

BEST PRACTICES

NON-STATE ACTORS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN DEVELOPMENT – ACTIONS IN PARTNER COUNTRIES (MULTI-COUNTRY) FOR NON-STATE ACTORS



Best Practices on
People's Participation
in Planning and
Decisionmaking
in Southeast-Asia

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DELGOSEA aims to create a network of cities and municipalities to implement transnational local governance best practices replication across partner countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. It supports the role of Local Government Associations (LGAs) in providing and assisting the transfer and sustainability of local governance best practices replication by local governments. Most importantly, through the exchange of best practices in the region, DELGOSEA intends to contribute to the improvement of living conditions of disadvantaged groups in Southeast Asia by helping increase their participation in local planning and decision-making.



The project has five partner organizations, running the national offices in their respective countries. DELGOSEA partners are:

- ACVN, Association of Cities of Vietnam, Vietnam
- LOGODEF, Local Government Development Foundation, Philippines
- NLC/S, National League of Communes/Sangkats of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Cambodia
- TEI, Thailand Environment Institute, Thailand
- UCLG ASPAC, United Cities and Local Governments – Asia Pacific, Indonesia





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About DELGOSEA

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In the first phase of project implementation, intensive research was carried out to determine best practices (BP) in local governance in each of the five participating countries. A consortium of international local governance experts and representatives from the LGAs reviewed and selected 16 BPs out of the submitted 27 BPs.

The project concentrated on the following four thematic areas while selecting best practice examples from the five countries:

1. People's participation in planning and decisionmaking;
2. Institutional governance;
3. Inclusive urban public services;
4. Fiscal management and investment planning.

Starting in January 2011 through to August 2012, DELGOSEA will continue to collaborate with LGAs and local governments to transfer best practices replication. The pilot cities/municipalities could modify or improve the original best practice to their local context. The LGAs in the five participating countries will closely consult and guide the selected pilot local governments on the transfer and implementation of BP replication.

About this Publication

This publication is the first volume of a series of publications on best practices in local government in the five project countries of the DELGOSEA project. The four volumes cover the following four thematic areas:

- I. People's Participation
- II. Institutional governance;
- III. Inclusive urban public services;
- IV. Fiscal management and investment planning.

These best practises were selected after a long and thorough research procedure, taking place between April and July 2010. Internationally renowned experts on local governance compiled a shortlist of 27 examples out of hundreds of submitted projects. The selection was based on the following key criteria: high transferability potential to other countries, the impact on the living conditions of the local people, institutional and financial viability as well as project sustainability.

From these 27 best practices, 16 were finally chosen for publication by a committee made up of experts and local stakeholders, including local government associations. With the help of external experts as well as resource persons from the cities featured, a detailed description and analysis of all aspects of the projects was developed, with the aim of providing comprehensive information for any other city or commune who is interested in replicating the example.

This particular volume features the three best practice examples from the area of people's participation in planning and decisionmaking – one each from Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. While being implemented in very different circumstances, all three examples show how much can be achieved if local people are given the chance to bring their experiences and commitment to the process of developing their communities.

For more information and other related publication, please visit www.delgosea.eu

Introduction to People's Participation in Planning and Decisionmaking

1. Concept

The concept of people's participation is not new. The idea has been around since the time of the ancient Greeks. The very concept of people's rule or *Demokratos* was placed at the heart of the Athenian system after Cleisthenes, an Athenian statesman, led the revolt that overthrew the oligarchy and established the democratic system in Athens. However, the failure of this Athenian political system during the Peloponnesian War resulted in a thousand year marginalization of the idea of democratic governance.

This concept was, however, raised again in the writings of Plato and Aristotle who both argued against the wisdom of giving the people the power to govern¹. This wisdom was eventually transformed into a common understanding about the problems of democratic governance.

Criticism of this concept has been echoed even by some of twenty-first century thinkers. Fareed Zakaria², for instance, argued that the problem of modern democratic governance stems from a contradictory pull – the pull between assigning the business of government to experts (delegated democracy) and consulting the electorate in government decisions (direct democracy). Zakaria further argued that there is a problem with “too much direct democracy”.

On a positive note, participation exists in both situations, despite the disparity in manner and extent. The more important consideration is the presence of some form of democratic legitimacy in any system where decisions are made. Otherwise, in the absence of democratic legitimacy, successful implementation of policies is hampered.

Since the beginning of the so-called Third Wave of Democratization, development in democratic governance in Southeast Asia (SEA) has taken place. Various forms of democratic reforms have been adopted in the region. Countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam have institutionalized people's participation in the decisionmaking apparatus of their governments.

Among the countries mentioned, the Philippine case is the most instructive since the restoration of democratic governance was immediately followed by a reform of the centralized nature of the Philippine unitary state. While not adopting a federalist structure, the resulting passage of the Local Government Code of 1991 gave way to the devolution of national responsibilities³ to

¹David Held, *Models of Democracy*, 1998

²Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom, Illiberal democracy*, 2001

³Enumerate areas of governance devolved to LGU

the various levels of local government. The resulting decentralization of government gave new mandates to the local government units (LGUs) which previously depended on the command from “Imperial Manila”⁴. The promotion of decentralization gave an opportunity to creative and enterprising LGU executives to develop their localities with a minimum of interference from national government authorities. Furthermore, since the Local Government Code of 1991 stipulated an extensive participation from people in drafting local policies, the participation of various civil society organizations and people’s organization in the planning process has been strengthened.

In neighboring Indonesia, the largest democratic state in Southeast Asia, a similar reform has taken place right after the Asian financial crisis that triggered the collapse of the Suharto regime. In 1999, the Indonesian People’s Consultative Assembly or MPR passed the Act 22/1999 on Local Government⁵ (Autonomy Law), which was implemented in 2001. This act put special emphasis on decentralization, in which the power of the central government was transferred to the provincial government and regency (municipal) government. This act was considered one of the largest decentralization acts in the world where two million civil servants were transferred from the central government to the regency (kabupaten) and municipality (kota) levels⁶. This decentralization act is quite remarkable for a country that had long been established as a state and which had viewed provinces as mere components and not autonomous parts of a developmental and unified state⁷. This 1999 reform was both a promotion of extensive autonomy and a catalyst for development. This law indeed empowered Indonesian local governments, even though more than 80% of local government budget still depends on the national government transfer. The Autonomy Law was revised in 2004, and one significant change is the direct election of Bupati and Mayor⁸.

On the other hand, the decentralization of the Royal Thai Kingdom has proceeded at a different pace compared to the cases of Philippines and Indonesia. Traditionally, the local governments of Thailand have been considered as arms of the central government. Although the local government already appears popular given this role, local government has little aspiration for local autonomy⁹. Despite this problem, the decentralization initiative has proceeded, employing a top to bottom approach whereby the decentralization effort was led by the Ministry of Interior. But similar with the cases of other Asian countries, a history of centralized governance pervades, wherein the central government remains superior in many areas of governance. Legislative powers

⁴The phrase use to describe the overly centralizes nature of the Philippine State, even with the passage of the Local government code the strong economic and political pull of the capital to the people all over the country.

⁵Budijardo and Sawandi in East and South East Asian network of Local Governance 2000

⁶Smith, Benjamin, Origins of Regional Autonomy in Indonesia; Journal of East Asian Studies, May 2008

⁷Ferrazi, Gabriele, Using the “F” word; Federalism in Indonesia’s decentralization Discourse; Publius 2000; Jstor.

⁸UCLG country report on the Republic of Indonesia 2010

⁹Atkinson, Adrian and Vorratnchaiphan, Chamniern Paul; A systematic approach in urban environmental planning in Thailand, a project report, Sage publication, 1996

on urban planning and environmental regulations, fortunately, has allowed local government some measure of flexibility in carrying out development plans. This approach was further institutionalized under the 1997 constitution calls for "increasing the share of local government revenues and expenditures, assigning more revenue sources to local governments, promoting local fiscal autonomy, and revising the system of intergovernmental transfers to provide grants in a more transparent and predictable way. According to the Decentralization Plan and Procedures Act of 1999, local governments are to be allocated at least 20% of the national government budget by the fiscal year of 2001 (October 2000 - September 2001) at the end of the Eighth National Social Economic Development Plan, and at least 35% by the fiscal year 2006 (October 2005 - September 2006), at the end of the Ninth National Social Economic Development Council"¹⁰.

In the case of Cambodia, its decentralization initiative only started in the year 2002 when it hosted the rotating chairmanship of the ASEAN organization that coincided with the commune election of February 2002¹¹. This election of the commune officials basically democratized all levels of local government in Cambodia. It allowed elected officials to exercise accountability to their localities and gave them the possibility of creating development plans outside the control of the dominant political parties in the center of the national government. The accountability of local officials now extends up to the *Sangkat/Communes*, which is the lowest level of government. The *Sangkat/Communes* all over Cambodia are the most immediate level of government that is accessible to the people. This initiative to extend autonomy is a far cry from the overly centralized nature of Cambodian government prior to the 2002 elections when the executives of the local government units were appointed by the central government officials who then normally appointed political party allies in the provinces.

Lastly, the case of Vietnam started with the passing of the 1992 constitution which initiated a reform of local government administration used to address the very centralized nature of the Vietnamese state, where the direction of all state institution is supervised by the central party organ of the People's council¹². The 1992 constitution refers to local governments as administrative units. Local governments in Vietnam have a popularly elected council, "People's Council, which is defined as the local organ of state power: it is accountable not only to the local people but also to the superior state organs. Its executive organ, the People's Committee, on the other hand, is defined as the local organ of state administration, which is responsible for implementing

¹⁰UCLG country report on the Royal Kingdom of Thailand

¹¹Ledgerwood, Judy and Un, Kheang, Cambodia in 2002; Decentralization and its effects on Party politics. Asian Survey 2002. JSTOR

¹²Hoat, Tu Van, and Ursal, Sofronio ; New Public Management Reform in Ninh Binh, Vietnam, Reforms and Procedures in East and South East Asian network of Local Governance 2000

the normative documents issued by higher level state organs as well as the resolutions of its People's Council"¹³.

The reforms initiated in local government occurred alongside the transition of Vietnam from a state-centered into a more market-based economy. These reforms of the local state infrastructure occurred in the context of rapid social change that is a result of development and growth¹⁴. It allowed local initiatives for development to prosper within the context of centralized state supervision.

2. Empowerment (Why and How)

The institutionalization of people's participation in the region is a notable development because these Southeast Asian countries shared an almost similar historical experience of having either an overly centralized colonial state or a centralized monarchy. After the destruction of the colonial/monarchical state in these countries either by a revolution, as in the cases of Vietnam and Indonesia, or by succession as in the cases of the Philippines, Cambodia, and Thailand, the successor governments all adopted a centralized approach of governance; the people were somewhat treated as mere rubber stamp upon which to impress the decision of the government. Unlike in the more advanced democracies, the concept of associational life observed by Alexis de Tocqueville in the America of the 18th century¹⁵ was absent or was ignored by the state. The difficulty in adopting this associational spirit is related to the trend of centralization of power in the history of Southeast Asian countries.

Unlike the experience of France in the 18th century, when the state took on a revolutionary nature and efficiently reorganized its resources to wage war against its European neighbors, this centralization experience of the Southeast Asian countries did not result in efficiency. On the contrary, the centralization of state bureaucracies in the five SEA countries created what Joel Migdal calls "islands of governance"¹⁶ – a situation where the majority of state's power was captured by social forces while leaving some areas of governance efficient in carrying out its objective. In the Philippines, the perfect example would be the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Central Bank of the Philippines)¹⁷ which remained efficient during the post EDSA period while large areas of government remains captured by various local and national political leaders.

¹³UCLG country report on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2010

¹⁴Adger, W. Neil, Institutional Adaptation to Environmental Risk under the Transition in Vietnam, *Annals of American Geographers*, 2000, JSTOR

¹⁵ Tocqueville, Alexis De, *Democracy in America*

¹⁶ Migdal, Joel, *Weak State and Strong Societies*

¹⁷Abinales, Patricio and Amoroso, Donna, *State and Society in the Philippines*, 2003

The situation suggests not only a lack of institutional mechanism for people's participation but also the reinforcement of a culture of dependency of the electorate on their local leaders. Consequently, the local leaders became dependent on state largesse from national leaders creating the classic pattern of patron-client relationships¹⁸. This is best observed in postwar Philippines when national leaders lobbied for the political support of local political leaders; the national leaders in turn, however, neglected actions to strengthen the political power at the local level. Political dynasties having absolute power were also present. The worst case to be cited in this regard is the case of the Ampatuan clan which has been in power in Maguindanao for the past 40 years. The clan was only removed from power after the mass killing in which a group, allegedly led by Mayor Datu Unsay Ampatuan, massacred more than 50 journalists and civilians. This was the worst political violence committed in the Philippines since the restoration of democracy.

As a result of these instances of centralization of power, the potential of the people to make a meaningful contribution to governance was limited to having voting rights and giving assent to policies imposed upon them by the state. These policies, however, usually ignored local conditions making the experience of governance seem foreign to and often even an intrusion into the local community. In the absence of meaningful inputs from the local stakeholders, the local communities rarely understood the significance of a certain policy. Thus, no sense of ownership of the policy resource has been observed.

Indonesia's experience in empowerment occurred in the context of a long-standing tradition of state directed development. The entire concept of the Pancasila (five principles) democracy was grounded on the belief of a developmental state. When the Suharto regime collapsed in the face of multiple external problems (Asian financial crisis, East Timor crisis) and internal stress (the economic recession, massive civil unrest and secessionist threat) the issue of reforming the state was no longer a taboo. However, the reform stopped short of federalism, which was a taboo for the political elites; the Decentralization Act of 1999 was remarkable because it recognizes genuine demand for local autonomy. Despite decades of centralized governance, the demand for local autonomy was at its height during the opening of the debate in the last years of the Suharto Regime. There was also fear of giving powers to the provinces out of concern that it might disunite the nation. The most striking development that enhanced people's participation is the role of the local chief executives who for the first time were directly elected by the people.

However the previous Law of Local Government in its 1999 version describes that there is no hierarchical relationship between provincial and local governments because local governments are autonomous. The revised law

¹⁸Sidel, John, *Bossism in Philippine Politics*

in 2004 returns some former authorities back to provincial government. Conceptually, provincial government works as coordinator in the case of intra-province cooperation, provincial scale development as well as inter-province coordination. The law stipulates that this will include: development planning and controlling, landscape planning and usage, infrastructure development, healthcare, education, social problems, labour, environment, settlement and housing, civil service, investment, and other assignments that cannot be accomplished by municipal government¹⁹.

In Thailand, the demand for reforms was voiced in the face of strong resistance from the central government. Through the opportunities for participation that are provided in the area of urban planning and environmental management, local stakeholders were able to put their imprint on national development plans, that are usually imposed from central government. Despite the strong centralist nature of the Thai state it has attempted a series of measure to enhance local governance. All constitutions promulgated since 1975 had a chapter on local autonomy. These provisions, however, have consisted of very broad prescriptions calling for local governments to be based on the will of local residents and to reflect principles of self-governance through public elections for the heads of local government, and direct elections of councilors.

The constitution of 1997 has far more specific language on local autonomy, requiring the establishment of the National Decentralization Committee (NDC) and a revision of those acts that relate to local autonomy issues. The Decentralization Plan and Procedures Act of 1999 spells out these mechanisms for boosting local autonomy and is supplemented by the Local Authority Personnel Act of 1999. The Commission on Municipal Personnel Management of the Ministry of Interior previously determined salaries, wages and promotion of municipal personnel. Article 78 (282-290) of the 1997 constitution requires the promotion of decentralization as a basic policy of the government, the definition of plans and procedures for decentralization in separate legislation and the establishment of a decentralization committee. The Decentralization Plan and Procedures Act of 1999 enabled local governments to receive grants from other government agencies and ministries as well, beginning in fiscal year of 2001²⁰.

Meanwhile, Cambodia's 2002 election of sangkat leaders throughout the country immediately weakened the control of national political parties and democratized governance in the sangkat/communes. Decentralization has contributed to increasing the accountability of commune councilors and citizens' engagement in local decisionmaking. Each commune has implemented a number of projects. Most of these are related to rural infrastructure, and it is generally believed that they have created more opportunities in various

¹⁹UCLG country report on Indonesia page 2, 2010

²⁰UCLG country report on Thailand page 6, 2010

sectors, such as agriculture. It is also felt that local residents have better access to markets, hospitals and other services, and that transportation of goods and service delivery are more convenient. There are some good examples available on contributions to rural infrastructure and on work on administration services, for example civil registration.

On January 2001, two major laws covering political reform were launched. The first was the Law on the Election of Commune Councils and the second was the Law on the Administration and Management of Communes/Sangkats. These laws provide citizens and those they elect to represent them (commune councilors etc.) with more power in public decisionmaking. In 2002, the first commune council elections took place. The establishment of supporting regulatory structures and mechanisms took place, including the inter-ministerial National Committee for Support to Communes (NCSC) and its Secretariat; the Department of Local Administration (DoLA) in the Ministry of Interior (MoI); the Commune/Sangkat Fund (CSF) (for administrative and local development); and the Department of Local Finance (DoLF) within the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). In accordance with the delegated functions and mandates of national agencies, provincial rural development committee (PRDC) structures were established in all provinces.

In Vietnam, despite the centralized political structure in its 1992 constitution, the government recognized the importance of local initiatives. This led to the rationalization of the structure of local government and allowed a more responsive mechanism to the needs of the people while being supervised by the national government. People's Councils at all levels are elected through universal and equal suffrage and direct and secret ballot. Voting age is 18. Elections of People's Council deputies take place once every five years. The Law on Election of People's Council Deputies determines the number of seats for each locality based primarily on the population size. Voters are divided into electoral constituencies, each of which shall not elect more than five deputies (Election Law 2003). Each voter is to choose as many candidates as the number of deputies to be elected at the electoral unit. Successful candidates are those who gain most votes, provided they also get more than half of all valid votes.

As a form of more direct participation by people in local government affairs, the Party and the government have been promoting the promulgation and implementation of grassroots democracy regulations in each locality at the commune level. A government decree providing a framework for this policy stipulates areas in which people exercise their democratic rights in different manners, in accordance with the slogan "people know, people discuss, people implement, people monitor."

While the commune is the lowest level of government, rural communes generally consist of a group of natural villages, and urban communes (wards) are divided into a number of resident groups. Villages and resident groups are semi-formal, self governing institutions, which also perform a wide range of administrative duties under commune/ward authorities. Villagers/residents choose their leaders through elections, in which there is no official control of nominations. Villages/resident groups are allowed to have their own local codes to regulate social relations within the community, which are to be approved by the chairman of the district's People's Committee.

3. The Institutionalization of People's Participation

The dominance of a delegated decisionmaking concept was perceived as one of the best practices on governance. Fortunately, recent developments have transformed this conventional wisdom. The governance reforms pushed in the five Southeast Asian countries since the early nineties have provided a framework for the people to make a meaningful contribution to the affairs of government. In the Philippines, after the passage of the Local Government Code in 1991, the people could directly participate in the planning process, formulation and implementation of local government initiatives through the mechanisms of public consultations, petitions and sectoral representations in municipal councils. Thailand has also carried out reforms of its local government as stipulated in specific sections of its 1997 constitution and the passage of the Thailand's Decentralization Act of 1999. Cambodia offered a similar reform under the Commune Law of 2001. In 2003, Vietnam issued the Democratic Regulation of Locality, which increased people's participation in local governance. The social context in which these enumerated decentralization initiatives emerged was quite similar due to the common historical experience of centralized governance.

National leaders of these countries realized that people's participation coupled with an institutional framework for strengthening local governance could reinforce development goals of the national government. By providing a public consultation mechanism where the people are regularly consulted for their inputs on different policy issues, the local government empowers citizens and conveys the message that the people are an important part of the decisionmaking process. By creating a venue for dialogue and exchanges of ideas and opinions, the state is actually creating and strengthening the associational life or civic-mindedness of the citizens. Thence, people are not reduced to mere cogs in the machine of an impersonal state.

The following best practices will discuss how people's participation was best institutionalized in the area of local planning. Each case represents the practical application of the concept of people's participation in different socio-political contexts. The case of Vietnam happened within the limitation imposed by the centralized one-party state. Cambodia, on the other hand,

illustrates the application of people's participation within the framework of peace-building, while Thailand is an example of people's participation in action in a traditionally democratic yet centralized state. Each country presented in the chapters below has different political and socio-economic system. They share, however, the common desire to enhance democratic governance by transferring political power outside the realm of traditional political authority into the sphere of informal voluntary organizations that work hand in hand with the formal political institution. By doing so, democratic governance is finally tapping into the local autonomous communities that have flourished in the region even before the creation of centralized political institutions in these countries. Much like the experience of developed countries in the Western hemisphere, the mobilization of voluntary participation to achieve public good is the truest meaning of democratic governance. By putting the people at the center of governance, a more transparent and accountable political atmosphere is created, truly institutionalizing people's participation in the political institutions of the countries studied in this publication.

Short Summaries of Best Practices on People's Participation in Planning and Decisionmaking

Summary Best Practice 1 | BP 1 Decentralized and Community-led Policymaking, Khonkaen, Thailand

Khonkaen municipality has been selected as a best practice, because unlike many other cases, it managed to develop a sustainable and comprehensive strategy to strengthen people's participation with the aim to (1) to improve people's quality of life and social capital, and (2) to enhance the competitiveness and capacity of the municipality. The establishment of the City Council and the "Department of Supporting Citizen Participation and Decentralization" as well as the consequent decentralization of municipal power to community organizations ("Small Municipality within Big Municipality") were the key prerequisites for the implementation of more than 200 projects.

The starting point for the strategy was the idea that first of all a platform is needed to get to know people's opinions and needs to be able to formulate the appropriate policies. For this purpose the City Council was created. The Department of Citizen Participation and Decentralization Support was established and has become a key mechanism for the municipality in the collaboration with community organizations and in project screening before submitting them to the municipal executive's for consideration.

The department is equipped with permanent staff and is handling the implementation plans to strengthen and facilitate citizen participation in municipal activities. The strategy has been designed with the belief that people know best their needs and constraints. Following this, community organizations were given the power to decide on their own development plans and projects.

The following results were achieved:

- Better policies through better defined data on the needs and constraints of the people; involvement of more than 130 community organizations in the City Council; close cooperation with academia for community research.
- More community based projects better reflecting the needs of the people; people defined their own development plans, manage their budgets, human resources and procurements. Community management became cost-effective and efficient.
- Strengthened capacities and empowered people to better deal with local concerns and issues.
- Better policies, for example better environment and sanitation management (flood prevention, garbage management, food safety), led to the improvement of living conditions for the people.

The strategy has been supported by the City Council Program from Denmark – DANCED as well as by own funds from the municipality.

Summary Best Practice 2 | BP 2

Community Participation in Upgrading The Old Collective Housing Areas, Vinh City, Vietnam

The best practice (BP) example of Vinh city is a good case of city development with sustainable effects not only on the city infrastructure, but also on the living conditions of the people and, first and foremost, on the improved democratic local governance. This BP is about the upgrading of 142 designated housing areas and of the city infrastructure in two wards at Vinh city.

The wards were initially poor slum settlements until they were turned into a modern housing area with adequate infrastructure. The inhabitants accomplished this transformation with the support from the city's government and through a collective savings scheme. The approach was bottom-up, mobilizing the strength and power of the inhabitants of the housing area as follows:

- The participation of people in decisionmaking from an early stage of the urban planning process on;
- The participation of the community in primary data collection for urban planning;
- The participation of people in the urban planning process from commune level to municipality level;
- The participation of the community in the implementation and monitoring of the construction process.

Specific results of community participations in the urban planning process in Vinh City were:

- The master plan was approved by the government;
- The detailed plans of wards and communes were approved by the city government, with citizens' agreement;
- The community has gradually become aware of the need to save land to build public spaces and green areas, and to participate in the urban planning and development process;
- Using investments from the community, several projects were carried out to demolish old and downgraded condominiums, to give way to parks and cultural houses.
- Land owners gave up 20,554 square meters of land to give way to infrastructure projects throughout the city;
- Resources were invested by residents, as well as Vinh's citizens who are now living in other cities.
- Between 2000 and 2007, with a total budget of 165.32 billion dong, the following were built or improved: 408.717 kms of road; 64.899 kms of drainage system; 206 public buildings, such as health care stations and cultural houses; 379,894 square meters of pavement.

From 2008 to 2009, and with a budget of 23.45 billion dong, 2,648 trees were planted along roads and greenery areas of offices and schools were improved. Vinh City is one of the cities that have succeeded in the mobilization of community participation in urban planning, from preparatory activities to publicizing the plans and the implementation of the reconstruction program.

Summary Best Practice 3 | BP 3

People-Private-Public Partnership (PPPP) to Improve Local Infrastructure, Toul Sangker Sangkat, Cambodia

The PPPP model from Toul Sangker sangkat commune, Cambodia, is a good example for successful involvement of residents and private businesses in local planning and decisionmaking processes to improve local living conditions. About ten years ago, the sangkat was an open and underdeveloped area, which was often affected by flooding during the rainy season. Today, the area is characterized by a well-development infrastructure, including buildings of various sizes, residential apartments and houses as well as roads, sewage, electricity and pipe water networks. With only a small annual budget, Toul Sangker sangkat was not able to improve its infrastructure to meet the great needs of its rapidly increasing population and urbanization. Considering these unmet needs, Toul Sangker council has taken the initiative and developed a five-year development plan and annual investment program with five key pillars: rehabilitation of infrastructure, education and health, national resource management, administration, and security and gender.

In the planning process, a majority of the villages' residents helped identifying needs and agreed on possible solutions. The sangkat council has established its Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) to work with residents in all three villages throughout the year (from the planning stage through project completion/evaluation stage) and set up various committees to deal with the collection of people's contributions, procurement/bidding for the work, project management and regular monitoring, and technical supervision.

The council has added to this participatory process some key steps to improve transparency and integrity in managing staff and public funds. For instance, after an agreement on a specific project is reached, technical feasibility studies and cost estimates are conducted. Following that contributions from private firms located in the Sangkat, rich individuals and ordinary residents are collected to add to the fund that the Sangkat's council has secured from government sources. Each contribution is recorded and announced on the Sangkat's information board, other public places and in front of the contributor's residence.

The results are impressive:

- By 2010, at least 70% of earth roads were upgraded to bituminous and well-maintained roads with no flooding during rainy season. At least 80% of financial contributions have been provided by the private sector and local people;
- The people in the community obtained many benefits, such as better education and welfare. Special emphasis has been given to the education of women and children;
- A sewer network and rubbish collection in the community has been set up;
- People participation and support from stakeholders in social development is strengthened;
- Men and women have equal rights and better understanding on gender sensitive issues;
- All political parties are represented in the council for the first time in Cambodian history;
- Toul Sangker sangkat became a good practice example for 90 other sangkats in Cambodia.

