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# 10 Stories

## of Community Resilience for Equitable Food Accessibility





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# Introduction

The southern border area of Thailand, covering the provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala, is a vulnerable region where the population has been living with hardships from over a decade of political unrest. And since the COVID-19 pandemic started in late 2019 and has been spread to all parts of the world with the recurrence of surge in cases, the local population is now facing greater adversity than ever.

The communities are directly affected by the crisis. Family members who were once able to travel to work outside their neighborhoods and send money back to support the family have lost their jobs. More people are unemployed and have to move back to their hometown. Some districts and villages are forced to enter a lockdown, and inter-provincial travel is restricted to contain the spread of COVID-19. Agricultural households cannot sell their produce to earn money, and the import of food and raw materials is difficult, leading to food shortages which exacerbates the economy, livelihood, and survival at the household and the community levels, especially of children, women, people with disabilities, and the elderly, most of whom have already been living with poverty and malnutrition.

Acute and chronic childhood malnutrition is a long-standing problem in the southern border areas. A survey on the health situation of Thai children between 2015 and 2016 by the UNICEF and the National Statistical Office of Thailand found that 13% and 11% of children under five in Pattani and Narathiwat suffered from acute malnutrition, which exceeded the national average of 5%. In addition, malnutrition, underweight, and short stature among the local children under five existed in a higher percentage than in other regions. 29% of children in Narathiwat, 21% in Yala, and 19% in Pattani had short stature, which was higher than the national average. The problem of short stature reflects a prolonged problem of insufficient nutrition in children, which affects physical growth and brain development. This is consistent with the result of the 2016 Intelligence Quotient (IQ) Survey of the Department of Mental Health, which found that primary school students in Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala had an average IQ of 88.32, 92.46, and 93.51 points, respectively, while the national average IQ stood at 98.23 points (100-point benchmark).

A key solution to food and nutrition problems in vulnerable and poor communities and in the context of COVID-19 is to bridge the inequality gap by ensuring social inclusion, equal rights, and freedom. It is important that the local population have access to justice, and meaningful and non-discriminatory participation in social, economic and political issues, decision-making and local development.

The Public Policy Institute, Prince of Songkla University, in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Thailand and with funding from the Government of Japan and the Swiss Confederation, implemented a program to develop local post-crisis prevention and recovery plans and conducted pilot projects of such plans to assist communities in areas with high inequality in enhancing food security and food safety. We worked with ten target local government organizations, including four in Pattani (subdistrict administrative offices of Pujud, Pulohpuyo, Ban Nam Bo, and Yarang), three in Yala (subdistrict municipality office of Lam Mai, and subdistrict administrative offices of Ban Rae and Bannang Sata), and three in Narathiwat (subdistrict administrative offices of Waeng and Palukasamo, and subdistrict municipality office Rue So).

The program focused on building sustainability in the area through 1) a formulation of strategic plans to strengthen local food and nutrition systems in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to foster participation and cooperation from all sectors and the government 2) building capacity for local networks in formulating strategic food and nutrition plans, and 3) financial support for local government organizations in implementing projects to distribute safe food to communities and vulnerable groups, including women, young children, school-age children, and households affected by COVID-19.

“10 Stories of Community Resilience for Equitable Food Accessibility” is a book that gathers work experience of the 10 local governments in establishing food security, food safety, and age-appropriate nutrition. We hope that this book will be an inspiration for social equality through strategic planning, projects and activities that contribute to people’s well-being in the long run.

**Project’s working group**

August 2021

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# Community-level post-crisis prevention and recovery plans and community pilot projects

to enhance food security, food safety and age-appropriate nutrition among vulnerable groups in Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala

## Working agencies

The Public Policy Institute, Prince of Songkla University, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program in Thailand and with funding from the Government of Japan and the Swiss Confederation, developed community-level post-crisis prevention and recovery plans and piloted community projects to improve food security, food safety, and age-appropriate nutrition among the vulnerable groups in Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala.

