

„AUSTRIAN-PHUKET COMMUNITY CENTER IN KOH SIRAY, THAILAND“

AID FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE FLOOD DISASTER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

1. Background and problem statement

The humanitarian disaster arising from the devastation caused by the tsunami which struck Southeast Asia on 26th December 2004 is tremendous. Up to 300,000 people are confirmed to be dead or reported to be missing. Over 1,5 million people have lost their homes and are registered as displaced. In Thailand the tidal wave killed 5,305 people but the estimates are double with up to 11,000 dead bodies. 8,400 people have been injured due to the Tsunami.

2. Location



The proposed project is situated in Koh Siray, Muang District, close to Phuket City. It can be reached by Phuket City in about thirty minutes by car.

Phuket Province contains a total of 3 districts of which one is Muang District.

Muang District has an area of 224 sq.km and 2 municipalities. It is divided in 6 sub-district administration organisations.

In total there are 44 villages and 36,932 dwellings.

Koh Siray

3. Background information on Koh Siray/Muang District

Phuket province is the biggest island in Thailand and the smallest province in the southern region. The province is located in the eastern part of the southern region.

The whole population in Phuket Province accounts for 261,386 people of which over 60% are living in Muang district. The population density with 740,8 people per sq.km is very high compared to the rest of the province.

Most of the work force in Phuket has positions in the hotel & restaurant sectors, followed by wholesale/retail and manufacturing sectors. The important crops and the production of economic plants in Phuket are as follows: para rubber, coconut, string bean, pine apple, durian, rice and vegetables.

There are 5 types of cooperatives in Phuket including an agricultural cooperative, a fishery cooperative, a thrift and credit cooperative, a services cooperative and a consumer cooperative. There were a total of 38 cooperatives or an increase of 2 cooperatives from last year including 16 saving cooperatives, 8 agricultural cooperatives, 7 services cooperatives, 4 consumers' cooperatives and 3 fishery cooperatives. Muang Phuket District maintained the highest numbers of 27 cooperatives followed by Thalang of 10 cooperatives, and Kra Thu of 1 cooperative.

There are a total of 439 factories in Phuket with an investment capital of about 4,096.10 million baht and a total employment of 8,273 workers. The service industry accounts for 51.0% of the total factories followed by wood processing industry, food & beverage industry, construction industry, and others.

Phuket has 3 government hospitals, including 1 general hospital or Watchira Phuket Hospital (480 beds) and 2 community hospitals or Thalang Hospital (60 beds) and Pa Tong Hospital (30 beds). Besides, there are 21 health centers for fundamental health services in various sub-districts. The ratio of bed to population is 1:428.

4. Project Partner

The project will be carried out together with the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization of which Ms. Anchalee Vanich Tephabuttra is the Chief Executive. Phuket Provincial Administration was set up as an office for embassy staff from 41 countries responsible for looking after their nationals in the aftermath of the tsunami in the six Andaman coast provinces of Thailand. The organisation is a local government agency.

5. Project objective

Due to the flood disaster caused by the Tsunami that struck Southeast Asia on 26th December 2004, Hilfswerk Austria became active in reconstruction projects in Thailand. Hilfswerk Austria is cooperating with Phuket Provincial Administration Organization on the project "Austrian-Thai Community Centre". The Tsunami has destroyed large parts of the area around Koh Siray.

Hilfswerk Austria wants to support the local community by reconstructing and rehabilitating livelihoods.

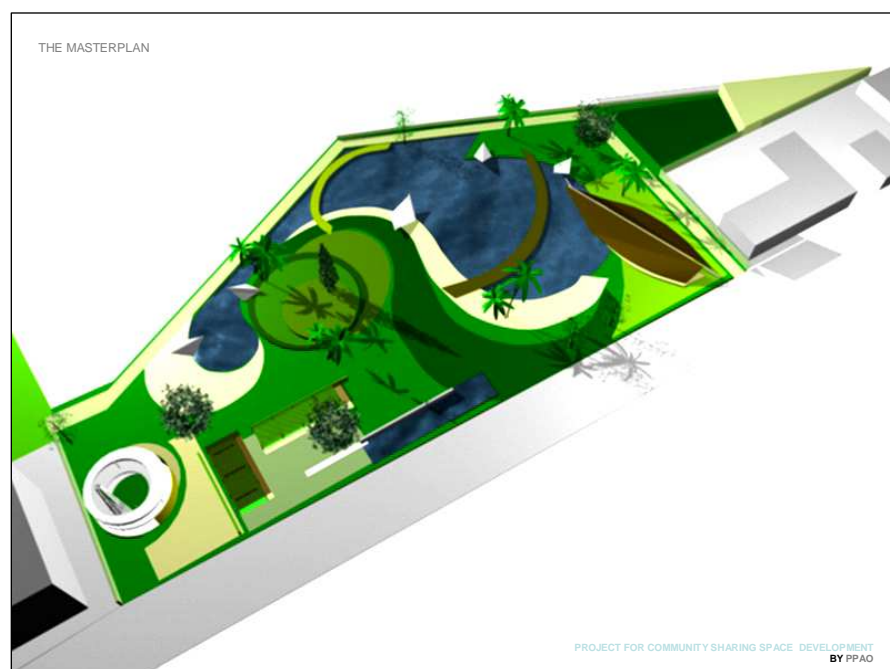
One of the main goals of this initiative is poverty reduction through support for disadvantaged people in Thailand designed to meet their basic needs, to improve the quality of their lives and to reinforce their own development capacities. Civil society strengthening and participatory development promotion in the partner country will be the focus of support in this context.