Best Practice 1 | BP 1

Decentralized and Community-led Policymaking Khonkaen, Thailand

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Section A. Description of Best Practice

1. An Introduction to the Best Practice Model and Its Innovative Elements

The Thai constitution guarantees all Thai citizens local democracy. The 1997 constitution also called the Peoples' Constitution, defines the rights and obligations of every Thai citizen. One of these rights is to participate in governance issues. The Decentralization Act of 1999 likewise strongly advocates grassroots participation in resolving public issues or in policymaking to resolve community problems.

The Khonkaen municipality's experience in decentralized and community-led policymaking is a good example of as well as actual practice in the concept of local democracy embodied in the constitution of Thailand and advocated in the Decentralization Act of 1999.

This best practice consists of two case studies: the City Council project and the "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project. Both are relevant to the principle of citizen participation and community's decisionmaking in public policy. These two cases are the results of the cooperation among more than 200 groups/organizations at community and local levels. The important characteristics of the innovations that make them so-called best practices are:

- a. In the City Council more than 200 different groups and organizations within Khonkaen municipality come together. They have a vital role to play in making suggestions to the municipal executive regarding urban and public policy. This activity is in accordance with the Royal Kingdom of Thailand constitution B.E. 2540.



- b. “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” is a decentralization process of administration, tasks, budget, human resources, technology and materials procurement from municipality to community - planning to implementation.



2. Reasons for Program Development, Shortcomings and Challenges Addressed by Best Practice Model

There are several concepts that Khonkaen municipality has used for its urban development program:

- Concept of the role of the municipal organization. Under this concept, the municipality should act as a coordinator and facilitator. It should support, subsidize and build capacity of its people. It should also assist in strengthening the people in the community to make decisions by themselves, and to enable them to become self-reliant and to have a sense of belonging to their city. On the other hand, the municipal executive should play a vital part in addressing the problems and obstacles in urban development. In addition, the municipal executive shall create opportunities and channel for citizens to participate in urban development.
- Concept of good governance. Under this concept, the municipality should manage their city by following five main principles, which are ethics, transparency, participation, accountability and efficiency. Good governance in city development shall contribute to citizens' sense of well-being and meet their needs.
- Concept of a liveable city. Under this concept, urban development shall embrace the following three main elements:
 - a. Reform the municipal organization towards good corporate governance, and deregulate a bureaucratic system that is obstructive to the community's development;
 - b. Strengthen the civil society sector, raise city citizens' awareness on political issues, build their capacity and develop their teamworking skills;

- c. Create awareness of public services, motivate people to assist each other and encourage them to develop their community in a participatory process.
- Concept of a kind and peaceful society. Under this concept, the municipality assists and subsidizes poor people, so that they can live with dignity in society.

Based on the aforementioned urban development concepts, Khonkaen municipality has refined its urban development vision into "Development of Liveable City, Create Peaceful Society and Respect Nature".

The goals and strategies of this urban development vision are increased competitiveness of the city, improvement of people's quality of life and social capital, and an enhanced capacity of the municipality:

1. Increased competitiveness of the city. To achieve this goal, the infrastructure management is improved and an investment environment developed, i.e. privatization and decentralization of small scale infrastructure management to community;
2. Improvement of people's quality of life and social capital. To achieve this goal, the evolution of the education system is supported, targeting youth by adopting a people-centred study approach. In addition, building a kind and peaceful society and strengthening civil society are also aims to be achieved;
3. Increased capacity of municipality. Improvement of the municipality's administration system through human resources development, decentralization, transfer of tasks, developing a participatory development plan, deregulation, and effective administration of the budget, management and development of information system and, lastly, the development of the municipality's capacity in revenue collection.

Consequently, Khonkaen municipality translated urban development's concepts and strategies into policy. Khonkaen municipality's administration policy can be classified into four issues, which are decentralization, evolution of education, participation and health.

2.1 Decentralization of Authority from Municipality to Community versus Decentralization from Central Government to Local Authority.

Decentralization is viewed as a vital tool in driving urban development. One major project under this policy is the "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project. On the other hand, decentralization from central government to local government has not yet been cleared and, thus, cannot be fully implemented as stated in the law. In many cases, the central government organization still orders a local authority to perform some tasks, citing some rules and regulations, which the local authority

is obliged to comply with. Aiming to achieve decentralization, Khonkaen municipality, therefore, tries to transfer the power from the municipal executive to heads of each department and divisions. For instance, the procurement authority is transferred to the Chief Municipal Officer and the Deputy Chief Municipal Officer, Director of Bureau/Division. In addition, the mayor assigns more responsibility to his deputies in the administration of particular bureaus and divisions.

- **Education Policy**

Khonkaen municipality has a policy to improve human resources and social capital. The executive believes that education management for specific groups of people is required to help reduce the social gap and to increase their opportunities to improve their life. The municipality, therefore, has launched the Evolution of Education Policy to achieve the human resources development goal.

- **Participation Policy**

The ultimate goal of Khonkaen municipality is to develop itself into a liveable city. Hence, the strengthening of civil society and the involvement of citizens' in the urban development process are major strategies being employed. Participation policy is exercised in a tangible manner. A new organization, i.e. the Department of Citizen Participation Support is established, which is equipped with permanent staff and implementation plans to motivate and facilitate citizen participation in municipal activities.

- **Health and Environment Policy**

Khonkaen municipality has at its goal to improve the quality of people's life and their society through the strategy of promoting good health and the protection of environment.

2.2 City Council's Initiation Stage

The project is influenced by both internal and external factors. One internal factor was the involvement with a participatory development planning process, initiated by the Research and Development Institute, Khonkaen University in 1999. The process was a channel through which people could express their opinions and needs with regard to their urban development.

In addition, the government of Denmark (DANCED) assisted Khonkaen city municipality in its "Environmental Initiative Phase 2" by building a network for the Khonkaen Liveable City project. The purpose of the project is to involve all people and stakeholders, develop learning process and systematic cooperation at every level for Liveable City.

Opinion surveys were employed to get an idea of the citizens' views. The municipal executive believes that prior to any project implementation, people's opinions should be heard.

The municipality, therefore, cooperated with the Research and Development Institute, Khonkaen University and the Coordination Committee of Non-Governmental Organization of the Northeastern Region to build a participatory process among various stakeholders i.e. community groups, academic groups, government officials, academic staff and civil society, for developing a plan for Khonkaen Liveable City. Through this platform, in which Mr. Peerapon Pattanapeeradej (the present mayor) played a vital role, an enduring learning environment and relationship between the municipality, academic staff and NGOs were created and fostered.

Another internal factor was the municipal executive's interest in listening to stakeholders' opinions. The executive, therefore, proposed his vision and policy to people during an election campaign that promised to develop and provide channels for citizen participation in urban development.

The external factor contributing to the City Council project was a process to develop the 8th National Social and Economic Development Plan in 2000. That process introduced and advocated a participatory approach to developing a local authority's plan. In addition, it supported cooperation and networking of civil society to monitor and implement a local authority's development plan to install a stronger sense of belonging.

In this regard, the Royal Kingdom of Thailand Constitution B.E. 2540, Section 76 and Section 78 strongly highlight public participation. Section 76 states that the government shall facilitate and support citizens' participation in defining goals, making decisions on political issues and social, economic, environment and political plans, including monitoring the government's performance at every level.

Under Section 78, the government shall decentralize its authority to local authorities, enabling them to be self-reliant and make decisions on their own. The central government shall enable local authorities to develop their economy, utility, facility and information structure.

Consequently, the government enacted the Decentralization Act B.E. 2542 to accomplish the goals stated in the Constitution B.E. 2540 that stakeholders' participation and adjustable processes that are suitable to a particular context and facilitation of learning process of stakeholders are to be achieved.

Both aforementioned internal and external factors contributed to the establishment of a City Council which serves as a channel to absorb citizens' information, opinions, needs etc, as well as information for the formation of public policy of Khonkaen municipality.

The City Council is also a platform for the municipality to explain and deliver information for and against any municipal projects to stakeholders. Citizens and other sectors can use this platform to express their opinions and convey their message to the municipality. The platform enables proper decisionmaking of the municipality.

It is noted that the City Council was designed with the following principles in mind:

1. Citizens are the owners of the city. The municipality shall listen to their opinions before implementing any particular project that affects their well-being. Apart from that, participatory process will generate a sense of belonging among the people.
2. An election is not a process through which citizens delegate their power to their representatives throughout their four-year term in office. An election merely expresses a consensus that citizens select their representatives to manage some tasks. However, for any project to actually have an effect on citizens' well-being, the representative shall double-check the citizens' views before making a decision. Only in this way is real democracy ensured.
3. The aim of the Royal Kingdom of Thailand Constitution B.E. 2540 in attempting decentralization is motivating citizen to participate in any urban development activities. Local authorities cannot exercise their power without listening to their citizens.
4. There are not enough government officials and they know much less about a community's problem than the people living there. Hence, the municipality should involve people in its problem-solving process.

In terms of innovation, the "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project employs the decentralization concept, by which Khonkaen municipality delegates tasks, decisionmaking power and responsibilities, including budget and resources to the community.

The municipality exercises decentralization and employs citizen participation in the implementation of several activities, which are the City Council project, the decentralization of the procurement authority to the Chief Municipality Officer, Deputy Chief Municipality Officer, Director of Bureaus and Divisions. Lastly, the mayor assigns to each of its deputies responsibilities to supervise and administer particular bureaus and division.

In terms of decentralization to community, Khonkaen municipality emphasizes participation, transparency and decentralization, aiming to develop the strength of community organizations and civil society. Under the concept of “the Heart of Administration is Decentralization, the Heart of Decentralization are Citizens”, the policy was translated into an implementation plan. The municipality delegates particular tasks, which can be better undertaken by community organizations, to the community. This project has been implemented since 1997. Some examples of the tasks delegated to the community level are: road improvements; park; maintenance of drainage system; collecting of garbage fee; street cleaning; promotion of local culture and traditions.

The project has proved that many tasks can be done perfectly well on the community level. The delegation of some of these tasks, for example collecting garbage fees, can help reduce the municipality's staff and equipment costs. These activities are part of the project to promote citizen participation in urban environmental management and increase the revenue of local authorities.

The result is satisfying compared to the year 2004 when the municipality collected the garbage fee by itself. The fees collected by community organizations in 2005 were 15.42% higher than the fees collected by the municipality in the year before. In addition, the fee collection through community organizations saved the municipality around 55,000 Baht on staff and equipment costs. At the same time, the construction of a road and drainage system which was carried out by community organizations, reduces waiting time for municipality's services. An evaluation has shown that people are satisfied and the cost of services tend to be lower compared to the costs incurred by the municipality.

The implementation mentioned above is in accordance with Section 16 “Supporting Citizen Participation in Local Development Activities” stated in the Royal Kingdom of Thailand Constitution Act B.E. 2542 (1999). In the fiscal year 2005-2006, Khonkaen municipality arranged for platforms active in the communities to produce a draft development plan and involved them in the decentralization. A pilot community was then selected under the “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” project.

In this project, the municipality duplicated the decentralization model - decentralization of power from the central government to local government – to carry out a decentralization of power from the municipality to community organizations. Rum Jai Pattana community was first selected as a pilot community. After the success of the pilot project, it was extended to 90 other communities.



3. Results Achieved and Relevance to Public Life

As for the City Council project, the results are satisfying as the mayor and executive take information given by citizens and community organizations into account before making any decision. The results of the City Council's meetings lead to various development projects that meet people's needs. People can plan and define an implementation method by themselves; hence, there are no conflict and disputes. This model contributes to sustainable development. The municipality's performances is also monitored frequently to ensure transparency in its administration.

Following are some examples of developments undertaken as a result of city council's meetings:

1. Preservation and improvement of local indigenous cultural and historical sites i.e. Phra Nakhon Sri Bariruk - Khonkaen's Founder - Monument, Nam Sang airport, establishment of Hong Moon Mong Museum, City Pillar Shrine, Pu Kru Yen Spirit House (Nong Yai Village), Pu Ya Kru Jud and Pu Ta Spirit House (Ba Kham Village), Sri Khaew Temple (Non Tam Village), Chom Sri Temple (Sri Than Village) and City's Gate.
2. Enactment of municipality's ordinances, i.e. ordinance on prohibition of installation of advertisement boards in 8 zones, ordinance on biodiversity preservation zone in Kaeng Nakorn Reservoir.
3. Public park improvement, i.e. Kaeng Nakorn reservoir park, Tung Sang reservoir park, Nong Wang reservoir park, City Gate's park (1st phase and 2nd phase), Nong Yai reservoir park, Nong Bon reservoir park, Nong Sa Pang pond and park in front of the prison house, etc.
4. Environment and sanitation management, i.e. flood prevention and whole garbage management i.e. Prosperity by Recycle Project, Recycle Organic Waste into Pig Food Project, Safety Food Project (i.e. an improvement of the slaughterhouse), improvement of municipal fresh market, etc. In addition, traffic management at Sam Liam intersection was proposed to the relevant agency, i.e. 5th Highway Office (Khonkaen province), Khonkaen Highway Bureau as an alternative solution for their attempts to solve a traffic problem.

At present, the City Council serves as a tool to mobilize participation in any public policy formulation of Khonkaen municipality.



In terms of the “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” project, community organizations have the authority to decide their development plan and implement projects by themselves. The municipality realizes that people in the community know their problems best; therefore, they are the best equipped to solve them. An evaluation revealed that the majority of citizens participated in community development projects. Most of them knew about the project from municipal radio, their neighbours and friends.

According to the evaluation, they also joined religious and traditional activities, community meetings and all activities that benefited the community, such as cleaning their houses and community spaces and security matter.

However, urban society comprises different groups of people. Not many middle-income households who are mainly government officers or private company's employees joined the project due to certain constraints. But they are still interested to know what is happening in the community and try to participate in any activities they can, through donation of money or attending activities when they have time.

Characteristic of community network: People have a bond due to their shared characteristics (i.e. income level, geographical settlement, etc.). Apart from that, there is still Thai style bonding i.e. a network of people who join religious

ceremonies, and traditional festival such as pouring water on elderly people on Songkran Day, celebrating the spirit house, paying respect to Pu Ta spirit house, etc.

At the community level, people have accumulated more experience in the management and implementation of their community's development projects. They can improve their quality of life themselves. This development pattern at community level is similar to development at municipal level.

After an implementation of a pilot project in 2005, Khonkaen municipality carried out an evaluation and found that the participatory method was efficient and effective. Therefore, the municipality met with the other communities, asking them to review their own capacity in implementing some tasks, which would be delegated to them by the municipality. Since 2007 until the present, there has been an increase of delegated tasks from 8 to 12 tasks. At present, it can be said that there is no longer "Small municipality within Big Municipality" project, as it has become part of the regular process of Khonkaen municipality's implementation policies.

Judging from the two models, it can be stated that people can be empowered to manage and develop their own community by themselves if they are provided with the chance and support from related agency.

4. Description of Khonkaen

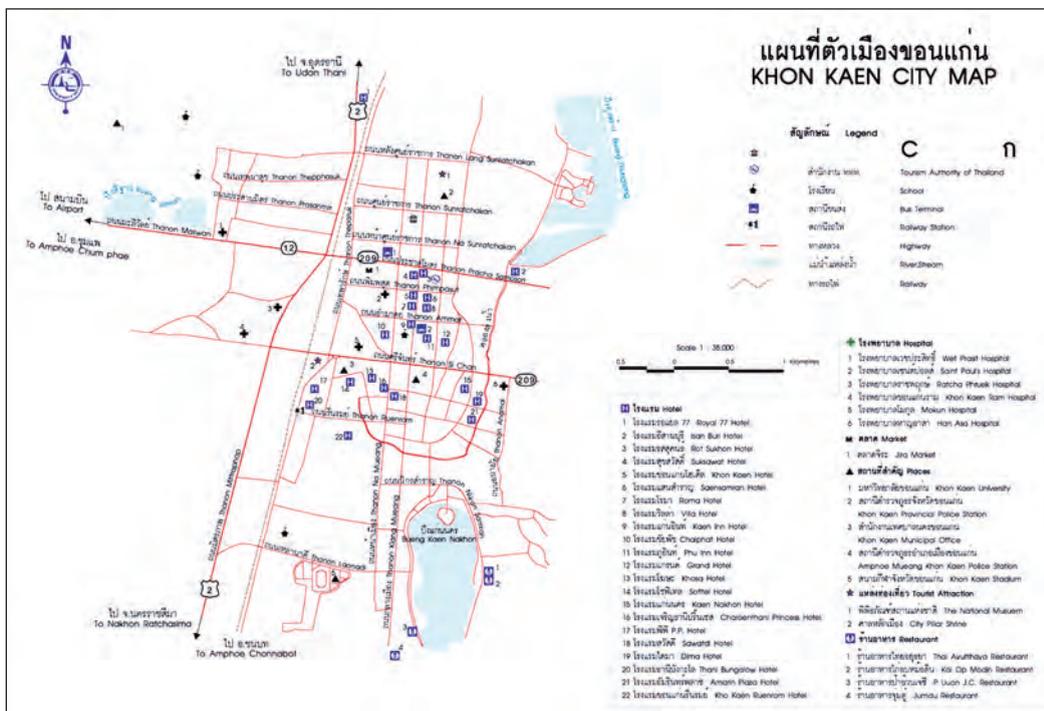
Khonkaen province has been at the center of the north-eastern region since the introduction of the 3rd National Social and Economic Development Plan. The development of the north-eastern region was started by the government in the 2nd National Social and Economic Development Plan, hence the provincial development plan for all 15 provinces in the region in the 3rd plan.

Khonkaen Province is surrounded by more than ten smaller provinces. It is the centre of the regional administration. More than 200 government offices are situated in this province, which also serves as a centre of regional transportation and as an investment hub. There are more than 1,400 educational institutions in Khonkaen province, of which three are higher level educational institutions and ten are colleges.

There has been a continuous expansion of Khonkaen's economy both in the agricultural and the industrial sector. The central government has formulated a strategy to develop Khonkaen province into a hub of for trade with Indochina or into a center of the East-West Corridor. This is due to the fact that Khonkaen province is in the center of the corridor, connecting *Moulmein* on the Andaman Coast of Myanmar to Tak province, Pitsanulok province and Khonkaen province in Thailand with Savahnnaket province in Laos and Danang on the South China Sea in Vietnam. Khonkaen Chamber of Commerce and businessmen from the province were invited to Danang to discuss bilateral investment

opportunities. Khonkaen University reiterated that Khonkaen province can be center of trading of the Indochina region. At present, Khonkaen province is a center of education, economy and transportation of the region.

At first the municipal status of Khonkaen was town municipality, which was awarded on August 20, 1935 by the Khonkaen Municipality Establishment Decree. Its municipal area covered 4.031 square kilometres. However, in 1971, the central government enacted the decree to expand its municipal area, which presently covers 46 square kilometres. In 1995, the central government enacted the decree to upgrade it into Khonkaen municipality (Nakhon Municipality).



Picture 1: Map of Khonkaen Municipality

As for its urban expansion, statistical reports on population and household at provincial, district and tambon level in December 2008 showed that there are 53,498 households with a population of 118,203, of which 56,090 are male and 62,119 are female. There are 90 communities within the municipal area, which Khonkaen municipality divides into 5 zones.

Apart from indigenous Thai people, there is a large Chinese-Thai population. This group plays a vital role in boosting provincial economic growth. In addition, there are Thai-Vietnamese people and foreigners who have settled in Khonkaen province.

At present, the population growth within the municipal area is in decline. This is due to the fact that people have moved to a private sub-division housing project outside the municipal area. During 2003-2006, there was a population of approximately 450,000 registered and non-registered people combined (information from Social Welfare Division).

Municipal executive and municipality members of parliament: the municipal administrative unit comprises the mayor (Mr. Pakpien) and four deputies. The municipal administrative unit shall formulate and implement the policies if approved by the municipal parliament. Normally, the policies are translated from the concept and vision of the municipal executive, which are under the main framework of participatory urban development and decentralization of power to community organizations. The municipal executive is frequently involved in learning and exchanging information and knowledge with academic institutions and local people. The mayor himself believes that local authority should respond to citizens' needs and provide best services to them, who are the city's owner. He views that decentralization of power to people is the best approach to urban management. Hence, he integrates citizen participation into municipal implementation processes as part of the principles of "transparency, participation and decentralization". The aim is to develop Khonkaen and, ultimately, provide the benefits to people.

The municipal parliament has 24 elected members who serve a four-year term. The parliament is administered by a chairman, vice chairmen and members. The members are responsible for monitoring municipal executive's performances, passing laws and regulations, impeaching the mayor if he commits wrong acts, approving the budget plan, revenue collection, and controlling budget expenditure, etc.

Six municipal members of parliament shall be responsible for each particular area. For instance, one is responsible for construction work while another takes charge of health volunteer, etc. Each member has close contact with the people from the community within his designated area. They will help people in their coordination with related agencies to serve the interests of the community. For example, if a community organization is interested in waste recycling, a municipal parliament member will be involved in the planning and implementation process by providing advice and coordinating between the municipality and community organization.

Specific political characteristic: The dominant political party in Khonkaen municipality is Ruk Pattana Nakorn Khonkaen Party. It aims to develop Khonkaen. The municipal executive and the majority of the members of the municipal parliament are from this party, so there is unity in the administration of the municipality. The party selects a candidate for any municipal election and has a lot of power in the negotiation with other related sectors. Therefore, Khonkaen municipality is a very strong local authority. Most of the members of the municipal parliament play an advisory role and support the community's activities, as well as relaying the community's needs to the parliament. Impeachment never occurs. Hence, the municipal parliament is acting more like an advisory board to the municipal executive.

Communities located within Khonkaen municipality's area are divided into five groups as follows:

1. Sub-Community, meaning a community situated within the municipal area and sharing physical features and conditions (i.e. same soi, same street, same road, same row-house or same block, and same zone, for instance residing in the same private sub-division project).
2. Slum, meaning congested settlement with unhealthy physical conditions, untidy or deteriorated houses, lack of infrastructure and sometimes lack of security of land tenure. People in slums frequently move in and out. In addition, environmental, social and economic problems prevail in slum communities.
3. Urban community, meaning a community formed by settlers in a municipal area for commercial purposes. It is a newly formed society featuring various cultures. Commercial exchange activities take place in the community. Each household has a secure income. The community is provided with public utilities and facilities.
4. Semi-urban community, meaning old urban settlements where family and its relatives and kin are living close by. People stick to traditions and cultural norms. They are mainly engaged in farming as their forebears are. However, as some of them are new immigrants, their occupation are mixed between agriculture and trading, etc. Their houses are strongly built. People have their own land and are provided with facilities and utilities. The physical conditions are quite good.
5. Sub-division community, meaning a community of people living in private sub-division housing projects. Houses are in good order and strongly built and are provided with good facilities and utilities. Each household has a secure economic status with land ownership and income.

In 2007, there are 90 communities within the municipal area. The communities are divided into 4 zones. Zone 1 comprises 19 communities. Zone 2 is settled by 24 communities. Zone 3 comprises 24 communities, while 15 communities belong to Zone 4.

In each community, there is a community organization comprising one chairman, a vice chairmen and members, totalling 24 persons. Each member is responsible for different areas, i.e. administration, social welfare, health, etc. Additionally, a special committee may be set up by an external organization, for instance Baan Man Kong Community Committee, which was set up by the Community Organization Development Institute (CODI).

Municipality in Thai Legal Framework: Decentralization was incorporated for their first time in the Royal Kingdom of Thailand Constitution Act B.E. 2540. The aim was to decentralize power in the formulation of public policies and the administration of local development to local authorities. In addition, Section 78 states that the central government shall decentralize power to local authorities so that local authorities can decide on and manage their own

administration. Meanwhile, Section 290 prioritizes Independent Principle and Empowerment of Local Authority. Section 284, states that local authority shall be independent in the formulation of administrative policy, human resources and finance.

The Royal Kingdom of Thailand Constitution Act B.E. 2540 specifies that law shall prevail to ensure that local authorities maintain tradition and local and indigenous culture, provide education, support local people's occupation, promote and preserve the environment, provide basic services, etc. Chapter 9 of the constitution states that the central government shall be committed to decentralizing some authority to local authorities. Therefore, the central government enacted Decentralization Act B.E. 2542 which has been in effect from November 18, 1999 as a tool to determine decentralization procedures. This Act was promulgated in the Royal Gazette No. 116, Section 114 on November 17, 1999. Under this Act, a decentralization committee was to be established and be responsible for decentralization process supervision in order to meet the objectives of the Act (Anan Techawanich, 2003).

Section 16 of the Decentralization Act defines the authority of local authorities, as municipality, Pattaya city and Tambon administration organizations have the power and authority to provide public services for the benefits of their citizens as follows:

1. Formulate Local Development Plan;
2. Maintain road, water transportation and drainage system;
3. Provide hygienic fresh market, port and parking spaces;
4. Provide public utilities and other construction work;
5. Provide public facilities;
6. Provide occupation support and training to people;
7. Support commerce and promote investment;
8. Promote tourism;
9. Provide education;
10. Provide social welfare, improvement of quality of life of children, women, elderly people and disadvantaged people;
11. Preservation and maintenance of art, culture, tradition, local indigenous wisdom;
12. Improvement of slum and housing management;
13. Provide and maintain recreational places;
14. Promote sport;
15. Promote democracy, equality and rights and freedom of people;
16. Support citizen participation in local development;
17. Clean and maintain the tidiness and order of city;
18. Garbage disposal, waste disposal and wastewater treatment;

19. Provide health and medical services;
20. Provide crematorium and funeral site;
21. Control animal husbandry;
22. Provide and supervise slaughter house;
23. Maintain security, tidiness, hygiene of entertainment complex and public spaces;
24. Manage, maintain and utilize forest, land, natural resources and the environment;
25. Urban planning;
26. Transportation and traffic engineering;
27. Maintenance of public spaces;
28. Building control;
29. Disaster alleviation and prevention;
30. Maintenance of order;
31. Other activities benefiting the citizen.

Table 1: Structure and No. of Staff, Permanently Hired Staff, Hired Staff of Khonkaen Municipality, Muang District, Khonkaen Province

No.	Bureau/Division	Staff	Permanent Hired Staff	Hired Staff	Hired Staff
1	Bureau of Chief Municipal Officer	71	9	77	14
2	Bureau of Finance.	47	-	36	33
3	Bureau of Public Work.	47	11	68	74
4	Bureau of Health and Environment.	38	11	105	173
5	Bureau of Education.	31	-	33	4
6	Division of Planning and Academic.	25	1	10	-
7	Division of Social Welfare.	14	1	8	1
8	Internal Audit.	1	-	-	-
9	Suan Sanook Municipal School	109	5	15	5
10	Wat Klang Municipal School	116	1	28	10
11	Kum Nong Ku Municipal School	20	2	7	2
12	Non Tan Municipal School	35	2	10	2
13	Baan Nong Yai Municipal School	56	2	12	2
14	Non Nong Wat Municipal School	14	2	4	1
15	Baan Non Chai Municipal School	28	1	11	4
16	Baan Sam Liam Municipal School	56	4	5	1
17	Baan Nong Wang Municipal School	19	1	6	3
18	Baan Toom Municipal School	21	1	4	1
19	Baan Sri Than Municipal School	24	2	4	-
Total		772	56	443	330
Grand Total 1,601 Staff					

(Source: Khonkaen Municipality, March 2010)

5. Budget and Supporters for Best Practice Implementation

The important success factor of these initiatives - participation and decentralization models - is the community. Despite their being such a variety of communities within Khonkaen municipality, many of them have accumulated experiences in fighting for equal rights and community's rights on natural resources and other issues. Such experiences have contributed a great deal to the success of the project.

