

The Tambon Kamphuan Community Learning Center Opens

Thai and U.S. government officials, community members, and private sector representatives gathered in Ranong's Suk Samron subdistrict on 12 December to inaugurate the Kamphuan Community Learning Center and commemorate the second anniversary of the December 2004 tsunami. Event participants included Ranong's Deputy Governor Mr. Orachun Nuibandan; the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Regional Environment Office Director Mr. Winston Bowman; as well as representatives from the Kamphuan Tambon Administration Office and Coca-Cola Thailand.

AIT was a partner in building the center and was represented by Dr. Khin Ni Ni Thein, vice president for development and resources.

The new center was designed to support education and training programs which will enhance the diversity of livelihoods and strengthen community resilience to natural disasters. Public-private partnerships and community engagement are highlights of successful project completion. The center also received support from Rotary International, Coca-Cola, and the Raks Thai Foundation. USAID's Bowman remarked, "The learning center is a legacy to the people of Kamphuan and surrounding region who have worked to rebuild stronger, more resilient communities following the 2004 tsunami. While the building itself strives to demonstrate green building techniques friendly to the environment, it is the programs of the learning center and the partnerships that will help ensure community members are ready to face future challenges and seize opportunities."

The 500-square-meter, two-story learning center is designed for multiple purposes. Large outdoor areas can accommodate meetings and workshops, while a confer-



ence room and classroom inside the building will be used for training and educational programs. A computer room will provide services to local business operators for their sales and marketing activities. Additionally, the center has a tsunami memorial room which contains educational materials and tsunami survivor testimonials. The building was constructed using a locally-produced brick designed to reduce material cost and increase structural stability for coastal areas.

The Kamphuan Community Learning Center is the crowning achievement of USAID's Post-Tsunami Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Program. Initiated in May 2005, the program has worked in five tsunami-affected villages in Ranong Province to build the resilience of coastal communities, develop the economic basis of livelihoods, and provide skills and resources for self-recovery.

In addition to construction of the center, project activities have included establishing village microfinance institutions, supporting environmental protection and co-management of natural resources, reducing local vulnerability to natural hazards, increasing risk and disaster management skills and strengthening local governance. The Post-Tsunami Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and implemented by AIT, the University of Rhode Island and the University of Hawaii in cooperation with the Kamphuan Tambon Administrative Organization in Suk Samran District, Ranong Province, Thailand. More information on the program is located at www.crc.uri.edu.



The Post-Tsunami Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and implemented by the Asian Institute of Technology, University of Rhode Island, and University of Hawaii in cooperation with the Kamphuan TAO (Tambon Administrative Organization) in Suk Samran District, Ranong Province, Thailand. The goal of the program is to demonstrate how participatory, issue-driven and results-oriented processes can be applied to restart livelihoods and rehabilitate coastal communities affected by the December 26, 2004 tsunami in selected coastal villages along the coast of the Andaman Sea.

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Waste Expo in Village 4



Fun and Games

To mark the end of Ramadan this year the Recycling Group from Taklang Village in Ranong Province, Thailand held a day-long Solid-Waste and Recycling Exposition. Food and games for children provided the backdrop to bring across the serious message of the benefits of recycling and improved waste management. Over the past year the recycling group in this village has developed a village waste-bank where villagers can exchange recyclable materials for household items like eggs and dish detergent. Children winning competitions received a deposit into their waste-bank accounts. Many of the children in the village are using their waste bank accounts to save money. The group has expanded their waste bank to 98 people with

accounts and provided bank books to more members in the village.

The recycling group is also using household food waste to make liquid compost. Through the process of Effective Micro-Organism (EM), organic waste is fermented to produce liquid fertilizers and household cleaner. The group is currently testing the liquid by growing vegetables and herbs in planter boxes for household use.



Members of Village Waste Management Program

Women's Head Scarves Group

A group of 14 women from village 2 and 3 have begun producing embroidered Muslim women's headscarves. The group received a small grant for the project to purchase two embroidery machines and used funds from their group to purchase a third. The group received further support for this small-business enterprise thru a month-long training program designed to develop technical and business management skills.

The group plans to sell the headscarves in southern Thailand and hopes that with continued training and product development their headscarves will be able to be sold in international markets such as Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.



Women receive training for head scarf production