, 87% of the households which used to stay in insecure slum communities, are now living in good houses, in well-serviced, well-planned settlements in the same location, with improved tenure security, by either purchasing their former land or negotiating some kind of collective lease.

It turns out that it is not really such a problem after all for all urban poor communities to stay in the city where they have been, with better status and social physical improvement.

1 CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Chiang Mai

Chiang Mai is Thailand's second largest city, but when its first flyovers were constructed a few years back, there was a collective groan across the whole city, which still clings to an image of itself as a quiet little capital of antique temples and soft-spoken natives, nestled in a cool mountain valley. Over the past decade, the city has found itself reluctantly facing some decidedly big city problems: uncontrolled runaway development, destruction of the historic city, pollution, traffic congestion, uncollected garbage, environmental degradation.



But as one foreign visitor recently put it, "Chiang Mai is lucky: it has a development plan being made by a local consultant, it has a concerned department of architecture, it has well-organized low-income settlements and concerned citizens groups. It has the CODI's resources. Given these assets, a workable plan for the city can be developed. What is required is that groups come together and pressurize the politicians and planners to have a say in how their city develops."

Chiang Mai has a complicated political scene with a lot of issues and a big collection of stakeholders. It hasn't been easy, but in recent years, through the *Urban Community Environment Activities (UCEA)* and *Liveable Cities* projects, and with support from the Northern Region Urban Community Network and the NGO POP, the city's poor communities have managed to link with the municipal government and with other actors to form a community development committee and to begin building a platform for addressing the issues of the urban poor in the city - issues like environment, housing and land tenure.

Upgrading in Chiang Mai takes off :

Chiang Mai makes a good example of how city-wide upgrading can start slowly, and then suddenly take off! First communities link together into a network and begin doing various activities together. But they are all still living without security on somebody else's land. Next, one community facing eviction tries to find solutions. When one community is finally able to purchase or lease their land, this is the breakthrough. Once you have the breakthrough, the upgrading process bursts out across the city. Everybody is convinced that it's something real, it's not a lot of hot



air. Since the first two pilots on Klong Maekhaa have been implemented, 20 new upgrading projects have started all at once. This is how Baan Mankong works: once people feel convinced it's real, and once the local mechanism lets the thing go forward, then the scale zooms up to city-wide almost automatically.

Chiang Mai city facts :

- Urban population : 1.5 million people
- Total number of poor and informal communities in the city : 62 settlements (11,320 households)

Chiang Mai's upgrading plan :

2004	Upgrade 5 communities	(426 households)
2005	Upgrade 13 communities	(978 households)
2006-2007	Upgrade 38 communities	



One of Klong Maekhaa's early canal cleaning jamborees, organized on the Queen's birthday in 1999. These canal cleanings are often made into big, public events like this, to showcase people's role in taking care of vital urban amenities like the canals.

Canals in Chiang Mai :

How the city's community improvement process got started in some very dirty water . . .

Klong Maekhaa is one of the two major *klongs* (canals) which flow through Chiang Mai's Mengrai District. In the land along the klong are eight informal settlements which are home to about 1,200 households. The water in Klong Maekhaa was already polluted by the time it got to the city, where markets, hospitals and factories dumped in more junk. And by the time it reached the communities, the black, foul-smelling water was barely able to sustain a few miserable fish. While the city and local politicians dithered about these deteriorating city amenities, it was the klong-side communities who found themselves being accused of polluting the klongs with their garbage and toilets, and threatened with eviction from the places they had occupied for 20 - 30 years.

In the past 8 years, these canal communities linked together into a network, started saving groups and organized themselves around the solving the problems which united them: the klong and housing, land security. With a small grant from the Urban Community Environmental Activities (UCEA) program they initiated a long-term klong improvement process of their own, which included frequent high-profile canal clean-ups, community and canal environmental improvements, improving walkways, moving houses back from the canal edge, negotiating with private-sector polluters upstream, etc.



All these activities have improved water quality and living conditions in the canal settlements. But they have also showed the city that these canal-side communities, which used to be seen as invaders and polluters, can be vital partners in improving the quality of life for the whole city. Through this process, problems faced by the urban poor have become legitimate points of discussion in the city planning process, and issues of canals and environment have led to issues of housing and tenure security. The first two Baan Mankong pilot upgrading projects in Chiang Mai have come out of this canal improvement process, both of them on Klong Maekhaa :

1 Kampeng Ngam : (110 households - on-site upgrading, with long-term lease) *Details on the following page.*

2 Hua Fai (2 parts) : (138 households). The Hua Fai community is across the canal from Kampeng Ngam, on Treasury Department land, and is divided into two projects :

- **On-site upgrading :** 126 households are now in the process of upgrading their houses and infrastructure in the same place, after negotiating a long-term, collective lease. Infrastructure subsidy of US\$ 86,250. Housing improvement loans will be the next step.
- **Relocation to nearby land :** 39 households (including 12 families from the old settlement, and 27 from nearby squatter areas) will develop a new community on a 1,800sqm piece of land they bought, with a CODI land loan of US\$ 185,000, and will develop with an infrastructure subsidy of \$37,500 and housing loans of \$232,500.

Kampeng Ngam :

Chiang Mai's pilot canal-side upgrading . . .

Part of Klong Maekhaa runs along the ruins of Chiang Mai's old outer city wall, and the Kampeng Ngam community sits between the canal and part of the wall. In the 1990s, the municipality thought nothing of demolishing most of this old wall to build a road, but the Fine Arts Department finally persuaded the city to preserve what remains, for tourism. At first, it looked like communities along this wall would be facing eviction, but over the past few years, the newly strong Klong Maekhaa community network have negotiated to stay put, and have become the city's best canal - and ancient wall - keepers.

The offer they made was pretty attractive: since the Fine Arts Department had no money to take care of the wall and the city had no resources to take care of the klong, let the people do both, and in exchange, they get the right to stay there and improve their living conditions, while adding a potential tourist attraction to boot. Accordingly Hua Fai and Kampeng Ngam began making plans to redevelop the housing and environment in their settlements, as a pilot initiative. Most of these people are very poor, and many produce handicrafts which are sold in Chiang Mai's famous night bazaar.

The plan was eventually accepted by the municipality and the Fine Arts Department, and the communities began refining plans with help from young architects and from the NGO *People's Organization for Participation*. In the early stages of the project, some assistance for the environmental improvements came from the UCEA fund, but the Baan Mankong program has brought many new financial tools to both community upgrading projects. A long-term community lease is now being negotiated with the Fine Arts Department. As part of the project in Kampeng Ngam :

- Three houses built on top of the old city wall have been demolished and reconstructed in space created by reblocking in the settlement down below.
- Houses abutting the old wall have all been pulled back 1 meter to construct a footpath for tourists.
- The wall area itself is being repaired and landscaped with earth-stabilizing greenery.
- Alternative "green" waste-water treatment systems are being installed.
- The canal edge has been improved with walkways and "soft" landscaping.
- All the houses have been improved or rebuilt.



It all started with efforts to clean up the canal.



Surveying the communities along the canal, and identifying places where pollutants were being dumped into the Maekhaa Canal upstream.



▲ **BEFORE :**



▲ **AFTER :**

KAMPENG NGAM UPGRADING FINANCES :

- Number of households : **110 units**
- CODI housing loans : **\$ 67,500**
- Infrastructure subsidy : **\$ 65,000**



Meetings to discuss the reblocking of the settlement, in which some houses have to move a little.



▲ **BEFORE :**



▲ **AFTER :**



Instead of the "hard edges" along the canal, the people are stabilizing the banks with trees and shrubs.

2

CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Uttraradit

City plans in the bustling northern city of Uttaradit, as in most Thai cities, are beautifully colored maps showing parks go here, housing over there, parking here and commerce and industry on that side. It all looks lovely on paper, but the reality of the city is not like that at all. Like other cities, Uttaradit has squatters and serious housing problems, but there's no color in the key for squatter settlements. Until recently, the city's poor were not part of the city planning process.

Years before Baan Mankong, the community network in Uttaradit (along with Ayutthaya and Chiang Mai) was linking with the municipal governments and pioneering collaborative, people-driven and city-wide strategies for providing secure land and decent housing for *all the poor* in their city, rather than just in isolated communities. In 1999, CODI began working to expand the savings process to include Uttaradit's squatters, whose serious housing problems were not being addressed. The activity of getting people to start saving for better housing began building a parallel community process in the city.

First survey : The next step was to survey all the poor settlements in Uttaradit. This process helped link these scattered groups and laid the foundations for a community network. As part of the survey process, the people mapped all the slums and small pockets of squatters, identified land owners, and indicated which slums could stay put and which needed to relocate. Two young architects helped, along with a group of supportive monks and the mayor, Prakaikeo Ratananaka, who became the network's enthusiastic and strategic ally.



Looking at the whole city's housing problems : To find sustainable solutions for the 1,000 families in the city with housing problems, this city-network partnership looked at the city as a whole and developed plans which made room for all those families, within the fabric of the city. To find that room, they used a range of planning techniques: land-sharing in one area, reblocking in another, in-situ upgrading here and relocation there. The city-wide housing plan which they developed has since become the basis for the city's upgrading program under Baan Mankong, and includes infrastructure improvements, urban regeneration, canal-cleaning, wasteland reclamation, park development, and the creation of amenities which could be enjoyed by the whole city.

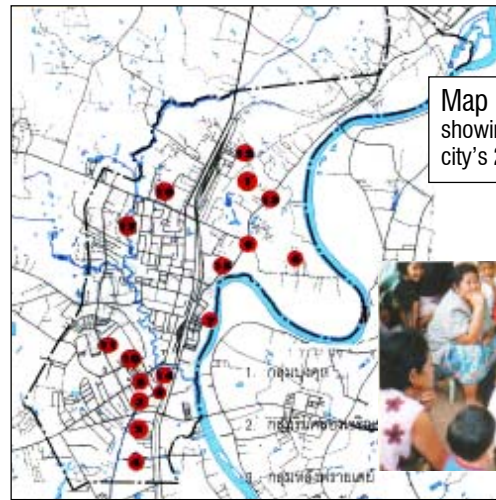
Uttaradit city facts :

- Urban population : 500,000 people
- Total number of poor and informal communities in the city : 22 settlements (6,113 households)

The "Livable Cities" project : Later on, Uttaradit became a pilot city in a central government program to promote "Livable Cities" in Thailand through partnership between the various civic stakeholders.



This program gave a big boost to the work the community networks and the municipality had already begun and elevated urban poor housing as an important issue of Uttaradit's "livability", along with such things as markets, parks, traffic, historic preservation, river and canal management and civic pride.



Map of Uttaradit, showing the location of the city's 22 poor communities



The "15-baht-a-day" house : Uttaradit's community improvement process starts small but makes a very big bang . . .

After the survey of poor communities had been finished and a city-wide plan for solving Uttaradit's housing problems had been drafted, the work began. The upgrading process started the Jarernm Dham community, where eight canal-side squatters negotiated to lease temple-owned land nearby and worked with the young architects to design and build solid 2-story row houses for themselves there, at the unheard-of cost of just 40,000 Baht each (US\$ 1,000) (with loan repayments).

That worked out to only 15 Baht a day - less than a single plate of fried rice!). This left space beside the river for the remaining house to reblock and develop kitchen gardens. CODI provided loans and the new houses were officially inaugurated in a seminar on "Livable Cities" which brought together government housing officials and community leaders from networks all over Thailand. These 8 little houses became famous all over the country, as one of the most inexpensive, roomy and practical house models developed by communities yet. And the visitors still keep pouring into Uttaradit to see the famous "15-Baht a day" row-houses.