One example is Ba Kham community which has been empowered through participation in development processes undertaken by both public and non-governmental organizations. The community leader himself has progressive views and highly prioritizes long-term benefits for the citizens of his community. He advocated Ba Kham community to be a pilot community for the citizen participation model run by Khonkaen municipality. Finally, the community has become a case study for others.

Leaders of other communities, meanwhile, have regularly joined municipal activities. Through this, they have learned and acquired techniques and working processes. They can express their needs and have developed systematic thinking, can propose solutions to problems, and are able to manage a community's activities. This human capital is of outstanding importance for Khonkaen municipality. Khonkaen municipality can involve community people and community leaders as partners on a continued basis.

In addition, Khonkaen municipality have enabled them to realize and become aware that they are city owners and shall have to participate in all urban development activities. The mayor - Mr. Peerapol Pattanapeeradej - believes that whatever changes there may be in the municipal government, the innovation in citizen participation and decentralization will not be affected as community people are now fully aware of their rights.

In terms of academic capital, Khonkaen municipality has different partners, i.e. Khonkaen University, Faculty of Humanity and Social Study, Coordinating Committee for Non-governmental Organization for Rural Development. They are all part a network staffed by academic personnel and experts on research and consultation.

The municipality has a close relationship with the university as many of themunicipal staff as well as the municipal executive are master degree graduates from the university.

Additionally, Khonkaen University, aiming to be an academic leader, set its missions to explore, search and transfer knowledge to society through research, while local and indigenous wisdom is integrated into the university's modern theories and knowledge.

Khonkaen municipality sought participation from the university in the research to find solutions for urban problems, for example traffic, housing, project evaluation, or monitoring municipal performances as well as building the capacity of municipal executive and staff as well as local people. Apart from that, university researchers play a vital role as advisory team for communities and municipal staff.

Furthermore, the advisor of the Committee for Non-governmental Organization for Rural Development in Northern-Eastern Region (Mr. Decha Premrudeelert) has become an advisor for the municipality. The municipal executive will exchange knowledge and experiences with both Thai and international academic persons on public policy formulation, etc. At the same time, non-governmental organizations plays a significant role as municipal advisory team by providing information, facilitating development processes and sometimes monitoring municipal performances.

The relationship between the municipal executive and the private sector is also good. Once the mayor has a new project, he will seek advice from experts, including experts from the private sector.

In terms of budget, the municipality gained support from two significant sources i.e. DANCED, Denmark, who supported the City Council project and the municipality's own revenue, which is used to finance the „Small Municipality within Big Municipality“ project.

6. Specific Technical Expertise

The key expertise needed for designing and implementing the models and the City Council project is participation building technique. Specifically, expertise is needed in developing public platforms, public hearings, dispute resolution and conflict resolution, which require communication and management skills. The specific skills required for the City Council project are:

- Arranging public hearings;
- Dispute resolution;
- Conclusion technique;
- Project development;
- Personnel, budget, material management by community people;
- Systematic thinking.
- Other special skills i.e. urban design (i.e. used when designing City Pillar House and City Gate) and traffic engineering

Regarding the “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” project, the objective of the project is to work closely with people in the community for the formulation of a community development master plan by analysing existing information and as well as the needs of the community people, arranging public hearings and proposing a plan for approval from the municipal parliament executive. The staff must therefore be equipped with participation building techniques, management skills, negotiation skills, strategic thinking and strategic planning. The municipal staff who are trainers must be able to utilize Mind Map, SWOT, AIC, Roadmap, CIPP Model, public hearing and focus group interviewing.

The municipality then established the Department of Supporting Citizen Participation and Decentralization. This department has responsibility for coordinating and facilitating community development planning, implementing, evaluation and monitoring process.

Apart from that, the municipality builds capacity for staff from other divisions who need to work with communities. The municipality invites university lecturers or non-governmental organizations to transfer knowledge and techniques regarding working with communities to municipal staff through workshop and on the job training. Each division can design their own program to build their staff’s capacity with assistance from lecturers. In addition, specific skills are also gained through working with academic persons during meetings, discussions, brainstorming and study trips.

Section B. Methodology in Design and Implementation of Best Practice

1. Brief Description of Best Practice Design Process

In order to design the City Council model and the “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” model, Khonkaen municipality applied the, Triangle Moving the Mountain” concept of Mr. Prawet Wasri. The concepts of decentralization, participation and good governance were all employed in the model design process. The draft models were developed from the platform in which Khonkaen Liveable City Development Plan was formulated. All concepts utilized in the model’s development can be elaborated as follows:

1.1 “Triangle Moving the Mountain Concept” of Mr. Prawet Wasri²¹

This concept is applied in the performance of difficult tasks. “Mountain” means something difficult and hard to move but this triangle concept can affect its movement.

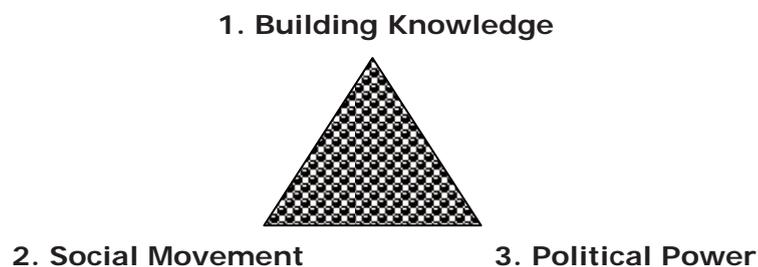


Illustration 1. Triangle Moving the Mountain by Mr Prawet Wasri

1. Building knowledge means building clear and sufficient knowledge related to the activities. Khonkaen municipality asked an academic institution (i.e. Khonkaen University) to conduct research on critical issues affecting Khonkaen’s people and on existing knowledge in the City Council as alternative solution.
2. Social movement means participation of civil society in learning and expressing their needs. Khonkaen municipality uses the City Council as a channel for the citizens of Khonkaen to mobilize their social movement peacefully.
3. Linkage to government’s power means political body which is a body of government in exercising government’s power, utilizing resources and enacting laws and regulations.

Khonkaen municipality believes that if all elements of the triangle are in-sync with one another, the most difficult tasks can be addressed and tackled.

²¹Professor Dr. Pravej Wasri (<http://www.prawase.com/bio.php?lang=en>) initiated this theory which has been widely applied by private and public sectors as a tool to solve and achieve sustainable goal with participations of the following three counterparts: government, community, and private sector.

1.2 Concept of Decentralization of Power from Local Authority to Community Organization.

Decentralization is the transfer of the central government's authority to local government as specified by laws. There are two types of decentralization, i.e. administrative decentralization and political decentralization.

- Administrative decentralization: This is a decentralization of power to regional government. Representatives from the central government are assigned to work in regional offices countrywide on a rotation basis, but are still subject to the central government.
- Political decentralization: This is a decentralization of decisionmaking power and resources management to local government. Through this, the local authority is empowered and becomes independent under the supervision of regional government and central government.

Political decentralization is concerned with the following key elements:

1. Decentralization of some tasks to local government, such as education services;
2. Decentralization of decisionmaking power in the management of the transferred tasks to local government;
3. Distribution of resources management;
4. Decentralization to motivate citizen participation. This is to create channel for citizens to participate in local administration both directly and indirectly, for instance allowing people to impeach corrupt local politicians;
5. Decentralization, transparency and accountability. Decentralization shall proceed in tandem with transparency and accountability the of local executive. The local executive shall be inspected by central government and citizens. Responsibility means awareness of rights and duty, being accountable for society, prioritizing interests in public matter and being committed to solving problems, including respect different opinions. Importantly, local executives shall be accountable for their right or wrong acts.

In this initiative, Khonkaen municipality applied the political decentralization concept because it needs to distribute resources (i.e. budget) through the transfer of some decisionmaking power to the community.

In conclusion, the decentralization of power from local government to community shall involved citizens playing significant roles and being responsible for managing tasks delegated from local government. This is to ensure that all tasks will properly serve their own needs. Citizen should participate in elections, policy formulation, and examination of local

government administration. The way to motivate citizen participation is to make them possess knowledge of their own their locality and love and respect of their roots.

Decentralization of power is a matter of inter-organizational relationships or of a relationship between delegating organization and recipient organization. Based on such foundation, some some about decentralization guidelines, problems and obstacles can be drawn.

Decentralization is proper relationship management between one organization and another organization or many organizations under their former's authority to achieve the benefit of effective and efficient policy and plan implementation. The recipient organization shall be accountable for its tasks delegated. Following factors shall be taken in account in the decentralization:

- Citizens want to participate in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring, so that their needs can be responded to;
- Apart from decentralizing tasks, budget and decisionmaking power shall be decentralized as well. The recipient organization shall be independent in its implementation and the power-decentralizing organization shall be able to supervise, monitor, evaluate and conclude the results of decentralization for the development of both organizations;
- The structure has to be in place and the personnel has to be ready to perform new tasks and responsibilities;
- Decentralization shall concern citizen participation, especially those who are affected by the tasks delegated.

1.3 Community Participation Concept

Community participation involves the empowerment of citizens to manage the utilization and distribution of resources and production capital in society for their living. Citizens need to be educated to be able to make right decisions. Therefore, citizen participation is both functioning as a means and an ends at the same time.

Participation is derived from three main concepts:

- Mutual interest and concern;
- Mutual dissatisfaction and shared difficulty;
- Mutual decision to affect changes for the better.

Participation, therefore, has several meanings:

1. Participation through development process; by allowing citizen participation from the beginning until the end:
 - Joint identification of problems and analysis;
 - Planning;
 - Decisionmaking;
 - Gathering resources and local technology;
 - Management;
 - Evaluation and Monitoring;
 - Sharing benefits; the project, however, shall be suitable to citizens' way of life and community culture.

2. Participation in a political context; there are two types of this kind of participation:
 - Promotion of citizens' rights and powers. Citizens are empowered to manage, control and distribute the community's resources for the sake of the community which will lead to procedures and structures in which citizens can express their needs and earn benefits from development;
 - Transfer development mechanisms from a government to citizens through decentralization of power from central government to regional and local government.

Participation is, therefore, an opportunity for people to express their opinions in important decisionmaking processes through such diverse means as letters, public hearings, public discussions, referenda, etc.

1.4 Good Governance Concept

Good governance can be defined as a structural system and process that specifies a relationship standard between economic, politic and social sectors of the country for the benefit of all stakeholders. The goal of good governance is development and peaceful living of all stakeholders in the society.

There are four principles employed to evaluate this model, which are as follows:

- **Rule of Laws** means the right and equal enactment of laws, enforcement of laws and defining rules that are derived from consensus on rights, freedom and equality of all;
- **Ethic** means firm belief in good and moral standards, supporting citizens to be honest, sincerity, hard work, patience and respect for order;

- **Transparency** means building trust among citizens by improving implementing mechanisms of organizations towards transparency;
- **Effectiveness** means management and utilization of limited resources wisely for the benefits of the public. This can be achieved through campaigns for Thai people to economize, develop quality goods and services that are globally competitive and conserve and develop natural resources.

Good governance is good management principle. In this evaluation, good governance principles are employed as an input for community that will enable community organization to manage and administer projects under Small Municipality within Big Municipality properly.

1.5 From Concepts to Designing and Developing Initiatives

In the past, all administrative power and responsibility belonged to the central government. However, the scale and complexity of present-day society renders the central government ineffectual with regard to many of the problems that arise. Therefore, decentralization or the transfer of some functions from the central government to citizens via local government has become one high priority as stated in the Decentralization Act B.E. 2542.

Actually there had been discussions about decentralization among local government bodies before the decentralization was clearly defined in the Royal Kingdom of Thailand Constitution B.E. 2540. Mayors realized that decentralization was not just about the transfer of power from central government to local counterparts but also from local government to its citizens.

The stepping stone of the decentralization of power from local government to its citizens was laid in 1997 under the "Liveable Khonkaen" project. Supported by DANCED of Denmark, the project was a collaboration between Khonkaen municipality, university, non-governmental organizations, civil society and communities. All stakeholders gathered and formulated an urban development plan with a participatory approach. There was a platform where all stakeholders could raise urban problems in any aspects and formulate urban vision, strategic problem solving plans and urban development with creative thinking utilizing various kind of tools such as meetings and AIC (Appreciation Influence Control). At that time, politicians (i.e. Mr. Peerapol Pattanapeeradej - the current mayor who at that time was a deputy mayor for public works) played a vital role in driving the process. One of the results from that meeting was the establishment of the City Council. Therefore, when Mr. Peerapol became mayor, he initiated and applied the City Council for Khonkaen municipality.

2. Best Practice's Initiators and Driving Forces

2.1 City Council

In 1997, a coalition of citizens' organizations was formed with the cooperation of Khonkaen Liveable City Network, Research and Development Institute of Khonkaen University and Khonkaen city municipality. The coalition developed Khonkaen Liveable City Plan together. There were six main groups of people in the coalition i.e. municipal communities, academic persons, government officers and academic staff, youth, and members of municipal parliament and citizens of Khonkaen. They proposed that the City Council should be a platform for citizen participation in urban development.

There were frequent meetings in 1998 to formulate a concept called City Council meeting which was designed to facilitate citizen participation on a continued basis. Around 30 organizations attended the meeting. In 2001, Khonkaen municipality began to arrange City Council meetings every three months. At present, there are approximately 168 council members. The members can be divided into groups depending on each organization's nature such as National Organization, Occupational Organization, Regional Organization, International Organization, Educational Organization, Public Organization, while Khonkaen University plays an advisory role. The following organizations are members of the City Council:

- National Associations: Khonkaen Chao Aieng Association, Khonkaen Hakka People Association, Khonkaen Hainanese Club, Association of Pow Leng Khon Kaen, Kek Aieng Khonkaen Association, Chinese Musicians Association, Khonkaen Wisdom Buddhist Jekchaji Yiengkor Association, Association of the Tie Un, Khonkaen Samakkee Uthid Association, Kuk Sook nimit Sampan Association, Vietnamese People Club
- Professional Organizations: Retired Teacher Club, Association of Retired Officials and the Elderly, Attorney Club, Pharmacy Club, Khonkaen Press Association, Khonkaen Hotel Club, Khonkaen Gold Shop Club, Textile Club, Handicrafts and Northeastern Women Development Network, Municipal 1 Market Club. Municipal 3 Market Club, Ruen Rom Night Plaza Club, Tenant City Pillar Shrine.
- Regional Associations: Chum Phae People Association, Khonkaen Southern People Association, Northern People Club, Supan People Club, Representative of Nong Saphang people, Northeast Human Wheelchair Club.
- International Organizations: Khonkaen Chamber of Commerce. Khonkaen Industrial Council, Khonkaen Banking Association, Khonkaen Lions Club, Khonkaen Red Cross, Businesswomen and Professional Association of Thailand, Khonkaen Rotary Club,

Friendship Rotary Club, Association of Volunteer, Son Ta Khonkaen International Association, Khonkaen Tourist Association, Khonkaen JC Lions Club.

- Educational Organizations: Kaen Nakhon School, Student Council of Kaen Nakhon School, Student Council of Kaen Nakorn City College, Alumni Association of Kaen Nakorn City College, Basic Education Commission Kaen Nakhon College, Parents - Teachers Association of Kaen Nakorn College, Khonkaen Wittayayon School, Alumni, Parents and Teachers Khonkaen Wittayayon School, Khonkaen University, Faculty Council of Khonkaen University, Khonkaen University's Council of Officials and Employees, Khonkaen University Professors and Officials Club, Khon Kaen University Students Club, Khon Kaen University Alumni Association, Satit School of Khon Kaen University, Parents and Teachers Association of School of Satit Education. Mor Din Daeng Students Board, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University, Institute of Peace Studies, Research and Development Institute, Khon kaen University, Landscape Art Group, Department of Statistical Science, Khon Kaen University, Chew Hua Alumni Association, RatUthid College.
- Public Affairs Organizations: Organization for Promoting Good Governance of Civil Society, Khonkaen Province, Community Organization Development Institute, Cycling Club, Dok Khun Elderly and Volunteer Club, Khonkaen Network of Urban Development, Karnchanapisek Conference Center, Northern-eastern NGOs Association, Thai Creativity Association, World Vision Foundation of Thailand, International Plan Organization, Khonkaen Province Cultural Council, AIDS Network-Khonkaen Hospital, Khonkaen Consumer Network, Khonkaen Municipality Elderly Club, Restoration Public Creative Network, Northeastern Rural Development Association, Khonkaen Lovers Club, Khonkaen Civil Society Coordination Center, Foundation Dedicated to Children in Rural Thailand, Northeastern Community Foundation, Khonkaen Library Association, Khonkaen Community Health Volunteers, Protection of Women and Children Association, Group of Volunteer for Village's Security, Women's Development Committee, Khonkaen Municipality, Sub-Community in Khonkaen Municipality, Group of Volunteer for Civil Defence, etc.

2.2 Small Municipality Within Big Municipality Project

This project is an outcome of training on participatory planning held by the municipality with the assistance of Dr. Sompan Techaathic. Also contributing to the project was the research and training on "Strengthening Administration and Management of Municipality" initiated by an advisor of Khonkaen University, the municipal executive together with other academic persons, senior developers and a local politician (mayor Mr. Peerapol Pattanapeeradej), Mr. Decha Premruedeelert and Dr. Sompan Techaathic, leader of communities joining the municipality's research.

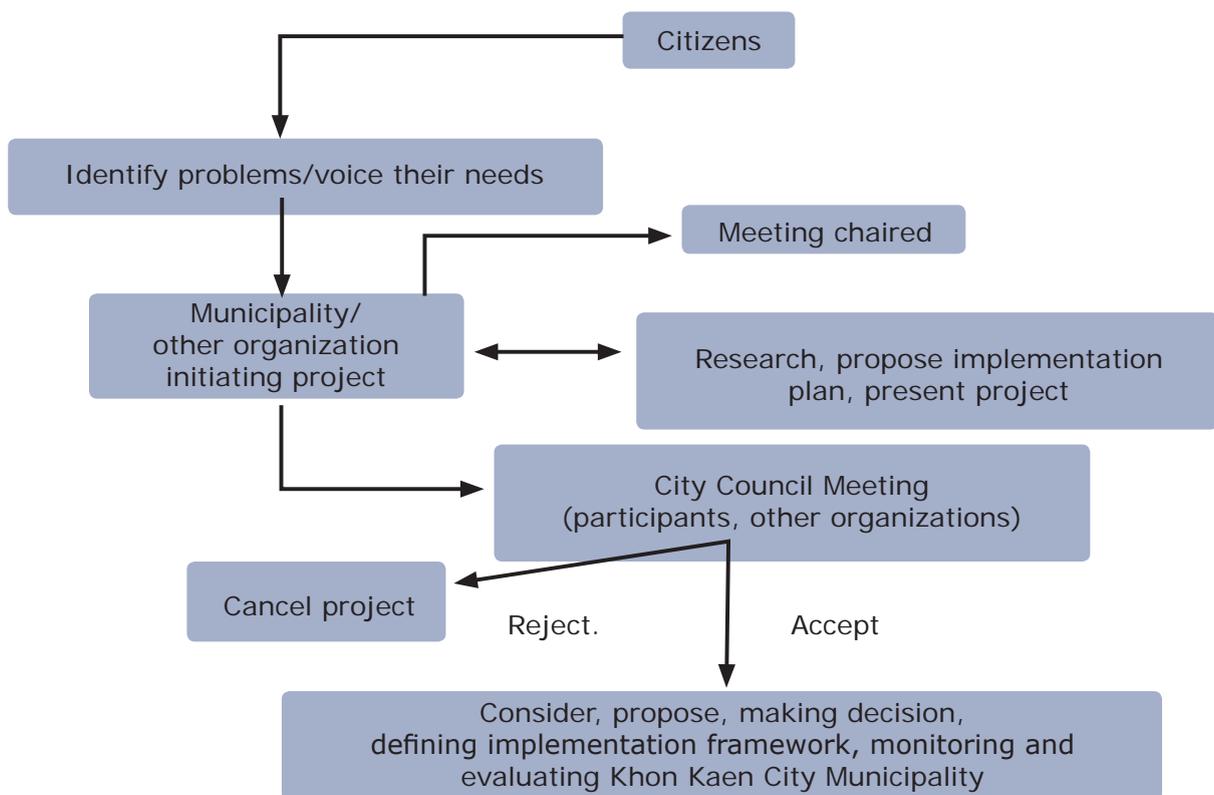
3. Brief Description of Best Practice Implementation Process

3.1 City Council

Khonkaen City Council is not directly linked to any department or bureau. Instead, there is a cross-functional working committee to facilitate and manage the City Council process.

Arranging the City Council is an experiment, and a learning-by-doing process for the municipality and its staff. The municipality arranges a City Council every three months, but only if there is a significant issue requiring citizens' opinions. The City Council will compile the data on citizens' needs and problems, and the municipal staff will conduct research to find possible solutions, coordinate with relevant agencies and finally arrange a City Council meeting.

The meeting will be chaired by the municipal executive. All participants can express their opinion and join the discussion until a consensus is reached. After that, the municipal executive will take the consensus into account before defining a framework, implementation plan, monitoring and evaluation. However, if the City Council meeting rejects the project, it will not take place. The City Council gives Khonkaen citizens an opportunity to define the framework of urban development and solutions for their city. This process, therefore, builds a sense of belonging amongst citizens and finally secures participation in urban development on a sustainable basis.



Picture 2: City Council process of Khonkaen Municipality

3.2 Small Municipality within Big Municipality Project

Under the decentralization policy of Khonkaen municipality, this is a pilot project, in which the municipality transferred some tasks to Ba Kham community, the pilot community. The community leader and the people in the community have some experiences in this area from other agencies, especially educational institution. Ba Kham community is now a role model for other communities within the Khonkaen municipal area. In the past, it was dependent on assistance of the government agency, but realized that local problems are best solved locally, which fitted well with the policy of community empowerment by Khonkaen municipality. Both sides decided to hold a meeting to draw up a community development plan on June 27-29, 2005.

Khonkaen municipality coordinated with community organizations start the experiment of "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" model, with Ba Kham community acting as a pilot community. The people of the community are responsible for developing all stages of the project: planning, implementing, evaluating and monitoring. Upon obtaining approval by the people, any project is proposed to Khonkaen municipality for budget approval by community organizations.

It was found that 17 projects and 19 activities were implemented within one year of the pilot project. Most projects aimed at promoting community's culture, and new leaders and many volunteers emerged. The community leader also strived to train a young generation to be capable of carrying out the community's development tasks in the future.

After the implementation of the project, Khonkaen University was asked by Khonkaen municipality to monitor the "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project. The academic expert conducting the monitoring used to work in the community for a long time and used to be involved in the capacity building program for municipality staff.

The monitoring results affected some changes in the decentralization framework of the municipality, which was applied to other 90 communities afterwards. In conclusion, both the City Council and "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" are now integrated into a conventional operation process of the municipality.

When the municipal executive receives project proposals submitted by community organizations, approval for the budget will be sought from the municipal parliament. The Department of Citizen Participation and Decentralization Support was established and has become a key mechanism for the municipality in the collaboration with community organizations and in screening projects before proposing them for the consideration of the municipal executive. In addition, the cross-functional working committee is also one important mechanism in running the

process. Monitoring is conducted by members of the municipal parliament, as well as local press and Khonkaen University's experts.

4. National Government Roles and Function

This model has earned recognition from national organizations as best practice for citizen participation and decentralization. This can be testified by a number of prizes awarded by many organizations, i.e. the Good Governance Prize of Puai Ungpakorn Institute, Good Governance Prize of King Rama the 7th Institute and Gold Prize of the same institute. This model is an initiative in good urban governance and Khonkaen municipality becomes a case study for many organizations.

King Rama the 7th Institute awarded the prize for this model because it is a tool to promote democracy. Although a large number of local authorities are expected to promote democracy, many are not achieving the goal effectively. King Rama the 7th Institute, therefore, decided in 2001 to award the annual prize to any local authority who can promote democracy properly. In 2006, Khonkaen municipality submitted its model for the competition and earned the award. The committee felt that Khonkaen municipality has transparency and promotes citizen participation while initiating innovations on a continued basis. It is noted that Khonkaen municipality used to win the prize from King Rama the 7th Institute in 2001 and 2003.

As King Rama the 7th Institute is a national organization involving itself in the promotion of democracy and decentralization, its prize is a trustworthy proof that this model is a best practice others can learn from.



5. Civil Society and Community Involvement

In terms of the City Council, civil society and citizens participate in the model through their attendance of meetings and workshops. Researchers can observe and learn from the two venues and figure out some issues that must be improved. During the meetings, citizens who are interested in urban development can discuss and exchange their opinions. Sometimes, people can voice their opinions through community radio and F.M. 103.

In terms of “Small Municipality within Big Municipality”, community members participated in the formulation of the community development plan, budget planning, research and other activities. In addition, researchers conducted field surveys to observe the working process and study the effectiveness and efficiency of the model.

Community members are the direct beneficiaries. They have participated in the process directly, especially during the translation of policy into an action plan. They directly expressed their needs to the municipality during community meetings. This practice is still continuing.

Apart from that, community members played a vital role in the formulation of the Municipal Fiscal Year Development Plan. They also participated and assisted other municipal activities, such as cultural and traditional activities. Meanwhile, community leaders play a significant role in the formulation of the development plan and motivate community members to express their needs and participate in the implementation of the action plan.

Community members played a vital role as participants in the formulation of the community development plan and projects, implementing those projects under the administration of the community leader and municipal executive. They are also direct beneficiaries of the decentralization process. The municipal executive, meanwhile, has a channel to receive and listen directly to the needs of the community. Community meetings become a platform where people can express their problems, negotiate and make suggestions to solve such problems. The municipality frequently holds meetings with the community, who is now aware that they are capable of negotiating with politicians in order to take part in the project or promote growth, such as infrastructure, building or development projects in their community.

The community members believe that they have been empowered under this decentralization policy, which is launched through “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” project. This is due to the fact that they can propose projects to and obtain subsidy from the municipality or join in the implementation as the municipality sometimes hires members of the community to implement the project.

Any implementation of a particular task that is decentralized from the municipality to community organizations is flexible enough as the plan or budget can be adjusted to suit the community’s conditions.

6. Role of Media

In the beginning, the press served merely as a medium of information dissemination for the municipality. But under the Next Century project, an initiative whose implementation framework is similar to the City Council model, the press has now become a coordinator between the municipality and other stakeholders and hold meetings to express and define development strategies

of Khonkaen province. In addition, some media i.e. radio and newspaper start to exchange opinions to gather information.