## Situations, problems, and challenges

- The southern border region has the highest poverty level. In 2016, the proportion of the poor reached 32.8%, higher than the national average at 8.6%.
- In terms of income inequality, people in the southern border provinces have the lowest median income of only 5,725 THB per month (the national average is 9,409 THB). Low income means less access to food.
- In the COVID-19 situation, most families see a lower quantity and quality of food. Some children have to skip meals during the day.
- Safe and organic farming is rarely practiced.
- A food sampling result found chemical and microbial contamination. Heavy metals and lead were found in seafood, and the amount of synthetic dyes in processed foods, such as dried Shrimp and iced tea exceeded the standard.
- Children in the southern border provinces suffer from malnutrition, underweight, and short stature in a higher percentage than other regions. 29%, 21% and 19% of children under five in Narathiwat, Yala, and Pattani have short stature, exceeding the national average figure.
- Acute malnutrition is reported in 13% and 11% of children between 0–5 years in Pattani and Narathiwat, which is twice the national average. This data reflected a chronic inadequate intake of nutritious food in children, leading to malnutrition affecting their physical growth and brain development. The result is in line with the 2016 IQ Survey conducted by the Department of Mental Health which found that primary school students in Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala had the average IQs of 88.32, 92.46, and 93.51, respectively, while the national average stood at 98.23 points (the benchmark being 100 points).

## Target

The working group aims to strengthen the capacity of local communities as key agencies in the management of food system, including food security, food safety, and age-appropriate nutrition for vulnerable groups in times of crisis, and support them to work with network partners through the local health security fund mechanisms, planning, and project implementation on food system for sustainability.

## Implementation

To implement the program, the working group conducted food system surveys, pilot projects for food and nutrition system management at the community level, and capacity building activities for local administrative organizations,

formulated strategic plans for food security, food safety and age-appropriate nutrition, and developed a community-level handbook about food and nutrition system.

## Performance of the initial phase

- Capacities of local government officials, hospital staff, schoolteachers, local communities, youth and women groups, and farmers are strengthened to employ the participatory, evidence-based project development and integrated strategic planning to mobilize funds from the annual ‘Subdistrict Health Security Fund’ which is a localized mechanism channeled and oversighted by National Health Security Office. This Fund is available to support local governments, local communities, civil society organizations, schools, and hospitals in improving the well-being of people which includes an agenda of food security, food safety, and age-appropriate nutrition. Work plans and projects were submitted to apply for budgets from the subdistrict fund, and the seven targeted local government organizations were able to develop their own plans and thirteen projects under those plans, and secured the total funding of 533,245 THB from the subdistrict fund including
  - Nine projects to solve nutritional problems for children in childcare centers and schools
  - One farming project for lunch
  - Three food safety projects

The resources mobilized from the local health security fund through strengthened participatory evidence-based projects and plans is to ensure the continuation of community pilot projects supported under this current project and enhance effectiveness of local financing for integrated food systems at subdistrict level.

- Food systems community pilot projects in ten local administrative areas

We conducted activities that promoted food security at the household level, the transition to safe food production through safe food market or green market mechanisms in the areas, and the greater access to quality food for children, students, the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

These activities led to collaborations with various stakeholders, such as

- 300 parents, students, and teachers
- 40 religious teachers at Tadika School
- 55 youth leaders
- 30 members of women and career groups
- 50 farmers
- 30 members of Sufficiency Economy agriculture groups and organic agriculture groups
- 72 elderly members of the communities

These stakeholders will take the lead in expanding and improving the projects in the next phase in order to create green markets, safe food markets, and online markets in many areas, such as Rueso Subdistrict, Nam Bo Subdistrict, Lam Mai Subdistrict, Pujud Subdistrict, and Waeng Subdistrict.

## Beneficiaries from the initial phase

Approximately, 2,672 people, including children in childcare centers, schools, the disadvantaged group, and the general public benefit from the projects.

