

**Training Course Report on
Strategic Plan and Community
Natural Resource Management Plan**

15 - 18 May 2008

**Ranong Laguna and Resort, Gapure
Ranong, Thailand**

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Background

This training course was the final of three courses in the Training of Trainers Program that Mangrove Action Project (MAP) agreed to organise for the Asia Resource Foundation (ARF) in partnership with and supported by Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT). The original plan was that the last training course would be on mangrove restoration, but participants had a wide variety of backgrounds and there is not much current work on mangrove management. It appeared that mangrove restoration may not be the most appropriate topic for the entire group.

Thus from the evaluation results, and with staff and villagers we agreed to change the focus of the final training to "Strategic Plan and Community Natural Resource Management Plan". There was a need for staff and community leaders who are involved in natural resource management under a time frame in the community. This course provided direction and greater understanding of community-based natural resource conservation and management work.

Generally, government agencies take lead roles in natural resource management. However, it is obvious that only government organizations are unable to look after all natural resources. Furthermore, as major stakeholders, local people have used, protected, and collaboratively managed local natural resources. The other stakeholders include local administrative organizations, private sectors and schools, for instance. It is essential to have a strategic plan in which all stakeholders have participated in developing and provided opinions and information. Based on local situational analysis, the strategic plan will also help them to create projects related to natural resource management by linking to national, provincial cluster and provincial strategies. The projects will be responsive and planned for both short and long term.

A Community Natural Resource Management (CNRM) plan is a more specific plan for the community to design and manage their respective natural resources. According to feedback during the second training on Participatory Resource Information Tools and Techniques (PRIT) both staff and villagers from Ban Samnak were enthusiastic about mangrove forest management. CNRM plan would empower them because it includes not only an action plan, but also community and natural resource management data base, chronicle, vision, strategy, procedure, regulations, committee structure and administrative mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation, necessary forms and a list of mentor organizations. Having a CNRM plan is also used to collaborate with Tambon Administrative Office (TAO or Or Bor Tor in Thai) and concerned government organizations.

The course was organized for 4 days between 15-18 May 2008 at Laguna Resort, Gapure district, Ranong province and 10 participants attended including ARF staff from Bangkok, Ranong and Phuket and community leaders from Sam Nak village. The training was led by trainers from MAP

This report aims to reflect experience and lessons learned from organizing the training course.

Course objectives

At the end of the training the participants were expected to:

- (1) be able to facilitate the natural resource management strategic plan development process
- (2) be able to facilitate the CBNRM plan development process
- (3) be able to write a reasonable project proposal
- (4) develop a strategic plan related to their work

Course structure and methodology

The course was designed so that participants could share and exchange their ideas and experiences and learn how to develop strategic and community management plans for their organization and communities. The course included many activities designed to increase the knowledge and skills of the participants including building up participants' enthusiasm and sense of cooperation to fulfill the objectives of the training course.

The summarized program of the training is as follows (see annex 1):

- Course introduction
- Strategic plans at the Tambon level
- The process of strategic plan development
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Situational and data Analysis
- Mission, Strategy and Goal
- Community Natural Resource Management Plan

Course details and lessons learned

The main sessions of the training workshop were

- Strategy plans at the Tambon level
 - Process of strategy plan development and practice activities
 - Mission, strategies, goals and projects
- Community Natural Resource Management Plan

During the introductory session participant's expectations of the training were collected. Broadly similar, a number of expectations were shared among the group. They were as follows:

- Be able to write project and funding proposals
- Gain knowledge on planning and write a community plan
- Analyse strategy plans
- Be able to write a community plan
- Be able to write more effective project proposals
- Be able to collect the necessary information to help to obtain funding and run activities in a sustainable way
- Have a systematic approach to monitor community plans

Below, details and lessons learnt are given for each main session.

Strategy plans at the Tambon level Session

The obligations of the sub-district or Tambon are derived from three areas, namely legislation, the National Social and Economic plans and the local administrative office. Following from this comes the mission of the TAO which is comprised of five components: protect, prevent and restore natural resources; promote citizen participation in natural resource management; build relationships with local communities; prevent and eliminate pollution and monitor and evaluate activities in natural resource management. This session introduced the theory behind strategy plans and was delivered using a PowerPoint presentation and flip chart notes. The purpose was to allow participants to see how their work is related to the mission of the TAO. Participants had to complete two tasks. In task one, participants were divided into pairs (one ARF staff member and one village representative) and each given one of the five components of the TAO's mission. They were asked to brainstorm ways and activities through which TAO staff could achieve that mission. The second task involved extracting information from the training handouts regarding the laws and policies related to their TAO mission. At the end of the session each pair of participants shared their findings with the whole group.