Imagining tools :

To help the house design process in Jarernm Than, architects Tee and Baan made beautiful drawings and scale models to show different options. The people smiled politely and said yes that's nice. It was hard to tell what they felt about those sketches or how much they understood. But when the architects proposed building a life-size house model, it unleashed a storm of fine-tuning. That big model (made of old boards, bamboo and blue cloth somebody got at a discount) became a three-dimensional imagining



tool for people unfamiliar with the abstraction of scale drawings. As the model went up, the people pulled out boards, nailed things up differently, changed this, argued about that. Measurements altered, ceiling heights were raised then lowered, window positions shifted, bathrooms and kitchens swelled and shrunk.

Boong Kook Community :

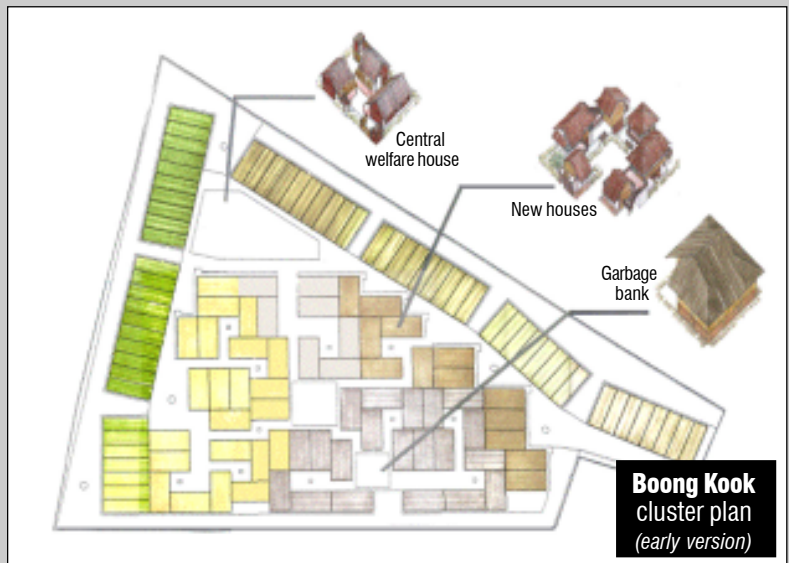
Uttaradit's scattered squatters get a home . . .

The pilot project at Boon Kook does not involve a single, established community, but represents a highly collaborative strategy for resolving the housing problems of the most vulnerable poor families living in scattered "mini squatter settlements" around the city, all in immediate danger of eviction. To resettle these families (identified by the community network in their city-wide survey), the municipality agreed to purchase 1.6 hectares of land (which the network identified), which was given on long-term lease to the new community, made up of these scattered squatter households. The inauguration of Boon Kook, on March 29, 2003, was the starting point for Uttaradit's Baan Mankong process and makes a very good example of how collective housing can be developed when various local partners cooperate to solve serious problems of housing the city's poor :

- The **Community Network** surveyed all the people with tenure problems in the city, selected the most vulnerable to move to Boon Kook and helped start daily savings groups among them. The network also helped raise funds to construct Boon Kook's "central house" for elderly, poor or handicapped community members, which is part of the community's plan.
- The **Municipality** worked with the network to identify good land, bought the network's 2nd choice land, for 6 million Baht, and gave it on long-term lease to the community cooperative.
- **CODI** provided housing loans to families who needed them.
- The **National Housing Authority** provided roads and infrastructure on the new site, built according to NHA standards, by private contractors.
- The **New Community** planned the layout of their settlement and built their own houses collectively, in their chosen neighbor groups, according to 5 house designs they also developed themselves.
- **Community architects** helped organize the survey and worked with the people to design affordable house types and a community layout plan which allows them to live with old neighbors and includes spaces for sorting recyclable waste, since many of the relocatees are waste-pickers.

In the past, most government organizations didn't see poor people, they just saw a bad thing in the city. They couldn't see the potential in poor communities, only the problems. This is a way to open the eyes of government organizations to see the potential in Thailand's poor and to allow them to do things together to solve their problems. We have to change the way from the past, when projects were owned by the ministry. Now the grassroots have to take ownership. This project at Boong Kook shows that this change of direction can work and can produce better results.

Deputy Minister of Social Development and Human Security, speaking at the Boong Kook Inauguration, March 29, 2003.



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



"It is important for the monks to join with the process of this central welfare house in Boon Kook and in other communities. Why? Government welfare programs target only the elderly and the poor - community has no role, and no flexibility in who needs help. This central house in Boong Kook is better than a normal house, and really makes people want to live there! An attractive looking house with good construction, not a sad place made of tin sheets."

A senior monk, speaking at Boong Kook's inauguration

3

CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Bangkok

Both CODI and the myriad community networks which operate in Bangkok, Thailand's mega city of 11 million people, are having to adjust the Baan Mankong upgrading process for Bangkok, which is very, very big - and keeps growing! The city's 1,604 settlements, which are home to almost a third of Thailand's urban poor, are spread across 50 *khets* (districts). Many of these districts are like an entire city, with many communities within their boundaries. The first task was to figure out how to divide up this vast city into manageable parts.



Dividing one mega-city into 50 smaller parts :

For the Baan Mankong Program, it's been decided that each district will be regarded as a separate city. So each district is doing its own survey of poor settlements, forming its joint committee with all the key actors (community networks, BMA, universities, NGOs, land-owning agencies, District government agencies, etc.) and developing its 3-year upgrading plan, just like all the other cities. Each Bangkok district is also selecting two pilot projects within its boundaries (total 100 for the whole city), and CODI has an MOU with the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA) to facilitate this. The next step will be to use the momentum of the upgrading process to "break the wall" of the savings groups now working in each district, which are still very limited and not touching many poor communities.

On April 3, 2004, a big seminar was organized to discuss the Bangkok Metropolitan area's plan for Baan Mankong. Around 1,500 people were invited to the meeting, to share their experiences, learn together, express their problems and plan together how to solve Bangkok's serious housing problems. During the seminar, a target of solving the housing problems in 67 communities was set for 2004, under Baan Mankong.

The busy tenure security market :

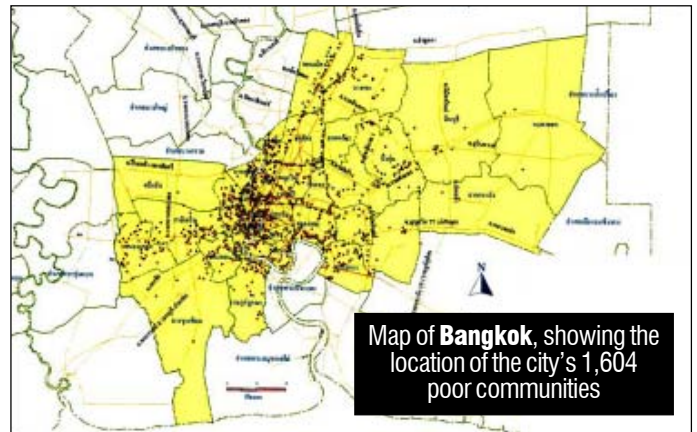
As part of this city-wide upgrading process, many communities in Bangkok under various land-owners are now in the process of negotiating long-term lease contracts or land purchases. Secure tenure is one of the most important parts of the new housing program, and communities have to work this out before they can access the housing loans and infrastructure subsidies under the program. All this bargaining for land is being done by people, by themselves, with only a little support from CODI, when necessary.

Bangkok city facts :

- **Urban population :** 11 million people (officially 6.5 million)
- **Total number of poor and informal communities in the city :** 1,604 settlements (283,566 households) (according to the 2001 CODI / NHA Survey)

Baan Mankong projects in Bangkok so far :

- 2003 5 pilot upgrading projects (578 households)
- 2004-5 ● **TARGET :** 100 pilot projects (2 projects per district)
- **APPROVED :** 61 projects in 71 communities (13,110 households)



Map of Bangkok, showing the location of the city's 1,604 poor communities

Different ways of **GROUPING**, and different ways of **HELPING** . . .

Besides dividing this mega-metropolis according to its 50 administrative districts, the Baan Mankong process is also making room for other groupings of communities to work together and other ways for communities to support each other's upgrading plans:

1 CANAL NETWORKS : Bangkok is a city of canals ("*klongs*" in Thai), and many of them are lined with poor settlements. Many of these settlements are linked together into networks of communities along certain canals, or within certain districts. There are at least ten major canal community networks in Bangkok, and many of them have been busy for years doing canal cleaning, environmental improvements and savings and welfare activities. As part of the Baan Mankong program, many of the major canals (such as Klong Hualamphong, Klong Ong-An and Klong Bam Bua) will begin with their own pilot upgrading projects, in collaboration with NGOs, district officials, local universities. The next step will be to jointly develop plans to upgrade *all the settlements* along each canal.

2 HOUSING COOPERATIVE NETWORK : Years before the Baan Mankong program was launched, CODI was promoting the formation of housing cooperatives by evicted communities, to enable them to purchase alternative land and develop their own new housing projects. These communities are linked together into a growing network of housing cooperatives, which is busy with many of the after-housing activities like income generation, community welfare, environmental improvements, and daily savings and loan repayment. These are experienced people, and are already becoming an important resource for assisting communities in some stage of the upgrading process: forming cooperatives, starting savings groups, searching for land, negotiating land purchase or lease terms, designing layouts and housing, etc.

"Bangkok is going to be very difficult! If it wasn't so difficult, the NHA would have been able to solve the city's housing problems years ago! But we believe that the situation is ripe now, the other factors are favorable, so it's a good time to start upgrading in Bangkok."

Lek Sompop, a senior community organizer with CODI



4 of the Bangkok pilot upgrading projects :

1 Chalermchai Nimitmai

This 50-year-old community of land-renters negotiated to buy the privately-owned land they occupied in central Bangkok at far below the market rate, and redevelop their infrastructure and housing.

- Number of households : 89
- Tenure terms : Cooperative ownership
- Upgrading type: on-site reblocking
- Infrastructure costs: US\$ 44,500
- Housing loans: US\$ 100,250 (av. \$1,250/unit)
- Land loan : US\$ 450,000
- Land Area : 7,840sm (plot sizes vary)



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :

2 Bonkai

This 566-house squatter community in central Bangkok is on Crown Property Bureau land. After a fire destroyed 200 houses in one area of the settlement in 2001, they used the crisis to negotiate a more secure future and started rebuilding.

- Number of households : 202
- Tenure terms : Collective lease (15 yr)
- Land rent : \$4 / household / month
- Upgrading type: on-site reconstruction
- Infrastructure costs: (NHA provided)
- Housing loans: US\$ 749,750 (\$4,125/unit)



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :

3 Klong Toey Block 7-12

This old community in Klong Toey, Bangkok's largest slum area, struggled against eviction by the Port Authority for decades, and finally negotiated to rent a piece of nearby land and rebuild there.

- Number of households : 115
- Tenure terms : Long-term (30yr) lease
- Land-owner: Port Authority of Thailand
- Upgrading type: Nearby relocation
- Infrastructure costs: US\$ 287,500
- Housing loans: US\$ 559,000 (av. \$5,400/unit)
- Land rent : \$1/ house/ month (average)



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :

4 Klong Lumnoon

After a long, bitter eviction struggle, this 20-year old canal-side squatter community in suburban Bangkok negotiated to buy a portion of the land they used to occupy, and build a new community.