7. Input from International, National and Local Experts

There were exchanges of experiences between international experts and national and local counterparts. DANCED of Denmark provided budget support for the production of the Khonkaen Liveable City Plan, with Khonkaen University's researchers acting as coordinator. Personal contact, informal contact, and formal contact were all channels of meetings and channels to design and implement the model. In addition, the municipality set up various committees, for example the Monitoring Committee and the Community Health Fund Administration Committee to facilitate activities run under the model. Apart from that, the municipality invited experts from both university and communities to provide advice and opinions, while academic experts were hired to conduct evaluations and research.

8. Types of Implementation Activities

The activities implemented serve as a platform for public hearings and a platform for the formulation of the community development plan.

In terms of the City Council, the municipality stages public hearings, chaired by the municipal executive. The venue is rotated depending on the situation. Sometimes, the municipality used a park as an open-air platform or a meeting room in a hotel.

In terms of "Small Municipality within Big Municipality", the municipality plays a role as a coordinator and assistant in drafting the community development plan. This is a conventional process for the municipality; however, it is now decentralized to enable people to make their own decisions for development planning, implementation and management of both, human resources and finance as well as procurement.

9. Steering Body and Coordination Mechanism

Khonkaen municipality established the Department of Citizen Participation and Decentralization Support as a municipal mechanism similar to other divisions.

This department is headed by a director (Administrator Level 6) and is responsible for policy formulation, supervision, administration and facilitation in order to support citizen participation and decentralization tasks together with the gathering of citizens' opinions.

The participation taskforce is responsible for:

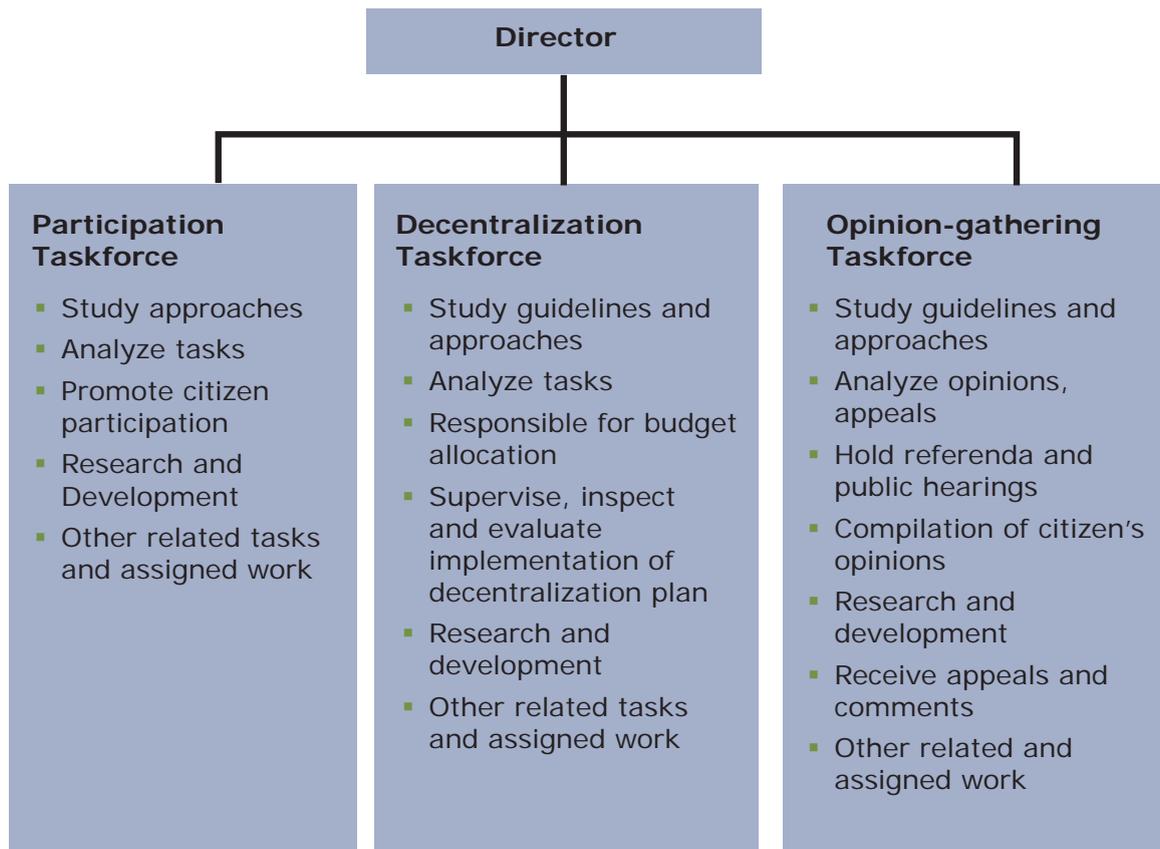
1. Study guidelines and approaches to promote citizen participation;
2. Analyze tasks that should involve civil society or community organizations' participation in municipal administration;
3. Promote citizen participation method;
4. Research and development of citizen participation;
5. Other related tasks and assigned work.

The decentralization taskforce is responsible for:

1. Study guidelines and approaches to decentralize power to community organizations;
2. Analyze tasks and their scope that should be decentralized to community organizations;
3. Budget allocation to subsidize the empowerment of community organizations;
4. Supervise, inspect and evaluate implementation of decentralization plan;
5. Research and development of decentralization procedures;
6. Other related tasks and assigned work.

The opinion-gathering taskforce is responsible for:

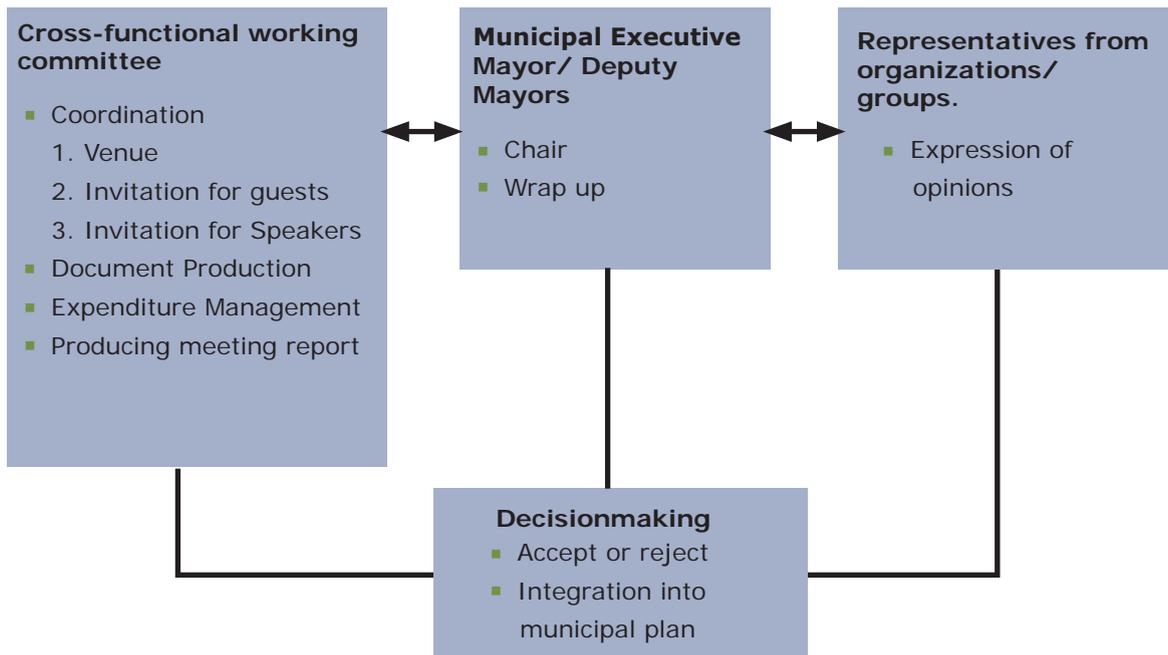
1. Study guidelines and approaches to gather citizens' opinions;
2. Analyze opinions and appeals lodged by citizen;
3. Hold referenda and public hearings as legally stated;
4. Compilation of citizens' opinions, produce report and make solution suggestions;
5. Research and development of opinion gathering procedures;
6. Receive appeals and comments;
7. Other related and assigned work.



Picture 3: Structure of mechanism for Small Municipality within Big Municipality Project through Department of Citizen Participation and Decentralization Support



There is no specific department or division responsible for the City Council project. However, there is a cross-functional working committee comprising staff from every division and bureau within the municipality including the municipal executive team.



Picture 4: Structural Mechanism of City Council

10. Sequence of Activities and Vertical and Horizontal Coordination

10.1 City Council

The City Council is a group of non-governmental organizations and civil society members who share their passion and are committed to developing Khonkaen municipality into a liveable and sustainable city. The monitoring and evaluation system was established to examine whether or not the municipality's implementation is responding to citizens' needs. There are frequent meetings (i.e. every 3 months) for discussion about significant issues arising in the city.

The members of the City Council comprise approximately 135 citizen organizations, i.e. clubs and associations. Key issues of the City Council's meetings are the improvement of the city's landscape, preservation of local arts and culture, defining social measures to attain a peaceful society and the monitoring of the municipality's administration. The procedures of the City Council are as follows:

Step 1: A municipal or academic expert prepares data on problems or issues that must be discussed in the City Council's meeting.

Step 2: Invite all members of the City Council, i.e. around 150 organizations, for instance:

- Educational institute;
- Non-governmental organizations;
- Press;
- Governmental organizations;
- State enterprises;

- Organization established by government i.e. community organizations, Volunteer for Disaster Prevention, Volunteer for Health, etc;
- Organization set up by citizens (i.e. clubs and National Associations, Occupational Association, Educational Association, Regional Association, International Association, and Public Association).

Step 3: Khonkaen municipality arranges a City Council meeting in the form of a panel discussion in order to gather data and opinions proposed by all organizations and draw an initial consensus and, to some extent, lead to a conclusion on certain issues. In this process, the mayor and executive will act as chair.

Step 4: the cross-functional working committee will gather data, analyze and prepare information in order to present it to City Council's meeting. Meanwhile, the Division of Academic and Planning will gather issues and make a meeting agenda.

Step 5: Compile data, analyze and report to the municipal executive for final decisionmaking.

10.2 Small Municipality within Big Municipality Model

To empower community organizations, the municipality provides knowledge and raises understanding among the municipal executive and municipal staff on the significance of the decentralization.

The activities of the implementation are carried out as follows:



Picture 5: Implementation of Small Municipality within Big Municipality Project.

- The production of the community development plan is a process to determine a set of activities that the community needs to carry out. This plan will be proposed to the municipality for consideration as to which tasks can be performed by the community and which ones shall be undertaken by the municipality. To develop the plan, the municipality invites community leaders and the community committee to develop their own plan together with other communities. Through this process, the municipality acts as facilitator and supporter.
- The community meetings are aimed at defining problems and the needs of people in the community. It is a process to develop recognition and consent amongst members of the community for the implementation of tasks transferred from the municipality.
- Formulating the draft of the Decentralization Action Plan which is a compilation of plans, projects and activities which communities need and which will be categorized. The plans will be re-examined to see whether they are contradicting the action plans of any divisions and bureaus. There will be a feasibility study of each activity and project. If the activity or project proposed by the community is revised due to any constraints, municipal staff will explain and discuss with the community organizations and make necessary adjustment together.
- Proposal for approval. When the draft decentralization action plan is revised and feasible, the Department for Citizen Participation and Decentralization Support will propose the plan to the director of the bureau and the municipal executive. The department will act as secretary for the meeting and will present the principle and rationale of the plan, the development and screening process. The municipal executive will consider each plan on the basis of its effectiveness, knowledge transfer, sustainability, strength, accountability, participation and citizens' satisfaction.
- Enforcement of the plan. When the draft decentralization action plan is approved, the plan will be integrated into the bureau's or division's implementation plan. After that, a contract or a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the municipality and the community organization for the project or activity which the community organization will handle on their own. The conditions stated in the contract or the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) depend on the tasks agreed.
- Evaluation and monitoring. An evaluation of the project will be conducted by a representative from each of the divisions and bureaus of the municipality. The team will evaluate resources utilization, efficiency and the progress of project. After the completion of the project, monitoring will be conducted by comparing outputs and goals of the project, using the balance scorecard. An evaluation will be conducted on four main aspects:

1. Learning and skill development for an implementation;
2. Project Management;
3. Budgeting;
4. Community member's satisfaction.

Khonkaen municipality applies "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" to the regular development process of the community development plan. Each community's development plan will be implemented with activities which are dependent on the community's needs.

The municipality will subsidize the budget in different forms and amounts, depending on the activities or projects. Related regulations and orders shall be considered in the decisionmaking process of how to arrange the subsidy and whom to sign contracts with.

In the process of decentralization of power from the municipality to the community, the community will establish a committee and appoint each committee member to be responsible for a particular issue while the community leader will supervise the holistic framework. This is to facilitate the contract signing of legal entities with the municipality. In case, it is not required that a contract be signed with by a legal entity, any member of the community can be responsible for that task. Other community members are beneficiaries and participate in monitoring the progress of activities or projects. They also play a role as an inspection mechanism. Any mistake or instance of corruption found will be pointed out to the municipality for a close inspection afterwards.

11. Documentation of Activities, Monitoring, Reporting and Monitoring Progress

Khonkaen municipality has been holding City Council Meetings since 1998. Unfortunately, at that time there was no recorded documentation. The City Council Meetings have been recognized by people since 2001.

There are records and reports of the "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project, which are posted on a website and presented to the municipal parliament and the public. Monitoring is performed by municipal staff responsible and through the meeting of each bureau and division. Plans or community's missions under "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project can be translated into tangible actions. This is because the critical issues are integrated into the municipality's implementation plan, which is promulgated in the municipal decree.

Monitoring progress of the project is conducted according to the principle of participation. The municipal executive exchanges and debates urban development issue and public issue among their team. After that, all issues are discussed jointly in municipal meetings between executive, director of

bureaus and divisions and municipal staff. Then, all policies will be discussed and debated in public platforms and the City Council platform aiming at gathering citizens' opinions before any decision is made. Members of the municipal parliament play active roles in gathering and finding best solutions for any problems. At the end, there is a conclusion for lessons learned between the municipal executive, member of the municipal parliament, municipal staff and communities. The final results will become new policies. In addition, municipal staff play vital roles in translating the policy into practice through suggestion procedures, methods and techniques, by which the policy will be efficiently and effectively responded to. Communities also participate in an implementation of policies and projects, receive benefits and finally evaluate the project.

Section C. BEST PRACTICE EVALUATION

1. Sustainability of the Model

Currently, both models are integrated into the normal implementation process of the municipality. If citizens' opinions are needed, the municipality will arrange a City Council meeting. Likewise, the "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project is applied in the formulation of the community development plan at every fiscal year.

The factors sustaining these policies are tangible benefits that a community gains and communities' acceptance of the policies, which are stated in three-year and five-year development plans of the municipality.

Good policies, for instance the "Small Municipality within Big Municipality" project, tend to be implemented by any executives no matter which party they come from. Commitment and attending to citizen participation enables people to make appeals and suggestions to their municipality through various kinds of channels, i.e. the City Council or community meetings, so that they can give inputs into the formulation of the community development plan. The policies decided upon can be implemented sustainably and continuously. Participation in translating a policy into an action or implementation plan creates a sense of belonging among the people responsible (i.e. the municipal executive, members of municipal parliament, municipal staff and members of the community). They are finally integrated into a conventional implementation process.

2. Major Success Factors of Khonkaen's Best Practice Model

2.1 City Council

The driving forces of the City Council model consist of various elements. For instance, the municipal executive and municipal staff have to be strongly committed to achieving the goals, they have to be able to compromise and citizens have to have the opportunity to express their needs openly. The driving forces can be summarized as follows:

- Municipal executive and staff:
 - The municipal executive is of a young generation, strongly committed to working and solving the problems of the citizen. He works effectively with his team with an open-minded attitude by listening to the voice of the citizens. Being accessible, he and his team earn recognition from the people of Khonkaen. The team set goals, developed vision and worked hard to involve citizen in municipal administration;

- The municipality has strived to build infrastructure, maintain security, manage traffic system, improve the quality of people's lives, and to develop recreational venues and provide best services for its citizens;
 - Good relationship between municipality and other organizations/groups. An alliance is formed for urban development and the municipality is consistently improving its performance by using the data gathered from the City Council.
- The presentations at the City Council meetings are well prepared with good data and evidence. The municipality presents both pros and cons of the project clearly and is always ready to answer all questions. The municipality also invites experts to explain the difficult parts of the project to the people. In addition, citizens can inspect the municipality's administration through the City Council meetings. The municipality takes comments and suggestions voiced by citizens to improve its administration or sometimes halts an operation if the City Council disagrees.
 - The municipality creates a pleasant meeting atmosphere. People abide by rationale and reason during the discussion. No conflict emerges as most tend to compromise for the sake of the communal benefits. Any problems arising during a previous meeting are also attended to and solved.
 - The budget expenditure is transparent. Its details are clearly itemized in the documents, platform and press. Citizens are able to recheck and inspect all municipal documents relating to an arrangement of a City Council meeting. The budget expenditure for the City Council Meeting is quite efficient.
 - Participation and expression of opinions.
 - Citizens participating in City Council meetings are able to express their needs and opinions and freely make decision related to public activities. The meetings are open for all groups of people, regardless of race, gender or age.
 - Citizens feel that they are recognized and can reflect on the community's problems and voice their needs publicly, including making suggestions for urban development. They also participate in the formulation of spatial and city's landscape development plan (i.e. an improvement of City Gate's park and an improvement of public spaces within municipal jurisdictional area).

After the establishment of the City Council, inhabitants of Khonkaen and organizations of Khonkaen province can participate in the municipality's administration by attending City Council meetings four times a year. Their knowledge of politic and local administration has been enhanced every time they join the meeting.

Khonkaen citizens are satisfied with the municipality's performances as they are provided with the opportunities to participate in the decisionmaking of the municipality. Their suggestions are listened to and responded to properly.

2.2 Small Municipality within Big Municipality

The driving forces of this model are:

- Vision of Mayor, his creativity and commitment to decentralization and empowerment of people and community;
- Support from non-governmental organizations, private sector, academic personnel, press and citizens;
- The municipal executive and members of the municipal parliament are from the same political party (i.e. Ruk Pattana Nokorn Khonkaen Party). Normally, the municipal parliament shall be responsible for checking and balancing the power of municipal executive, but in this case, the municipal executive and members of the municipal parliament share the paradigm of development, thus, leading to administration unity;
- Khonkaen municipality has enough mechanisms and a budget for implementation. In addition, the municipality recognizes people in terms of their thinking framework, roles, negotiation with other stakeholders, working procedures, communication, public relation, etc. The municipality shifts its role to the facilitation of an implementation of a project undertaken by the people of the community. Therefore, municipal staff are keen to facilitate the establishment of a development plan and enhance their capability by becoming a trainer for the community. At the same time, the municipality set up one mechanism i.e. the Department for Supporting Citizen Participation and Decentralization.

3. Major Challenges and Obstacles of Khonkaen's Best Practice Model

A significant challenge when trying to implement this best practice is to get the right attitude from the municipal executive, who should believe that if community people are empowered on a continuing basis, they will be capable of performing their tasks within the right and defined authority. The municipality should facilitate the community to initiate action themselves. Unfortunately, there are still many municipal executives who have the conservative attitude that politicians should undertake the development for the community in order to secure their future votes. If municipal executives have a right and good attitude, they can apply the Khonkaen model to their community.

Major obstacles when applying this model are a bureaucratic system and laws. Despite having full responsibility for the municipal administration, many municipal executives may not take bold decision or build new mechanisms within their municipality and then this model cannot be applied smoothly. In the case of Khonkaen municipality, it set up a special mechanism (i.e. the Department

for Supporting Citizen Participation and Decentralization) to coordinate between municipality and people. This mechanism helps the municipality to work closely and effectively with communities. Meanwhile, there is an organization directly responsible for driving the decentralization process.

Another challenge is to change the attitude and way of thinking of municipal staff. The municipal executive needs to find proper strategies to foster the change. The municipal staff should not be regarded as the superior of the citizens, rather they should be like a friend, son or daughter who are willing to assist the community members without any conditions. The municipal executive shall determine a proper time frame to affect changes in the attitude of municipal staff.

The aforementioned obstacles and challenges are mostly related to humans and systems. In order to apply and practice these models – the City Council and “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” - it does not require a clever mayor. Rather it needs a sincere and hardworking mayor who can wait for gradual and smooth changes. The preparedness of human resources is a very important pre-condition for applying these innovations in any municipality.

4. Why This Model is Viewed as Best Practice

The first characteristic of this model as best practice is its seriousness and continuing implementation. The City Council has been implemented from 1998 until the present (2010) or for a total of 12 years. Implementing and integrating a particular task into a normal municipal process, with regular participation and acceptance of the citizens, are all characteristics that make the model a best practice. There are processes to mobilize citizen participation and their opinions are taken into account for decisionmaking on urban management. Citizens have a sense of belonging and are willing to participate in urban management.

“Small Municipality within Big Municipality” is a decentralization process of power from municipality to community to formulate a development plan, manage a budget, human resources and procurement. The approach to involve the community in defining their problems and needs by themselves is better than defining community’s problems and needs by outsiders (i.e. politicians or government officers). Management by community is cost-effective and efficient.

5. Khonkaen’s Best Practice Transfer And Replication Adaptability

Basically, every government would like to decentralize its power and authority to citizens. The City Council and “Small Municipality within Big Municipality” models are not something new nor are they complex initiatives. They are rather tangible activities of decentralization and building citizen participation. These initiatives are part of a municipality’s responsibility and not difficult to implement.

Users of these models, especially local politicians and the municipal executive, need to have a good attitude towards decentralization and empowerment of community. The municipal executive should strengthen and build the capacity of municipal staff who must work with the community. Apart from that, those municipal staff should be inspired to create a better city for their people. In addition, a strengthened press, non-governmental organizations and civil society are needed as well.



Best Practice 2 | BP 2

Community Participation in Upgrading the Old Collective Housing Areas, Vinh City, Vietnam

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Section A. Description of Best Practice

The best practice in Vinh City, which shows the participation of the community in urban renewal, is a good example of what Vietnamese cities can do to improve urban areas under the law on urban planning approved in June 2009. The area of concern for local authorities in Vietnam includes the preservation of historical relics, urban environmental planning, etc.

The concept of community participation in urban planning and development had not been well integrated in Vietnam until the launch of Doi Moi policy²² by the Vietnamese government in 1986. Until then, most of urban planning and development handled by state-owned consultancy bodies without engaging the community, i.e. exercising a top-down approach. This approach was not only limited to urban planning but spread to almost all sectors of socio-economic development planning. As a result, the planning and implementation of these projects' activities had faced many difficulties as the people in the community felt there were unmet needs and, thus, did not entirely accept the projects' objectives. This circumstance had, to some extent, constrained the economic development of the country.

Meanwhile, experiences from many developed countries show the strength and positive impacts of having community participation in the urban planning development process. Being aware of the importance and the role of community participation in the planning and development process is part of the move towards a democratic civil society. The Vietnamese government has later issued many legal documents to mobilize community participation in urban planning and implementation processes. The mobilization successfully led many cities in Vietnam to encourage community participation in many fields, such as residential area construction, urban infrastructure and social service delivery.

Nevertheless, community participation in the preparatory stage of urban planning in cities is still limited due to poor policies, a bureaucratic system, administrative subsidies as well as a lack of awareness. Vinh City is one of the few Vietnam cities which are successful in mobilizing community participation in urban planning during the preparatory stage. Its success covers several aspects: from socializing the project planning, to implementation and management of housing reconstruction planning.

Vinh City was destroyed by two wars, and the city has worked on its reconstruction from 1974 on to the present day. Since 1970, the financing for the city's development and investment has come predominantly from the state budget, mainly used for public buildings. Meanwhile, the development of private housing has been strongly funded by private financial sources. However, the city's infrastructure remains in very poor condition in terms of road network, sewage and drainage system, walking paths, cultural houses, healthcare stations, water supply, etc. Such conditions

²²**Đổi Mới** (English: Renovation) is the name given to the economic reforms initiated in Vietnam in 1986 with the goal of a "socialist-oriented market economy", where the state plays a decisive role in the economy but private enterprise and cooperatives play a significant role in commodity production.

negatively affect the city landscape and environment and decrease the quality of life there.

The decision no.31/CT.TU (10/04/2000) by the government of Nghe An province, about resource mobilization in the city has set up a legal framework for building infrastructure of the city. Apart from this, the city authority has encouraged people participation in setting up and planning the project as well as in investing, implementing and monitoring the construction process. The core problem of the city which needs to be prioritized and solved is upgrading the infrastructure and the slum area including collective housing units that were built in the time of the wars.

At present, there are 142 collective units inhabited by the poor in the city that need to be rebuilt and upgraded to meet current living standards. Many collective housing units in Vinh City were built in the period of planned economy (before 1990). These buildings were mainly downgraded to level 4 (the lowest level of the Vietnamese building standard regulation), meaning they were located in backward areas and were in dangerous conditions. The infrastructure was also very poor, incomplete, with low quality of environmental sanitation, therefore directly affecting people's living standards and the city landscape. Most of the people living in those collective housing units are civil servants or retired people of low income.

In terms of management, some collective housing units are not managed by district or commune authorities. This causes difficulties in security and social management in the area.

The subject of upgrading and eliminating old collective housing units in Vinh City is very important for meeting the requirements of improving living conditions for collective housing units' inhabitants and people in the city. The program will also play an important role in the development of Vinh City to become a category 1 city and the centre of economy and culture in the northern centre part of Vietnam in the near future.

Legal Foundation

- The Land Law 2003 and related decrees by the central government, and guidelines;
- The Construction Law 2003 and related decrees by the central government, and guidelines;
- The Housing Law no.56/2005/QH11 date 29/11/2005 by the National Assembly of Vietnam Socialist Republic;
- Decree no.90/2006/ND-CP date 06/9/2006 by the government about detail regulations and guidelines to implement housing law;
- Decree no. 08/2005/ND-CP date 24/01/2005 by the central government about construction planning and management;
- Instruction no. 34/2006/CT-TTg date 26/9/2006 by the Prime Minister about operation of housing law;

- Decision no. 239/2005/QĐ-TTg date 30/9/2005 by the Prime Minister about approving the subject of building Vinh City become the cultural economic center of the northern central region of Vietnam;
- Decision no.49/2002/QĐ-TTg date 20/4/2002 by the Prime Minister about approving the adjustment of Vinh city's planning by the year 2020;
- Decision no.39/2005/QĐ-UBND date 21/3/2005 and decision no 156/2006/QĐ-UBND date 28/12/2006 by Nghe An People committee about promulgating regulation of contributing land with land use right certification for households, individuals in Nghe An province;
- Decision no.157/2006/QĐ-UBND date 28/12/2006 by Nghe An People Committee about promulgating regulation of contributing certification of housing land use right, garden land, pond in the same land plot;
- The resolution of Party Congress of Nghe An Province in the period of 2006-2010;
- Decision no. 1354/QĐ-UBND dated 18/4/2007 by Nghe An People Committee about approving subject proposal: "Upgrading and eliminating old collective housing units in Vinh City" and "Program of housing development by the year 2015, and orientation to 2020 in Nghe An Province";
- Decision no.109/QĐ-UBND date 21/9/2007 by Nghe An People Committee about approving subject of: the solutions for old collective housing in Vinh City;
- Decree no. 84/2007/ND-CP date 25/5/2007 by Central Government about delivery of land use right certificates, land acquisition, the implementation of land use right, procedures, compensation, supports, resettlement and solving complaints about land.

