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## 1. Tsunami Relief



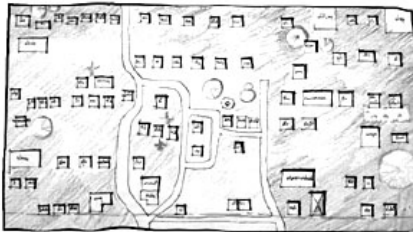
Immediately after the 2004 tsunami in Thailand, CODI held meetings with a number of community organizations, NGOs, and civil groups in the affected area.

Six investigation teams were set up to assess the extent of the damages. Together the team planned short-term and long-term relief strategies. Short-term relief includes finding the dead, caring for the wounded, providing food-clothing, and setting up tents for the survivors.

### Long-term strategies were:

1. Setting up the Tsunami Relief Center
2. Building temporary Housing.
3. Building new permanent housing and fixing up the existing ones.
4. Clearing up land disputes (with private land owners).
5. Preserving local fishery-related trades and professions.
6. Setting up community financial cooperatives.
7. Preserving local cultures and promoting sustainable tourism (partnering with UNDP).

### Highlight: Land Dispute in Tung Wah

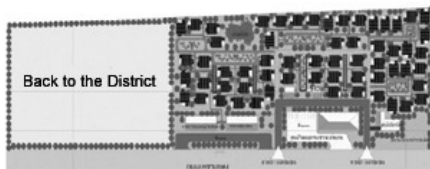


Baan Tung Wah is a village of indigenous Moken sea gypsies in Kao Lak, an area of Phangnga Province that was badly hit by the December 2004 tsunami. The village is on public land, but its proximity to the coastal highway and a big tourist hub made it prime real-estate. All 70 houses in the village were swept away by the tsunami and 42 people were killed.

A few weeks later, Tung Wah survivors staying at a nearby relief camp were shocked to find a big sign-board on their old land announcing the construction of a German-financed public hospital. A few phone calls to the German Embassy in Bangkok revealed the project was bogus and the sign board

was a crude attempt by the District Authority to seize the land. Though they had no title deeds, these fisher folk had lived there for generations and considered the land their own.

**Reclaiming their ancestral land :** So without waiting for anyone's permission, they marched right back home and encircled their wrecked village with rope, in a symbolic gesture to mark their land ownership. With the entire community camping out there, it became difficult for the authorities to chase them away, especially given the intense media attention being focused on tsunami rehabilitation and the plight of such poor Andaman fishing communities. With help from a few architects and the Community Planning Network, the people immediately set to work, designing a wooden house model, securing donor funds and starting to build permanent houses. Within days, Ban Tung Wah had become a lightning rod for the land rights struggles of many similar villages, and visitors started flowing in.



**The land sharing deal :** The plans they made for rebuilding their community involved a compromise with the District, in which they kept part of their original land for rebuilding their houses, and gave part to the District. This land sharing proposal was accepted only after some very difficult haggling, but as part of the agreement, the villagers could then regularize their tenure status under a long-term communal land-lease from the Provincial Administration. Once the land-sharing agreement had been made, the villagers at Tung Wah

were able to get back to the reconstruction of their houses and community in earnest. By June 2005, all the houses were finished and most of the villagers had gone back to sea to fish. The cost of rebuilding their houses came as a grant from tsunami donors and government agencies, but the infrastructure development at Tung Wah was supported by the Baan Mankong program.

## 2. Housing for People with Leprosy

**None Somboon :** This village-like community, in rural Khon Kaen Province, was set up by the government in 1964 as a colony for people affected by leprosy from around Khon Kaen Province. Back then, when the disease was much feared and little understood, the common practice was to banish leprosy patients to such out-of-the-way places, where it was thought they would not infect others. Today, there are 3,111 people living in the settlement (Buddhists and Christians), but only 786 are still affected by leprosy - none of their children or relatives in the community have the disease.

**A history of banishment :** The 456 hectares of land, which the people have used for both housing and farming, is under Treasury Department ownership. Originally, the government provided people with basic one-room



wooden houses, built in the village style up on stilts, but most families later built houses for themselves in concrete and brick. Because they don't own the land, but have only individual land use rights, community members can't pass on the land to their children or sell out and move elsewhere. And because outsiders are still afraid of the disease, community members - even their children who are not affected by leprosy - are stigmatized, insulted and socially isolated. All these problems have meant no improvement and no change, leaving the people in the community feeling hopeless and stuck in their poverty.



**Run-down living conditions :**

Environmental conditions in the community were not that great either. Most of the houses were old and in bad shape, with only make-shift electricity connections and primitive toilets. The roads were unpaved and mucky, without any drainage or trees to shade them from the hot northeastern sun. Because there were no garbage bins or solid waste collections, the community was strewn with rubbish.

The Baan Mankong process in None Somboon began with a survey of all the households and a big meeting to bring everyone together to discuss their housing and land problems and to learn about the possibilities the program offers to help them bring about improvements. There has been a high level of enthusiasm and involvement from the start, where people saw a chance to determine what they need, to design and carry out real improvements themselves - not some outsiders from the health department or do-gooders from a charity - and to strengthen their community in the process.