- Number of households : 49
- Tenure terms : Collective ownership
- Upgrading type: Land-sharing
- Infrastructure costs: US\$ 12,500
- Housing loans: US\$ 189,750 (av. \$4,000/unit)
- Land loan : US\$ 75,000
- Land Area : 4,000sm (56sm per family)



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :

4 CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Rangsit

Rangsit is a municipality in the 300-year-old province of Pathum Thani, which together with Bangkok, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhorn and Nonthaburi make up the greater Bangkok Metropolitan Region. Rangsit is a busy Bangkok suburb on the Bangkok-Ayutthaya transport artery, crowded with shopping malls, universities, posh housing enclaves and the city's airport. If you look at the aerial photos of Rangsit, you see an astonishing amount of empty land for an area so close to Bangkok, but most of it is being kept idle by speculators for future real estate deals and is way too expensive for the city's poor to access. The 2002 survey by CODI and NHA found 27,175 households living in 77 poor communities in the seven districts of Pathum Thani Province, many of them along canals.



Getting started in Pathum Thani Province :

The community upgrading process in Pathum Thani Province began in 2003 with a big forum (involving the Municipality, the enthusiastic mayor, representatives from all the communities and CODI), the launching of community savings groups (which practice both daily and monthly saving) and the setting up of a joint committee (municipality, community leaders, CODI and other local actors) to develop plans for resolving the problems of housing in Rangsit and Pathum Thani Province.

First "learning by doing" in Rangsit :

Rangsit's first pilot improvement project was at the canal-side settlement of Klong Sawaan, where many informal waste-collectors live. Besides rebuilding most of the houses, the project included reconstruction of the houses, environmental improvements, the installation of a "green" water-treatment system and the setting up of a garbage bank (with housing loans from CODI and an infrastructure subsidy of US\$ 34,500).

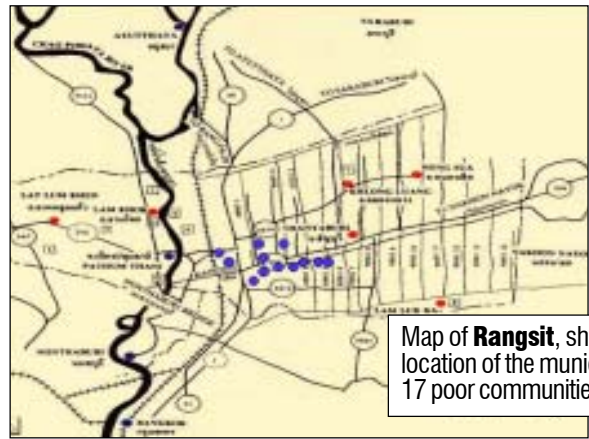


Rangsit city facts :

- Urban population : 72,000 people
- Total number of poor and informal communities in the city : 17 settlements (2,746 households)
(according to the 2001 CODI / NHA Survey)

Baan Mankong upgrading progress :

2004	Pilot upgrading at Mit Sampan	(138 households)
2005	Upgrade 7 communities	(Total 485 households)
●	Klong Sawaan (on-site upgrading)	(55 households)
●	Sapan Gaew (relocation)	(90 households)
●	Baan Chai	
	+ Sapan Koo	
	+ Jalern Pattana (relocation)	(224 households)
●	Yoo Lao Roay	
	+ Samaki Ruam Jai (relocation)	(116 households)



Map of Rangsit, showing the location of the municipality's 17 poor communities

Canal settlements in Rangsit :

How the city's canal-side communities are showing the city they're an asset and not a problem . . .

Thailand is a wet part of Asia, and many cities like Rangsit are built on low-lying swampland and are criss-crossed with *klongs* (canals). These canals not only help control all that water, but have traditionally provided vital conduits of commerce, transport and development. But since the car replaced the boat, roads and expressways have overlaid these older, wetter structures. The *klongs*, relegated to the status of open drains, have fallen into disrepair and are used for dumping sewage and garbage, or concreted over to make way for buildings.

But as the cities keep growing, and the *klongs* keep deteriorating, worsening problems of flooding and pollution are putting municipal officials in the hot seat. Too often, the finger is pointed at the poor communities which line many of Thailand's *klongs*, to mask much deeper problems of urbanization and bad planning. Canal-side communities find themselves accused of spoiling the *klongs* and threatened with eviction.



In most Thai cities now, beleaguered *klong*-side communities have used the problems they have in common to form networks, to work together to improve their *klongs* - and the environment around them. And in the process, they are consolidating their right to stay by demonstrating that they are the best keepers of these much-needed water management systems.

RANGSIT :

Thailand's first planned agricultural development . . .

In the nineteenth century, the extremely fertile land in Rangsit inspired the King to develop Thailand's first planned agricultural development. An extensive network of canals were planned and dug, the land was surveyed and divided up into long fields of uniform length and width, which farmers could cultivate, for a fee. Lively settlements, floating houses and markets, and a whole culture grew up around these canals. But as Bangkok expanded towards Rangsit in the 60s and 70s, the economic pressure to stop farming and start developing real-estate meant Rangsit's canal-side communities started being evicted.



Mit Sampan Community :

Rangsit's first pilot upgrading project . . .

Mit Sampan is a community of 250 households of private land-renters. In 2004, a devastating fire completely destroyed 84 houses. The land-owner decided to develop the land commercially, and after the fire refused to allow these people to rebuild. The crisis gave people the push they needed to start taking steps to make their lives and settlement more secure. The burned-out families people formed a working team, set up a savings group and started searching for alternative land. Just 800 meters inside the same lane, they found 1.4 hectares of open land owned by the same land-owner. Rangsit's supportive mayor helped the people to persuade the land-owner to knock down the selling price for the land, which the people eventually bought collectively with a CODI loan.

Once they had the land, the people developed a community layout of 138 house plots and common amenities, which includes 84 units for the original Mit Sampan households, and 54 units for poor households from five other squatter areas of Rangsit (Sapan Kaeo, Wat Sang, You Lao Roay, Krong Nung Pattana, Sapan Koo). They are now developing infrastructure on the new land and planning affordable house designs with young architects. The municipality has contributed to the development of the project's infrastructure, both internal and external.

The pilot upgrading project at Mit Sampan (nearby relocation) was the "breakthrough" in Rangsit - for both the city's active new community network and for its progressive municipal government. Once people have the power of the financial tools Baan Mankong offers in their hands, and once they see it's really possible, things take off. The next batch of upgrading projects are now underway in 8 communities in Rangsit, many of them canal-side squatter settlements.



After the fire, people stayed in tents they set up with a US\$ 62,500 subsidy from CODI. These tents are also providing temporary accommodation for 138 families during the construction process.



The new land: cleared, filled and ready for building.



After the fire



MIT SAMPAN UPGRADING FINANCES :

- Number of households : **138 units**
- CODI land loan : **US\$ 680,000**
- Infrastructure subsidy : **US\$ 165,000**
- CODI housing loans : **US\$ 227,500**



▲ HOUSE MODEL 1

2-story house with floor area of 43.8 square meters, on a 70 s.m. plot. Price **US\$ 3,750**



▲ HOUSE MODEL 2

2-story "Twin" house (semi detached) with 2nd story loft on 70 s.m. plot. Price **US\$ 5,500**



5 CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Ayutthaya



UNESCO has designated the old Thai capital city of Ayutthaya a "World Heritage Site." That's been good news for historic preservation, but a big problem for the city's poor, who are as authentic as the ruins, but are now in danger of being evicted from their city. On the oldest "island" part of

Ayutthaya, where most of the monuments are and where the tourists go, 80% of the land is under government ownership, and that has created a situation in which the poor's only housing option has been in squatter settlements, scattered here and there between the ruins.

The network of community savings groups in Ayutthaya has linked communities around the idea that poor people and historical monuments can, in fact, cohabit in mutually beneficial ways. The network began by surveying and mapping all of Ayutthaya's informal settlements, finding 53 informal communities (10,300 households) within the municipal boundaries. To open a public dialogue on the city's critical housing problems, they organized a public seminar in July 2000 and presented their survey information to the city and to all the actors with a stake in Ayutthaya's development. The idea was to look at the city as a whole, and to jointly develop a comprehensive housing plan for the entire city, rather than just doing a project here and a project there.

The people's idea for historic Ayutthaya? Monuments need to be maintained, and tourists who come to see them need guides, drink vendors, souvenir sellers, bicycle-renters. The people who are already providing these services are Ayutthaya's poor citizens and they've lived all their lives in the shadow of those ancient spires and battlements. If they are allowed to improve conditions in their communities and build new houses, shifting their houses a little where necessary to allow the monuments to be rehabilitated, then the unsightly shanties the preservationists are so vexed about will turn into healthy, attractive neighborhoods.

Since then, CODI has coordinated with the NHA, the Municipality and the Fine Arts Department (responsible for Thailand's historic monuments) to promote this idea, which is a new one for everybody. An agreement was eventually made to test the idea in a few pilot community improvement projects, and use them to inspire a city-wide community reconstruction process.



Ayutthaya city facts :

- **Urban population :** 730,000 people
- **Total number of poor and informal communities in the city :** 53 settlements (10,030 households)
- **Land ownership :** 95% of these households live on public land
- **Tenure status :** 75% of these households have land-rental agreements, 15% are squatters, 4% own the land they occupy and the rest are under some combination of the three.
- **Tenure problems :** 39% of these households have received verbal eviction threats, and 11 communities (21%) have received written eviction notices, mostly on land under Fine Arts Department ownership, within the boundaries of the "World Heritage Site"



Map of Ayutthaya, showing the historic part of the city, where most of the city's 53 poor communities are located

First 3 pilot projects in Ayutthaya :

1 ARKARN SONGKHROA

(66 households - on site reconstruction - details on following page)

2 TROK KANOM TOUAY



(33 households - on site upgrading) This community of wooden houses is named after kanom touay, the delightful coconut custard sweets which many residents prepare and sell from carts around the streets of Ayutthaya. The first families settled here about 50 years ago, on land which was then vacant, under Treasury Department ownership.

For the past ten years, the community has been resisting attempts by the city to evict them for a road-building project. The people here have used the process of making environmental improvements and establishing community welfare activities to organize and unite their settlement, through action, and to strengthen their negotiations to stay, with secure tenure.

3 WAT PEECHAI

(29 households, on-site upgrading of old wooden houses with long-term collective lease) These families live in a long line of old wooden shop-houses, which they have been renting from the adjacent temple for the past 50 years. This small community was also under threat of eviction from the temple, which had plans to tear down the old houses and develop the road-fronting land commercially. Here, people used the process of repainting their building and widening the public gallery in front to organize and unite the community, and to show the temple they can make everything look nice, no need to evict! The Ayutthaya community network linked with the Provincial Development Committee to help facilitate discussions with the temple Abbott. Eventually, a land-sharing plan was agreed to, in which the community would return part of the land to the temple, in exchange for a long-term rental contract to the remaining part.



4 OTHERS ON HISTORIC MONUMENT LAND



Beside these three pilot communities, there are eight other communities located on land which the Department of Fine Arts has plans to clear, in order to improve the landscaping around historic ruins. The local joint committee is now exploring alternative ways of solving the problem, with the communities taking a central role in developing ideas for resettlement, shifting, reblocking, or redeveloping on the same site. Baan

Mankong will be an important tool for improving these settlements. Detailed upgrading plans are now being developed in all of these communities.

Arkarn Songkhroa Community :

Ayutthaya's first pilot upgrading project . . .

The Arkarn Songkhroa community began life 45 years ago as an early social housing project, in which the government built two lines of simple row houses for families whose dwellings had burned down in settlements nearby. Later, more households moved into the open spaces and the tightly-knit community grew to 67 households. The people work as vendors, factory laborers, tuk-tuk drivers and traditional Thai massage therapists - all active members of the savings group. With the help of two young architects from Bangkok, the community spent 3-months designing a full redevelopment plan for Arkarn Songkhroa which included the realignment of all the houses to equalize plot sizes and to create some much-needed open spaces, and the complete reconstruction of the community's housing and infrastructure.