1. An Introduction to the Best Practice Model and Its Innovative Elements

In exercising the Doi Moi policy of the Vietnamese government, the Vinh City authority has defined and integrated the role of community participation into all processes of city planning, construction and management, i.e. the following four types:

- Setting up city development strategy (CDS);
- Survey, setting up planning, investment and implementation;
- Transfer, operation and maintenance;
- Management, control of the process of city development.

The model of people's participation in planning and project implementation was taken into account when the government drafted the construction planning law. With regards to urban planning and management, people were involved at the following areas of implementation:

- The participation of people in decisionmaking from an early stage of the urban planning process;
- The participation of the community in primary data collection for urban planning;
- The participation of people in urban planning assessment and approving of the plans from commune to municipality level;
- The participation of the community in the process of implementation and monitoring.

The major innovative element in this best practice is the prioritization of the city's and community's benefits. Previously, this had only been mentioned in papers or in conferences, rather than been translated into practical activities. This was one of the main reasons for people's continued complaints about the public authority and agencies.

This best practice has also been innovative in terms of cooperation. During the whole implementation period cooperation and coordination between the provincial and the city government, civil society organizations and community has been given. This is in strong contrast with the previous situation, where decisions were made by the central and higher authorities in top-down approach and only little interaction with the local community existed.

There is high consensus and support from the community. The practical works showed many successful results of projects with high approval and support from the community.

There is flexibility in the implementation of state regulations. Due to the different context of each city and local community in terms of culture and lifestyle, the state regulations should be applied flexibly to meet people's requirements.

There is support from local government and civil society organizations (CSOs). Their engagement is very important for carrying out the project and provide feedback to the national authority.

In addition, the innovative elements also include:

- A step by step approach in replacing the top-down approach of planning, which is characterized by obligatory investment from public sectors, with a bottom-up approach, with community participation and resources mobilized from different economic sectors in the planning and implementation process;
- Mobilization of people's participation in urban planning and management, not only in the human and financial aspects but also in terms of creating more accountable and transparent public services support for the development of the city.

2. Reasons for Program Development, Shortcomings and Challenges Addressed by Best Practice Model

The process of city development in Vietnam since the start of the Doi Moi policy often faces many problems relating to the community's benefits due to a lack of concern for what people really want as well as the top-down approach, from decisionmaking to management and monitoring. Vinh City is one of the Vietnamese cities that have been facing such problems. The general problems related to the city development can be presented as follows:

- Lack of transparency and accountability in city planning information and management. This has been creating difficulties for the management and control of city development, and influenced the investment and construction by the private sector;
- According to the law and regulations, the old approach of top-down government has many disadvantages including a lack of feasibility studies, no concern for the market economy and not meeting the requirements of the people. People participation exists in theory more than in the reality of city's development and planning;
- Very little involvement of the community in planning and implementation; no participation in decision-making; "new" role of the community first had to be introduced to the people.
- Local government faces many difficulties in the implementation of planning, especially in compensation and land clearance for areas of private houses;
- Due to limited financial resources, the investment and implementation process are prolonged and incomplete. This slows down the progress of construction;
- The annual budget for the construction of the road network and its upkeep is very limited. So the land compensation and clearance work is difficult due to limited financial resources;
- The infrastructure management of the city is not effective and far from solving practical problems;
- The infrastructure system belongs to many different levels of management authorities such as road management unit, department of transportation, city. This causes difficulties in infrastructure management and operation.

Furthermore, there were also existing problems with the quality of the housing, the road network, the management of their usage and maintenance and the quality of living conditions. A brief description is provided below.

2.1 Quality of Housing

Most of the collective housing units were built before 1990, and are mainly categorized as level 4 (lowest level of the Vietnamese building standard regulation) with poor roofs and structure. The construction area of each building is about 75-162m²/building with each household's area about 15-30 m². All these collective buildings have not been upgraded for a long time, so they are in very poor conditions and very dangerous. This is unsafe and affects people's living standards.

The other facilities such as kitchen, toilet, breeding facilities are very unsettled, narrow, dirty, smelly, and does not meet the basic requirements of environmental sanitation.

Due to housing needs, people had extended their rundown house with new poor structures. This has created a disorder of construction in the city. Such bad quality of collective housing reflects the people's quality of life and has a negative impact on the city's landscape and environment.



Picture 1: The old collective housing unit in the Vinh City center.

2.2 Infrastructure System

The road network surrounding the collective housing units was narrow, dark, with weak infrastructure of thin layers of brick and cement. The road was often cracked after strong rain and floods would swamp the collective housing units.

Most collective housing units also did not have good sewage systems. Waste water was directly disposed to open locations, affecting the drinking water and causing air pollution. For electricity, people often set-up their own power supply which did not follow safety standards. Besides putting themselves into a hazardous environment, such individual set-ups also looked bad.



Picture 2. Sharing system of Sewage and drainage in Ben Thuy Ward-Vinh City

2.3 Management and Usage of Collective Housing Units.

According to the data from Vinh City's management division, each housing unit belongs to different managers, including the city authority, national organizations, public companies, districts, etc. The relationship between city planning and management regarding the current situation of old collective housing units is as follows:

▪ City Planning

- There are 27 collective housing units belonging to plot planning projects and built by households themselves or by contracts with construction companies, such as the old collective housing unit in Cua Nam ward;
- There are two collective housing units in the planning area which have been approved by city authority, but have not been built due to a lack of financial resources;
- There are 67 collective housing units that have been built without any specific planning;
- 46 collective housing units are not in line with city planning and must relocate to other places in the city.

▪ Management

- The number of collective housing units under the management of district and commune people committee are 10 units, in which:
 - ❖ Quang Trung people committee: 6 units
 - ❖ Quan Bau people committee: 3 units

- ❖ Cua Nam people committee: 1 unit.
- The total number of collective housing units under direct management of state organizations: 125 units.
- Number of collective housing units belonging to the national organizations in the city: 7 units.

2.4 Current Living Situation

According to the city authority's census data, most people and households living at the old collective housing units are poor and from low income groups. Many collective housing units are not managed by district or commune authorities. This causes difficulties in security and people registration management in the district and ward. Other collective housing units are used and rented by outside customers including students, young couples and service staff, etc. The diversity and inadequate registration of people are causing difficulties for the management of the district and ward authority as well as causing social problems in the city.

Based on interviews with several people in the households, their expectations focus on getting better quality housing, infrastructure and environment. For some households, it means to have a bigger plot so they can share plots for public space or with other neighbours. There are also complaints about the limited investment and concerns that the city authority only concentrates on spreading out the city's residents to new urban land areas. This is the common problem not only in Vinh City but also in many big cities of Vietnam, where there is a lack of focus to improve the quality of inner city areas where many poor groups live in old collective housing units.

The target of the overall reconstruction project is the old collective housing units in Vinh City that were built before 2005. This best practice project aims:

- To solve current problems, reconstruct and plan for collective housing units upgrading and step by step eradicate collective housing units in the city by the year 2015;
- To improve conditions of housing and living for all the people and households in this area, in order to contribute to the city development towards civilization and modernization;
- To promote the role and responsibility of the community in the process of urban planning and development;
- To mobilize resources from all economic sectors and the community;
- To strengthen the cooperation, mutual assistance, the unification as well as the diversity of the community;
- To improve the quality of the environment, ensuring sustainable and effective urban development.

The project's mission and responsibility:

- To create consensus, conduct a survey about the existing land use situation in old collective housing units;
- To clarify and analyze the location of collective housing units that do not match with the proposed city planning;
- To analyze and assess all collective housing areas based on land law, housing law and decrees, guidelines to certify land use right and land ownership for the people and households;
- To develop resettlement planning for households living in collective housing areas, which needs to satisfy people's requirements and the city's development planning;
- To deliver institutions, regulations and policies for self-building projects, and for the areas that need to be relocated due to not matching with the city planning and standards of new housing for resettlement of people;
- To set up institutions and policies for housing resettlement and incentives for public organizations, enterprises to participate in investment and construction of resettlement projects;
- Census, surveys, listing households who have good conditions for getting private land and resettlement;
- Complete land use right certification, and establish legal foundations on the national and local level.

Based on this analysis, the housing project proposed the following solutions to address the aforementioned problems:

A. *Architectural Solutions*

The architectural planning is based on the data gathered from the census and from a survey of 142 collective housing areas in the city. In this step of data collection people participation plays a very important role in providing practical information and data. Other legal documents for planning are the master plan and a specific plan for of Vinh City and districts and communes that have been approved by the Vinh government. The following solutions have been found for different kind of collective housing units:

- For the collective housing quarters in the city's residential plan (27 collective housing quarters):
 - Contribute land use right for land plot of housing based on land law, housing law;
 - Contribute land use right and upgrading infrastructure for housing which people built themselves;
 - Setting up resettlement plan for residents from 54 collective housing quarters (with the area < 3000m²) that followed by land plot per household;

- For 12 collective housing quarters with area of >3000 m² available in the city housing planning:
 - Encourage such enterprises as Urban Housing Development Group (HUD) to invest in modern high-rise buildings for resettlement of those households living in the collective housing quarters;
 - Setting up projects of complex buildings (office, market, and apartment) to solve resettlement's requirements;
- For 46 old collective housing quarters not included in the city's plan:
 - Relocation planning for the new urban housing quarters for those households from 23 collective housing quarters (with 513 households and 1886 people), keeping the planning information open to the public;
 - Setting up a resettlement plan for the remaining 23 collective housing quarters with 487 households and 1800 people;
 - Resettlement planning for the residents to the new housing quarters in the city;
 - Resettlement planning in between residential areas in the districts;
 - Cooperate with investors of construction in resettlement implementation.

B. Policy Dissemination Solutions

- Land policy for households with plot planning of resettlement:
 - Checking legal documents related to land owners and land use rights for households to determine a price policy;
 - Setting up specific plans for collective housing quarters that have affordable price before 01/07/2004 for the low-income households;
 - Implementation based on a model of price control and the issue of land use right certification and other legal documents by the government.
- Solutions of policy and institution for enterprises, organizations and construction investors in upgrading collective housing quarters:
 - The land policy and investment capital is used for upgrading collective housing quarters with a model of social housing that focuses on the poor;
 - Priority regulations are applied for complex buildings (with housing, office, and commercial functions) depending on the number of housing that the project can serve;

- Enterprises, organizations and the private sector is encouraged to participate in upgrading collective housing quarters smaller than 3000 m² and available in the city plan.
- Policies and regulations for households living in collective housing quarters:
 - For self-constructed houses: checking legal documents based on land law, housing law, and by-laws to regularize documents of land use right and housing;
 - For higher income households: the city authority provides them with land as per plot plan and issues construction licenses;
 - For lower income households: the city authority supports them so that they can rent or buy new apartments in apartment buildings;
 - For households living in the collective housing quarters with a land area smaller than 3000 m²: new projects of apartment housing in the model of social housing need to be developed, so that households can resettle in the same location in better quality housing;
 - For those households living in the collective housing quarters to be relocated due to the fact that they are not planned by the city: the new urban housing needs to be relocated to other parts of the city and those households can receive compensation as per land law and by-laws.

3. Results Achieved and Relevance to Public Life

People participation in the process of city planning and implementing has had many positive effects on upgrading urban infrastructure and social services, improving environmental quality as well as improving the city's landscape. Especially, it met people's basic requirements of housing and ensures their trust in the development plans of the city government.

With the strong participation of the community in planning and implementing the project, the following results could be seen:

A. Overall Results:

- Living conditions, facilities of the community and the quality of the living environment have been improved;
- The city became more socially, politically and economically effective;
- The city landscape looks better;
- The community's awareness of their roles, responsibilities and benefits from participating in the city development process has been improved.

B. Specific Results:

- The detailed plans of wards and communes were approved by the city government with a high consensus amongst the city's citizens;
- Community awareness of using land for build public spaces, green areas and participating in the city plans and development process has been developed;
- Many projects were implemented to remove the old and downgraded neighbourhoods for public parks, community centers (cultural houses). This helps to improve people's living conditions with investment from the community;
- About 20,554 m² of land was donated by city communities for infrastructure works;
- A large amount of financial resources was mobilized from the communities including Vinh's citizens who were living in other parts of the country;
- 408,717km of roads and 64.89 km of drainages were built, 206 public buildings such as local clinics and culture houses were upgraded or newly built, 379,894 m² of pavements was constructed between 2000 and 2007 with a total budget of 165,324,861,000 VNDs;
- In 2008 and 2009, 2,648 trees were planted along city streets and roads; green areas within the campuses of offices and schools were improved with the total budget of 23,451,900,000 VNDs.

C. The Results of Human Resource Mobilization for Developing Infrastructure between 2005 and 2009

After the first mobilization effort in the period of 2000-2004, the city's authority continued to involve local people in developing infrastructure, especially for reconstructing walking paths and planting trees with the slogan "a safe-green-clean-beautiful city", as well as installing water pipes for those who lived in remote parts of the city.

This is a very important milestone in the public-private partnership to involve resources for city reconstruction. The city government encouraged the people in the community to contribute about 3-5 million VND per household (the highest amount was 50 million VND per family).

D. The Results from Infrastructure Development Completed between 2005 and 2008

- Number of completed works:
 - Length of road constructed: 35,0km
 - Canals, drainages completed: 53,4 km
 - Cultural houses, local clinics developed: 181 (98% housing quarters were provided with cultural houses)

- Bridges, culverts completed: 286 quarters
- Walking paths, public gardens developed 339,461 m²
- Water supplied to 15,836 households.
- The total amount spent: 140,738,713,000 VND of which:
 - Contribution from the community, businesses: 61,699,949,000 VND (43.84%)
 - Contribution from local government: 79,038,764,000 VND (56.16%).

E. The Results from Infrastructure Development Completed in the First Six Months of 2009

- Numbers of completed works:
 - Length of road constructed: 7.8 km
 - Canals, drainages completed: 6.3 km
 - Cultural houses, local clinics developed: 11 quarters
 - Walking paths, public gardens developed 6,232 m²
 - Water supplied to 881 households.
- The total amount spent within this period was 15,856,047,198 VND consisting of:
 - Contribution from the community, businesses 5,917,978,497 VND (37.3%)
 - Contribution from local government: 9,947,168,701 VND (62.7%).

F. The Results of Urban Management Activities

- Urban environmental sanitation conditions were improved;
- People's attitude towards their environment and their fellow citizens was positively affected by the changes to their environment. For example, people have becoming more caring towards their neighbors and are more concerned about the quality and safety of the neighborhoods;
- People awareness of the need to follow regulations and laws was enhanced;
- People's standard of living has gone up;
- The city authority has launched work plan No.34 on mobilization of "all city citizens to participate in city management", focusing on infrastructure management;
- A network including city inspectors, authorities from other districts of the province, and citizens was set up to deal with city management.

G. Total Number of Old Collective Housing Units

According to the census data in 2010, at present there are 142 collective housing areas in the city, of which:

- 27 old collective housing units were prepared to be build by the city government; people will be able to participate in the planning process (table 1);
- 57 old collective housing units (table 2) dispersed throughout residential areas with 1108 households, in line with land use planning, in which:
 - ✓ Three collective housing units were self-built for 162 public staff;
 - ✓ 54 collective housing units with 946 households living in them;
 - ✓ 12 collective housing units with the total area smaller than 3.000 m², with 743 households living there;
 - ✓ 46 collective housing units (table 4) with 991 households living there, not matching land use planning and needing to be relocated to other place. It was planned to resettle 23 of these units, 23 other units were not intended to be resettled.

4. Description of Vinh City



Picture 3: Location of Vinh City on Vietnam map

The total population of Vinh City in 2009 was 435,208 inhabitants. The ethnic group of Kinh people made up the greatest part of the population. The communities in Nghe An and Vinh are closely knit as a result of their endurance of the war period.

Historically, Vinh and its surrounding areas have been considered important centers of rebellion and revolutionary activity. The famous revolution of Vietnam organized by Nghe An people in 1930 is named Xo Viet-Nghe Tinh. Currently, the Nghe An people are proud of their "Nghe An's spirit".

The total natural area of Vinh City is 104.96 km². It is located about 300km from the Hanoi capital to the North and 1400km from Ho Chi Minh City to the south. Vinh City is also located about 12 km to the East from Cua Lo tourism beach and about 20km from Bai Lu tourist resort. It is located in the northern half of the country, and is the capital of Nghệ An province.

4.1 Legal Position in the Respective State Structure

Politically, Vinh is a separate municipality under Nghệ An province, holding a status equivalent to that of a district. On September 5th, 2008, it was upgraded from Category 2 to Category 1 City, the fourth city of Category 1 in Vietnam after Hai Phong, Da Nang and Hue. Vinh is the most important city in northern central Vietnam.

Vinh City is also the center of politics, administration, economics and culture of Nghe An province, which is the center of the northern central coast of Vietnam. The inner city area includes 16 wards and nine communes.

4.2 Human and Financial Resources

Vinh community has a unified character. Therefore, it was relatively easy to mobilize their participation in urban planning and development. The labor force has potential and salaries are very competitive compared to other areas. In 2005, the population of Vinh City was 295,000 people, of which the population of working age made up 56% and the number of laborers working in economic sectors was 96,380 people.

However the financial resources provided by the state budget are very limited, as is the investment from private sector. So the city government is making efforts to initiate an incentive policy to attract investment and mobilize people participation in city development.

4.3 Character of Specific Political, Social, Cultural and Economic Framework

The city of Vinh was once home to a number of significant historic sites, particularly an ancient citadel. Over the years, however, Vinh has been extensively damaged in a number of wars. As such, little of the original city remains today. The reconstruction of Vinh borrowed heavily from Soviet and East German ideas in town planning - the city is noted for its wide streets and its rows of concrete apartment blocks.

During the wars, Vinh was nearly destroyed. The reconstruction has been carried out since 1974. Due to the limitation of budget for construction of infrastructure, the road network, the pavements, cultural houses and health care stations were of low quality which directly affected the urban landscape and the living conditions of the urban inhabitants.

Vinh City is the centre of economics, socio-culture and politics of Nghe An province and also the centre of the northern central coast for:

- Industry, commerce and tourism;
- Culture, education, science and technology,
- Health care, sport and national defence.

The so-called Northern part has a population of about 15 million inhabitants and includes the provinces of Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue.

Economic indicators in 2009:

- Industry and construction: 42%
- Service, commerce and tourism: 56%
- Agriculture and fishery: 2%

Average economic development speed: 16.5%.

Average income per capita: 1.900 USD/year

According to data in 2009, the service sector forms the largest part of Vinh's economy, with around 56% of the workforce being employed in this area. This is followed by the industrial sector (around 42%) and the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector (around 2%). Vinh is an important transportation hub, having a key position on the route between the northern and southern parts of the country, and also has a notable port.



Picture 4: Master planning of Vinh City by the year 2020.

5. Budget for Best Practice Implementation

According to the decision No.31/CT.TU by the city authority, the financial resources to support infrastructural construction, city reconstruction and management are mobilized in the model of “Public–People Partnership”.

Thus, the best practice model was supported by the following sources of funding:

- City budget;
- Financial supports from overseas organizations;
- Financial contributions from the community.

The financial resource collected from community members as well as the overseas loans were specifically assigned to those living in the collective housing quarters. These community representatives (elected by the community) are in charge of money collecting and in keeping track of the money paid based on “community’s saving books” and “household’s saving books” with monthly interests. In this way, households are directly involved in providing financial contribution to the planned projects.

The *investment capital* was divided by stages of implementation as follow:

- 2001-2008: 20 billion VND
- 2009-2010: 30 billion VND
- 2011-2015: 161,78 billion VND

The total invested capital was 211,78 billion VND and included/excluded the following:

- The investment from local budget in forms of land, contribution of households and other legal sources;
- The investment capital resource did not include the cost of compensation and land eviction.

The budget to implement for upgrading collective housing quarters was proposed about 211,78 billion VND, of which:

- for 2007-2008: 20 billion VND
- for 2009-2010: 30 billion VND
- for 2011-2015: 161,78 billion VND

Requirements of lands and financial resources for the model of upgrading and eliminating collective housing quarters:

- a. Resettlement as per city plot plan, and housing developed by the people themselves (57 quarters):

- Number of households: 1,108
 - Total land area: 79,754,0 m²
 - Area per household 79,754/1,108: 71.98 m²
 - Cost of building infrastructure: 79,754 m² x 0.2 million VND/m² was 15.95 billion VND.
- b. Resettlement by building new housing apartments (12 quarters):
- Number of households: 743
 - Total floor area: 37,150 m² (average 50.0m²/household)
 - Cost of building housing: 37,150 m² x 3.0 million VND/m² was 111.45 billion VND
 - Cost of building infrastructure: 64,882 m² x 0.2 million VND/m² was 12.98 billion VND.
- c. Resettlement for residents from old collective housing quarters which are not part of the city planning (46 areas):
- Cost of building infrastructure for 23 quarters with plot plan of housing: 43,962 m² x 0.2 million VND/m² was 8.79 billion VND
 - Cost of building 23 unplanned collective housing area (about 478 households)
 - Total floor area: 23,900 m². (average 50.0m²/household),
 - Cost of building housing: 23,900 m² x 3.0 million VND/m² was 71.70 billion VND
 - Cost of building infrastructure: 34,259 m² x 0.2 million VND/m² was 6.86 billion VND
 - Total proposed investment capital: 211,78 billion VND.

6. Specific Technical Expertise

The relevant specific technical expertise was mainly provided by civil engineers, architects, urban planners who were working to design specific plans and models of new housing for households.

Due to limited financial resources for implementation, the architect's participation in designing new apartments for households was considered as volunteer work.

The civil engineers worked based on contracts between communities and construction companies to build new apartments.

Section B. Methodology in Design and Implementation of Best Practice

1. Brief Description of the Best Practice Design Process: Initiator, Main Actor and Driving Forces

After the Doi Moi policy initiated in 1986, the Vietnamese government has encouraged the role and responsibility of communities in many sectors of the economic development of the country. In 2003, the law of land was adjusted and the Grassroot Democratic Ordinance was issued, in which all citizens are entitled to participate and monitor planning projects and urban development progress. Especially, the role and responsibility of local people was acknowledged in supporting and approving all levels of city plans from regional plans to specific plans. Apart from this, the community has more power in decision and policymaking and has become one of the driving forces and main actors in many development projects of the country.

In the case of Vinh City and Cua Nam community housing project, the main initiators are the community associated with the city authority and overseas organizations. The community plays the major role as driving force to implement this model.

In 2003, the law of land was adjusted by the National Assembly, the Grassroot Democratic Ordinance was also issued, which entitles citizens to participate in and monitor planning projects and urban development process. In this light, Vinh City has consulted its citizens in the process of preparing and implementing plans.

The implementing process is as follows:

- Developing and approving the master plan project: the planning project of Vinh city was developed and adjusted three times:
 - In 1993: The Prime Minister approved the Master Plan of Vinh City up to 2010;
 - In 2000: The Prime Minister approved the Revised Master Plan of Vinh City up to 2020;
 - In 2009: The Prime Minister approved the Revised Master Plan of Vinh City up to 2025.
- Implementing the detailed planning project scaled 1/2000. In the process of developing the details of a planned project, in the following tasks were carried out:
 - Distributing questionnaires to collect suggestions and ideas from the people;
 - Organizing meetings with the citizens to collect their suggestions and

ideas and with civil society organizations in the wards about the planned project;

- The city government organized meetings to collect suggestions and ideas from communities and civil society organizations in the wards before approving the project;
- After being approved, the planned project was announced openly at the Ward's People Committee;
- The detail plan scaled 1/500 and project preparation. The implementing process was carried out, including many meetings with the citizens and civil society organizations to discuss the project and implementation solutions;
- The city government and civil society organizations organized campaigns to mobilize contributions in terms of ideas and resources to implement the project;
- In those projects invested by the people themselves, the communities selected representatives to monitor, manage and financially report openly to the communities every month.

The next stages of implementation were:

- a. After approving a subject proposed by city authority, some collective housing quarters were selected as pilot projects for implementation. These quarters need to be on the priority list and have social policies to attract various economic sectors to participate.
- b. Selecting investors: the city encouraged people who were living in collective housing quarters to cooperate with local governments in implementation such as:
 - For the collective housing quarters smaller than 3.000 m²: the people committees of districts or communes were investors to draw up plot plans for people to build their own houses;
 - For the collective housing quarters larger than 3.000 m² planned by the city to be developed into residential areas: selecting investors who had enough financial capacity and technical skills of construction to set up project investment;
 - For the households that needed to be relocated: the city's People Committee became an investor or encouraged other investors to support the project voluntarily.

The implementation of best practice followed these timetables:

- Work plan for 2007-2010:
 - Surveying and completing the old collective housing quarters with plot plans approved for resettlement;

- Proposing to operate some pilot projects for collective housing quarters in the city;
- Organizing the activities of learning and sharing experiences from completed projects.
- Work plan for 2010-2015:
 - Continuing to operate, complete projects of eliminating the old collective housing quarters in Vinh City.

The implementing stage covered the following activities:

- Prepare and approve the master plan project. The planning project of Vinh City was prepared and adjusted three times;
- Prepare the detailed planning project in a scale of 1/2000, with detail planning at scale of 1/500 and project preparation. The implementation process was carried out with many meetings with people and civil society organizations to discuss about the project and implementation methods;
- Government and civil society organizations organize publicity and fundraising campaigns to collect ideas and money as well as resources to implement the project;
- The community selected a representative to monitor, manage and report on financial issues openly to the community every month.

2. National Government Roles and Function

The Vietnam national authority at first was concerned about the model of upgrading and elimination collective housing quarters in Vinh City as it was the first pilot project to apply such approach. This model mainly involved decentralization from provincial to district and commune level in Vinh City, and focused on the role of community in implementation, monitoring and management of the projects.

The national authorities played an important role in creating a legal framework and contributed to some portion of the investment in the model.

Responsibilities of different levels of national governmental organizations:

- a. The committee of Vietnamese Fatherland Front and the trade unions of provinces and city worked closely with the Communist Party and local governments to explain, supervise and mobilize resources to develop new housing quarters;
- b. The Department of Construction (DoC) is the leading unit to work with Vinh City People Committee on the project of upgrading collective housing quarters after being approved by the People Committee. The DoC supervises necessary procedures to launch the project, and organizes and assesses specific plans. It works with other agencies to build regulations and policies for implementing the model.

