

Ruam Samakkee Community

On-site reconstruction at Ruam Samakkee

These pilot projects are already scaling up : The pilot upgrading projects at Ruam Samakkee and Kao Pattana have sparked off a larger development process which includes seven informal communities under Crown Property Bureau (CPB) ownership in the Ramkhamhaeng area, involving about 40 hectares of land and over 1,000 families.

Instead of redeveloping each in isolation, these seven communities are now working together to develop a master housing redevelopment plan which provides housing and secure land tenure for all of them as a group - in the same area. In April 2004, CODI signed an M.O.U. with the CPB to assist in developing this master redevelopment plan for all seven settlements, which will create new residential areas which are linked to markets and parks, and will involve reblocking in some areas and nearby relocation in others. But the idea is that everyone will remain in the area, on CPB land, for which they will get long-term lease contracts through their community cooperatives.

Ruam Samakkee is a larger squatter community of 124 families occupying 0.8 hectares of CPB land in Ramkhamhaeng Soi 39, not too far from Kao Pattana. The community's original idea was to regularize their tenure status by negotiating a long-term lease for the land they now occupy. They have completed their cooperative registration (which provides the legal status to obtain a collective lease agreement with the CPB).

In May 2003, the people worked with young architects to develop a new layout plan and to design 2-story town houses which will cost 180,000, involving monthly repayments of between 1,000 and 1,300 Baht for 15 years. In the three months that followed, they demolished all the old houses and laid the new infrastructure. By December 2003, they had completed construction of the first 31 houses. The construction in Ruam Samakkee has been suspended, though, while the people work on the development of this larger 7-community plan.

Project Details :

- Households : 131
- Land-owner : Crown Property Bureau
- Tenure terms : Long term lease (30 yr)
- Type of upgrading : On-site reconstruction
- Infrastructure cost : 1.8 million Baht (US\$ 45,000)
- Housing costs : 14.58 million Baht (US\$ 364,500) (aver. 180,000 Baht/unit)
- Total cost of land + housing + infrastructure : 21.13 million Baht (US\$ 528,250)

Background

Ruam Samakkee community was settled in Soi Ramkhamhaeng 39 in Bangkok. It was the first initial pilot project of Bann Mankong Programme. It was a squatter community comprised of 124 families occupying 0.8 hectares of Crown Property Bureau Land, who negotiated a 30-year lease after forming a cooperatives, and developing a new layout plan with community architects for two-storey houses.

Most of the people in Ruam Samakkee community came from the rural areas, have variety occupations such as employees, workers, officers, garbage collectors and general

merchants. They have the good relationship among themselves like relatives, so they help each other on their work, housing, and sharing food etc. These are the symbol of being generous and thoughtfulness which have rarely been seen in the urban society at present time.

From the past, community people had set up the groups for many activities such as saving group, culture conservation, activities against drugs, youths activities and environment conservation and these activities made the community to be more strong.

In the year B.E. 2546 (A.D. 2003), Thai government adopted an ambitious policy to generate “Baan Mankong Housing Program” or “Secure Housing Program” which was a “demand-driven” approached that channels infrastructure subsidies and soft housing loans directly to existing poor communities so they could upgrade their housing, infrastructure, services and community environment. So, the Community Organizations Development Institute (Public Organization) or CODI had been assigned to monitor and implement this project. Ruam Samakkee Community which had been selected as one of the ten pilot projects became the knowledge center and the first model of the other communities for housing development initiative.

At present Ruam Samakkee Community comprised of 130 households families, 486 populations, 200 people are children and youths, 231 people are at the work-age, the other are the elder.

Due to the nature of the community was the squatter land, so community people in the past had not received the basic infrastructure such as electricity or water supply from the government. People in the past had to buy electricity and water supply from the row houses near the street. Later on, Ruam Samakkee People joined hand to help each other by organizing

the Community Committee in the year B.E. 2536 and in year B.E. 2538. People here were almost facing the problems of eviction but they tried to negotiate, but there was the negotiation with the Crown Property Bureau for remaining in the old land by the group of the Community People.