Poor communities and historic monuments can make good neighbors. For the Ayutthaya Community Network, the upgrading of Arkarn Songkhroa is the first step towards showing the city and the preservationists that improving the living conditions and tenure security of the city's poor communities answers the imperatives of both historic preservation and need for housing.



The 2-story "core house" with internal half-loft at the top, which can later become a full 3rd floor.



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



On-site reconstruction at Arkarn Songkhroa :

Number of units : 66 houses

Area of community : 4,800 sm total, with 66 plots of 30 sm each.

Development costs : 2.7 million Baht (as infrastructure development subsidy from NHA)

House design : 2 story "core" row-houses (3 x 7 meters) with internal lofts on 2nd floor, and a total living area of 60 sm.

House costs : US\$1,860 per house. To keep costs low, the people collectively built core houses with side walls, floor slabs, roof and space for a 2nd floor loft. Each family provides front and back walls, windows, doors and finishes, many using recycled material from old houses.

Total housing loan : US\$ 180,000 to community cooperative (\$1,800 per household)

Tenure terms : The land belongs to Treasury Department, which has leased it to the Municipality, which in turn has sub-leased it (on a long term 30 year renewable lease) to the cooperative (not to individual families) which the community formed at the beginning of the negotiations.

Land rental rate: 1 Baht per 4 s.m. per year, on a 30-year lease, renewable (nominal).

6

CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN :

Rayong



The coastal town of Rayong is just 200 kms south of Bangkok. For tourists, it's just a stop-over on the way to the island of Koh Samet and nearby beaches. But the town has an interesting history, as an ancient trading port and as the capitol of a lovely fruit-growing and sea-fishing province. Twenty years ago, the central government decided to make Rayong the center of a new industrial development and manufacturing zone in central Thailand, and began building infrastructure to

support. This has brought a lot of investment, created a lot of jobs and led to a big in-migration of people to the area, but it has also made for some heavy problems of pollution and environmental degradation.

Opening up an environment for collaboration :

The collaboration between Rayong's poor communities and its city government to improve the housing and tenure conditions of the city's poor households began in 2003, with the "Livable Cities Project." At that time, the city's progressive mayor, Suraphong Putanapibul, became an important ally in setting up a joint mechanism to redevelop several aspects of Rayong, including :

- Developing housing and secure tenure for all of the city's poor communities.
- Improving environmental conditions in these communities.
- Restoring the city's historic wooden shop-house district on Yom Jindaa Road.



Rayong city facts :

- **Urban population :** 550,000 people
- **Total number of poor communities in the city :** 37 settlements (3,024 households - not all of these households live in established communities, some are living in scattered circumstances)
- **What people do :** Most are general laborers, food vendors, garbage collectors, factory workers and fishermen. Many also work as seasonal workers in the fruit orchards around Rayong Province.

Rayong's upgrading plans :

- 2003 - 4** First pilot was **Laem Rung Reung** (76 households) On-site reblocking with long-term lease.
- 2005** Upgrade 4 more communities (269 households).
- **Kao Yot** (60 households) On-site upgrading with long-term lease on Port Authority land.
 - **Khon Peak** (70 households on-site upgrading with collective long-term lease on National Irrigation Dept land.
 - **Klong Kaya** (55 households) On-site upgrading with collective land purchase, on private land. Sanam Pao (80 households) on-site upgrading with long-term lease on temple land.
 - **Chai Gapom** : (80 households) on-site reconstruction with collective land-lease on private land.



“We don't always realize how much we already have . . .”

Rayong's former mayor, Suraphong Putanapibul, was for eight years a key supporter of the community network's involvement in resolving Rayong's low income housing problems, and was instrumental in launching the community improvement process at Laem Rung Reung. Here are some of his comments on what he feels the experience in Rayong has to teach other cities :

Cities like Rayong have a lot of good things already: a nice environment, good weather, clean air, fertile soil, a rich history and a lovely beach. If the people and the government become partners, they can bring all these good assets to benefit the society as a whole. Because we live with these things everyday, we don't always realize how much we have! We end up looking for something we don't have, and forget what we do have. We need to be cautious that the new capitalist system doesn't destroy all these good things we already have in our city. We need to understand our history and the roots of our society. And we have to bring all this wisdom and all these good things we already have along with us, as we plan our future development.



New partnerships to promote renewable energy in Rayong :

As part of the national Baan Mankong process, the Ministry of Energy has been helping several of the pilot communities to develop alternative energy sources. At Laem Rung Reung, these innovations have resulted in some BIG savings for the community people:

1 Community solar cells :

There are no electric lines in the community. Before, people used car batteries, which had to be lugged outside on a motorcycle to be recharged each day, costing each family 35 baht per day. After they installed community solar cells, it costs people only 10 Baht to recharge their batteries. That means each family is saving 25 Baht per day, or almost 10,000 Baht per year! (the equivalent of two months basic salary!).



2 Efficient charcoal cooking stoves

are saving families 300 Baht per month (over the traditional wood-burning or charcoal-burning cooking stoves), and this means each family is saving another 3,600 Baht per year!



Laem Rung Reung :

Rayong's first on-site upgrading pilot . . .



Laem Rung Reung is an old community of 76 households - mostly very poor fisher folk - located on a sandy peninsula which stretches out into the Gulf of Thailand. Since tidal waters separate this beautiful area (which used to be a graveyard!) from the mainland for most of the day, Laem Rung Reung is practically an island. There have been serious erosion problems caused by companies coming into the area to illegally mine sand.

The houses were loosely scattered and constructed mostly of coconut palm thatch and salvaged planks and tin sheets. Only a few houses were built of concrete blocks. The community had no water supply, drains, toilets or municipal electricity, and so for years, community people have had to use car batteries to power their radios and lights, and buy their drinking water and make do with brackish well water for bathing. Besides reconstructing their houses and develop basic infrastructure in the community, Laem Rung Reung's redevelopment plans involved some repositioning of houses to be closer together and to make way for tree-planting and the creation of a public park at the center, for the whole city to enjoy. With help from young architects, the people developed several simple wooden house types.

The land at Laem Rung Reung belongs to the Ministry of Interior, but the people stayed here for decades without any formal lease contract. There are many communities around Thailand on land under Interior Ministry ownership, with whom CODI has signed an M.O.U. to work together within the Baan Mankong Program to obtain long-term leases for all the informal communities located on

Interior Ministry land. But the tenure arrangements are decided only on a project-by-project basis, and in some cases where the ministry wants the land for other purposes, they're giving only three or five -year leases. Eventually, the a 30-year collective lease contract was negotiated.



KAOSENG UPGRADING FACTS :

- Number of households : **76**
- CODI housing loan : **US\$ 40,000**
(average **\$1,000 / unit**)
- Infrastructure subsidy : **US\$ 33,500**
- Tenure terms : **Long term lease (30 yrs)**
- Land-owner : **Treasury Department**



▲ **BEFORE :**

▲ **AFTER :**



▲ **LAYOUT BEFORE :**



▲ **LAYOUT AFTER :**

7 CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Khon Kaen

Khon Kaen is Thailand's fourth largest city, as well as the most important commercial, financial, educational and communications center in the northeastern region of Thailand (which is also called Isaan). Khon Kaen is also the provincial capital of Khon Kaen District.

Railway slums in Khon Kaen : Some of the largest, poorest and most insecure communities in Khon Kaen are those along the railway tracks, right in the middle of town. These railway communities have the strongest network. In fact there are two railway community networks in Khon Kaen city, working in parallel: one is linked to the national "Four-Regions Slum Network" and the other is the network based in Khon Kaen itself.



All together, these two networks cover about 1,500 railway households. All these railway communities are included in the first phase of the city-wide upgrading plan. Some of these communities will have to relocate to nearby land, but most will be able to stay, according to an agreement that has been negotiated by the national network of railway communities, in which :

- Communities within **20 meters** of the tracks will have to relocate.
- Communities located **20 - 40 meters** from the tracks can get 3-year lease contracts and upgrade their settlements *in situ*.
- Communities on railway land **beyond 40 meters** from the track can get 30-year lease contracts and upgrade *in situ*.

Baan Mankong upgrading plan : There are 69 poor communities in Khon Kaen, of which 50 (which are the poorest) will be improved in this first phase of the Baan Mankong Program. The others are mostly communities within markets or older communities with fairly secure tenure, whose housing needs are not so urgent.

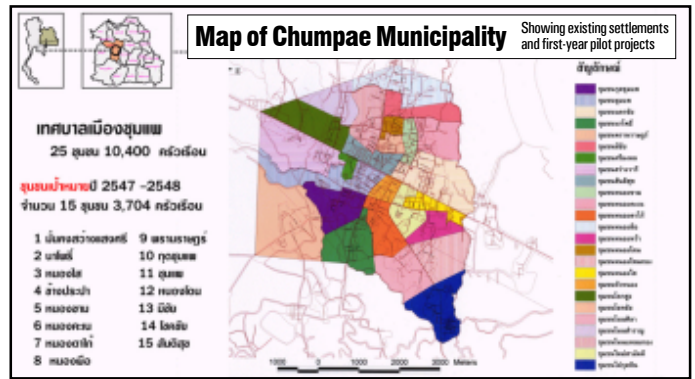
Joint mechanism to solve the problems : Khon Kaen's young, enthusiastic mayor is one of the county's most progressive. He has been an important supporter of the city-wide upgrading process in the city. His energetic participation has helped to link the various community networks and many NGOs operating in the city and helped get all these different factions to move in a common direction.

Khon Kaen city facts :

- **Urban population :** 1.8 million people
- **Total number of poor and informal communities in the city :** 65 settlements (19,539 households)

Khon Kaen's upgrading plan :

- 2004 Upgrade 3 pilot communities (303 households)**
- **Dynamo** (relocation to collectively-purchased land nearby, see next page for project details)
 - **None Nong Wat** (on-site upgrading with long-term collective lease on State Railway land)
 - **Nong Yai 2** (on-site upgrading with long-term collective lease on public land under Ministry of Interior ownership).
- 2005 Upgrade 11 communities (998 households)**
(10 communities on State Railways land, 1 on NHA land)



Scaling up the city-wide upgrading process to **PROVINCE** level :

The Baan Mankong process began in Khon Kaen city but is now spreading to other towns in the province. Four cities are now involved in the upgrading process in Khon Kaen province, of which three are now in active implementation: Khon Kaen city, Chumpae and Baan Pai. This is one of the first provinces in the country where we got the cities to get the overall picture of all the cities in the whole province, and those cities all develop upgrading plans together.

The town of **BAAN PAI**

This is a small town in Khon Kaen Province. The upgrading process started in this town with one pilot on-site upgrading project, which took about two years, but the whole city was involved. This project was Baan Pai's "break-through", and after it was finished, four other communities were approved and are now underway. 2004 pilots in Baan Pai include:



1. Phra Thammasaan : (125 households, on-site upgrading and house reconstruction) This richly diverse community is 68 years old, and composed mostly of foreign migrants from China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao. The land includes bits under public, temple and private ownership.



2. Soon Maa Namai : (89 households, on-site upgrading with long-term lease) This 50-year old railway community sprang up around a vibrant income earning opportunity - in this case a major highway. Most people here earn their living serving the various needs of the truck drivers at the nearby truck stop: so there are garland sellers, food vendors and sex workers.

3. See Moan Pattana : (415 households, on-site upgrading) People moved to squat on this land (partly State Railway and partly private land) about 20 years ago, after a big fire gutted the Ban Pai Market and surrounding houses, where they were living. This area used to be a fuel station for the train yard.