- c. The Department of Finance (DoF) works with other agencies to draw up specific regulations and policies related to financial issues;
- d. The Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DoNRE): it works with other agencies to set up documents of land acquisition and contribution for the model implementation; it draws up regulations and policies related to the model;
- e. The Department of Taxation works with related agencies to build regulations and policies of taxation for the model of eliminating and upgrading collective housing quarters;
- f. The Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) works with related agencies to draw up regulations and policies in mobilizing and supporting capital for the implementation of projects; amongst others with the DoF to provide resources from the local budget to implement the model in 2010.

3. Brief Description of Best Practice Implementation Process

The implementation of this best practice will be further illustrated through examples from Cua Nam and Bent Thuy Wards.

3.1 Project of Community Housing in Cua Nam Ward

Cua Nam Ward is located close to the centre of Vinh City. It has the area of 200ha and consists of 16 residential blocks with 4100 households and 14,200 inhabitants. One of them, block 6A with an area of 1900m² and 29 households, includes people on low-income who were living in houses that were considered slums due to poor housing qualities.

The policy of the ward's People Committee was to demolish the dilapidated houses and to discuss with the people how to implement the projects under the technical support of a volunteer architect group and the Association of Cities of Vietnam (ACVN). The Association did support the city's initiative in setting up the Community Development Fund with the aid of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR - Thailand). The community in Block 6A was provided with a loan of 40,000 USD to implement a housing project here. A construction investment fund for developing infrastructure and housing was contributed by those who were living in the old collective housing quarters themselves.



Picture 5: Visiting one household in Ben Thuy Ward

The people participation in the process of Cua Nam project consisted of the following main steps:

- Step 1: People contributing to the surveying, data collecting and analyzing;
- Step 2: The community developed a Steering Committee and elected a community representative;
- Step 3: The community leader worked with the city and ward authority on the project implementation and discussed current problems and solutions as well as people's requirements;
- Step 4: Mobilizing human and financial resources from households for implementation;
- Step 5: Creating the saving system for the community and households;
- Step 6: Designing new housing based on community's opinions and contracting with construction companies;
- Step 7: Implementing new housing construction;
- Step 8: People participating in project construction, controlling and the management process.

The architect volunteers took part in all above processes of the project as the major supervisors in the design of the concept, as well as controlling and managing the implementation.

In the early stage, the ward's people committee formed the steering committee, and the community elected the representatives to collect money from households as contribution to the community saving account. In this way, each household contributed their money based on their income and capacity.

A report is made of every meeting. According to the regulation of Nghe An province, each plot of land for construction should be at least 50m² large. However, as per proposals and requirements from the community, the provincial government agreed to adjust and accept the smaller land size of 47m²/plot land/household.

The decision to make adjustment in the land plots to 47m² per plot was made by the households themselves. The houses were build sharing their foundation and walls. The community saved 30% of constructing costs thanks to reusing the old materials and their own human resources.

The process of implementation was led by a community representative who was elected by the members of the community. The community representative kept the community's savings books and monitored and controlled the process of constructing new housing. This person was also held responsible for any questions and complaints from people and households in terms of finance and technical problems.

During the project implementation, some households were temporary rehoused close to their new homes while others moved to other parts of the city. There was a close corporation between households and the community leader in this process.

So far, the implementation has gone smoothly and there are hardly any complaints from the people. However, there is still an existing challenge related to the sharing of foundations and walls. This could cause difficulties in getting land use certifications or for selling houses in the market in the future.

The results gained from the community housing project in Cua Nam Ward are as follows:

- Community housing requirements were met;
- The city's environment and landscaping was improved;
- The land value increased since the infrastructure (roads, water supply, electricity, sewerage and sanitation system) and other social facilities had been improved;
- A better relationship was created between community, the city and the ward authority;
- The ward became a good model for other communities in the city in housing development.



Picture 6: New houses for resettlement of Cua Nam ward in progress of implementing



Picture 7: shows legal documents of plot plan, land use and housing design, in which:

- Approval and appraisal organization: Nghe An province People Committee.
- Assessment organization: Nghe An Department of Construction
- Agreement organization: Vinh city People Committee
- Investor: Cua Nam ward People Committee

3.2 The Community Housing Project in Ben Thuy Ward

The neighbourhood includes 110 households living in dilapidated housing quarters. The inhabitants are construction workers on low incomes. The conditions of housing and infrastructure are bad and the neighbourhood is in a polluted environment. All of the houses are categorized as level 4 with many potential risks.

The ward's People Committee assigned a team to discuss and to agree the planned project with the community. The volunteer architects took responsibility for drawing a plot planning map. Every household was welcome to give feedback on this map.

Because the total land size was very small and only covered 69 households, the community agreed after some discussions to move some households to other places. The remaining households invested in infrastructure and in housing with separated foundations and walls. This is different from the project in Cua Nam Ward.



Picture 8: Visiting one household in Ben Thuy Ward

4. Civil Society and Community Involvement

Two main elements of civil society/community groups took part in the implementation process of this model:

- People Committee of Vinh City
The People Committee of Vinh City plays the role of a coordination unit, working with related agencies and sending its representatives to districts and communes to implement the model. The People Committee of Vinh City organizes the drawing up of detailed plans for the collective housing quarters; establishes the regulations for compensation and land eviction; works with districts and communes to assess and approve those households proposing to contribute land as per detailed plan; issues land use certifications and construction permission licenses.
- People Committees of districts and communes
They work with the agencies responsible in operating and implementing the model; function as investors of plot plans for the old collective housing quarters; make a list of households and people involved in the model.

Additionally, local people recognize more clearly their role and responsibility in decision and policymaking for their city's development as well as integrating civil society into the city's life.

In general, with the model of people participation in developing and implementing plans, the top-down approach that existed for a long time has been gradually replaced by a bottom-up approach in planning process.

5. Role of Media

The media is very relevant from the beginning to the end of the model's implementation. It also plays a important role in creating transparency and accountability as well as bringing information related to the project into each household.

Through the media, mainly the radio and the ward's broadcasting system, people learn and understand more about the planned projects and the implementation process. The city's and central region's newspapers have columns that capture and disseminate feedback from the community members about the planning issues and even complaints about certain aspects. This establishes a two-way transfer of ideas between government and people.

Furthermore, the media can support the city authority in receiving more feedback from communities to improve the quality of decisions and policies as well as select alternatives that meet the people's requirements.

6. Input from International, National and Local experts

In the process of implementing the model, local experts worked closely with the communities from designing to completing the model. The communication was done through directly working in the model and with the communities who were living in the old collective housing quarters.

The communities also directly contacted construction companies to lower construction costs. Through such direct contact, respective architects and civil engineers could understand clearly the nature of the project and their work which was to serve the poor in the city.

7. Types of Implementation Activities

7.1 Types of activities

- Community participation in designing housing and developing specific plans;
- Electing a community representative to implement the work;
- Setting up transparent procedures in implementation and operation;
- Cooperating with construction company and volunteer architects.

7.2 Vertical and horizontal logics and synergies of activities

The activities being implemented are interlinked with each other, respecting both - vertical and horizontal logics and synergies.

At the horizontal level, it has been important to plan activities in a way that consensus amongst communities from the early stages of implementation is ensured, e.g. the agreement of all households to participate in the upgrading of collective housing quarters. The process also showed the good cooperation between the different city departments, such as the department of resource and environment, the department of city construction and management.

The vertical synergy was achieved through the relationship between city leaders and city departments, divisions and communities. This relationship offered strong support to the people in implementing and operating the model as per city and province's regulations and laws.

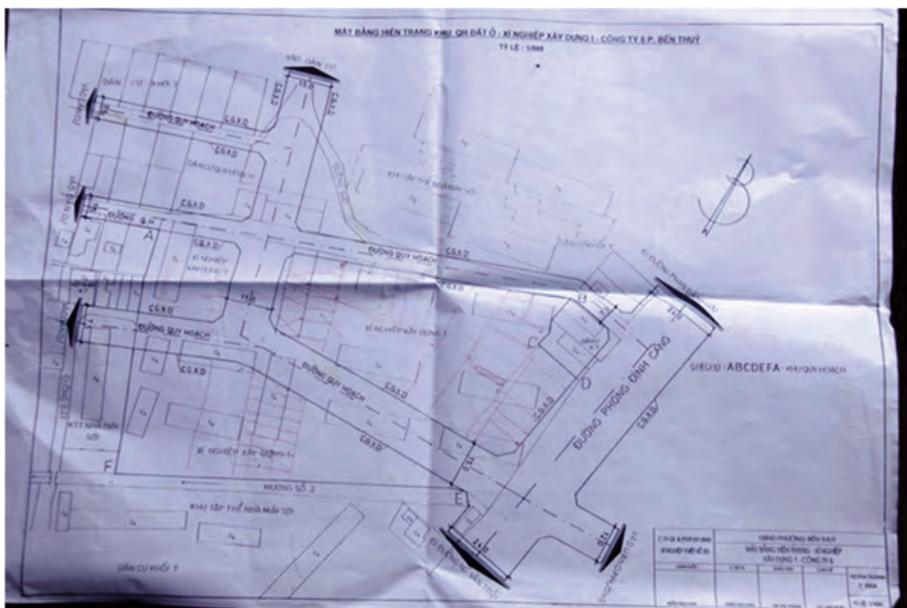
8. Documentation of Activities

The documents relevant for the activities, especially for monitoring, reporting and updating are those related to city government, legal documents issued by the national and provincial government, and project profiles including drawings and reports. The legal documents of the city are mainly related to land use right certification, land price, price of compensation, regulations and policies of resettlement.

Project profiles (with drawings and reports) of new housing design were drawn up by architects and civil engineers from construction companies. Inputs and suggestions made by the people strongly influenced the process of new housing design.

Part of the documentation are the saving books introduced by community representatives for saving money in households and communities. These books helped people to monitor the money used for implementation activities as well as to get the monthly interest rate depending on the amount of each saving.

The community representatives had responsibility for coordinating any related information and reporting the progress of model implementation. These reports should be accessible to anyone at any time.



Picture 9: The housing owner shows the plot planning map in the process of consulting communities

Section C. Best Practice Evaluation

1. Sustainability of the Model

The model project of upgrading and if necessary demolishing the old collective housing units in Vinh City achieved its objectives in political, economic, socio-cultural and environmental terms. It met the community basic needs of improving their living conditions.

The model also encouraged the mobilization of community participation in upgrading the collective housing quarters. It also helped the city government to gain the confidence of the community. This supports the city government greatly in their development and governance plans.

The model has received positive feedback and support from the community in terms of financial and human resources for the model implementation, since the local budget was very limited.

With the strong support and synergies from the community, the model proves to be sustainable within the community, bringing them the benefit of improving their living conditions in terms of housing and environmental qualities.

2. Major Success Factors of Vinh City's Best Practice Model

- The cooperation between community and city authority in decisionmaking in upgrading and eliminating collective housing quarters in the city;
- The bottom-up and democratic approach that was applied in the process of surveying, designing, policymaking and implementing the model;
- The transparency and accountability of the community leader and the financial system, as well as the implementation process was proved through the relevant documents, financial mobilization from the community and local government;
- The civil society and environment improved. The city's residents were aware of the threats and problems of existing old collectives housing quarters in the city.

In general, the experiences gained from mobilizing human resource and in developing infrastructure and upgrading collective housing quarters are as follows:

- Disseminating, convincing people to understand the difficulties and limitation of public sector, including limitations of public budgets;
- The work of civil society organizations plays a very important role in a successful outcome. In this aspect, exemplary and skillful leaders are very important for involving people in the project;

- A democratic system was set up with a principle: “people know, discuss, do and control”. The responsibility of investors was made known to people committees of districts and communes. All building management quarters had their own community representative to ensure accountability, keep the finance open to every member of communities and call for their contribution to the project;
- Mobilizing community resources is an innovative approach in project operation. In the previous time of planned economy, the human and financial resource mainly came from governmental budgets and state-owned companies. This approach created big limitation as well as unfeasibility of projects and did not meet practical requirements of people;
- The close relationship between city authority, departments, divisions and community is very important in creating high synergies in the project implementing process. The staff and leaders always communicated and worked closely with the community in the implementation period;
- The role of community leaders (community representatives) was very important to convince and mobilize people and households in the participation.

In addition, the bottom-up approach applied from decisionmaking to implementation, management and monitoring was an advanced approach. It produced positive results in terms of the feasibility and effectiveness of the best practice model in upgrading collective housing quarters.

3. Major Challenges and Obstacles of Vinh’s Best Practice Model

The governmental budget to implement the model was quite limited, specifically in the aspect of compensation for land eviction in the old collective housing quarters in the city. This was problematic, especially for those located close to the city center where land values are much higher. Furthermore, most people living in these collective housing quarters are poor, so they did not have much money to contribute to the project.

The project implementation had to deal with a series of administrative procedures with out of date accounting technology. The skills and knowledge of people does not match the advancement of computing, accounting and other technical skills. These conditions caused some delays in the project implementation.

The system of accountability and transparency was also still limited in terms of information distribution and caused some delay in the decisionmaking and implementing process.

In the case of Cua Nam housing project, the challenge for the future may be the sharing of walls and foundation of buildings. This may make it difficult to verify and issue land use certifications for households.

The process of consulting community people also faced problems since different ideas were put forward, even opposite opinions from different people and groups. It required flexibility to improve people's awareness of the common benefits brought by the housing project.

4. Why This Model is Viewed as Best Practice

There are many existing collective quarters in other cities/towns of Vietnam, especially in the northern part of the country. Many of them are in poor conditions. The inhabitants of these housing quarters are mainly poor civil servants, low-income groups.

The model of community participation in upgrading collective housing quarters did not only bring a better quality of housing and infrastructure to the city, it also helped to ensure a social balance.

Moreover, the rapid urbanization of Vietnam impacts significantly on the change in collective housing quarters that caused many problems in many municipalities.

So the model of upgrading the collective housing quarters in Vinh City should be seen as best practice for other cities in Vietnam in terms of integrating new values, benefits and the position of the community through people's participation in city development, and accelerate the process of local democratic governance in the country.

5. Vinh City's Best Practice Transfer And Replication Adaptability

In recent years, the role of people participation has been shown to benefit city development and planning. It turns cities into pleasant places for those who live there and it supports the civil and democratic society in Vietnam.

All this shows that the model of upgrading the old collective housing quarters with people participation can be applied widely in other cities of Vietnam. This model is particularly relevant to northern cities/towns where various collective housing quarters have been existing since the time of the planned economy.

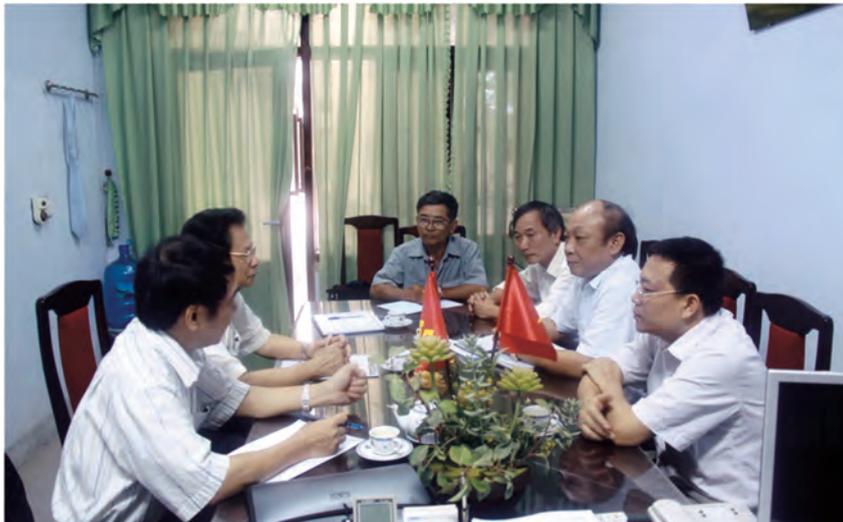
The model can be useful not only in upgrading collective housing but also for many other existing residential areas which suffer from low quality housing. This will help the urban poor by giving them more opportunities to improve their living conditions.

The local governments and communities are becoming aware of the huge effectiveness of involving people in the process of planning development and approval. This model can also be implemented easily, there are no strict requirements for technical support and resources from the local governments.

Illustrative Pictures of Vinh City



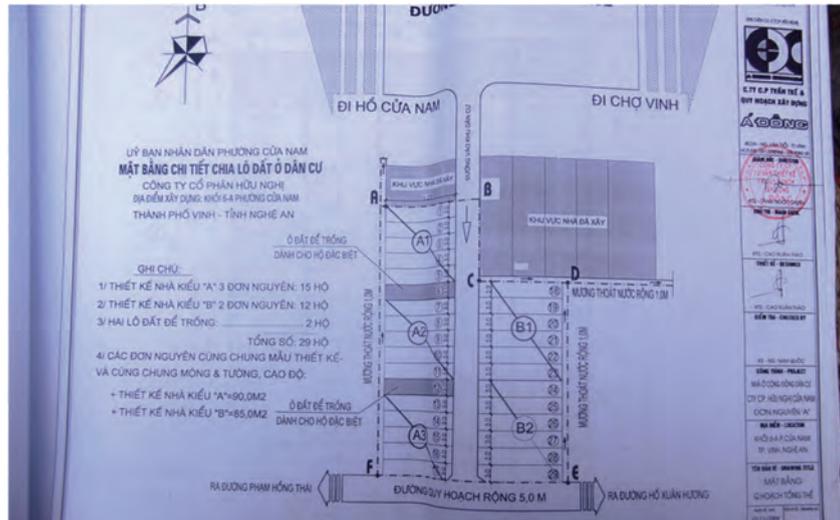
Picture 10: City view



Picture 11: Working with president of Cua Nam ward and the staff.



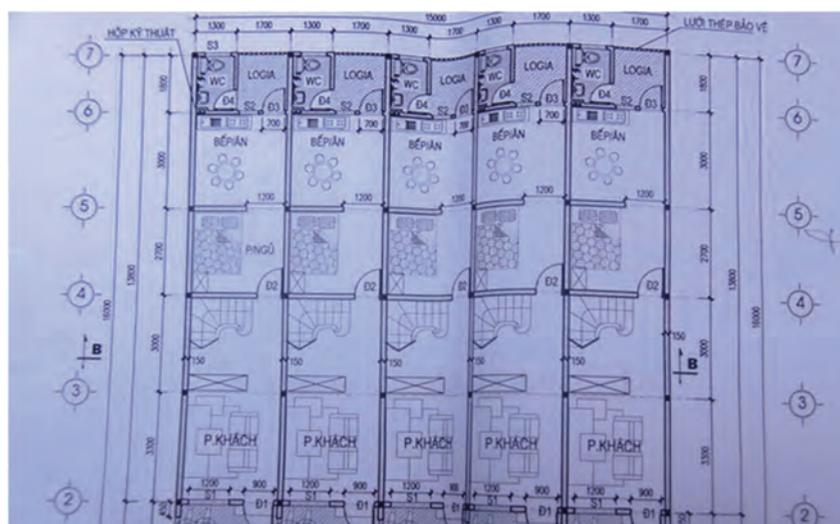
Picture 12. The old collective housing units of Cua Nam ward before upgrading



Picture 13. New plot planning of housing for resettlement of households in old location



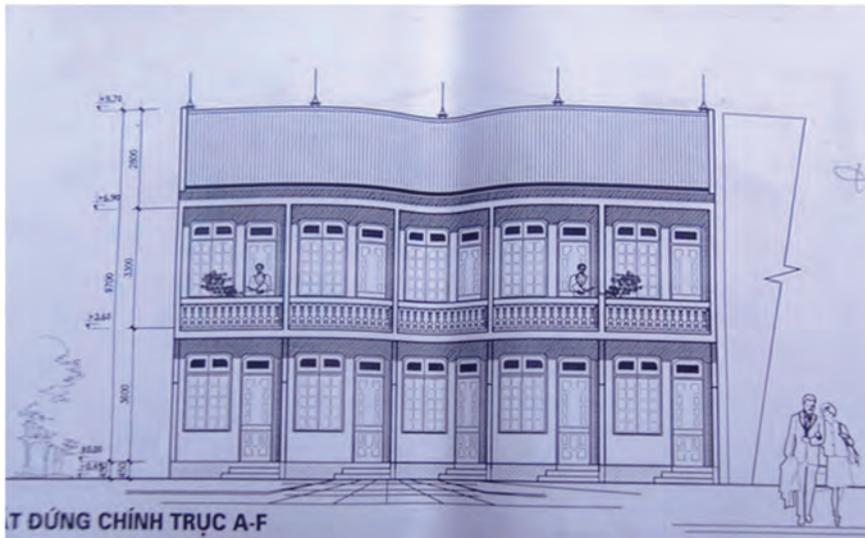
Picture 14. The community leader (community representative) and the architect



Picture 15. The layout of new houses is designed with sharing of walls



Picture 16. The layout plan and building in progress



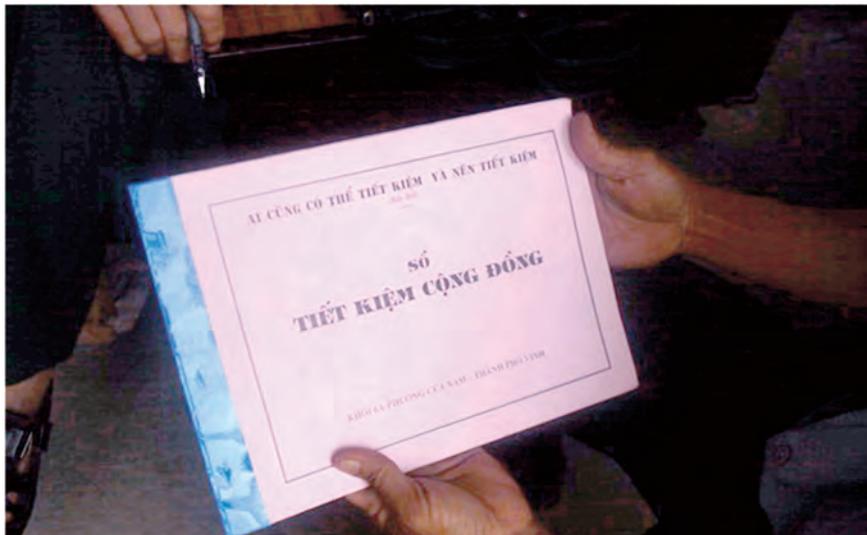
Picture 17. The new houses for households sharing the wall and foundation in the implementation process



Picture 18. The situation of households' temporary resettlement



Picture 19. The community representative showing the community saving book



Picture 20. The community representative showing the community saving book



Picture 21. The community representative worked with ACVN representative and DELGOSEA national coordinator



Picture 22. The division of city construction management



Picture 23. The new houses sharing the wall and foundation being constructed



Picture 24. Technical drawing of new houses by volunteer architect



Picture 25. The new urban housing unit completed



Picture 26. The facade of new houses was designed with same height of the floor and the width of the balcony.

Table 1: List of Old Collective Housing Units which are Planned to be Built

No.	Location	Name of collective housing unit	No. of households	No. of resident	Construction area (m2)	Land area (m2)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
I	Ben Thuy					
1	Unit 7	Construction company no. 6	70	280	5,760	10,534
2	Unit 11	Wood factory of Vinh	60	180	2,240	5,532
II	Dong Vinh					
1	Unit 14	Railway transportation company	20	75	1,370	2,300
III	Ha Huy Tap					
1	Unit Yentoan	Collective housing unit. no 4	16	32	690	4,000
2	Unit 10	Agricultural bank	5	20	250	3,111
3	Unit 8	Mechanic factory of Vinh	12	45	250	2,877
IV	Hongson					
1	Unit 10	Friendship	25	80	2,876	2,876
V	Hungbinh					
1	Lienco	XN 2 - 16 Vinaconex	35	30	3,500	3,685
2	Unit 19 - Khu 2	XN 14 - 16 Vinaconex	9	32		795
VI	Hung loc					
1	Ngu Phuc	Garment Hoang Thi Loan	16	48	250	4,944

VII	Hung phuc					
1	Yenphuc B	Company 2	10	40	240	240
2	Yenphuc B	Power construction Nghean	20	80	480	480
3	Yan Phoc B	Agriculture and soil	20	60	480	480
4	Yenphuc B	Center of education	30	95	540	840
5	Yenphuc B	Collective housing of pharmacy	4	15	120	120
6	Yenphuc B	Division of survey	6	18	144	144
7	Yen Binh	Company 3	21	10	252	252
8	Tan Phuc	Transportation company no. 4	6	19	150	150
9	Tan Phuc		10	40	300	300
10	Unit 14	Construction company 1 Nghean	41	143	1,640	2,464
VIII	Le Mao					
1	Hong Bang.r	Construction company 3	36	144	4,320	7,840
2	Minh Khai.r	company 104	30	120	1,950	4,912
3	Tran Phuc.r	company 102	20	80	540	2,665
IX	Quang Trung					
1	Unit 13	Restaurant Quang Trung 1	8	30	331	331
2	Unit 11	Factory of gazette Nghe An	10	43	536	785
X	Truong Thi					
1	Unit 14	Company 16 Vinaconex	14	48	565	1,578
2	Unit 16	Agricultural food company	7	25	150	1,600
Total (27 old collective housing units)			561	1,832	29,924	65,835

Table 2: Number of collective housing units is available with city planning of residential area.
3 collective housing units were completed and sold to households (table 2.1)
54 collective housing units remained in existing conditions (table 2.2)

Table 2.1

No.	Location	Name of collective housing unit	No. of households	No. of resident	Construction area (m ²)	Land area (m ²)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Hung binh					
1	Truong tien	Co.16 Vinaconex	93	315		8,417
2	Unit 22	Co. 16 Vinaconex	27	94		1,790
3	Unit 19-area 1	Co. 16 Vinaconex	42	147		3,047
Total (3 units)			162	556		13,254

Table 2.2

No.	Location	Name of collective housing unit	No. of households	No. of resident	Construction area (m ²)	Land area (m ²)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
I	Ben Thuy					
1	Unit 9	Construction co.no. 6 (unit 72)	18	63	735	2,150
2	Unit 7	Garment co. Hanoi	227	755	7,230	7,230
		Unit 1	29	96	815	815
		Unit 2	60	200	2,178	2,178
		Unit 3	45	150	1,553	1,553
		Unit 4	30	100	882	882
		Unit 5	26	87	781	781
		Unit 6	37	122	1,020	1,020
3	Unit 9	Garment co. Hanoi	32	107	560	1,302
II	Dong Vinh					
1	Unit Vinh Yen	Material co.	8	30	400	867
2	Unit 13	Railway co.	21	84	866	2,610

III	Ha Huy Tap					
1	Unit 10	Commercial bank	5	37	230	480
2	Unit 10	Construction co.	8	22	380	747
3	Unit 3	Export import co.	12	45	600	919
4	Unit 9	Survey co. 3	10	35	450	2,354
IV	Hung Binh					
1	Unit 17	City television	3	9	45	630
2	Unit 23	Education equipment co.	22	29	420	1,800
V	Le Mao					
1	Ng.Hai r.	Nghe an garment co.	36	164	600	1,183
2	Dinh Cong Trang	People committee of Vinh city.	17	52	425	1,411
3	Dinh Cong Trang	Informative co.	8	32	160	1,106
4	Tran phu r.	Collective housing unit of teachers.	6	24	90	1,533
5	Tran phu r.		6	24	90	1,072
VI	Quang Trung					
1	unit 11	Gazete printing building Nghean	9	30	785	785
2	unit 13	Restaurant Quang Trung	12	41	289	300
3	unit 10	Mechanic and Power co.	16	42	204	884
VII	Truong Thi					
1	unit 15		30	105	600	1,626
2	unit 5	Le Viet Thuat school	5	20	100	800
3	unit 13	Construction co.no. 1	8	49	200	550
VIII	Cua Nam					
1	Unit 6A	Friendship joint stook co.	29	100	1,300	1,727

IX	Trung Do					
1	Unit 5	Garment co. Hoang thi Kim Loan	5	23	112	970
2	Unit 13		36	108	398	398
3	Unit 7	Construction co.no. 6	30	120	264	800
4	Unit 13	Survey and consultancy co.	10	40	210	1,198
X	Le Loi					
1	Unit 14	Construction no. 482	8	29	126	200
2	Unit 14	Transportation building co. 492	15	45	468	468
3	Unit 10	Beer co. Sai Gon-Nghe tinh	19	51	237	1,545
XI	Nghi Phu					
1	Unit 3	Railway hospital	6	19	180	1,254
2	Unit 8	Body adjustment	24	96	384	1,915
3	Unit 15	Warehouse A37	7	24	272	2,359
4	Unit 15	Provincial bank	12	44	630	1,870

XII	Quan Ban					
1	Unit 18A	Transpiration building co. 874	26	91	1,811	1,811
2	Unit 17	Mechanic co. Nghe an	11	34	495	495
3	Unit 17	Construction and consultancy co. N.An	15	38	450	450
4	Unit 17	Garment co.	27	64	1,549	1,549
5	Unit 18A	Labor protection co.	21	84	1,266	1,416
6	Unit 17	Power co. Nghe An	19	79	645	645
7	Unit 19	Railway icon co.	17	71	724	772
8	Unit 19	Vinh railway station service co.	31	127	2,391	2,730
9	Unit 19	Vinh railway co.	13	62	1,110	1,302
10	Yen Xuan	Vinh rubber co.	25	67	963	963
11	Unit 19	Railway management co.	10	27	676	676
12	Yen Hoa	Transportation co. 5	9	20	184	184
13	Yen Hoa	Food station no. 1	7	24	425	425
14	Unit 18A	Food processing co.	20	62	965	965
Total (54 collective housing units)			946	4,003	39,766	66,500

Best Practice 3 | BP 3
People-Private-Public Partnership (PPPP) to
Improve Local Infrastructure, Toul Sangker
Sangkat, Cambodia

Reported by:

Long Viseth and Toch Pol Ponnlok

with the support of National League of Communes/Sangkats (NLC/S)

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Section A. Description of Best Practice

1. Introduction to the Best Practice Model and Its Innovative Elements

The PPPP model from Toul Sangker Sangkat commune, Cambodia, is a good example of a successful involvement of residents and private business in local planning and decisionmaking processes to improve local living conditions. About ten years ago, the Sangkat was an open and very little developed area, which was often affected by flooding during the rainy season. Today, the area is characterized by a well-developed infrastructure, including big and small buildings, residential apartments and houses as well as roads, sewage, electricity and pipe water networks.