Process of strategy plan development

The process of strategy plan development involved four steps: preparation; analyzing the current situation in natural resource management; development of missions, goals and projects and evaluation and monitoring. To introduce the participants to the process of strategy plan development they were asked to analyze and compare Tambon (Ban Samnak, Tambon Muang Gluang) and provincial (Changwat Ranong) strategic plans. A circle diagram illustrating how the regional provincial group plan, provincial plan, provincial administrative office level and TAO were related was presented to the participants. The purpose of this exercise was to

get the participants to understand the different levels of strategy plans and the relationships between them. Participants were introduced to the tools and techniques involved at each step and were given practice activities to consolidate their learning.

Practice activities: Stakeholder, SWOT and Situational Analysis

SWOT analysis

During this activity ARF staff and village representatives worked in separate groups. ARF staff identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of their organization and the village representatives of their community. This session worked well as the village representatives felt freer to offer their views and opinions than in previous sessions where they worked with ARF staff.

During this session participants also worked in groups to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the TAO. Participants were given scenario cards which they had to arrange under the relevant heading. A comparison of the two group's answers and then a comparison to the trainer's answers then ensued.

Stakeholder Analysis

ARF staff members worked together to identify who was involved in natural resource management within the Tambon. Having compiled a list of potential stakeholders they then prioritized them by ranking the importance of each against five factors. A discussion of their results and the process of stakeholder analysis then took place. The following morning they cascaded the training down to the village representatives and compared their understanding of the importance/ranking of stakeholders to that of the village representatives.

Situational Analysis

The session was introduced by challenging participants to say how many oranges were in a tree and how many pips were in an orange. The purpose of this exercise was to illustrate to the participants that to understand the situation you need to investigate, go to the community, collect and collate information and analyze it to gain an understanding of the situation and problems. Participants were then presented with a diagram illustrating how policy, economics, natural resources and social factors are interrelated. Participants were asked to brainstorm social, economic, natural resource and policy information for Tambon Muang Gluang. This was then used to illustrate how the different areas were interrelated. They were then asked to analyze in detail each aspect against different points. Participants were informed that matrix ranking can be used to prioritize and identify the most important community problems.

Mission, strategies, goals and projects

The session started by giving the participants definitions of the terms. They were then asked to state the mission for Tambon Muang Gluang. Working in two groups they then had to come up with different strategies that could achieve this mission. Finally they came up with the specific goals that would help them to achieve their

mission. A lot of time was devoted to this session as participants struggled with the concepts. A variety of teaching techniques were employed to try and overcome the barriers including presentation, group discussion and pair work. As the ARF staff participants have varying backgrounds and job responsibilities they were asked to apply the information presented and develop a strategy plan that would be relevant to their current work.

This part helped the participants deepen their understanding on how to develop project activities and how to keep direction and shape the ideas to fit with the goals.

Overall lesson learned on Tambon strategic plan development

Neither ARF staff nor villagers are involved in TAO; they were not familiar with strategic plans. As the result, it was difficult for them to analyze the TAO's mission as well as work on the higher level policy. Having TAO officers participate in the workshop would help other participants to understand this session better.

- analyzing TAO mission as insiders and link it to the policy
- sharing experience in the strategic planning process
- It will be easier for ARF staff to work with the TAO if they are going to develop a strategic plan together
- Applying the knowledge to their individual work helped ARF staff become aware that they need to develop project activities that are based on problems and situational analysis
- Each session had to be repeated using different pedagogy methods due to the varying needs of the participants; this delayed the whole process but was necessary to ensure that they learned.

Community Natural Resource Management (CNRM) Plan Session

The concept and components of the community management plan were introduced through a PowerPoint presentation. The course participants were then divided into five sets of pairs and each was given one component of the community management plan for Ban Pred Nai from eastern Thailand. Each pair had to read and analyze the community plan, then feedback to the whole group what it contained.

