

## Executive Summary

### Project on Social Innovation for Sustainable Urban and Rural Development

Rural development to reduce gap between urban and rural communities has been the necessary and important activity or variable for the success in sustainable development. The study of social innovation focuses on urban and rural development methods involving interdisciplinary fields in order to reduce the social gap as well as to specify the appropriate and efficient role of social investment by various sectors so as to create a balance and utilize social capital and intellectual capital consistent with the social transformation in the Thai society.

Social capital arises from thinking processes, values, standards, and attitudes whose social groups have awareness, want to remedy problems or create conditions for the public benefit, and provide alternatives for development in economy, society and environment that are in line with the set target. The cooperation of all individuals will create stakeholder engagement; in the end, groups and communities will benefit. Thus, social capital has been chosen as an important tool for development.

The project on social innovation for sustainable social and community development has specified five targeted areas covering all regions in the country in order to search for primary data observed in various areas and to provide conclusions for different findings. In particular, the Ban Na Huek community in Chiangmai experienced the problem of chemical agriculture and later became a success story of organic agriculture. The Ban Pet Community in Khon Kaen had the problem of being a large community and later developed leaning process through the establishment of community radio for knowledge and information dissemination. The Ban Nongkhae community in



Chai Nat experienced the problem of low paddy price and later cooperated to built a community rice mill. The Bo Kwang Thong community in Chonburi faced with various problems and later learned to solve community problems by setting up the acceptable community plan. The Pak Phun community in Nakhon Si Thammarat encountered the health problem and later cooperated with the Public Health Center to transfer health knowledge in order to change behavior in the community; as a result, the quality of life in the community has improved.

Methods for sustainable urban and rural development should specify links in three main dimensions. They are as follows.

**(1) Economic Dimension** The rural area serving as a production source or supplier and the urban area serving as a market source or demander must be interconnected so that there is a balance between demand and supply. Specifically, suppliers in the rural areas must understand the needs of urban consumers in order to produce goods that use the local potential as well as develop the patterns of products and services that have identity and quality up to standard. Therefore, the public sector, the private sector, and the educational institutions must cooperate and provide knowledge to suppliers in the rural area. While urban consumers have high purchasing power and capacity to spend for up to standard and environmentally friendly goods and services, the current consumerism provides opportunities for producers in the rural area. The urban consumers give information about their knowledge and wants to rural suppliers who could apply to produce goods and services that insert conservation and local wisdom and culture in response to the wants of urban consumers.

**( 2) Social Dimension** Social institutions must cooperate to create core values for the society. In particular, family institution should instill good behaviors and honesty. The public institutions should uphold good governance. The private institutions should have clear conscience of selfless coexistence. The religious institutions should have a role in instructing good spirit and behavior.

**(3) Environmental Dimension** The rural regions are areas that have beautiful natural environment. Thus, conservation and revival natural resources such as forests, mangrove swamp, and rivers are crucial not only in maintaining rich natural resources and biodiversity in the rural area but also in becoming conservation and cultural tourist spots for both urban and local people. Individuals should have conscience and use local wisdom and combine new knowledge in conservation and revival local nature resources so that human can live together with environment that provides the source of food and community income.

In addition, sustainable urban and rural development ought to be aware of the link of social capital and intellectual capital in order to create social capital with outcomes in communities that must have the following.

**(1) Knowledge Creation** It requires having knowledgeable persons who are willing to teach, providing learning process that links with the way of life, promoting innovation and creativity, and cultivating learning and lifetime learning.

**(2) Knowledge Management** This is through information technology that records and collects scattered knowledge from individuals, communities, the public agencies and the private sector so that it can develop into a system that provides all individuals access to knowledge expeditiously

and efficiently and individuals can develop into a knowledgeable and wise person.

**(3) Knowledge Location** The area with this physical feature could be a house, temple, pavilion, or community learning center serving as an area that creates beneficial activities, brainstorm, and exchanges knowledge. In addition, the cyber world should take into account since the future will be the world of creativity that aims to use knowledge in product development.

**(4) Community Research** It involves people in the communities together compiling problems and developing research to answer problematic issues and find remedial measures. Researchers and outside personnel from other communities may be consulted to find success lessons. The expectation is to have a broad and multiplier effect.