With a small amount from the annual Commune/Sangkat Fund (C/SF), Toul Sangker Sangkat's council could not improve much of its physical infrastructure compared to the vast needs of its rapidly increased population and urbanization. Therefore, the Sangkat (urban commune in Khmer) has used the commune/Sangkat planning process to work with its three villages and gather people's ideas and financial contributions to match with the annual C/SF allocations and/or Phnom Penh Capital's Development Fund.

This local planning process involves the majority of the residents in identifying needs and agreeing on possible solutions. The Sangkat council has established its Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) to work with residents in all three villages throughout the year (from the planning stage through to the project completion/evaluation stage) and set up various committees to deal with the collection of people's contributions, procurement/bidding of the work, project management and regular monitoring, and technical supervision. It has furthermore added to this participatory project planning and implementation process some key steps to improve transparency and integrity in managing both people and public funds. For instance, after the agreement reached by the people on a specific project, a technical feasibility study and cost estimates were conducted.

Once that has been done, contributions from private firms located in the Sangkat, rich individuals and ordinary residents are collected to add to the fund that the Sangkat's council has secured from the government source(s). Each contribution is recorded and publicly placed on the Sangkat's information board, other public places and in front of the contributor's residence.

2. Reasons for Program Development, Shortcomings and Challenges Addressed by the Best Practice Model

Until 2002, Cambodia's government was favouring a centralized management style. The communes/sangkats (CS) carried out their roles based on commands and orders from the national level. The main role of the communes/sangkats was related to security issues.

After the free and fair election of commune and sangkat councils in 2002, the administration management system in Cambodia has been gradually transformed to be a decentralization and deconcentration administration. The roles and some resources to serve local development have been provided and transferred to the commune and sangkat councils. However, with the limited resources of CS funds, the communes/sangkats are not able to respond to people's needs, unless other resources are mobilized.

It is known in general that commune and sangkat councillors are political members, they are accountable to their constituents for addressing people's needs through the implementation of infrastructure projects so that they will gain the political support from the voters during the election period. With this regards, the financial bookkeeping was not well recorded.

However, Toul Sangker Sangkat differs from other sangkats. All sangkat councillors from different political parties actively participated in all stages of project planning and implementation. They were active in mobilizing people's participation, identifying people needs and collecting local contribution. All information related to commune and sangkat funds has been properly recorded, publicly disseminated and posted in public places. All projects were required to indicate clearly the project outputs, costs (funding sources) and location.

Through the CS champion project implemented by the National Commune Sangkat League and Commune Council Support Project (CCSP), the Toul Sangker sangkat was selected to be a good model in project implementation. Each sangkat councilor received a reward from Phnom Penh City Hall. The Royal Government of Cambodia, the National Assembly and Senate have conferred the medal of merit on Mr. Soy Kosal, Chairman of sangkat council. In addition, the Toul Sangker sangkat has become a place where other sangkats and/or communes come to visit and learn from its good experiences. This success led to the Sangkat Chairman to be elected Chairman of National Commune Sangkat League for the past two mandates.

3. Results Achieved and Relevance to Public Life

Toul Sangker's council and its staff have maintained clear records of each project and consolidated annual achievement reports since 2002 (its first mandate). The main physical infrastructure was developed during 2005-2009 under this initiative, including various DBST (Double Bituminous Surface Treatment), concrete and earth roads, sewages, culverts and canals as well as regular maintenance of road networks, sewages and canals. By 2010, the locality has reached its target to upgrade its entire earth road network to about 75% of DBST, asphalt and/or concrete types and has resolved its chronic seasonal floodings problem. The total costs of the above improvements and upgrading over the last five years exceeds USD 1.5 million out of which 80% has come from private contributions.

By 2010, the decentralization policy of the Royal Government of Cambodia has been implemented for almost eight years in the sangkats and communes. Having the sangkat administration elected directly has shown the following positive results:

- The commune/sangkat council legally represents its citizen. The council, therefore, has to be accountable to its citizen and develop their commune or sangkat in response to the needs of their citizen.
- The process of formulation of the Sangkat Development Plan and the Annual Investment Program provides opportunities for villagers to fully participate, from the first to the last step, in identifying peoples needs and proposing solutions to respond to the needs of local communities, in particular to women, children and vulnerable groups. The implementation of the decentralization policy has contributed to strengthening the security, safety, and rehabilitation of infrastructure towards economic development.
- This commune/sangkat reform makes the councillors from different political parties which used to rival each other work closely together for the public interest and the development of their community.
- Since 2003, all 1621 communes/sangkats have been allocated annual funds from the Royal Government of Cambodia and development partners. The commune and sangkat funds comprise two components - one third for administration and two thirds for investment development. So far, this fund was mainly used for infrastructure projects. The average of the commune/sangkat fund is USD 14,000 per sangkat in 2010.
- The Royal Government of Cambodia, has developed and issued the C/S planning and budgeting guideline as well as the and project implementation manual (PIM), aiming at the effective and transparent use of the commune and sangkat fund. The communes/sangkats shall implement those regulations/guidelines.
- To implement the development plan and annual investment program, the Toul Sangker sangkat has established its committees and other mechanisms to mobilize funds and resources from private sectors, generous people and local contribution in order to respond to the priorities as described in the following sector:
 1. Economic: focusing on rehabilitation and construction of infrastructure;
 2. Social: addressing education and health;
 3. Natural Resource and Environment;
 4. Administration and Security; and
 5. Gender.

For further information on outputs and results in all five sector priorities, please go to the Annex.

- The sangkat has also established committees to be responsible for coordination with all development partners, NGOs, villagers in all stages of planning, project implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The committee is also addressing the issues encountered during implementation and is responsible for the operation and maintenance of project outputs. The open and active mechanism for the mobilization of resources from all stakeholders no matter which cultural and political background is a key strategy to raise additional funds for responding to the community needs.
- The sangkat had widely and publicly disseminated its fund allocation and project contract awarded costs which have been mobilized from local contribution, from private company and other sources. More importantly, the sangkat has encouraged fund contributors to participate and take responsible for the project procurement process, project contract management, project implementation quality control, monitoring and evaluation and payment to contractors. The sangkat council has supported the project in coordination and assisting in project monitoring. Through this transparent set up and clear responsibilities the people believe and trust the sangkat council in managing the funds of any project development in this sangkat.

4. Description of Toul Sangker Sangkat

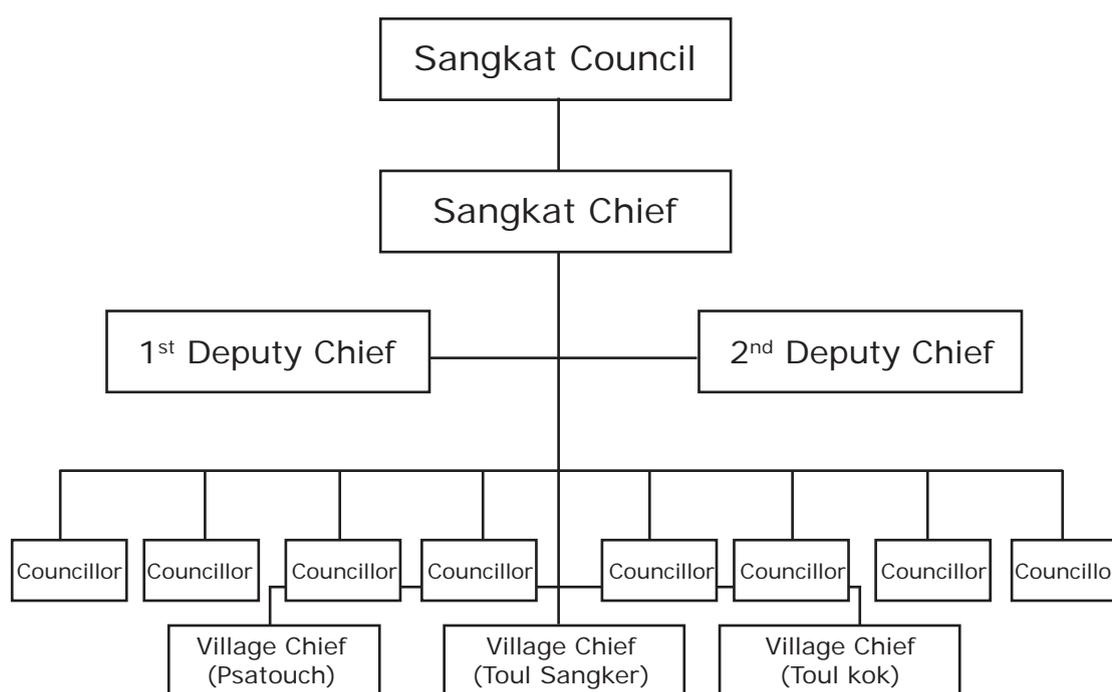
Toul Sangker is one of Phnom Penh's 76 sangkat, which is the fourth and lowest tier of government in Cambodia, and it is located in a newly developed area. About 10 years ago, the sangkat still had much open, but flooded area. Now, there are buildings of varying sizes, residential apartments and houses as well as road, sewage, electricity and pipe water networks.

The sangkat is located in the northern part of Phnom Penh and has a total registered population of 49,636 (or a day population of around 100,000 people due to numerous garment factories²³) in the Sangkat. The total size of the area is 635.31 ha and it is divided into three villages. It is governed by eleven directly elected councillors who are supported by one appointed Ministry's of Interior's clerk (and 20 police) as well as eleven voluntary personnel (two women). The eleven members council consists of six members from the Cambodian People's Party (CPP-2 women) and five from the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP), the country's main opposition party. The total population is 44,636 (11,221 families), of which 21,310 are male and 28,326 female.

²³ Interview with the Sangkat Council Chief in May 2010

The commune/sangkat councils have been elected indirectly since 2002. The sangkat council in Toul Sangker, for its first and second five year mandates, had formulated five-year development plans, with a clear vision and strategy for local development and an annual investment program identifying people's resources mobilization and participatory support for various institutions in order to promote the effectiveness for fulfilling people's needs. Before 2002, all road networks located in the sangkat were earth roads with narrow width which were flooded during the rainy season, causing transportation difficulties and inaccessibility. Within five year of the development plan and the annual investment program, the sangkat council established its own strategy to mobilize funding from different sources, particularly from generous people and private companies, adding to its own sangkat fund for local development purposes.

Sangkat Council Structure



5. Budget for Best Practice Implementation

By May 2010, the (commune) decentralization reform program in Cambodia had reached its 8th year of implementation. Overall, the establishment of elected commune/sangkat councils has shown a number of positive results.

First, the commune/sangkat council has gained legitimacy as the people's representative organ, leading to a changed line of accountability and the re-channeling of development assistance to the commune/sangkat council to address local needs. Second, the participatory planning and budgeting procedure has allowed people to feel involved and to express their preferences with regard to community needs. Third, the decentralization program has

contributed to security and peace building, and to physical infrastructure improvement leading to economic growth. Fourth, reform at commune/sangkat level has in return strengthened and legitimized the central government. The commune/sangkat councillors who come from different political parties/ ideologies and were formerly enemies are now working together to develop their localities.²⁴

On the physical infrastructure improvement, all 1,621 communes/sangkats have received an annual inter-governmental transfer called “the Commune/ Sangkat Fund-C/SF” since 2003. The C/SF has been incremental and is divided into two spending categories: 1/3 for salary and operations; and the other 2/3 are for commune/sangkat development/investment. The latter has mainly been used for infrastructure improvements of the commune/sangkat. In 2010, the average amount of this C/SF development component for each commune and sangkat was around USD14,000.

For the communes/sangkats to be able to utilize this fund, the government has provided guidelines on local planning and budgeting processes as well as published a project implementation manual. The commune and sangkat councils strictly follow the above guidelines and have mainly been able to respond to only a small portion of their people’s needs. This means that there has been a huge difference between people’s needs and commune/sangkat council’s responses.

Considering these unmet needs, Toul Sangker council has taken this commune/sangkat planning further and expanded it to work with their constituents on improvements of their physical infrastructure using mainly the contributions from private companies, wealthy individuals and ordinary people to address the issues. It started with the drawing up of the sangkat 5-year development plans and the annual investment programs in which people’s priorities are classified in five sectors: (1) Economic Sector which includes amongst others the rehabilitation and building of infrastructure; (2) Social Sector which includes education, health etc.; (3) National Resource Management Sector; (4) Administrative and Security Sector; and (5) Gender.

In terms of financing the agreed project, the council has approached the richer segment (including companies) prior to talking to ordinary residents about their contributions. Nonetheless, the original idea of having all parties of PPPP as the owner of the project would still be maintained regardless of the size of their contributions. Every contributor will be highly appreciated by the council, and their identity and amounts contributed will be publicly displayed. In addition, the contributors are encouraged to oversee the project bidding and implementation processes throughout the project life. This in turn has created trust amongst communities as well as with the council on the management of project funds.

²⁴ *The Government’s National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development/NP-SNDD (Adopted on May 28, 2010)*

Section B. Methodology in Design and Implementation of Best Practice

1. Brief Description of Best Practices Design Process: Initiator, Main Actor and Driving Forces

Until 2002, Cambodia was a highly centralized country. Sub-national tiers of government were very much a subordinate to, i.e. an administrative arm of the central ministries and always waited for the order/command from the top. Communes/sangkats were highly politicized and mainly charged with security matters. After the directly democratic commune/sangkat council elections in 2002, the country has slowly undergone a decentralization and deconcentration process with a general mandate given to the commune/sangkat council to deal with own local development. With limited resources, local development needs could only be dealt with effectively through extraordinary efforts from the council members. In many parts of the country, local development needs have been addressed by the respective councils (as local politicians) working closely with higher level politicians to invest on infrastructure in return for popular votes. This relationship is, however, prone to a political agenda whereas politicians concerned mainly focus on the parts of the commune where their supporters reside. Furthermore, this type of local development produces no record of contribution and corresponding expenditures.

Toul Sangker sangkat council had a different idea. Firstly, the process involves all councillors from different political parties. All council members are active and take the lead in mobilizing residents, identifying needs and collecting people's contributions. Secondly, all identified needs, people's contributions and corresponding expenditures are well recorded and displayed for people's scrutiny. Funds obtained from the government are also posted on the sangkat information board and other public places. Project signs showing project outputs and project finance (including its sources) are placed at project sites.

Toul Sangker has been seen as a model sangkat for many years and is now under the government-CCSP-NLC/S PBA screening process²⁵. For the whole council, it has received recognisance letters and awards from the Phnom Penh Administration on an annual basis. The head of the council, Mr. Soy Kosal received several medals from the RGC, the National Assembly and the Senate. More importantly, the sangkat has become a learning venue for many other sangkat in Phnom Penh and other urban places in the country. This was probably a clear reason why the head of the sangkat council has become so

²⁵ This is the first time that the government (the Ministry of Interior), the National League of Commune/ Sangkat (NLC/S) and an NGO called Cambodian Civil Society Partnership (CCSP) implement this comprehensive BPA program inviting all commune councils (and NGOs working in partnership with the councils) to submit their proposal for the BPAs. Many NGOs have also supported the councils in their target areas to identify the project which meets the set criteria and submit to the BPA Panel. About 500 applications across the country were received by the deadline, 30 April 2010. Three final winners were announced in November 2010.

popular and been elected as Phnom Penh PAC/S and NLC/S Chairman for the past two mandates.

For other country's municipalities the scale of this model is probably a bit too small. However, the issues of involving all people, private companies and the public sector to act together are probably an essential theme for all. Besides, it is accessible and convenient for any visitors coming to Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

In order to effectively formulate the five-year development plan, the sangkat council, during its second mandate, took into account some criticisms. The principle concept is that a good plan indicates the strategies to achieve its objectives or goals and responds to the needs of communities. The plan should offer support to improve the living standards of the people in the commune/sangkat.

Therefore, during the preparation of the plan, especially during the preparation of the five-year development plan, the sangkat councils and the planning and budgeting committee considered the following steps:

Identification of needs ⇒ setting development goals ⇒ identification of strategy on how to achieve the goals

Every year, each commune and sangkat has its own budget allocated by the Royal Government of Cambodia. In order to utilize this budget effectively, the council considered the following key points:

- What are the priority needs of the sangkat?
- What does the sangkat want to achieve within the next five years?
- What does the sangkat expects to achieve with the resources available in the next five years?
- What kind of service should the various departments of the sangkat provide for their people?
- What could the sangkat do in order to ensure the good management and implementation of the projects?
- In which way can citizens contribute to the project?

When preparing the sangkat development plan, the sangkat council looked seriously into strategies for development of physical infrastructure and non-infrastructure in order to respond to the prioritized needs of communities which will contribute directly to and improvement of living standards and well-being of citizens. Another important consideration was the sustainability regarding the budget, labour to be mobilized to secure the operation and maintenance of those investment projects. For example, when considering to construct a village road, the sangkat also looked at the question of who would maintain that road? How? And who will pay for the maintenance cost?

2. Brief Description of Best Practice Implementation Process

For formulating the five-years development plan, the sangkat council followed the guidelines and the five steps of the Sangkat Development Plan process:

- Step 1: Draft of Development Framework and Budget;
- Step 2: Public Meeting on C/S Development;
- Step 3: Draft of C/S Development Plan ;
- Step 4: The approval of C/S Development Plan;
- Step 5: The Evaluation on Implementation of C/S.

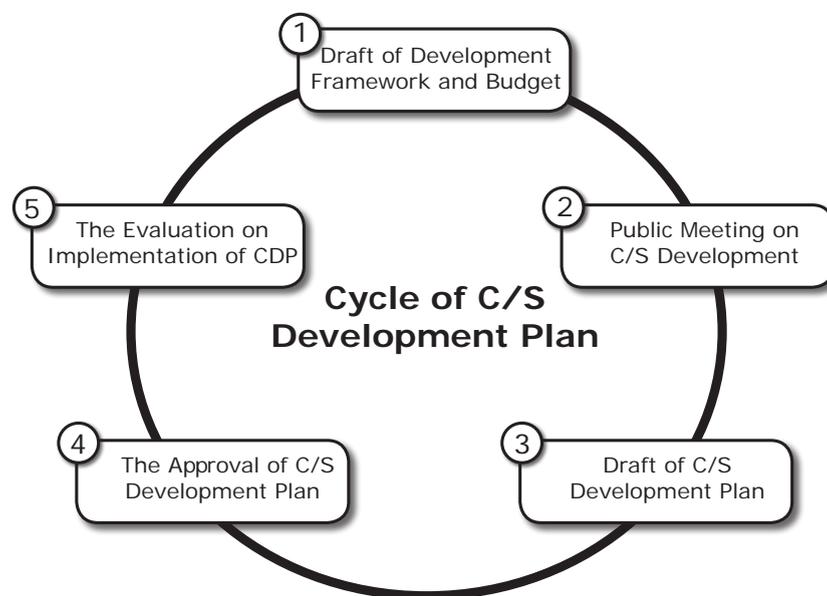


Figure 1: C/S Development Plan

2.1 Process of Sangkat Development Plan

Article 11 of the inter-ministerial circular of Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Planning on the preparation of the Commune Development Plan (CDP) and CIP has defined the content and cycle of CDP. During the second mandate, the sangkat fully complied with the guidelines, steps and formats that led to active participation from villagers. As a result, the Sangkat Development Plan was designed as a road map for local development.

2.1.1 Key C/S Information

Based on the updated C/S socio-economic profile and other data from relevant departments, the sangkat used all these information as input for the analysis. Key information include the following:

Total land size	6,336 km ²
Number of villages	3 villages
Rate of women in C/S and village leaders	20%
Total population	33,621 persons
Total female	18,432 persons
Rate of population growth	11,95%
Total families	6,014 families
Rate of women headed households	3,33%
Rate of families have as main occupation	68,33%
Total length of road (water way is excluded)	850 m
Irrigation system (total length of canal)	2,730 m
Rate of children out of schooling (aged from 6-14)	5,56 %
Rate of illiterate people (aged from 15-60)	2,67 %
Rate of illiterate women (aged from 15-60)	1,90 %
Total no of women who delivered a baby	251 persons
Rate of women deliver baby with trained midwife	100%
Rate of households using clean water (piped, pumped water)	99,50%
Rate of households having latrine	98%

2.1.2 Sangkat Map

A simple map showing key legends (roads, structures, lakes etc.) has been used for discussions with participants at the planning meetings to identify problems and needs in the three villages.



Figure 2: Sangkat Map - the Sangkat five-year development plan, 2008-2012

2.2 Current Situation and Challenges

Using the sangkat's socio-economic update and current situation, the sangkat council together with its planning and budget committee had analyzed the challenges identified the sangkat's priorities within following fields:

2.2.1 Economic Situation

Sangkat Toul Sangker is located where people have good access to roads networks in the community. The sangkat comprises:

- Electricity factories: 4
- Functioning garment factories (amongst all existing 31): 25
- Handicraft enterprises: 69
- Business shops: 132
- Local markets (Toul Sangker, PsaThomtoul Sangker and Psa Ngeun An): 4

The sangkat is situated in the Khan Reusey Keo, Phonm Penh capital. The rehabilitation of infrastructure dramatically improved the people's living condition. Moreover, the sangkat council noted that although roads network had been constructed, regular damage to the system occurred virtually everywhere due to the heavy rain during the rainy season which caused prolonged flooding. This problem requiree the intervention from the sangkat as local authority with the responsibility to repair roads quickly. The various footpaths that exist in the villages also need regular maintenance. The sangkat continued its efforts to build more roads during its second mandate, aiming to improve accessibility, especially for women and children.

Even though sewage pipes were constructed in some places, there are not enough to address the current situation and demand. Pumping wells would also be needed, while the old sewage system must be fixed, so that the community would be less prone to long flooding.

During its first mandate, the sangkat council was proud of improving infrastructure, but more efforts and commitments by the sangkat during its second mandate are required to continue serving the public interest.

2.2.2 Social

The social system consists of the following establishments:

1. Formal Education:

- One second school consisting of 35 teachers (14 females) and 625 students (310 females);

- Toul Sangker Primary School consisting of 48 teachers (36 females) and 1655 students (843 females);
 - Pochgne Krek Primary School consisting of 44 teachers (35 females) and 1494 students (706 females);
2. Health Service: nine private health clinics are operating and delivering services to the community;
 3. Religion: one Chinese worship house, two Catholic Churches and two pagodas.

During the five years of the first mandate with the assistance from the government's line departments, IOs/NGOs and generous people, knowledge on public health issues has been improved:

- Public health issue: education on community hygiene and prevention against any infectious diseases. The people in the community were given short training session, especially a health campaign, which enhanced their understanding on basic health needs and prevention.

Some challenges:

- Poor health and low income of people who live on the squatter sites;
- Illiteracy;
- Lack of health education and prevention that caused poor hygiene and an unhealthy environment.

2.2.3 Natural Resources and Environment

The main problem of environmental issues in the sangkat is lack of regular garbage collection. To solve this problem, an intervention from the higher levels of government as well as the cooperation of parties involved was required. Another issue was that the sewage network running through the sangkat was too narrow and old which caused blockages or flooding during the rainy season, although some parts of area have been fixed with large culverts. The knowledge of villagers on environmental issues is very limited.

2.2.4 Administration and Security

- At a police post in the sangkat, at least 20 police staff are working at 20 different targeted places to ensure good security, with strong support and cooperation from 241 people as volunteers;
- The number of insecurity cases occurred sometime due to

the complex location of houses, people's carelessness, multi business activities being operated by temporary residents, and plenty of workers that the Sangkat have limited control for those residents;

- Land conflicts arise, because of a lack of public knowledge on land management law;
- In three villages serious cases of drug trafficking occurred which required the sangkat to take immediate actions to combat these illegal activities;
- The civil registration campaign has been carried out well by the sangkat;
- Other conflicts among residents have been resolved by the sangkat council.

