

3837100 SHEV/M : MAJOR : ENVIRONMENT; M.A. (ENVIRONMENT)
KEY WORDS : PARTICIPATORY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT / MIND MAP/
SIX THINKING HATS/ VISUAL FACILITATION

KITJAKAAN CHUAYCHUWONG : GRAPHIC-BASED PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. THESIS ADVISOR: THAWATCHAI BOONCHOTE, Ph.D., ILJAS BAKER, M. PHIL., ARAYAN TRANGARN, Ph.D., MANEEWAN PEWNIM, Ph.D. 145 p. ISBN 974-664-854-3

The main objective of this action research was to assess two tools that facilitate participatory community development in a Thai rural context.

The study was done in a village on the border of Huay Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary. There were 80 families living in the community with a total population of about 500. The research was a case study. It was conducted within 1999. The researcher applied Mind Map for one-on-one interviews with villagers and introduced Six Hats Thinking method to the same villagers for community meetings.

The findings from the study indicate that the application of Mind Map to reinforce the effectiveness of interviews facilitated clear communication and promoted a positive interpersonal atmosphere significantly. Part of the reason for the success of the tool was that it made the interviews less serious and more fun, a positive value in Thai society even when work is being done.

It is recommended that government officials and NGO development agencies receive training in visual communication tools like mind mapping.

The application of Six Hats Thinking was a failure due to the social and cultural context of the community at the time of the study - the community had recently been traumatized by a major scam involving both outsiders and community members and were unreceptive to the idea of community meetings. The community also expressed a strong belief that community development was primarily the responsibility of the government and that role of the villagers was more or less limited to carrying out government initiated projects. Their own efforts to initiate community changes appeared to arise only in response to a perceived crisis. A further factor to account for the failure of this tool was that villagers seemed to find the idea of separating thoughts from emotions (a crucial function of the tool) to be quite alien. Lastly, the failure might be attributed to the fact that the researcher had no authority to persuade the villagers to initiate discussions about community development.

Most of these factors should be considered where any intervention is planned by a careful selection of the village, by more in-depth preparation of the community, and by putting authoritative figures in the role of development facilitator. Both tools could be effective alternatives to enhance people's participation in community development and environmental management, especially if used by government officials who have direct contact with rural communities.