

Community Learning Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

“The Kamphuan Community Learning Center embodies your aspirations to secure a better future for you and your children while protecting the environment,” USAID Regional Development Mission Director Timothy T. Beans told the assembled crowd at the Dec. 27 tsunami commemoration and groundbreaking ceremony.

“Most important of all, it will be yours to achieve your vision for a sustainable community,” said Beans. “Your plans and decisions will impact the lives of Kamphuan residents for generations to come. And your efforts to rebuild your lives in harmony with the environment will be a model for other communities in Thailand and Asia.”

The Center is being funded by the USAID Post-Tsunami Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Program and Coca-Cola (Thailand) Limited.

Many Thai and American dignitaries attended the Dec. 27 event. Mr. Mekin Methawikul, Governor of Ranong Province, addressed the crowd and presented certificates of appreciation to the chairmen of the five USAID/AIT revolving fund committees. Mr. Songsak Manchit, Islam Chairman of Ranong Province, and Suk Samran District Head Banjong Chanychoo also joined in the ceremony, along with Kamphuan TAO Chairman Dhari Manoch and several other senior Kamphuan (continued on Page 2)



Ground is broken for the new Kamphuan Community Learning Center by Kamphuan TAO Chairman Dhari Manoch, special envoy Esther Coopersmith, USAID Mission Director Timothy T. Beans, Ranong Governor Mekin Methawikul, Coca-Cola (Thailand) Limited Public Affairs & Communications Manager Jeremy E. Plotnick and Suk Samran District Head Banjong Chanychoo.

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Mr. Songsak Manchit, Islam Chairman of Ranong Province (7th from the left), leads the religious ceremony for the groundbreaking.

TAO Kamphuan has announced the due dates for the 2006 tax statements:

- Business Sign Tax Jan 4 – Mar 31, 2006
- Community Improvement Tax Jan 4 – Apr 30, 2006
- Real Estate Tax Jan 4 – Feb 8, 2006

The tax statements can be filled out, and payment can be made, at the Collection Office of the TAO Khampuan. Interest will be charged if payment of the total amount due is not received by the due date.

In December 2005, rubber boats and equipment, donated by the Seatboat Co. Ltd., were given to Ranong Province in conjunction with TAO Kamphuan. These items will be used by the “Beach Guard” project for the purposes of tourist safety and rescuing people from flooding and other disasters. This project comes as special support from the Administrative Organization for Regional Development for Sustainable Tourism.

Saturday January 14, 2006 will be Children’s Day, with activities for kids, and TAO Kamphuan will host a luncheon for 500 people at the Kamphuan School.

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 Dec. 2004 tsunami in several coastal villages along the coast of the Andaman Sea.

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ADPC Presents Disaster Preparedness Training

From December 19 to 22, the Project joined forces with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation to train 16 villagers. This program was the first of three, four-day training sessions designed to create an understanding of Community-based Disaster Risk Management for Resilient Communities. The project also plans to bring awareness of the Indian Ocean Early Warning System. During the next two months, trainees will develop risk management maps in each of the villages.

Groundbreaking Ceremony (Continued)

community members.

The American delegation was led by Esther Coopersmith, special envoy of the US tsunami recovery mission led by former US presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton. In addition to Mr. Beans, USAID was represented by Regional Environmental Director Winston H. Bowman and Regional Program Development Specialist Saengroj Srisawaskraisorn. Jeremy E. Plotnick, Region Public Affairs & Communications Manager for Coca-Cola (Thailand) Limited, represented his company. The US Peace Corps was represented by Crisis Corps Coordinator William Knowlton.

Village 2 TAO Representative Abdulah Sale and Program Field Site Manager Chris Dunbar served as masters of ceremony.

Ms Coopersmith said she was extremely impressed by the way the people of Suk Samran are working together to improve their communities after the tsunami. "I was amazed at how much reconstruction has been done in Thailand," said Ms Coopersmith, who had also attended the tsunami one-year commemorations on Dec. 26 in Phuket and Khao Lak. "The Thai people's effort to get back on their feet after the disaster is so impressive and must be a model for the rest of the world."

In the afternoon, Ms Coopersmith and others visited several USAID/AIT projects that are underway in Village 2, Hat Praphat, and Village 7, Hat Sai Khaw.

Photo right: Following the groundbreaking ceremony, the ladies of Kamphuan served a delicious meal to all those in attendance.



Above: Special Envoy Esther Coopersmith (photo center) with ladies of Village 7 in front of a new herb drying machine that is being funded by a US Peace Corps Partnership grant in conjunction with the Project.. Also pictured are Crisis Corps Coordinator William Knowlton and USAID Mission Director Timothy T. Beans.