The town of **CHUMPAE**

This is another small town in Khon Kaen Province. There are no NGOs or universities in this town, and the community network is not so strong yet. In Chumpae, the driving force behind the city-wide upgrading process so far has been a very active municipal government, which understands the people-driven concept. There is very little distance between the government



and the people here, and the 25 poor communities in the town are all fairly small (total 10,400 households). The upgrading target for 2004 - 2005 is to upgrade 15 communities (3,704 households), including the first pilot project :

Sowang Saan See : (58 households, on-site upgrading with collective long-term lease, on public land, under Treasury Department ownership)

Dynamo Community :

Khon Kaen's pilot upgrading project . . .



Some 40 years ago, the private-sector Dynamo Sawmill leased a piece of public land on the edge of Khon Kaen. To make extra money, the saw-mill built some simple houses of scrap timber and rented them out to poor families for 5 Baht a day. It was a kind of low-income welfare hotel. Now the rent has increased to 20 Baht per day, which works out to 600 Baht per month - which is not cheap at all.

First there were only a few rooms, now a lot of families have come to rent houses at Dynamo. Most

of these people are laborers, recyclable waste collectors (called "saa-leng" in Thai) and pedicab ("samlor") drivers. Though the rent was pretty high, the saw mill has never made any improvements over the years, or provided any basic services for the people living here, so the place has become a slum. There were no water taps or electricity and only a few smelly pit latrines in pretty bad shape. People have to buy all their water for washing (at 5 baht per bicycle-tanker) and for drinking (at 1 baht per gallon). They also have to buy their electricity informally from nearby shops for a flat rate of 450 baht per house per month, for just a tube light and a TV (which is another rip off!). As a result, many residents in Dynamo only use candles and kerosene lamps.

After organizing themselves, the Dynamo community decided enough was enough. They searched for and collectively purchased an alternative piece of land, and are now developing a new community there.



DYNAMO UPGRADING FINANCES :

- Number of households : **146 units**
- CODI land loan : **US\$ 585,000**
- Infrastructure subsidy : **US\$ 197,500**



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



The final layout plan, which the Dynamo community people drafted with architecture students.

The role of Khon Kaen University in the upgrading process :

In the northeastern region, architecture faculties at three big universities have become active in supporting the Baan Mankong program: Maha Salakam University, Korat University and the progressive Khon Kaen University. Besides working with communities in their own cities, they are also arranging to send teams of students to work with communities in nearby cities which don't have architecture faculties. These professors, architects, planners and students who have begun working with communities play an extremely important role in the upgrading process. In a program which has to do with physical change,

their ability to make lovely drawings and models, help community people to visualize new possibilities and make professional presentations is an essential ingredient in the success of the program. For most of these technical people and academics, assisting communities with their upgrading and housing plans and sitting on these local committees is something very new. And many are finding that it's not simply a matter of making a few models. Some are finding themselves being dragged into all the messy, complicated realities of communities in the process. The architects are also training community leaders to supervise the construction process and



monitor quality themselves, when contractors are involved. In these ways, the process is building a relationship between the university and the communities - and the society of Khon Kaen city as a whole.

8

CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN :

Ubon

The provincial capitol city of Ubon Ratchathani ("Ubon" for short) is on the banks of the Moon River, and is a financial, educational, communications and agricultural market center for the eastern part of Isaan (North-eastern Thailand). Like Udon Thani, Ubon Ratchathani served as a US Airbase during the Vietnam war days. Ubon is ancient with a capital "A". The whole area was for centuries part of the ancient Hindu Khmer kingdom during the Angkor period, and there are still archeological sites and ruins of fabulous temples and palaces littered around the province. And long before that, some of Asia's "pre-historic" pottery-making, bronze-casting and rock-painting civilizations were here.

Slums on public land in Ubon : Most of Ubon's 25 slum communities are squatters on public land. A lot of this land (which was all that was available to them when they came to the city) is in low-lying parts of the city. Many communities experience serious problems of flooding during the monsoons each year, when the Moon River swells and overflows. In the Gate Keaow community, for example, many houses are submerged under 2 meters of water for 5 months in the year, when people live on floating bamboo raft-houses! One of the biggest challenges for the community upgrading process in Ubon is dealing with this issue of flooding and low-lying land.



Strong network, strong city supporters : The community development process in Ubon started with a recycling project which used simple, vital activities related to livelihood needs to help people come together, work together and start saving their money together. There is a very strong community network in Ubon, a very supportive municipal government and some very strong community development workers from local NGOs. This has enabled the city's poor to move quickly from savings and livelihood into land and housing. Ubon's city-wide upgrading process is one of the country's fastest-moving.

The Baan Mankong process : Ubon's upgrading process began in 2004 with a big seminar, which brought together community people, municipal and district officials, academics from the local Rajabhat Institute and CODI to discuss the problems of housing and to set collaborative plans for solving them, using the financial tools that come with Baan Mankong. Communities from within the Ubon municipal area joined with communities from the adjacent Warin Chamlaap District to form a larger community network for upgrading, and six pilot upgrading projects were launched. There are now 11 upgrading projects underway in Ubon.



Ubon's waste-pickers :

Ubon's enterprising waste-pickers begin by upgrading their recycling activities and welfare, and move into housing and tenure . . .

Like so many cities around Asia, Ubon Ratchathani generates more garbage than its municipal collection systems can handle. The informal waste-collectors who ply the streets on three-wheel carts (*Sa-Leng* in Thai) have always played an important role in managing all that garbage, by collecting, sorting and selling recyclable waste. But their contribution is often looked upon as a nuisance. They are among the city's poorest citizens, leading lives that are often harsh and short, and live in squatter settlements without services or security.

The *Sa-Leng* Network in Ubon Ratchathani has started savings and credit groups in 14 of the city's squatter settlements, carried out settlement improvements and set up health care systems for its members. In 1999, the network began running a city-wide garbage collection and recycling enterprise, as a supplement to the city's solid-waste management system. The project, in which all the *Sa-Leng* members are shareholders, represented a dramatic upscaling of their traditional vocation and a chance to show the public they can help keep the whole city clean, and improve their own lives, incomes and settlements in the process. The city's mayor, Jirichai Kraikangwon, who has been one of the project's most enthusiastic supporters, says, "They are saving the whole town from avalanches of garbage mountains."

The network dubbed their enterprise "*Man and the Wheel for the Environment Project*" and it had a budget of US\$ 32,500, of which \$18,750 came from the UCEA Project, \$10,000 from network members (in labor, food and materials), and the rest came from the Miyazawa Fund. The project included setting up two recycling centers, where *Sa-Leng* can get their carts repaired, sell recyclable materials at fair prices, and refurbish broken appliances to sell and re-use. The project also involved setting up a special "Bank of the poor", establishing a labor center, planning an information campaign to promote the *Sa-Leng's* work, and organizing exchange visits with other *Sa-Leng* groups around Thailand.



Ubon Ratchathani city facts :

- Urban population : 1.7 million people
- Total number of poor and informal communities in the city : 25 settlements (7298 households)

Ubon's upgrading progress :

2004	Upgrade 6 pilot communities	(451 households)
2005	Upgrade 11 communities (in Ubon and Warin Chamlaap District)	
	● Infrastructure subsidy	US\$ 547,500
	● Land and housing loans	US\$ 297,500
	● TOTAL upgrading budget	US\$ 845,000

Ubon's six 2004 pilot upgrading projects :

1. **Nong Paa Souk Community (22 households)** Relocation to collectively purchased land. Housing construction began in June 2005.
2. **Taa Wang Daeng Community (64 households)** On-site upgrading with long-term collective lease to Treasury Dept. land.
3. **Wang Sawang Community (105 households)** On-site upgrading on land which is still under unclear ownership.
4. **Kurumith Community (40 households)** On-site land-sharing on collectively-purchased land.
5. **Gate Keaow Community (94 households)** On-site upgrading and land consolidation with long-term collective lease on public land.
6. **Haat Suan Suk Community (126 households)** On-site reconstruction of old community of brick-kiln workers on public land.

2 Ubon pilots :

On-site upgrading at Taa Waan Daeng (64 households)

People began settling on this river-side land, under Treasury Department ownership, 34 years ago. Many had been evicted from land elsewhere to make way for the construction of a technical college. The community now occupies 6,400 sm. People here earn their living as laborers, garland sellers and dried squid vendors. The people did all the work constructing the infrastructure themselves.



▲ PLAN BEFORE :



▲ BEFORE :



▲ PLAN AFTER :



▲ AFTER :

Land sharing at Kurumith (40 households)

The name of this very poor squatter community used to be *None Key Haen*, which means in Thai "Dry shit highland." People from nearby communities would come to defecate in the open air here! After migrants from nearby districts began settling here 65 years ago, the name was upgraded to *Kurumith*. At first, most of the people earned their living by making charcoal from trees which grew on the site. Once all the trees were cut down and the charcoal-making opportunities over, people began collecting recyclable waste and working on construction sites to survive. The land is owned by a private landowner who owns a lot of land in the area.

In 2004, the land owner decided to donate part of the land to build houses for school teachers, and asked the people (who lived in houses scattered over a big area) to move to another part of the land. The people agreed, and are now reconstructing their community on a 1,600 sm piece of the same land, which they are now negotiating to buy.



Besides housing and infrastructure, the people are developing a "garbage bank" for the waste recyclers living here, as part of the project.



▲ BEFORE :



▲ PLAN BEFORE :



▲ PLAN AFTER :



▲ AFTER :

9 CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Udon Thani

The northeastern city of Udon Thani really boomed during the Vietnam war, when a US Airbase was established there. Many GIs married local women, and their remittances home continue to pump serious money into the local economy. The airbase is gone, but this vibrant city remains an important transport hub and agricultural market for the surrounding provinces.

Baan Mankong starts : The Baan Mankong Program was officially launched in Udon Thani in December, 2004, with a big 3-day national seminar on community upgrading. The seminar wound up with a gala parade through the city, complete with marching bands and dozens of banner-waving community groups in matching t-shirts - all triumphantly headed by the city's mayor, driving a decorated tuk-tuk! The parade ended up at Wat Potee Wararam, where the ceremonies to inaugurate Udon Thani's first community upgrading project were held, and where several important milestones for the city's poor took place :

- The signing of the MOU between the municipality, the community network and CODI to launch Baan Mankong in Udon Thani.
- The signing of land lease contract for one of the first pilot projects and the making of the first land-purchase payment in another.
- The ceremonial cementing of the first concrete column in the Wat Potee Wararam community's reconstruction across the street.



It's much easier when the mayor is on your side :

Some old-style mayors, who operate along more traditional patronage lines, have been reluctant to support Baan Mankong. But in a few cities, a new generation of mayors have embraced with enthusiasm the opportunities in this highly participatory and community-driven upgrading program. Udon Thani's progressive young Mayor, Khun Harnchai, has been an enthusiastic supporter of the community network's initiatives and a key ally in making the city's Baan Mankong process go quickly and smoothly. His team has done a lot of the behind-the-scenes work to help negotiate lease contracts and tenure agreements for all the settlements and worked closely with the network to find pragmatic ways the city can support their upgrading efforts.

“Decent, secure settlements are good for people and good for the whole city. The Baan Mankong pilot projects will help show this. When people plan and build their own secure, well-served settlements, they feel a sense of ownership of those communities, and they become sustainable communities, not like a government project, which outsiders build and people move into.”

