

**Title** : Development of Land Use in Suburban Community of A  
Major Isarn Cities

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research work had as its aim to study the history of the community establishment, and the development of land-use in suburban communities of major Isarn cities since the settlement of villages up to the present time, with an emphasis on the period after 1961. The impact arising from the change of land-use patterns in the communities was also investigated.

The qualitative research study method was mainly applied, partially supplemented by the quantitative method. Field data collection lasted two and a half months from March to May, 1992. The sample communities included: Ban Kok, Ban Ped Sub-district, Muang District, Khon Kaen; Ban Don Taew, Kok Kruad Sub-district, Muang District, Nakhon Ratchasima; and Ban Non Kamin, Nong Bua Sub-district, Muang District, Udonthani. Forty-five key informants and three hundred and sixty-eight family leaders or spouses were interviewed by the researchers.

The research findings revealed that Ban Non Taew is a Thai-Korat community which could be dated back 140 years ago. However, the former settling places and the reasons for migration could not be detected. Ban Kok is a Thai-Loatian community which is 118 years old. The villagers in the past evacuated from drought in Ubol Ratchathani to this area. Ban Non Kamin, on the other hand, is a new Thai-Laotian community established 40 years ago, where people came to settle near their subsistence land.

Land-use patterns during the first period of the three communities were similar. Most of the areas (64.18%-94.57%) were covered with deciduous forests and groves. The villagers used to rely on the forests for food items such as wild vegetables, mushrooms, bamboo shoot, and kindling. Only 4.66%-17.62% was cultivated as paddy fields. The reason for low landuse for cropping was because during that period, the population only amounted to 1.6%-7.27% of the present population in the three communities, without any external individuals sharing the use of land.

The use of land during the last period (after 1961) has changed entirely. Forests could not be found at present while at the same time much more land has been cultivated with rice paddy. At Don Taew, the villagers also grow cash crops such as sugar cane for the production of sugar cakes, kenaf, and cassava. Thirty-seven per cent of the landusers comprise outsiders. The land sold to people from outside has been occupied by factories, a large farm, real estate, academic institutions, or left idle

awaiting for more benefits. The sellers use the money to buy land for paddy at the outskirts of the district, build their new houses, deposit in commercial banks, and use it for household expenditure. The people sold their land because of price incentives, because their land was encircled by other people's land, or because they lack laborers. There is a trend that 15.76% of the households will sell the remaining land.

The change of land-use and land holding patterns results in:

(1) The number of households without land increased to 47.55% whereas the size of paddy per household decreased to 5.44 rai.

(2) The national reserved forest has been encroached upon, and indirect result from the change of land use.

(3) The people's occupation and ways of living have changed, sixty-two point five per cent of the villagers now hold non-farm occupations while 30.34% hold both non-farm and on-farm occupations and only 5.16% are still working on farms.

(4) Environmental pollution has been brought about, namely unpleasant odor, dirt, contaminated water, and floods, all coming from factories and land-filling activities by investors.