Finally, the Crown Property Bureau agreed to alleviate to let the people remained temporary in the land. That led to set up the Community Committee in order to coordinate with the outside agencies such as the Urban Community Research Institute, the Crown Property Bureau and joined the meeting with the nearby communities.

In the year B.E. 2539, the Urban Community Environment Development Project, the Chumchon Thai Foundation under the grant support fund from Denmark had created the Environment Development Process of the Urban Community which made many communities in Ramkhamhaeng 39 area to settle the “Wang Thonglang Network” and Ruam Samakkee Community had proposed the “Project to settle Community Water Supply”. After this Community Water Supply Project had been approved, people had proposed to ask for the legal “housing number” from the Crown Property Bureau in order to settle the Water Supply System from the Bangkok Metropolitan Water Supply until it had been completed.

On January 5, B.E. 2541 the development Process and Giving Assistance among the people in the community began seriously. Since then they set up the “Saving Group”. Ruam Samakkee Community settled on the squatter land, had not been accepted legally and lacked of basic infrastructure from the government, so this community needed to find out the development resources from many funding sources. They fought to earn their sources fund from setting up the Saving Group within their community and used it to be the coordination with the outside funding sources as well as to develop variety of the community activities.

In the year B.E. 2544, ESCAP had the Workshop Research Project on “Building the Network of Social Protection by Community Organizations or “Social Safety Net” and assigned the Urban Community Foundation to be the implementing agencies and Ruam Samakkee had been selected as the “Pilot Community”. Later on, there had been the construction of the “Multipurpose Center” in the community which reflected the good cooperation among the community numbers, their generosity and thoughtfulness as well as taking the problems and the needs of the people to discuss and to find out the solution together. All these would lead to raise up for their quality of life and could be seen in the shape of concrete object in long term period.

Step to Baan Mankong Project

At the beginning of the year B.E. 2546, Thai Government assigned CODI to be the responsible agency to implement the Baan Mankong Secure Tenure Project in order to solve the housing problems of the poor in the slum areas. Ruam Samakkee Community had been selected to be one of the ten pilot projects. According to Ruam Samakkee which has its own activities continuously, so people are unity and they are active to find out the suitable guidelines to develop their housings.

After joining Baan Mankong Project, people have worked together in steps as follows:

1. Set up the meeting among villagers by CODI representatives and community leaders for giving the implementation guidelines.
2. Survey the Community Data such as number of members, troubles, and the needs of people. From the survey, it

can be found that the community has 40 meters width, 225 meters length and 130 households.

3. Set up the Regulations/Qualifications of the people who join this project.

Types of Housing Development

Ruam Samakkee Community has given the opportunity to many agencies including the community architects to work closely with the community people. Also, the community people have the good ideas and good decisions with the strong willingness to develop their housings and their community for their better way of life.

Project Details

Table to show the construction units in each phase

Phase	Main Families	Extended Families	Leaser
1	31	-	-
2	32	19	-
3	14	11	23
Total	77	30	23

- Two story houses (double houses), size 4.5 x 11 meters, for 77 families.

- Two story houses (double houses), size 4 x 9 meters, for 30 families.
- Three story apartments/flats size 4 x 8 meters for 23 families.

Management of the Housing Loan

Ruam Samakkee Community has received the loan credit approved from CODI in the amount of 17,154,240 baht. CODI has charged the Cooperatives 1% on the Housing Construction Loan. The Cooperatives have charged individual borrowers at a rate of 4% per year. The difference of the interest rate 2% has been used for management costs. The sum of the loan which the members borrow

has been different and has depended on the saving money 10% the member exist.

Land Lease

The Crown Property Bureau agreed to lease the land (total area 0.8 hectares) to the Cooperative for duration of 30 years (first land lease contract = 15 years with condition, after 15 years could extend the contract). The Crown Property Bureau charged the cheap land lease at the rate of 12 baht per month per square wah.

Now, each family is charged 300 baht per plot per month.