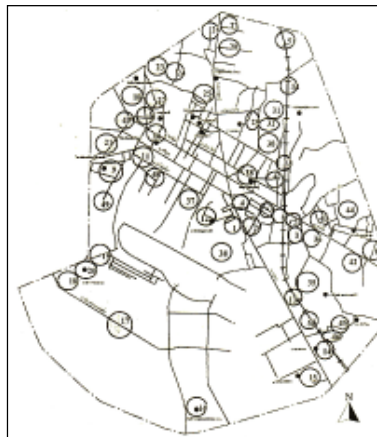
(Khun Harnchai, Mayor of Udon Thani)

Udon Thani city facts :

- Urban population : 1.5 million people
- Total number of poor and informal communities in the city : 51 settlements (18,347 households)

Udon Thani 3-year upgrading plan :

2004	Upgrade 4 communities	(1,067 households)
2005	Upgrade 8 communities	(5,045 households)
2006	Upgrade 9 communities	(1,717 households)



Map of **Udon Thani**, showing the location of the city's 51 poor communities

First year pilots in Udon Thani :

The joint committee set up to manage the city-wide upgrading process in Udon Thani includes 15 people: 8 community representatives (two leaders from each of the city's four zones), four representatives from the municipality (including the mayor), one development professional and two people from CODI. The preparation process in the first year (meetings, survey, selection of pilots, developing working plan and starting work) went very quickly, thanks to the good partnership between a strong community network and a supportive municipality. Here are a few notes on the first few pilot upgrading projects:

1 WAT POTE WARARAM

(136 households, on-site reblocking with long-term lease) *(see next page)*

2 PO TONG

(182 households, on-site reconstruction) The families in this community were mostly squatters who were evicted from other areas of the city, and resettled on this piece of private land, where some became land renters and others were squatters. Last year, they negotiated with the land-owner to buy the land they occupy at US\$19 per square meter. Each family will have a small plot of 48 square meters, costing US\$ 900. They are now in the process of completely rebuilding their settlement and houses.



3 NONG TAOLEK



(450 households, on-site reblocking on public land) The first inhabitant of this beautiful community settled on this lake-side land about 50 years ago. Since then, the area's central location has drawn hundreds of poor households, who now live all around the lake. The people have negotiated a collective long-term lease for the land and

are now in the process of upgrading their infrastructure and houses, with support from the municipality and young architects. Their plans include developing a landscaped public walkway along the lake edge.

4 PAA SOOK

(300 households, relocation) This community takes its name from Koom Paa Sook, the first guy to settle on this public road-side land 50 years ago! 30 years ago, the Highways Department tried to evict these people, and some left. The strong ones held on, though, and are now working with the Municipality to identify good land to move to, where they can develop a new community.



Wat Potee Wararam :

Udon Thani's first pilot upgrading project . . .

Wat Potee Wararam is a 50-year old settlement of 136 families renting land across the road from Buddhist temple. Initially, the people were only able to negotiate a short-term rental contract with the temple, but now they are working on obtaining a more secure, long-term lease contract. The upgrading program has given a big boost to the spirit of self-help in the community. When the survey process first began, only five or six people would show up for the meetings, asking "Is this program real?" Gradually, more and more got involved, bringing energy into the upgrading preparations.

The design process took about six months and involved a lot of extremely delicate negotiations. Some wanted to demolish everything and start over with same-sized plots, while others wanted to keep the houses they'd invested so much in. Some families owned only the house they lived in, while others owned several structures and were earning income by renting them out. Finding ways of accommodating all these differences was never easy.



The final reblocking plan called for some houses to be moved to allow internal lanes to be straightened and widened and most houses to be rebuilt. Young architects from the Rajabhat Institute helped the people to design three "adjustable" house types which allow old materials to be re-used. The construction of all the infrastructure and new houses was done collectively by the people themselves, and the community's savvy materials purchasing committee became infamous among building suppliers for haggling the lowest of low prices of materials.



▲ BEFORE :

▲ AFTER :



▲ BEFORE :

▲ AFTER :



▲ BEFORE :

▲ AFTER :



WAT POTEE WARARAM UPGRADING :

- Number of households : **136 units**
- CODI housing loan : **US\$ 345,000**
- Infrastructure subsidy : **US\$ 127,500**



The new community includes a common "welfare house" in the middle of the settlement for elderly, sick or unemployed community members who are alone or are unable to take care of themselves. This house was built by the people themselves, partly with contributed materials and partly with funds drawn from the margin charged on interest for housing and income generation loans.

10 CITY-WIDE UPGRADING Surin

The guidebooks will all tell you that the quiet provincial capitol of Surin represents the crossroads of Lao, Central Thai, Khmer and Suay people, which results in an interesting blend of dialects and customs. 90% of Surin's residents speak both Thai and Khmer, and the blend of cultures here got even more complex during the 1970s and 80s, when there were huge refugee camps in the province. In November every year, the city becomes a giant circus during the annual Elephant Roundup, the event of the year in a province famed for its elephants.



Ancient monuments and the poor : Like Ubon, Surin is also a very old city, and was also part of the 11th and 12th Century Angkor Kingdom, and the province is still dotted with Khmer ruins. The city of Surin itself is full of ancient monuments, but they're not kept up as well as those in Ayutthaya - in fact many are unrecognizable as ancient ruins at all. Most of the city's poor settlements are located on the land around these ruins, which is under the control of the Thai Government's Department of Fine Arts. Surin's mayor has taken a pragmatic view of the problem of squatters on the city's historic sites, and feels the best way to spruce up the ruins is for the Municipality to work with these communities to improve the housing and living conditions in these settlements. So most of the communities in Surin are being upgraded on-site.

Stong network, supportive city : The community network in Surin is strong, links together all the settlements in the city and is guided by some very good senior community leaders. The network has a long history of collaboration with both the Municipality and with CODI on various activities involving savings and credit, environmental improvements and community welfare.

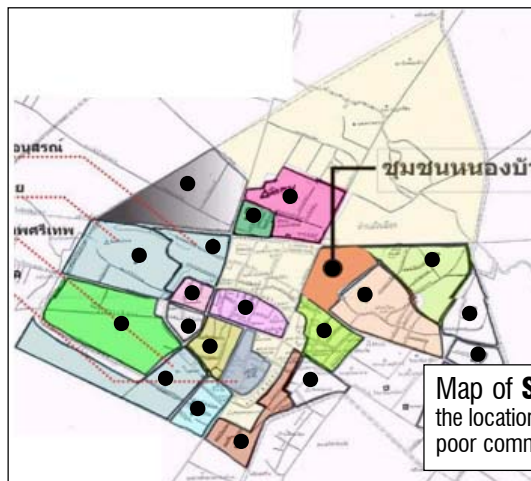


Surin city facts :

- Urban population : 1.4 million people
- Total number of poor and informal communities in the city : 20 settlements (4,561 households)

Surin's community upgrading progress :

2004	Upgrade 3 pilot communities	(444 households)
2005	Upgrade 10 more communities	(1,007 households)
	● upgrading subsidy	US\$ 575,500
	● housing loans	US\$ 107,500
	● TOTAL budget (for 10 projects)	US\$ 685,000
2006	After upgrading the city's established communities, the network and the municipality will be working to find ways to solve the housing needs of the city's very poor room renters (most of whom are construction laborers, samlor drivers, recyclers).	



Map of Surin, showing the location of the city's 20 poor communities

First 3 pilot projects in Surin :

1 NONG BUA COMMUNITY

Nong Bua Community (200 households) On-site upgrading (*see next page*)

2 SEE BURAI COMMUNITY

(157 households) On-site upgrading with long-term lease, on Fine Arts Department land, close to the city's ancient earth wall. People have lived here 40 years. In the beginning, there were only two families here, who settled on this empty land and began planting vegetables to sell at the market close by. As the city grew, more and more people moved here, until See Burai became a crowded settlement. So far, the people have begun the work on improving the infrastructure (with a US\$ 78,750 infrastructure subsidy), but have not yet taken any housing loans.



3 DOAN KAI COMMUNITY



(87 households) On-site upgrading with long-term lease. This 40 year old community is also on Fine Arts Department land, along the city's ancient earth wall, and very close to the Moon River. Most people are general laborers. Would like to improve houses. Infrastructure subsidy so far 2.2 million.

Taking care of everybody . . .

Most of the pilot projects in Surin have included in their plans the construction of a central welfare house (*Baan Krang*), which will be a place where poor, elderly, ill or needy people or families can stay. This central house is important because it represents a commitment by a community to take care of its own most vulnerable members. In a similar way, the community upgrading process which Baan Mankong supports makes the financial support conditional on a community including everyone in the community in the upgrading project, no matter how destitute or ill or elderly they are. So communities are finding ways to include even people with no income at all - or with minus income! - in the upgrading process.





Nong Bua Community :

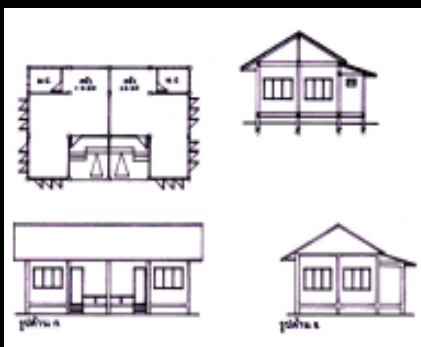
Surin's first pilot on-site upgrading project . . .

Nong Bua is an old community of about 200 houses. More than fifty years ago, the community started when five or six families settled on public land beside this small lake, and used the banks to grow vegetables, which they sold in the city's fresh markets. In the 1970s, a bus terminal was built nearby and after that, the community started to grow fast. People came from other parts of the city, and other districts of Surin Province to earn a living as food vendors, laborers or recyclable waste collectors in the area. Eventually, the community spread all the way around the lake, and now the area is in the middle of an intensely urban quarter of Surin.

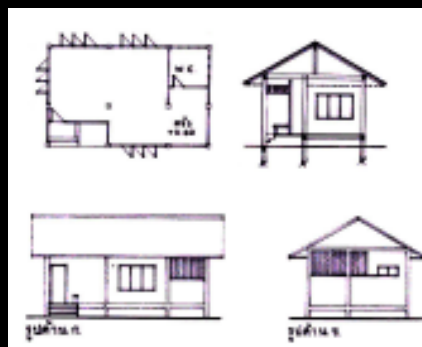
The community is now in the process of planning a full, on-site upgrading project for Nong Bua, in which the people will develop roads and basic services, build new houses and use tree planting and reblocking to develop trash sorting areas, a garbage bank and small outdoor recreation spaces in this crowded community. As part of the process, the community is working with the Municipality to negotiate a long-term collective lease for the land.



CONDITIONS BEFORE ▶



1 HOUSE TYPE
Cost : US\$ 1,875



2 HOUSE TYPE
Cost : US\$ 3,000



3 HOUSE TYPE
Cost : US\$ 3,750

11

CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN : Chantaburi

Chantaburi is a bustling provincial capital of about 100,000 people, located in the eastern part of Thailand, 245 kms from Bangkok. Chantaburi is also the name of the province surrounding this town. There are 16 municipalities in Chantaburi province. So far, upgrading has begun only in Chantaburi town itself, but the other towns have started surveying.

In a food-loving country like Thailand, the town of Chantaburi (which means *City of the Moon* in Thai) is especially famous for its tropical fruits, which grow in orchards in the surrounding province and are exported all over Thailand: durian (the national fruit), mangosteens, langsat and rambutan. The city is also famous for its rice noodles, which are manufactured in hundreds of workshops around town and exported all over the world. Chantaburi is also an important gem trading center, particularly known for its sapphires and rubies from all over southeast Asia, which are bought and sold in shops along the city's Trok Kachang Road.



A big proportion of Chantaburi's population are Vietnamese Christians, who fled religious or political persecution in Vietnam in the 19th century and later in the 1920s and 40s. From 1893 to 190, while negotiating with the Siamese over where to draw the borders between Laos and Cambodia, the French occupied the town. The Vietnamese-French influence on the city persists, in some beautiful architecture - particularly the French cathedral, and some Vietnamese-style shop-house neighborhoods.

Chantaburi city facts :

- **Urban population :** 500,000 people
- **Total number of poor and informal communities in the city :** 16 settlements (1,223 households)
- **What people do :** Most are general laborers, food vendors and garbage collectors. Many also work as laborers in jewelry-making and gem-cutting businesses, or as seasonal workers in the fruit orchards.