Having more case studies or management plans from other communities would have aided understanding as the participants have no experience on community natural resource management plans.

ARF staff collected information from the village representatives to help develop a community management plan for Ban Samnak. They then presented their ideas and received feedback on them.

Overall lessons learned on CNRM plan development

Adjustment of training to one day was only for introduction of CM plan and it was impossible for them to implement activities in communities.

- On one hand, using the Pred Nai case study was appropriate to directly illustrate the CNRM plan. On the other hand, participants who are not familiar with CNRM plan need to see more case studies to understand other management plan in different contexts.
- It is important to emphasise to the participants that the process of CNRM plan is an important tools for local villagers to learn about their natural resources and livelihoods. The CNRM plan can be written to fit into the tradition and keep it as simple as possible.
- The first, second and third trainings should not have been so spaced out and the same participant groups should have been kept. That way they could have immediately applied the knowledge and skills from first and second to the third training.

Overall Training Evaluation

From the previous training experience, we decided to have two different groups for the course evaluation in order to evaluate effectively and receive reflections from both villagers and staff.

The villagers who participated in the first three days were asked to fill in the evaluation forms (see annex 4). Most of the villagers found that the content was new for them, but they gained a lot of knowledge on how to develop project proposals to fit with the TAO plan. Most of them gave the training process, training venue and trainers an outstanding level and good or satisfied for the content. There were some suggestions that time management and coordination should be improved.

Staff were asked to consider their expectations from the first day of the training and write down the knowledge, experience and lessons learned on another piece of paper as well as writing a letter to the trainers. Most of them found that they gained knowledge on the process of strategic plan development. They also addressed that the course helped them to understand how their field work is a part of the strategic plan components. Some of them indicated that before they focused only on their projects level, but this course helped them to think systematically and they learned how to link the project activities to the strategic plan at Tambon or Changwat levels.

Main Recommendations

Overall the main issue during the training was the selection of participants. None of the ARF staff who attended are currently working at the Tambon level nor have any

experience doing so. This meant they lacked the knowledge and context necessary for much of the training and so were unable to share experiences during the sessions. Similarly the village representatives who attended the training are not part of the team responsible for strategic planning. Although the participants gained an understanding of the role of the TAO or Or Bor Tor and the process of strategy plan development it is uncertain to what extent they will be able to apply it to their current work.

Although a number of ARF staff also attended the two previous training sessions, there was little evidence of them applying what they had learnt previously during the practice activities on this course.

During the reflection session participants commented that prior to the training they had always thought that projects were the most important and main aspect of their organization. Now they appreciate that projects are only part of the picture and come at the end of a long process of mission, strategy and goal setting.

It seemed that the staff had very little knowledge about their responsibilities. A study trip on CBNRM for the staff who work in natural resource development, should be arranged to provide them with experience in CNRM plan.

To be more effective, ARF may need to invite other stakeholders to participate in capacity building sessions, including the Mangrove Forest Management Unit and TAO. This will strengthen their relationship for future collaborations.

Training for all staff should include other sessions such as writing project proposals, project management, and data analysis.

Annex 1: Training Program

| Day | Time | Content/ Activities | Method | Materials and Handouts |
|----------------------|--------------------|--|--|---|
| 15 May (Thursday) | 8:00-9:00 | Registration and opening | | |
| | 9:00-9:45 | Course introduction: Getting to know each other, Expectations, Overview of contents and activities | Training Road Participants' Car, Expectations (Fun dee =good dream)/fun rai = bad dream) | Masking tape, flip chart of training road, signs, markers, post-it-notes, |
| | 9:45-10:00 | Setting group norms and group photos | Plenary discussion | Flip charts, markers |
| | 10:00-10:15 | Explanation of daily feedback and summary | Presentation and group division | |
| | 10:15-10:30 | Break | | |
| | 10:30-11:15 | TAO Roles and responsibilities in NRM | Group work | Hand outs and flip charts |
| | 11:15-12:10 | Provincial, PAO and Tambon strategic plan analysis | Pair work, analyze and review training material, | Hand outs and flip charts |
| | 12:10-13:20 | Lunch | | |
| | 13:20-13:30 | Energizer | Game | |
| | 13:30-14:00 | Tambon Strategic plan step | Group work: card rearranging | Flip charts and markers |
| | 14:00-15:00 | Stakeholders analysis | Brainstorm, practice | Flip charts and markers |
| | 15:00-15:15 | break | | |
| | 15:15-15:45 | SWOT Analysis | Group work: Organization analysis Analyzed Tambon's SWOT | Flip charts and markers |
| | 15:45-16:15 | Situation analysis | Group work, kite model | |
| | 16:15-17:00 | Problem analysis and prioritization | Group work: matrix | |
| | 16 May (Friday) | 8:45-9:00 | Recap of day 1 | |
| 9:00-10:30 | | Vision, strategy and goals | Group work: | |
| 10:30-10:45 | | Break | | |