**Each of 15 areas in the community makes its own micro-plan :** The None Somboon residents decided to divide their loosely-scattered settlement into 15 areas, and let the group of households in each area develop its own upgrading plan, including road paving, drainage, solid waste collection points, tree planting, septic tanks, waste-water treatment and house improvements. Most of the groups decided not to make any major changes in the layout of their houses, roads and farming plots, but a few are doing a little reblocking of houses to make way for the new infrastructure or to regularize plots.



**Land tenure :** The community's savings group has now negotiated with the Treasury Department to convert their individual user rights to a 3-year renewable collective land lease. Once the community has registered itself as a cooperative, it will go back and negotiate a longer-term lease of 30 years, in line with the MOU between CODI and the Treasury Department to give 30-year collective leases (at nominal rental rates) to all community cooperatives upgrading their settlements on Treasury Department Land.

### 3. Housing for People in the 3 Southern Provinces



The 3 southern provinces are Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. There are 1.8 million people living in these provinces and the majority of them are Muslims. These communities have been deeply troubled by violence and civil strife in recent years, and mistrust between the locals (which are 80% Malay-speaking Muslims) and the government is high. Like many intellectuals in Thailand, the locals are fully aware of global politics and are deeply critical of the government's participation in the US 'War on Terror' and the war in Iraq.

Since 2003, CODI has allotted 176 million baht to help these southern communities; over 2,976 households have already joined the Baan Mankong program. The Baan Mankong "process" has brought a new tool to solving the city's housing and environmental problems, linking people together, and helping the government understand that people's participation is not something threatening, but a great asset in a city. The end result - we hope - is

not stronger and better houses, but stronger civil organizations. There are now over 1,800 community organizations in these provinces.

#### Highlight: De-densifying Pattani's slums



In Pattani, the 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, health and local wisdom.

**One big cooperative** : An interesting aspect of the Baan Mankong process in Pattani is that the people in the city's first three projects (including Poo Poh, Naak Lua and Pannaleh) are very close and decided to register themselves under a single cooperative, though their projects are in different areas of the city.

**Poo Poh** : This group of 112 families, most of whom are fisher folk, decided 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 has a plot of 160 square meters, for which they make a land loan repayment of just \$10 per month.

## 4. Canal Settlements Projects



Thailand is in a very wet part of Asia, and many of its cities, built on low-lying swampland, are crisscrossed with 'klongs' [canals], which not only help control all that water, but have traditionally provided vital conduits of commerce, transport and development.

During the Cold War (1957), however, American advisors were sent to Thailand to plan roadways and consequently most of the intricate network of canals were buried. Informal settlements were seen as potential hotbeds for communists activities. There was a saying : "Where there're new roadways, there're no communists!"

So the automobile began replacing the "fish-tail" boat, roads and expressways have overlaid these older, wetter structures. The canals, relegated to the status of open drains, have fallen into disrepair and are used for dumping sewage and solid waste, or concreted over to make way for buildings. But as the cities keep growing, and the canals 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 canals, to mask much deeper problems of urbanization and poor planning. The canal-side communities find themselves accused of spoiling the canals and threatened with eviction.



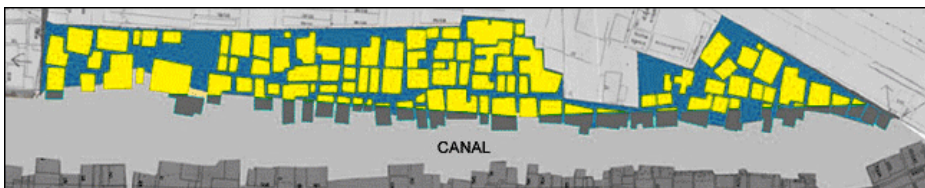
In several cities, beleaguered canal-side communities are using the problems they have in common to form networks, to work together to improve their canals and their settlements and to consolidate their right to stay by demonstrating that they are good keepers of these much-needed water management systems - the canals.

#### Highlight: Bang Bua Canal

About 3,400 families live in the 13 informal settlements which line the 13 kilometer stretch of Bangkok's Bang Bua Canal, many of them vendors, laborers and daily-wage workers. After almost a century of living in insecurity, with the daily risk of fires and eviction and facing constant accusations of polluting

the canal, the people living along the Bang Bua Canal joined hands with the Baan Mankong Program to upgrade their communities and secure their land tenure.

With good collaboration from the two district authorities (Bang Ken and Laksi) on either side of the canal, the nearby Sripatham University and CODI, the 13 communities along Klong Bang Bua formed a network, started savings groups, prepared plans for redeveloping their settlements and revitalizing their canal and formed a cooperative society. In the process, the Bang Bua communities have become the city's ally in revitalizing and cleaning this important canal.



**Bang Bua Canal** was the first network of canal communities in Bangkok to successfully negotiate a long-term lease to the public land they occupy, under Treasury Department ownership. This lease could never have been negotiated by a single community, which has no bargaining power. But as a network of 13 communities, and with the "network power" support of the city-wide network of 200 canal-side communities in Bangkok, Bang Bua was able to convince the authorities that redeveloping their communities in the same place is good for the people and good for the city as a whole.

The 30-year renewable lease is key to long-term tenure security to these communities. After long negotiations, the people bargained the Treasury Department down to a rental rate of about 1 Baht per square meter per month, with adjustment for inflation every 5 years. This means that each family will pay between 40 and 70 Baht (US\$2 - 3) in land rent every month, depending on the size of their house. Each family pays the cooperative, which then makes a collective payment to the Treasury Department.