Chantaburi's upgrading plan :

The first step was to survey all the settlements in the city and understand the problems together. To tackle the housing problems comprehensively, a committee was set up included the Municipality, the Provincial Administration, civil society groups (lawyers, professors, technical school people), the long-established Chantaburi community network, the provincial unit of the National Social Development Ministry and CODI.

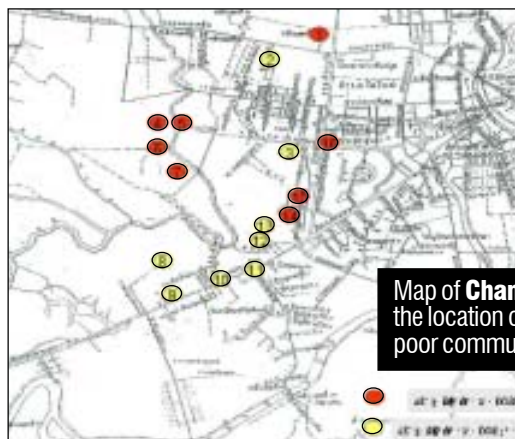
The committee set a target of improving seven communities (493 households) in the first year, starting with the pilot project at *Naa Technique*. Some of these seven communities have gotten delayed, while they wait for their land (under Treasury Department ownership) to be officially leased to the Municipality. But four projects are now being implemented:

- **Naa Technique :** (70 households) This is the city's first finished pilot project, was inaugurated by the Prime Minister in August 2005.
- **Soi Amon :** (300 households) This community is relocating to nearby land, which the people are buying collectively.
- **Baan Lang :** (122 households) This is another relocation project to nearby land: a kind of land-sharing process, where lots of squatters in one area of the city are moving to one new community.
- **Soi 3-4 :** (87 households) This community is upgrading in the same place, with a little reblocking of the houses.

The moment when things start to click...



A week before the prime minister was to inaugurate the *Naa Technique* pilot project in Chantaburi, a lot of the landscaping and housepainting still wasn't finished. Everybody was in a panic, so about 200 community people from other Chantaburi settlements, and from cities all over Thailand, came for a week to help. A *Baan Mankong* pilot like this is an important breakthrough for community people all over the country, and everyone ends up feeling it's "their baby" too!



Map of Chantaburi, showing the location of the city's 16 poor communities

The problem of land outside the city :

When people threatened with eviction have to find alternative land which they can afford, it often means looking at peripheral land outside the city. The new land which the people found in *Naa Technique*, for example, lies just outside the municipal boundaries. Developing housing in such places is not just a simple matter of building houses! The problem is that land like *Naa Technique*'s is beyond the reach of municipal services and infrastructure (schools, water mains, roads, etc.) Many of the cities in the *Baan Mankong* process are exploring new and unconventional ways in which municipal authorities - and provincial authorities - can help facilitate the development of these newly-relocated communities with vital infrastructure facilities, even when they're "off the map."

We usually hear about municipal officials wanting to get poor settlements out of the city. But in the case of Chantaburi, the municipality was not at all happy when the *Naa Technique* community moved to land outside the city boundaries. Why? Because the city lost a considerable vote bank and source of government revenues (which are based on population)! The upshot of this is that now, the Municipality has become a key supporter of other communities planning to relocate, and their efforts to find land *inside* the city! And this turnaround, in which the city helps to find land for housing *inside* the city, has given a strategic hint to other cities.



Naa Technique Community :

Chantaburi's first pilot upgrading project . . .

The first community in Chantaburi to be upgraded under the Baan Mankong program was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 2 August, 2005. The Naa Technique community takes its name from the Changburi Technical College, which it used to be near. The 42 households (about 200 people) in the community had been living for the past 30 years in houses they built themselves, on privately-owned land. Only 23 of these households had land rental contracts with the land owner. Most of the community people earn their living as construction laborers and vendors. In June 2004, the land owner decided to sell the land to a business and tried to evict the people.

Two of the young architects from Bangkok, Tuh and Baan, went down to Chantaburi to help organize the community to set up a housing saving group and search for alternative land nearby. They found a piece of good, empty private land 2.5 kms away. The people began negotiating with the owner of this new land, who finally agreed to sell the people 2 adjacent pieces of land (total 8,240 sq. meters) for US\$ 29,500 (which works out to a very low price of US\$ 3.60 per square meter). The people formed a cooperative and took a loan from CODI to buy the land, which will be owned collectively.

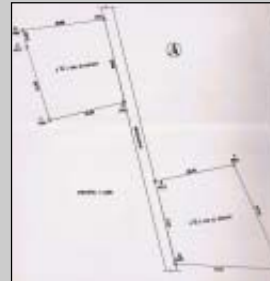
Once the people had the land, they began working with the architects to plan their new layout, infrastructure and houses. They decided to put 28 units on one of the plots, and 42 units on the other - total 70 units (which included houses for extended families and renters from that old community). The new layout includes different plot sizes, according to people's affordability, and they designed 6 different house types (4 types of single, detached houses, and 2 types of cheaper "twin" attached duplex houses). The layout plan includes some lovely, innovative "cluster planning" in which the houses are organized around shared green spaces, rather than along long, straight streets.

NAA TECHNIQUE UPGRADING FINANCES :

- Number of households : **70 units**
- CODI land loan : **US\$ 21,250**
(the rest comes from people's savings)
- CODI housing loans : **\$ 245,000**
- Infrastructure subsidy : **\$ 97,500**



Searching for good land nearby.



Finding the two plots and negotiating a good purchase price.



Working on planning the new community.



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



The final "cluster" house layout for one of the plots.



▲ BEFORE :



▲ AFTER :



Participatory design of affordable house-types.

12

CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN

Pattani

The provincial capital of Pattani, on the Gulf of Thailand, has been a trading settlement for more than 1,000 years. Until recently, Pattani was the center of an independent Malay principality which included Yala and Narathiwat Provinces. It was one of the earliest kingdoms in Thailand to host international trade, first with the Portuguese in the 16th century, the Japanese, Dutch and English in the 17th century. Today, Pattani is a lively city of ancient mosques, fishermen and rubber traders. 80% of the city's population are Malay-speaking Muslims.



The Baan Mankong process in Pattani got a head start through the "Livable Cities" project, which had sent a team down to work in the city and had helped link the city's poor communities into a network.



Baan Mankong has brought another tool to that project and to the goal of solving the city's housing and environmental problems, linking people together, and helping the government to understand that people's participation is not something threatening, but a great asset in a city. This is important, because Pattani is one of the three southernmost

provinces of Thailand (along with Yala and Narathiwat) which have been deeply troubled by violence and civil strife in recent years, and mistrust between local communities and the government is high.

Baan Mankong plans for Pattani : In Pattani, the three Baan Mankong projects so far are similar: all involve *de-densifying* the existing settlements, partly through relocation to alternative land, and partly through on-site upgrading. People felt this was necessary because many joint-family households were living in very crowded conditions, and land in Pattani is still relatively cheap (because of economic stagnation). Relocation tends to go more quickly than on-site upgrading, but moving to new land still isn't easy, even if the land is close by, as in Pattani. The "Livable Cities" project has helped link these upgrading projects (which focus on land and housing) to other issues of community life, such as environment, alternative energy and health.

One big cooperative : An interesting aspect of the Baan Mankong process in Pattani is that the people in all three first-year projects are very close and decided to register themselves under a single cooperative, though their projects are in different areas of the city.

Pattani city facts :

- Urban population : 600,000 people
- Total number of poor and informal communities in the city : 16 settlements (3,895 households)

Pattani's upgrading plan :

2004	Upgrade 3 communities	(302 households)
2005	Upgrade communities on Treasury Department land	(170 households)
	On-site improvement	(150 households)



First year pilot projects :

1 Poo Poh

(112 households) Relocation to collectively-purchased land - see next page.

2 Naak Lua

(78 households) Relocation to collectively-purchased land nearby. These families, who were living in the crowded Chumchon Klong Chang, moved to new land they bought at Naak Lua, with a US\$ 225,000 land loan from CODI (at 2% annual interest), through their 3-community cooperative. The new land (2 hectares) cost \$6.25 per square meter. Each house will have 170 square meters of land, and each family's monthly land repayment is \$14. Infrastructure subsidy is US\$ 115,000.

3 Pannaleh

(120 households) Relocation to collectively-purchased land in the same area. This community is in Pannaleh, a small town in the same province, close to Pattani, where there has been some violence recently. These people searched for and bought a 4.8 hectare piece of open land nearby for a very cheap price of only US\$ 75,000, which works out to only \$1.50 per square meter. Through the same 3-community cooperative, they took a \$67,500 land loan from CODI. Their infrastructure subsidy is \$195,000.

Tapping the rich "social capital" in these southern communities :

There is a lot of social capital in these three southern provinces of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat. One of the new buzzwords in development, *social capital* refers to a whole range of valuable *human* things which different societies possess - things like traditional wisdom, togetherness, faith, cultural identity, political engagement and cultural history.

For all three of these provinces, Baan Mankong is an ideal tool, because it gives people complete freedom to plan and to determine the nature of their own development. And so far, all this wealth of culture, history and faith has poured itself into the planning process, resulting in some strikingly beautiful community plans. In a part of Thailand where most government-imposed initiatives are met with some suspicion, the Baan Mankong

program has been enthusiastically accepted.



City-wide upgrading is also starting in the neighboring provinces of Yala and Narathiwat. In Narathiwat city, about 20 communities are now planning upgrading projects. There, the people are concentrating more on on-site reblocking and reconstruction, which tends to go a little slower than relocation.

Poo Poh Community :

Pattani's first pilot upgrading begins . . .



These families, most of whom are fisher folk, will move from three different squatter areas in the city to new land which they searched for and bought themselves, with a loan from CODI, through their 3-community cooperative. The vast track of beautiful new land (3.2 hectares) that they bought, cost US\$ 147,500 (\$ 4.70 per square meter). Each family will have a plot of 160 square meters, for which they will make a land loan repayment of just \$ 10 per month.

A young architect Nat and his team played a very important part of helping the people at Poo Poh (as well as the other two first-year pilots) to make a beautiful layout plan for the new land. In the plan they developed, the houses are arranged in clusters, where social structures define the physical plan. And at the center of the community are a mosque and public garden. Housing plots takes up 56% of the land, and a very generous 44% of the land is kept for public spaces, roads and community facilities.

POO POH UPGRADING FINANCES :

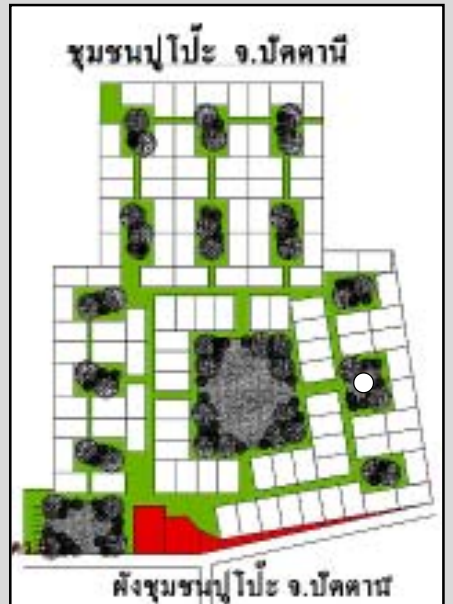
- Number of households : **112 units**
- CODI land loan : **US\$ 142,500**
(the rest comes from people's savings)
- CODI housing loans : **(not yet)**
- Infrastructure subsidy : **\$ 182,500**



The whole community goes to see the new land.



Working on planning the new community.