| Day | Time | Content/ Activities | Method | Materials and Handouts |
|-----|-------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| | 10:45-12:00 | Three year implementation plan | Group work | |
| | 12:00-13:00 | Lunch | | |
| | 13:00-15:00 | Project development | Individual work | |
| | 15.15-16.50 | Presentation | | Flip charts and markers |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| 17 May (Saturday) | 8:30-9:00 | Presentation action plan of strategic plan | | |
| | 9:00-10:00 | Linkage of CFM Plan to other plans | Power point presentation | |
| | 10:00-11:30 | CFM Plan: Definition, importance, components, plan development | Card technique Group work Power point Pred nai Case study | Hand outs, Flipchart and markers |
| | 11:30-12:30 | Review of PRA tools | | Hand outs |
| | 12:30-13:30 | Lunch | | |
| | 13.30-15.00 | PRA tools Practice | Practice with villagers | |
| | 15.30-16.15 | AAR of practices, | Circle time | |
| | 16:15-17:00 | Summarize data Presentation data from group work | group work | Hand outs |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 18 May (Sunday) | 8:30-10:45 | Presentation of action plan of individual strategic plan, Feedback and corrections | Plenary discussion | Flipchart and markers |
| | 10:45-11:00 | Break | | |
| | 11:00-11:30 | Open discussion on how to use the strategic plan process development in organisation work | Plenary discussion | Flipchart and markers |
| | 11:30-12:30 | Training Evaluation | Expectation evaluation, Round table presentation and Letter to trainer | Evaluation forms (for villagers) |

Annex 2: List of Participants

| No | Name | Organisation /Position |
|----|---------------------|---|
| 1 | Mr. Prasat Wattanom | Village representative, Moo3, Gapore, Ranong |
| 2 | Mr.Sompong Swatanan | Village representative, Moo 3, Gapore, Ranong |
| 3 | Mrs. Unreun Monggae | Village representative, Moo 3, Gapore, Ranong |

| No | Name | Organisation /Position |
|----|-----------------------------|---|
| 4 | Mrs. Mallee Khunwijarn | Village representative, Moo 3, Gapore, Ranong |
| 5 | Mrs. Sompong Mattakarn | Village representative, Moo 3, Gapore, Ranong |
| 6 | Mr.Sombut Kaewbudda | ARF staff, Phuket office |
| 7 | Ms. Aminor Matee Yor | ARF staff, Bangkok Office |
| 8 | Miss. Orapan Pathom Lek | ARF staff, ARF Bangkok Office |
| 9 | Miss. Thonglor Sae Ong | ARF Staff, Ranong Office |
| 10 | Miss. Tipwadee Tham Bamrung | ARF staff, Ranong Office |

Annex 3: Trainers, documenter and observer

| No | Name | Organisation /Position |
|----|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Ms. Jaruwan Kaewmahanin | Mangrove Action Project –Trainer |
| 2 | Ms. Weena Namcharoensombut | Mangrove Action Project –Trainer |
| 3 | Ms. Sarah Hornby | Mangrove Action Project – Documenter |
| 4 | Mr. Rungrot Tangsurakit | Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT) (Programe director) – Observer |

Annex 4: Evaluation form

How I feel about this training course:

| | Very good | Good | Fairly | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|------------------------------------|
| Content | | | | It will be better if..... |
| Training process/ teaching methods | | | | It will be better if..... |
| Training period (3 days) | | | | It will be better if..... |
| Training Venue | | | | It will be better if..... |
| Trainers | | | | It will be better if..... |
| Handouts/ Materials | | | | It will be better if..... |

I would like to tell the training organisers that.....

What I can apply to my work is.....

Annex 5: Photos