Basic Services

- CODI has been responsible for the expenses of infrastructure development.
- The Crown Property Bureau has supported the construction of central area.

This has been a re-construction project in which the whole community has been re-planned. People have been able to get involved in housing construction of their own and have been advised by architects from the Secure Housing Project on this.

After the DANCED and CODI Project had been launched, the community infrastructure had been developed and received the support fund. So, the water supply cost and electricity cost has been cheaper than before. (Now, water supply cost is 12 baht per unit, electricity cost is 4 baht per unit)

Participating Process

Ruam Samakkee Community has been the “model” for the other communities on the good cooperation and unity among their people to come to the conclusion to remain in their own living land with the secure households. All members of the community have to participate in helping to social opinions and to build a secure community and simultaneously build a community.

Structure of Management at Ruam Samakkee Community as Secure Housing Pilot Project

The structure was designed by the people in the community themselves.

- The Secure Housing first phase, 31 families has been completed on January 1, B.E. 2547.
- The Secure Housing second phase, 51 families has been on construction in February, B.E. 2548 and will be completed soon.
- The Secure Housing third phase, 48 families has been on construction and will be completed soon.

It has been noticed that people hired the building contractors in their own community and people were labors. The construction materials had been bought by whole lot in a large amount, not individual buying and in the name of the Housing Cooperatives in order to get the low cost and to be save also.

There have been the strong leaders in this community. There have been 3 groups of committee as follows:

1. Community Committee (18 persons) has their internal functions, to coordinate and manage in the community area. The Community Chairman is the leader.

2. Housing Cooperatives Committee Limited (10 persons) has their functions to coordinate with outside agencies, financial organization including monitoring and management on saving, loan, credit and repayment as well as social welfare of the members.

3. Secure Tenure Committee (or Baan Mankong Committees)

The community members play their important roles in this Committee.

At the launching of Baan Mankong Project on December 27, B.E. 2548, Dr. Jirayu Issarangkoon Na Ayudthaya, Executive Director of the Crown Property Bureau said that the implementation of Baan Mankong Project at Ruam Samakkee Community in Soi Ramkamhaeng 39 has been the important pilot project for the housing development on the land of the Crown Property Bureau. This is the good example for the cooperation of many agencies concerned both of the land owner (Crown Property Bureau), CODI and people in the community and this is the “model” for the society. The MOU has been signed by 3 agencies and the pilot implementation project will be 7 communities in Soi Wat Thepleela in the amount of 2,400 families. CODI will support on the housing construction and the infrastructure in the community. The Crown Property Bureau will support the land development center where the community can use together such as the central market, public-park or small children center due to the needs of the community.

Ms. Somsook Boonyabancha, Director of CODI said that the housing development of the Baan Mankong Project was not only to construct houses but also to construct community at the same time. So, it would create the sharing Community, have warmness and nice to live in. CODI and Crown Property Bureau planed to use this guidelines to develop 80 communities on the Crown Property Bureau land.

Factors of Success

Mr. Somnuk Chan-Inn, Advisor to the Community has recommended that even Baan Mankong Project of Ruam Samakkee Community has not been 100% completed but the concrete object we have seen now shows us the progress status of the project.

Main factors of success are

1. Strong Leadership of Community Leaders.
2. Community Unity and Enthusiastic.
3. Continuously Brainstorming Meeting.
4. Working in Order, Clear Planning and Transparent.
5. Good Support from Agencies Outside (Such as from CODI, Crown Property Bureau, Chomchon Thai Foundation, Wang Thonglang District Office, Network Members for Housing Development and 10 Pilot Projects of Baan Mankong.)

Future Direction

Mr. Apisin Nukhun, Chairman of Community has proud of the success and has mentioned that people will still continue to work for community development and make this to be the “model” community as well as the “attractive” community to live in.

People have planed the community future direction as follow:

1. Rearrange Community
2. Look after, Conserve the environment continuously
3. Manage social welfare to every community members.
4. Coordinate Members and have the network connection to improve and develop the community.