

Abstract

A project of monitoring and evaluating to develop appropriate environment for quality living of the Thai elderly has been an ongoing process since 2009 under the Development Plan of Monitoring and Evaluating a Model of Appropriate Environment for Quality Living of Thai Elderly by National Research Council of Thailand. The project was a foundation to be further developed into a proper and sustainable system for residential and environmental improvement for the elderly. Knowledge obtained from the research could also be expanded and applied to other areas of similar qualities.

The research was conducted at the 4 existing sites: (1) Subdistrict Municipality of Yang Hom, Chiang Rai (2) Subdistrict Administration Organization of Ta Tago, Nakonsawan (3) Subdistrict Administration Organization of Nong Gung Sen, Kon Kaen and (4) Subdistrict Administration Organization of Pag Bang, Sonkla, and 3 additional sites under the research network: (1) Town Municipality of Mae Hia, Chiang Mai (2) Subdistrict Municipality of Nong Tong Pattana, Chiang Mai and (3) Subdistrict Administration Organization of Ta Ngam, Singburi. Data would be gathered from the 7 study sites by means of questionnaires responded by 502 elders from, in-dept interview and focused group conducted with the groups of 15 people including Chief Executives and the Management team of Subdistrict Administration Organizations, community leaders and developers, and 34 elders whose houses had been improved.

The result from the study showed that common residential issues for the elderly concern areas of bathroom, toilet, stairs, and stability/strength of the house. Key challenges for the development are limited financial support from government sector, low level of engagement of the elderly within the community, and lack of support from private sectors, while key success are the Chief Executives of Subdistrict Administration Organizations and Municipality.

Recommendations from the study are as follows: (1) Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, should include an area of responsibilities of developing environment for quality living of the elderly as a part of the Key Performance Indicators in the form of Performance Appraisal as well as in the form of Efficiency Appraisal for Special Remuneration. (2) Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, should act as the knowledge center of the residential and environmental development for quality living of the elderly as well as the center for trainings, models, funding. (3) Subdistrict Administration Organization/ Municipality should include the issue of the environmental development for quality living of the elderly in the 3-year development plan of the units and should also encourage the use of appropriate technology with materials available in the community.