2.2.5 Gender

The Toul Sangker sangkat comprises of 736 women-headed households. The followings are key factors leading to the high rate of women-headed households:

- Marriage at a young age that led to family violence and divorce;
- Husband with disability;
- Husband who died of HIV/AIDS and other diseases;
- Any violence committed by husband due to low education, abuse of women's right, illiteracy and poverty;
- Less education opportunity and intervention for women.

2.3 Development Framework

2.3.1 Activities Based On Prioritized Needs

Based on the current situation and the challenges mentioned above, the Toul Sangker sangkat in consultation with the community had prioritized the needs in their five-year development plan with the following activities:

- Three concrete roads:
 - Psa Touch village: 5 m x 130 m
 - Toul Kok village: 5m x 220 m
 - Toul Kok village: 5m x 110 m

- New sewer pipe construction:
 - Toul Sangker village: 0.8 m x 450 m
- Small cash credit;
- Income generation activities;
- Raising awareness on hygiene;
- Anti mosquito drugs;
- Albet utility;
- Toilet construction;
- Campaign on infectious disease prevention;
- Natal- and maternity care;
- Immunization vaccine;
- STD and HIVs prevention;
- Family planning;
- Non-formal education;
- Promoting children's school attendance;
- Raising awareness on education needs;
- Rubbish bins;
- Identifying location for rubbish storage;
- Environment law dissemination;
- Training (Community hygiene);
- Preventing pollution;
- Producing education board;
- Dissemination on fishery law;
- Crackdown on criminals;
- Eradicating gambling activities;
- Drug-user education;
- Land law dissemination;
- Dissemination on laws enforcement;
- Public order;
- Strengthening village security volunteers;
- Education on rights and roles of men and women;
- Dissemination on law against woman and child trafficking;
- Support and promoting woman and child rights;
- Dissemination on law against woman and child abuse;
- Promoting women participation in social development.

2.3.2 Development Goal

Based on the identification of priorities, the Toul Sangker sangkat prepared development goals that could be achieved in the five years of the second mandate. By 2012, 80% of the population will have access to good roads in the sangkat; the people in the community will get better benefits; women and their children will be better educated; the sewage network and rubbish collection in the community will be improved; people participation and support from stakeholders in social development are strengthened; men and women will have equal rights and a better understanding of gender issues.

2.3.3 Development Strategy

The sangkat council prepared its development strategy in consultation with relevant stakeholders to achieve those development goals over the next five years. Those strategies include:

- Promoting and improving infrastructures with active participation from stakeholders and villagers;
- Promoting and enhancing people's knowledge on loan provision;
- Promoting health services delivery to community;
- Establish and improving sewer network;
- Promoting and disseminating any regulations on pollution and effective rubbish services;
- Enhancing people's knowledge on administration and security;
- Strengthening cooperation with local authorities and other agencies;
- Promoting people participation in local development; and
- Promoting gender equality activities amongst men and women.

3. Civil Society and Community Involvement

The council has also made an effort to set up various committees to discuss and involve people and local NGOs at various stages of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress, local conflict resolution during the project implementation and maintenance of the project's achievement. Openness and community's outreach were the key strategic approaches of the council. The council has set up mechanisms to reach out to all segments of the residents regardless of their wealth, belief, culture and political affiliations.

Section C. Best Practice Evaluation

1. Sustainability of Toul Sangker Sangkat's Best Practice

The Sangkat Development Plan has been implemented through its annual investment program. The monitoring of the investment program implementation is an integral part of the Sangkat Development Plan. The monitoring is focusing on:

- To what level people participate in the project implementation;
- Review and consolidate the achievement report of project results and service delivery by the sangkat;
- Sharing good experiences on recommendation and strengthening role and responsibilities of sangkat administration and service provision;
- The evaluation of annual investment program will indicate the implementation of the Sangkat Development Plan.

The sangkat council will conduct an internal evaluation of the Development Plan during the last six months of its mandate in order to measure the achievements and to gauge to what extent the development goals have been achieved. However, the Development Plan can be still evaluated any time during the implementation period if needed. The sangkat council has established its internal evaluation committee to be responsible for the evaluation of the Sangkat Development Plan. This committee consists of the following members:

- Sangkat Chief;
- Councillors;
- Monitoring and Evaluation Focal Points;
- Women and Children Focal Point (female representatives);
- Village representative (from three villages);
- Three Village Chiefs;
- Two representatives from two community based organization.

The Sangkat council and M&E focal points are responsible for effective monitoring activities of the project implementation as agreed in the Sangkat Development Plan.

2. Major Success Factors of Toul Sangker Sangkat's Best Practice Model

The Toul Sangker sangkat council had worked hard in formulating its five-year Development Plan and the Annual Investment Program. In the process of formulating this plan, the sangkat council has made a comprehensive analysis of the priority needs of its citizen and identification of appropriated solutions

including a gender perspective. This plan was important since it illustrated the vision for infrastructure and non-infrastructure development in this sangkat. However, the sangkat council was not able to respond to all the needs identified in this plan, even though the council received the commune/sangkat fund of about US\$ 15,000/year plus local contributions and other funds from Phnom Penh capital.

In the process of drawing up the Sangkat Development Plan the villagers of three villages had identified many of priority needs and solutions. The sangkat council had established the planning and budgeting committee in order to prepare its annual investment program and monitor the project implementation. The sangkat council had also established other committees responsible for collecting local contributions, managing the procurement within the project, bidding, project implementation and technical monitoring.

The people of this sangkat not only participated in the project planning and implementation process, but were also informed about the project costs and project management aspects, which was important for building trust and promoting transparency. For instance, after a project design and cost estimation were drawn up, the sangkat council has to collect contributions from households and others to supplement the money available from the C/S fund for the implementation of these projects. All of those contributions were properly recorded, signed by both parties as well as posted at the information boards located at Sangkat office, at the villages and at selected villagers' houses.

Moreover, the sangkat council and its staff have kept all the financial and progress reports of each project contract implementation and annual evaluation reports since 2002. From 2005 to 2009, the sangkat council has achieved a lot, including building the bituminous roads, concrete roads, earth roads, sewer drainage, culverts and regular maintenance of these roads. By 2010, at least 70% of earth roads were upgraded to be bituminous and concrete roads which are no longer at risk of flooding during the rainy season. For the last five years, the total amount collected as local contributions for upgrading of those infrastructure has been about US\$ 1.5 million of which 80% were contributed by the private sector and generous donors. During the implementation of these infrastructure projects, the sangkat council has played a coordinating and facilitating role to ensure good quality of construction, and has documented the progress.

3. Major Obstacles and Challenges of the Toul Sangker Sangkat Best Practice

To be so successful, Toul Sangker sangkat had to overcome some serious challenges. The first challenge was probably to come to a consensus of all political actors to begin the process of creating a sense of ownership of a development plan. Usually in the ASEAN region, development plans are a

top-to-bottom affair, decided by centrally located political elites either in the national capital or even in municipal centers of power. They are the ones involved in the creation of the development plan. To come to such a consensus will even be more difficult if there are different political groups in control of the local council.

The remarkable quality of the Toul Sangker sangkat experience is that despite the adversarial nature of party politics in Cambodia, wherein the political parties actually represent warring factions during the Civil War, the parties were able to work together despite years of bitter conflict. Finding a possibility of bringing together different political groups is difficult under the best circumstances. But as the experience of the Toul Sangker sangkat has shown, former warring parties can work together for development. It is also possible to forge possible coalitions in local councils that have a divisive political nature.

Considering the weakness of local political institutions, it remains to be seen if there accountability between the local public officials and their constituents can be institutionalised. The difficulty of getting political elites to cooperate can be confounded by the lack of trust citizens often have in their elected government, especially local government. If political elites cannot make their constituents believe that they are trustworthy, it is much more challenging to persuade citizens to become part of the planning process, especially to ask them for voluntary contribution in carrying out development activities which are viewed by many as a government job.

4. Why This Model Is Viewed as Best Practice

Until 2002, Cambodia was a highly centralized country. Sub-national tiers of government were very much a subordinate to and an administrative arm of the central ministries and always waited for orders and commands from the top. Commune and sangkats were highly politicized and mainly charged with security matters.

After the direct democratic commune/sangkat council elections in 2002, the country has slowly decentralized, with a mandate given to the commune/sangkat council to deal with their own local development.

With limited resources (under the C/SF, the only source of revenues of the commune/sangkat), local development needs could only be dealt with effectively through extraordinary efforts from the council members. In many parts of the country, local development needs have been addressed by the respective councils (as local politicians) working closely with higher level politicians to invest on infrastructure for popular votes. There is a political agenda in this relationship, however, as politicians mainly focus on the parts of the commune where their supporters reside. Furthermore, this type of local development produces no record of contribution and corresponding expenditures.

Toul Sangker sangkat council had a different idea. Firstly, the process involves all councillors from different political parties. All council members are active and take the lead in mobilizing residents, identifying needs and collecting people's contributions. Secondly, all identified needs, people's contributions and corresponding expenditures are well recorded and displayed for people's scrutiny. Funds obtained from the government are also posted on the sangkat information board and other public places. Project signs showing project outputs and project finance (including its sources) are placed at project sites.

With only a small annual budget, Toul Sangker sangkat could not improve much of its physical infrastructure compared to the great needs of its rapidly increasing population and urbanization. Considering these unmet needs, Toul Sangke council has taken the initiative and developed a five-year development plan and annual investment program with five key pillars: rehabilitation of infrastructure, education and health, national resource management, administration and security, and gender.

In the planning process, the majority of the villages' residents helped to identify needs and agreed on possible solutions. The sangkat council has established its Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) to work with residents in all three villages throughout the year (from the planning stage through project completion/evaluation stage) and set up various committees to deal with the collection of people's contributions, procurement/bidding for the work, project management and regular monitoring as well as technical supervision.

The council has added to this participatory process some key steps to improve transparency and integrity in managing the people and public funds. For instance, after the people reach an agreement on a specific project, a technical feasibility study and cost estimates are conducted. Then contributions from private companies located in the sangkat, wealthy individuals, and ordinary residents are collected to add to the fund that the sangkat's council has secured from government sources. Each contribution is recorded and announced on the sangkat's information board, other public places and in front of the contributor's residence.

The results are impressive:

- By 2010, at least 70% of earth roads were upgraded to bituminous and well-maintained roads which were no longer at risk of flooding during the rainy season. At least 80% of financial contributions have been provided by the private sector and local people;
- The people in the community obtained more benefits, such as better education and welfare. Special emphasis has been given to the education of women and children;
- A sewer network and rubbish collection in the community has been set up;

- People participation and support from stakeholders in social development has been strengthened;
- Men and women have equal rights and show a better understanding of gender sensitive issues;
- Members of all political parties are represented in the council for the first time in Cambodian history;
- Toul Sangker sangkat became a good practice model for 90 other sangkats in Cambodia.

5. Toul Sangker Sangkat Best Practice Transfer and Replication Adaptability

Toul Sangker has been seen as a model sangkat for many years and is now under the government-CCSP-NLC/S Best Practice Awards Program (BPA) screening process²⁶. The council has received recognition from the Phnom Penh Administration on an annual basis. The head of the council, Mr. Soy Kosal received several medals from the RGC, the National Assembly and the Senate. More importantly, the sangkat has become a learning venue for many other sangkat in Phnom Penh and other urban places in the country. This was probably a clear reason why the head of the sangkat council has become so popular and been elected as Phnom Penh PAC/S and NLC/S Chairman for the past two mandates.

Although the initiative has been implemented in a small local unit, municipalities from other countries can still learn from the policy of involving all segments of the population, private companies and the public sector in the infrastructure development planning and implementation process. Other cities should be able to adapt various committees (such as planning and budgeting committee, bidding and procurement committee, women and children committee, project management committee etc.) in accordance with their own situations and needs. When doing so, the cities must ensure that all residents regardless of their level of contributions are consulted and informed on the city's decisions and final achievements on each and every project.

²⁶This is the first time that the government (the Ministry of Interior), the National League of Commune/ Sangkat (NLC/S) and an NGO called Cambodian Civil Society Partnership (CCSP) implement this comprehensive BPA program inviting all commune councils (and NGOs working in partnership with the councils) to submit their proposal for the BPAs. Many NGOs have also supported the councils in their target areas to identify the project which meets the set criteria and submit to the BPA Panel. About 500 applications across the country were received by the deadline, 30 April 2010. Three final winners were announced in November 2010.

ANNEX 1

Table 1.1: List of C/S Prioritized Projects or Activities

	Projects or Activities	Planned Output		Location
		Amount	Unit	
1. Economic				
	Building concrete road	6 x 350	m	Psar Touch Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 362	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 475	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 454	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 451	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 458	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	5 x 275	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	5 x 75	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	6 x 392	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	9 x 150	m	Psar Touch Village
	Building concrete road	6 x 6355	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 380	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	5 x 127	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	4x 120	m	Psar Touch Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 450	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	10 x 470	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	4 x 129	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	6 x 220	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 300	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	4 x 100	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 275	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	6 x 215	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	4 x 135	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	8 x 100	m	Toul Kok Village
	Building concrete road	10	Families	Psar Touch Village
	Building concrete road	10	Families	Toul Sangker Village
	Building concrete road	10	Families	Toul Kok Village
2. Social				
	Prevention and reducing HIV/AIDS and STD	10	Course	Sangkat office
	School construction	1 School/ 5 room	place	Toul Kok Village
	Albet utility	10	Time	3 villages
	Immunization vaccine	8	Time	3 villages
	Health centre construction	1 centre/ 2 room	Place	Toul Sangker Village

	Health education on STD and prevention	10	Course	Sangkat office
	Family planning	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Anti-mosquito drug		Time	3 villages
	Maternity care	10	Course	Sangkat office
	Dengue Fever prevention	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Training on care for pregnant woman	10	Course	Sangkat office
	Awareness raising on AIDS prevention	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Dengue fever education	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Education and prevention for infectious	5	Times	3 villages
	Women and children health care	5	Times	3 villages
	Training on first aid	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Food hygiene education	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Reproductive health education	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Distribution of vitamin A	5	Time	3 villages
	Campaign on tuberculosis prevention	5	Time	3 villages
	Khmer cultural education	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Helping AIDS victim	3	Village	3 villages
	Organizing old age group	3	Group	3 villages
	Non-formal education	3	Class	3 villages
	Drug user education	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Mental health education	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Organizing school drop-out network	5	Time	3 villages
	Training on latrine utility	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Tetanus prevention campaign	5	Time	3 villages
3. Natural resources and environment				
	Training on environmental law	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Training on fishery law	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Culvert construction	0.50x378	m	Psar Touch village
	Culvert construction	0.50x350	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Training on environmental pollution	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Prevention on illegal fishing	5	Times	Sangkat office
	Polluted water education	5	Course	Sangkat office

	Waste management planning	5	Times	Sangkat office
	Culvert construction	0.50x350	m	Psar Touch village
	Culvert construction	0.50x700	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Identifying proper rubbish storage	3	Place	Sangkat office
	Fishery education board	3	Board	3 villages
	Community hygiene education	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Culvert construction	0.50x150	m	Psar Touch village
	Culvert construction	0.50x1000	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Environment & natural resource education board	3	Board	3 villages
	Replanting	90	Tree	3 villages
	Culvert construction	0.50x700	m	Toul Sangker Village
	Dissemination on natural resource and environment	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Environmental education	5	Course	Sangkat office
4. Administration service and security				
	Dissemination on land law	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Dissemination on traffic law and public order	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Dissemination on civil and new criminal codes	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Drug user education	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Security and public order planning	5	Time	3 villages
	Drug trafficking crackdown	5	Time	3 villages
	Gangster crackdown	5	Time	3 villages
	Gangster organizing and training	10	Course	Sangkat office
	Combating gambling activities	5	Time	3 villages
	Identification card registration	5	Time	3 villages
	Public education on fireworks	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Capacity building for police officer	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Village information board	3	Village	3 villages
	Capacity building for Sangkat councils	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Capacity building for village security staff	5	Time	Sangkat office

	Establishment of security posts	3	Place	3 villages
	Promoting civil registration	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Building village center in Psa Toch	1	Place	Psar Touch village
	Building village center in Tol Sangker	1	Place	Toul Sangker Village
	Promoting regulations on business, handcraft and services	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Dissemination on goods and food management	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Conduct survey and weapon collection	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Dissemination on security and public order regulations	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Information decimation at village level	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Dissemination on regulations against any forms of gambling	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Crackdown on gambling activities	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Combating robbery activities	5	Time	Sangkat office
	Dissemination of tourism guideline	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Dissemination of fiscal taxation law	5	Course	Sangkat office
	Dissemination of gender promotion	5	Course	Sangkat office
5. Gender				
1	Dissemination of law against domestic violence	10	Course	Sangkat office
2	Dissemination of women and children trafficking law	10	Course	Sangkat office
3	Dissemination of women and children abuse law	10	Course	Sangkat office
4	Strengthen Women and Children focal person	5	Course	Sangkat office
5	Dissemination of roles of women and children in local development	5	Course	Sangkat office
6	Support for women and child's right activities	5	Course	Sangkat office
7	Education on women and men's right	5	Course	Sangkat office

8	Promoting women participation in local development	5	Course	Sangkat office
9	Gender promotion and child's right	10	Course	Sangkat office
10	Dissemination of gender promotion	10	Course	Sangkat office
11	Dissemination of child right law	5	Course	Sangkat office
12	Education on mental health and human rights	5	Course	Sangkat office

ANNEX

Table 1.2: The Estimated Cost for Prioritized Projects or Activities

Project or Activity	Estimated Costs in USD	Estimated Cost by Year Estimated Cost by Year				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Development Goal 1: ³ By 2002, 80 % of population have access to good roads in the Sangkat						
1.1 Development strategy: Promotion and quality improvement with people participation						
Activity # 1: Concrete road construction						
1.1.1 Concrete road construction (6mx350m)	17,850	17,850				
1.1.2 Concrete road construction (8mx362m)	24,616	24,616				
1.1.3 Concrete road construction(8mx475m)	32,300	32,300				
1.1.4 Concrete road construction(8mx454m)	30,872	30,872				
1.1.5 Concrete road construction(8mx451m)	30,668	30,668				
1.1.6 Concrete road construction(8mx458m)	31,144	31,144				
1.1.7 Concrete road construction(5mx175m)	7,437.5	7,437.5				
1.1.8 Concrete road construction(5mx75m)	3,187.5	3,187.5				
1.1.9 Concrete road construction(6mx392m)	19,992	19,992				
1.1.10 Concrete road construction (9mx150m)	11,475		11,475			
1.1.11 Concrete road construction (6mx350m)	17,850		17,850			
1.1.12 Concrete road construction(8mx380m)	25,840		25,840			
1.1.13 Concrete road construction(5mx127m)	5,397.5		5,397.5			
1.1.14 Concrete road construction(4mx120m)	4,080			4,080		
1.1.15 Concrete road construction(8mx450)	30,600			30,600		
1.1.16 Concrete road construction (10mx470m)	39,950			39,950		

1.1.17 Concrete road construction(4mx129m)	4,386			4,396		
1.1.18 Concrete road construction(6mx220m)	11,220			11,220		
1.1.19 Concrete road construction(8mx300m)	20,400				20,400	
1.1.20 Concrete road construction(4mx1000	3,400				3,400	
1.1.21 Concrete road construction(8mx250m)	17,000				17,000	
1.1.22 Concrete road construction(6mx215m)	10,965				10,965	
1.1.23 Concrete road construction(4mx135m)	4,590				4,590	
1.1.24 Concrete road construction(8mx100m)	6,800				6,800	
1.1.25 Concrete road construction 10 families	200					200
1.1.26 Concrete road construction 10 families	200					200

Development Goal 2: ³ By 2012 90%of population gain knowledge and welfare

2.1. Development strategy : Promoting children and illiterate persons to acquire knowledge and effective health education. Promoting people's awareness on basic health service

2.1.1 Reducing and prevention HIV/AIDS	4,000	800	800	800	800	800
2.1.2 School construction	100000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
2.1.3 Albet utility	4000	800	800	800	800	800
2.1.4 Child birth vaccination campaign	4000	800	800	800	800	800
2.1.5 Building Health Centre	48000	9600	9600	9600	9600	9600
2.1.6 Health education on STD and prevention	4000	800	800	800	800	800
2.1.7 Family planning	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.8 Anti-mosquito drug and eliminating mosquito nest	4000	800	800	800	800	800
2.1.9 Maternity education	4000	800	800	800	800	800
2.1.10 Dengue Fever prevention	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.11 Services for pregnant woman care	4000	800	800	800	800	800
2.1.12 Raising awareness on AIDS prevention	2000	400	400	400	400	400

2.1.13 Campaign on infectious disease prevention	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.14 Education on Dengue Fever	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.15 Women and baby health care	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.16 First aid training	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.17 Food hygiene education	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.18 Reproductive health education	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.19 Distribution of vitamin A	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.20 Dissemination on Tuberculosis	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.21 Khmer cultural education	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.22 Helping HIV/AIDS victims	800	160	160	160	160	160
2.1.23 Helping old age groups	500	100	100	100	100	100
2.1.24 Opening non-formal education classes	3250	650	650	650	650	650
2.1.25 Drug user education	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.26 Mental health education	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.27 Organizing network for school drop-outs	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.28 Promoting toilet use and construction	2000	400	400	400	400	400
2.1.29 Tetanus prevention campaign	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Development Goal 3: By 2012, the sewer network in community will be improved and people knowledge on fishery and environment are sustained						
3.1 Development Strategy: promoting and improving sewer network with people participation and maintenance						
3.1.1 Dissemination on environment law	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.2 Dissemination on fishery	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.3 Culvert construction	75600	15,120	15,120	15,120	15,120	15,120
3.1.4 Culvert construction	43000	8,600	8,600	8,600	8,600	8,600
3.1.5 Education on polluted environment	2000	400	400	400	400	400

3.1.6 Enforcement against illegal fishing	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.7 Education on water pollution	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.8 Waste management planning	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.9 Culvert construction	70000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
3.1.10 Culvert construction	140000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000
3.1.11 Identifying proper rubbish storage	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.12 Fishery education board	600	120	120	120	120	120
3.1.13 Community hygiene education	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.14 Culvert construction	30000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
3.1.15 Culvert construction	200000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
3.1.16 Environment and natural resource education board	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.17 Replanting	270	54	54	54	54	54
3.1.18 Culvert construction	140000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000
3.1.19 Natural resource and environment management	2000	400	400	400	400	400
3.1.20 Environmental education campaign	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Development Goal 4: By 2012, quality services on administration , safety and security will be enhanced.						
4.1 Development Strategy: Promoting services for administration and security and active participation from people						
4.1.1 Dissemination on land management law	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.2 Dissemination on traffic and public order law	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.3 Dissemination on civil and new criminal codes	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.4 Drug user education	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.5 Public order and security planning	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.6 Crackdown on drug trafficking	2000	400	400	400	400	400

4.1.7 Crackdown on criminals	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.8 Organizing group and education on criminals	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.9 Crackdown on any forms of gambling activities	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.10 Identification Card registration campaign	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.11 Public education on firework	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.12 Capacity building for police post officer	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.13 Establishing village information board	600	120	120	120	120	120
4.1.14 Capacity building for Sangkat council	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.15 Strengthening capacity of village security staff	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.16 Set up security check point	950	190	190	190	190	190
4.1.17 Civil registration campaign	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.18 Building village center in Psar Touch	6000	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
4.1.19 Building village center in Tol Sangker	6000	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
4.1.20 Promoting regulations on business, handcraft and services	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.21 Dissemination on goods and food management	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.22 Conduct survey and weapon collection	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.23 Dissemination on security and public order regulations	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.24 Information decimation at village level	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.25 Dissemination on regulations against any forms of gambling	2000	400	400	400	400	400

4.1.26 Promoting regulations on business, handcraft and services	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.27 Dissemination on goods and food management	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.28 Conduct survey and weapon collection	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.29 Dissemination on security and public order regulations	2000	400	400	400	400	400
4.1.30 Dissemination on gender development						
Dissemination on law against domestic violence	4000	800	800	800	800	800
Dissemination on women and children traffic law	4000	800	800	800	800	800
Dissemination on women and children abuse law	4000	800	800	800	800	800
Strengthen Women and Children focal person	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Dissemination on roles of women and children in local development	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Support for women and child's right activities	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Education on women and men's right	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Promoting women participation in local development	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Gender promotion and child's right	4000	800	800	800	800	800
Dissemination on gender promotion	4000	800	800	800	800	800
Dissemination on child right law	2000	400	400	400	400	400
Education on mentality health and human right	2000	400	400	400	400	400

Table 1.3 Project Achievements by Year

Year 2005					
No.	Name of Projects	Location	Output		Total Costs
			# Unit	Unit	
1	Bituminous road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	8 x 312.30	m	\$ 17,176
2	New sewer drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	3,725	m	\$ 251,930
3	Road repair	Sangkat Toul Sangker	1,900	m	\$ 2,525
4	Repairing sewer drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	200	m	\$ 2,760
5	Concrete road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	5,312.50	m	\$ 567,240.46
6	Canal restoring	Sangkat Toul Sangker	1	canal	\$ 175
7	Road compassion	Sangkat Toul Sangker	8 x300	m	\$ 240
Total					\$ 842,046.46
Year 2006					
1	Asphalt concrete road	Toul Sangker	168	m	\$17,550
2	Cement concrete road	Toul Sangker	8 x 285	m	\$24,299
3	Sewer drainage	Toul Sangker	163.20	m	\$19,870.22
4	New culverts	Toul Sangker	1,665	m	\$36,438
5	Road repairing	Toul Sangker	1,314	m	\$750
Total					\$98,907.22
Year 2007					
1	Cement concrete road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	6 x 378.12	m	\$17,362.18
2	Cement concrete road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	6 x 380	m	\$26,938
3	Sewer drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	53	m	\$1,113
4	Cement concrete road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	8 x 362	m	\$46,336
5	Road repairing	Sangkat Toul Sangker	4,110	m	\$7,701
					\$99,450.18

Year 2008					
1	New Sewage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	298	m	\$4,000
2	Restoring culvert	Sangkat Toul Sangker	340	m	\$300
3	Repairing road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	2,110	m	\$4,585
4	Cement concrete road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	6,628	m	\$237,235.31
Total					\$246,120.31
Year 2009					
1	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker		m	\$10,506
2	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	58	m	\$2,116
3	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	241	m	\$7,230
4	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	25	m	\$951
5	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	142	m	\$2,840
6	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	225	m	\$3,200
7	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	432	m	\$12,654
8	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	55	m	\$826
9	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	304	m	\$4,560
10	New culvert drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	346	m	\$10,000
11	Cement concrete road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	623.30	m	\$25,346.75
12	Cement concrete road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	1,347	m	\$212,149.63
13	Restoring canal	Sangkat Toul Sangker	157	m	\$187.5
14	Restoring sewer drainage	Sangkat Toul Sangker	5 canals	m	\$3,718
15	Repairing road	Sangkat Toul Sangker	360	m	\$3,290
Total					\$299,574.88

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