The final community layout which the people developed with the architect feature houses arranged in clusters around small open spaces, and a big garden with a community mosque at the center.



▲ **POO POH BEFORE :**

▲ **POO POH BEFORE :**

Who is eligible?

The community network in Pattani drafted their own seven criteria for participation in the Baan Mankong program :

- must have no secure house or land
- must have stayed in the community for at least 5 years
- must be member of savings group and cooperative, and save frequently
- must join in the activities
- no drugs!
- have to get married!
- must have some income.

13 CITY-WIDE UPGRADING IN Songkhla



In the southern port city of Songkhla, a long history of Thai, Chinese, Arabic, Malay and Dutch cultural influences are combined, and make for an urban atmosphere that is like no other place in Thailand. You sense this when you walk along the city's streets, lined

with beautiful old merchant's shop-houses, and catch whiffs of spicy curries and the tang of the sea, which is never far away. It is a prosperous city with a vigorous economy based on trading, industry, fishing and tourism. But there are a lot of slums for such a small city, many of them located on public land.

Ten busy years for Songkhla's poor :

The community process in Songkhla began about ten years ago, and has been supported by several organizations besides CODI, including the local NGO run by Pi Duk, the Four Regions Slum Network, and the Southern Region Slum Network. Over the years, savings groups have



been set up, environmental improvements and canal-cleaning jamborees were organized in several communities along the Klong Samrong, community welfare activities have been launched and a community network has been established. All this activity has had the effect of energizing Songkhla's poor and creating an impulse for change.

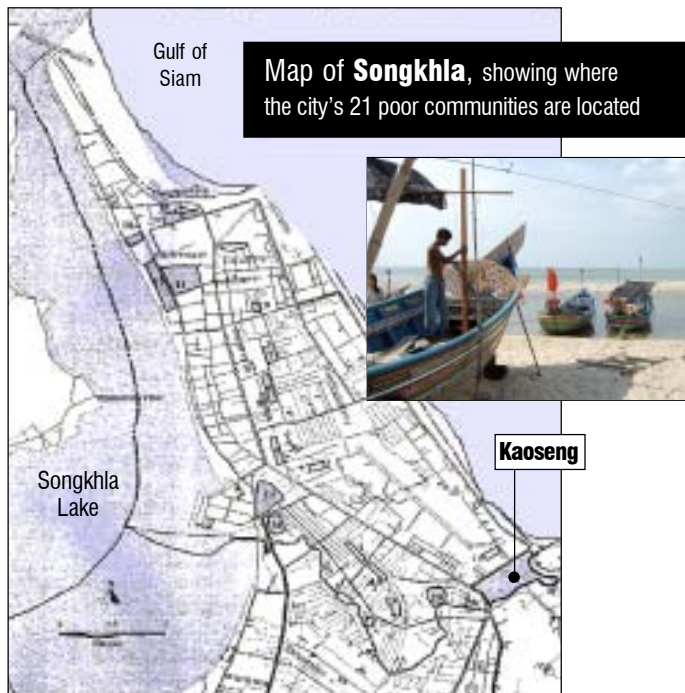
Songkhla city facts :

- **Urban population :** 1.3 million people
- **Total number of poor and informal communities in the city :** 21 settlements (6,032 households)
- **Two types of poor settlements in Songkhla :**
 - Traditional coastal fishing communities which have been there for 50 years or more.
 - More recent communities of migrants who came to Songkhla only after the city began to develop.
- 57% of these households are squatters
- 10% are land-renters on private, government or temple land.
- **What work people do :** fisherfolk, laborers, food vendors, market vendors, pedicab drivers, etc.

Songkhla's upgrading progress so far :

2003 Upgrade Kaoseng Community pilot project (480 houses) (still in process) the Baan Mankong process began with the pilot on-site upgrading project in the city's largest community, Kaoseng, which became one of the first ten national Baan Mankong pilots.

2005 Upgrade Tung Sao Hua Pom Community (a railway settlement being supported by the 4-Regions Slum Network)



Map of **Songkhla**, showing where the city's 21 poor communities are located



Canals in Songkhla :

A community's canal cleaning set off the redevelopment process on Klong Samrong . . .

In a flat-bottomed wooden boat, it takes about an hour to paddle along the briny four-kilometer length of Klong Samrong in Songkhla, from the Songkhla Lake on one side, to the Gulf of Siam on the other. Besides houses, factories and tidal flats, you pass five poor settlements which have been home to fishermen, net-weavers, dockyard laborers and vendors for half a century. The last one in the line, on the sea-end, is Kaoseng. These settlements had long been accused of polluting the klong, and ten years ago, plans were announced to evict them.

The people got together and, with help from the Southern Urban Poor Community Development Project (a Songkhla-based NGO), formed a network to negotiate alternatives. Over the next 15 years, they cleaned the canal, built walkways, reblocked their settlements, and replanned their community infrastructure.

By demonstrating their commitment to keeping their canal clean and improving their settlements, all five communities were able to change their future, consolidate their right to stay, trigger other community developments and set a strong precedent for other klong-side communities all over Thailand.



Kaoseng Community :

Songkhla's first pilot upgrading project . . .

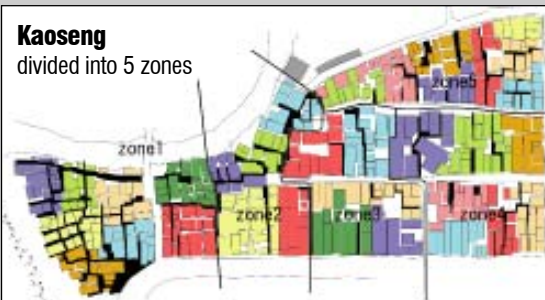
The upgrading of this large beach-front community at Kaoseng has been one of the largest and most complex of the Baan Mankong pilot projects so far. Besides being home to 480 households of mixed ethnicity and religion, with widely divergent occupations and income levels (from very poor fishermen to very prosperous traders), the community has a long history of displacement and tenure uncertainty.

In the early 1960s, Kaoseng was the official relocation site for people evicted from a large settlement on the cape in northern Songkhla. Though they had no formal leases, the people have occupied this new land in peace ever since, and the settlement has grown into a thriving and colorful neighborhood, with a mosque at the center and an afternoon fresh market. Then in 2000, the municipality unveiled plans to redevelop Kaoseng as a tourist beach and announced that the community would be evicted again.

Fortunately, negotiations between the community and the provincial government were able to transform an eviction threat into plans to redevelop their community as a thriving, beachside community. The Treasury Department, which owns the land, agreed to lease the land to the people.

With help from four very enthusiastic young architects, the community divided itself into five zones, and then into 33 working groups of 10 - 20 households each. Using models, drawings and plastic transparencies (laid over enlarged aerial photos of the community), each group analyzed its problems and developed plans to improve their micro area's environment and housing, trying to preserve as much as possible the lively and informal charm of the existing settlement. This intense and highly decentralized planning process involved everyone, in innumerable meetings held around the clock. It took three months for all 33 groups to finalize their plans, which were then combined to make five zone plans, which in turn were put together into a full community plan, making adjustments for widening and paving roads and lanes, laying drains, planting trees, planning solid waste disposal points, adding street lighting and developing "pocket parks" on unused land.

Kaoseng
divided into 5 zones



▲ **BEFORE :**



▲ **BEFORE :**



▲ **AFTER :**



▲ **AFTER :**



KAOSENG UPGRADING FACTS :

- Number of households : **480**
- CODI housing loan : **US\$ 525,000**
(average **\$1,095 / unit**)
- Infrastructure subsidy : **US\$ 240,000**
- Tenure terms : **Long term lease (30 yrs)**
- Land-owner : **Treasury Department**



To stretch their infrastructure subsidy, the people are doing all the work themselves.



Later, the architects worked with the people to develop affordable house designs.



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The budget tools go straight into people's hands :

1 Infrastructure subsidies : The program provides subsidies which allow communities to upgrade their infrastructure, environment and social and economic development, according to priorities they set, using budgets they manage themselves and using technical assistance they select themselves. The ceiling for each community's total subsidy is calculated by multiplying the number of households by per-family infrastructure subsidies, for different kinds of upgrading :

- US\$ 625 per family for communities upgrading settlements in-situ.
- US\$ 1,125 / family for communities reblocking or rebuilding their settlements on the same land.
- US\$ 1,625 per family for communities relocating to different land.

2 Low-interest housing loans : Soft loans are made available to families wishing to purchase land, to improve their existing houses or build new ones after upgrading or relocating - with interest rates subsidized by the government, so loans go to people 2%.

3 Administrative support grants : A grant equal to 5% of the total infrastructure subsidy is made available to whatever organization the community - or community network - to assist and support their local upgrading process under Baan Mankong. This could be an NGO, another community network, a local university, a group of architects, or a local government agency.

Baan Mankong Progress : (January 2003 to September 2005)

Total number of cities in the process now : 140 cities and Bangkok districts, in 57 provinces

Projects approved so far (as of September 27, 2005)

- Total number of projects approved **304 projects** (some cover several communities)
- Total number of communities covered **415 communities** (in 106 cities, in 53 provinces)
- Total number of families covered **29,054 families**
- Total budget approved **US\$ 25.7 million** (upgrading subsidy)
US\$ 14.4 million (housing and land loans)

Projects organized by type of upgrading

	projects	households	% of total
On-site upgrading / reblocking / reconstruction	269	22,151	(76%)
Nearby relocation	40	2,109	(7%)
Relocation	105	4,784	(16.5%)
Shelter house for homeless	1	100	(0.5%)
TOTAL	415 projects	29,054 households	

Projects organized by nature of housing problem

Solving eviction problems, or housing after fires, floods or debt crises	84	3,608	(12%)
Resettling scattered squatters	190	16,713	(57.5%)
Securing tenure in existing slums	102	7,421	(25.5%)
Developing new communities in new sites	39	1,312	(5%)
TOTAL	415 projects	29,054 households	

Projects organized by terms of tenure security

Cooperative land ownership	158	9,849	(34%)
Long-term lease to community cooperative	171	14,897	(51%)
Short-term lease to community co-op (<5 yrs)	32	2,282	(8%)
Permission to use land	54	2,026	(7%)
TOTAL	415 projects	29,054 households	

Upgrading : one size does not fit all . . .

When flexible finance allows communities and their city development partners to invent new ways of responding to different upgrading scenarios, variations on how upgrading happens occur almost automatically. Instead of a single model for obtaining secure land tenure and improving housing and living conditions, a range of options are being implemented by communities. As the work spreads out and scales up, these strategies are being expanded, refined and adapted to suit the particular needs, aspirations and conditions in each city and each community. The five strategies listed below are by no means the final word on what's possible, but make a good starting list of upgrading options for communities under the Baan Mankong Program :

1 Upgrading is a way of improving the physical environment and basic services in communities, while preserving the location, character, social structures.

2 Reblocking is a more systematic way of improving existing communities by realigning the layout to install sewers, drains, walkways and roads, while moving as few houses as possible.

3 Land sharing allows both land-owner and people living on that land to benefit by dividing the land and allowing the community to buy or rent part of the land for their housing, in exchange for returning part of the land to the landowner to develop for commercial or public uses.

4 Reconstruction : Existing communities are totally rebuilt on the same land, in some cases after fires, either under long-term lease or outright land purchase.

5 Relocation : There are two kinds of relocation: nearby relocation (within 3 kms of the former settlement) and relocation to sites that are farther away from existing communities, job opportunities and support structures. The trade-off is that these more distant relocation sites usually come with housing security, through land use rights, outright ownership or some kind of long-term land lease.

83% of these households have been upgraded in the same place or on land which is very close by.

75% of these households have secured their tenure in resolution of eviction crises or serious land conflicts.

89% of these households have now got long-term land tenure security.