

PROJECT 55/08
SUPPORTING HOUSING FOR THE POOREST
BAAN MANKONG PROGRAM IN THAILAND
PROGRESS REPORT PREPARED BY SOMSOOK

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Baan Mankong (Secured Land and Housing Program) is a Governmental City-wide upgrading Program by urban poor communities implemented by Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Securities, Thailand. This pilot project will provide funds to support poorest families living in urban slums to access this program. They will receive small grants so they can cover the basic financial contributions requested to all members of the community who want to participate in the program. This will enable them to continue being part of the group in a similar ways to other members, instead of being left behind because they cannot afford to pay. It is expected that the existing Baan Mankong will be mobilized by this pilot project to incorporate to its regular activities the important task to house the poorest.



SLUMS IN THAI CITIES



UPGRADING BY COMMUNITIES

PROGRESS OF ACTIVITIES PRELIMINARY TO FUNDING

1. ACHR, CODI, the City Development Committee and representatives of the community will organize a project committee.

We have set up a joint committee comprising of ACHR-CODI representatives-Community representatives from 5 region and two representatives from the very poor families total about 15 people. It is an independent committee outside of CODI structure but a link of ACHR and CODI

2. The project committee will agree upon criteria, mechanisms and forms to identify potential beneficiaries of the grant, select the most vulnerable amongst them and monitor to ensure effectiveness of the support

a. Before this agreement on composition of the committee and how the process and detail program should be worked out, there has been 3-4 informal meetings with community leaders on how they think the process should be working, how it will benefit the poor and the communities, what should be the criteria, how this very small pilots of just about 100 families can make big change and influence other program of municipality and other government organizations, etc.,. Then criteria, following criteria proposed to SELAVIP, including those from discussion was drafted and circulated. Subsequently, community networks from all 5 regions (North, Northeast, South, Central and western as well as Bangkok and neighboring cities have discussed and start discussing with cities, networks in the cities and they start working and selection.

b. So today afternoon we had the first meeting of the committee which was very lively and so interesting. We were able to conclude on final criteria which agreed by all the region together (after they have worked and tried with real cases). We have already approved 17 cases from 10 communities in the south, central and western region who are really very poor and able to provide these very poor this assistance so they can have secure land and houses and support on how all the poor families will be able to have more proper way of living and support with the strong support of the community organization and the city. After the meeting today in making consideration to those real cases, clearing up final criteria, now all the region have very clear idea how to go about. So we fix the next meeting next month and hopefully we can come up with full decision for all 100 cases, otherwise we can conclude it by the end of June already.

c. We agreed to call this project "The Decent Poor"

The final agreed criteria are as following:

- a. Poorest of the poor who have income less than expenses, have serious economic burden or having debts and having difficulties in living insufficiently.
- b. The poor who may have social problems, sick or being left or deserted
- c. The poor who is ready to help and cooperate and participate with community activities
- d. The poor who should be living or being a part of the community

e. The poor to be selected by community organization and community network or city joint committee also agree with

f. Community organization who select should have a plan so the poor selected to this program will be able to have real secure housing and better quality of life with continue back up and follow up.

- It is agreed that as pilot process for all 5 regions, the number of the poor to be selected and support will be divided tentatively about 20 people from each region, so totally $20 \times 5 = 100$ families.

- Not more than two persons from each community.

- Each city will bring information to share and compare

- The committee agreed to make a simple two page form for each case which will have picture of applicant, the story why they need support, what will the budget of 600\$ be used for specifically, what will be the plan of community organization and comments and opinion from the city committee.

3. Matching funds (USD 134.285) are secured, and their use in the project is defined.

- It is agreed that this (project) budget may not be too much but we will use it to experiment community-driven approach to deal with solutions for the very poor families who may not be able to enter the Baan Mankong upgrading housing projects so that : the Baan Mankong project need to be improved so they can take care of this very poor families into their process in the long term, the city authority should also be involved with so many more poor families still not being able to enter so communities will use this process to negotiate and to leverage resources, support and more active roles from local authority, also other relevant program which is still not working properly, communities should try to find ways to negotiate from learning and understanding taking from this project together.

CONCLUSION

I think after the meeting next month, we will be able to make a very good report of all the poor who get grant support from this program. We will probably make a good book out of it. Some of the cases presented today are so interesting about the way how communities are working for solving all the problems of the very poor using small grant from this support.

With above progress report, I hope it is sufficient for SELAVIP to agree with the serious implementation which has already embarked. So please kindly consider the transfer of fund to the ACHR account so we will proceed with the process that already been approved.

Somsook

17 APRIL 2009