Within its life span design, the envisaged project will include the implementation of actions in order to address the problems related to themes in the area of action: Actions that support sustainable health, social, human, environmental and economic development processes in Thailand and that mainstream institutional support and capacity building for local development structures with the aim of improving their internal organization, strengthening their financial management capacities and developing their analytical and advocacy skills.

6. Project description

The Austrian-Thai Community Centre comprises the following elements:

- Kids Care Centre (Nursery)
- Basic Health Care Centre (linked to the Nursery)
- Handy Craft Centre
- Public Library and Training Centre
- Public Park



The basic health care centre includes a general practitioner, an eye specialist, an otorhinolaryngologist, a gynaecologist, a dentist and a minor surgery. The public library will be open to the local community in order to offer them a meaningful source of information and education. It will comprise a broad selection of books, magazines and other useful sources of information.

The handy craft centre will be closely linked to the OTOP-initiative from the Thai government (see *details under point 7*). Special emphasis will be placed on the fabrication and marketing of the following OTOP products that are typical for the region where the project is implemented: batik fabrics, woven products from lipao, bulrush and panan pandanus, mother-of-pearl inlays and carved wood products.

With the introduction of OTOP, village communities are faced with the complex realities of trading beyond borders: the issues of meeting deadlines, quality control, production capacity, design preferences and marketing challenges. Not all OTOP products are of export quality.

The Austrian-Thai Community Centre will offer the necessary support in the training centre. In training courses activities are developed that assist in exporting OTOP products, such as the improvement of quality, enhanced marketing capabilities, the training of skills, the creation of marketable designs and packages.

Local women have the possibility to participate in these seminars and training courses, and they can bring their children to the nursery centre during the day.

Training sessions also include language courses, especially in German so that the local communities are able to sell their products to the tourists residing in Phuket. It could be envisaged to open an OTOP shop and to provide international buyers and tourists in the Centre with better access to the wide variety of traditional products.

7. OTOP – One Tambon, One Product



With thousands of tambons (village sub-districts) the length and breadth of Thailand each producing their own distinctive products, in 2001, the Thai government initiated the nationwide One Tambon One Product (OTOP) project aimed at improving incomes in village communities to help alleviate rural poverty.

Drawing its inspiration from Japan's successful One Village One Product (OVOP) scheme, Thailand's OTOP project encourages village communities to produce and market unique products and handicrafts hand-made from locally available materials utilising local wisdom and skills handed down from generation to generation.

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Typical OTOP products are handicrafts, cotton and silk garments, pottery, fashion accessories, household items and many other articles indigenous to each community. The essential ingredient is that they are all painstakingly hand-made, frequently with great skill.

So far a number of product groups have been classified for promotion; these include food items and beverages, textiles and clothing, woven handicrafts, artistry items, gifts, household and decorative items, and non-edible herbal products. These cover traditional items made in village communities, each lovingly crafted with the inimitable flavour and style of their localities.

The project has strong government support on many levels -- identifying potential OTOP products, providing advice on production, quality control, packaging and designs that make them even more attractive to domestic and export markets. The entire OTOP product cycle comes under the supervision of a National OTOP Committee, with regional and provincial level committees to assist in identifying, developing and grading OTOP products.



A website (www.thaitambon.com) has been set up to construct a comprehensive database system which accommodates necessary information from every Tambon in Thailand, to help encourage and promote tourism in Thailand down to Tambon level and to help rural people to exchange information, ideas, and to improve communication across various Tambon districts.

8. Project duration

March 2005 – Dec. 2007

9. Budget

total budget 500,000€

10. Contact details

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