# Story 1

## Food security, food safety and age-appropriate nutrition system

Pujud Subdistrict Administrative Organization,  
Muang District, Pattani Province

### Community situation

- Of 50 households, 2.0% are living in poverty.
- Children under five years old suffer from malnutrition and short stature due to the lack of knowledge in breastfeeding, children's food preferences and household economic situation.
- Due to COVID-19, 20% of the working-age population is unemployed, affecting the household economy.
- Limited access to nutritious food



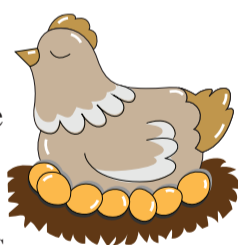
### Community information

- 7 villages / 2,004 households
- Occupation: Agriculture (in-season rice farming)
- Geography: lowlands, semi-urban area



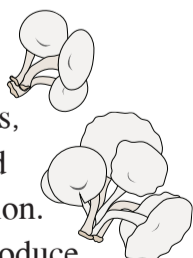
### Activities

- Raising egg-laying chickens and Javanese ducks
- Growing vegetables and oyster mushrooms
- Organizing farmer markets



### Results

- Participating households have organic chicken eggs, duck eggs, vegetables and mushrooms for consumption.
- These safe agricultural produce are sold on the webpage of the Pujud Subdistrict Administrative Organization (SAO) and by village hawkers.
- The private sector donated 200 SQM of land for mushroom cultivation.



### Participants

Asnah Kalupae, 57, has from a family of 3 and sells cooked food (porridge). He grows mushrooms with one of his neighbors. The first mushroom harvest was on July 8, 2021. At present, the average daily yield is 1-2 kilograms. He sells mushrooms at 50 THB per kilogram to restaurants and food tricycles in the community.

“I like farming and I am happy to do this job. Growing oyster mushrooms is a fun and good activity because it is a local food source in the village. Villagers don't have to buy food from outside. We harvest our own produce, sell it in front of our own house. The villagers, when they know, come to buy it themselves. We don't use chemicals. We do bookkeeping and use some of our income to buy mushroom cubes to continue the cultivation. My friend and I work together, watering and harvesting the mushrooms. The SAO is encouraging us to grow salads next to the mushroom farm.”



# Raising egg-laying chickens to strengthen the community's economy through food security networks in Pulohpuyo Subdistrict

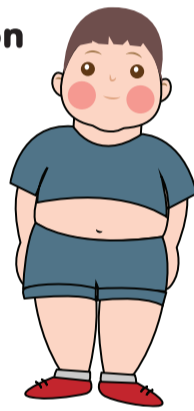
Pulohpuyo Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Nong Chik District, Pattani Province

## Story 2



### Community situation

- In 2020, 923 children aged 0–5 years were malnourished. Eleven children had short stature. Fifty children were underweight, while 83 were obese.
- The COVID-19 situation has affected the household economy, causing health and nutrition problems.
- The Hometown Conservation Club “Kampong Natkudum” and the Ban Klong Khuan Youth Group have 70 members who can produce safe food in the community.



### Activities

- Supporting the Hometown Conservation Club “Kampong Natkudum” and the Ban Klong Khuan Youth Group to raise egg-laying chickens.
- Helping Tadika School and the community to organize a market for chicken eggs.



### Results

- The community agreed to allocate a plot of land to a chicken farm. A written agreement was made.
- The community mobilized resources, labor and food, to help with the construction of the chicken farm.
- A chicken farm learning center was established in the community.

### Participants

Abdul Rohman Dolo has 3 children, aged 5 to 10. He is a member of Kampong Natkudum Club. The Pulohpuyo SAO encouraged the club to raise 100 chickens. Each day, two out of 40 members of the club take turn feeding the chickens and collecting eggs. The eggs are sold to the group members and neighbors who order the eggs online (Line application). A pack of chicken eggs of assorted sizes is sold at 80 THB.

“This activity teaches me how to raise chickens, give them food and water, manage the light system of the farm, and care for sick chickens. Raising chickens brings incomes to the community. Everyone helped build the chicken house. Children cut the grass. Adults made wooden stalls. Villagers brought snacks and water to help out. It united us. I am proud to have built the first community's chicken farm. Now, we have learned that chickens are easy to raise, and chicken droppings don't stink because we use rice husks to absorb the odor. My children and the other members' children can spend their free time productively by feeding chickens and collecting eggs instead of playing games or playing on the phones.”



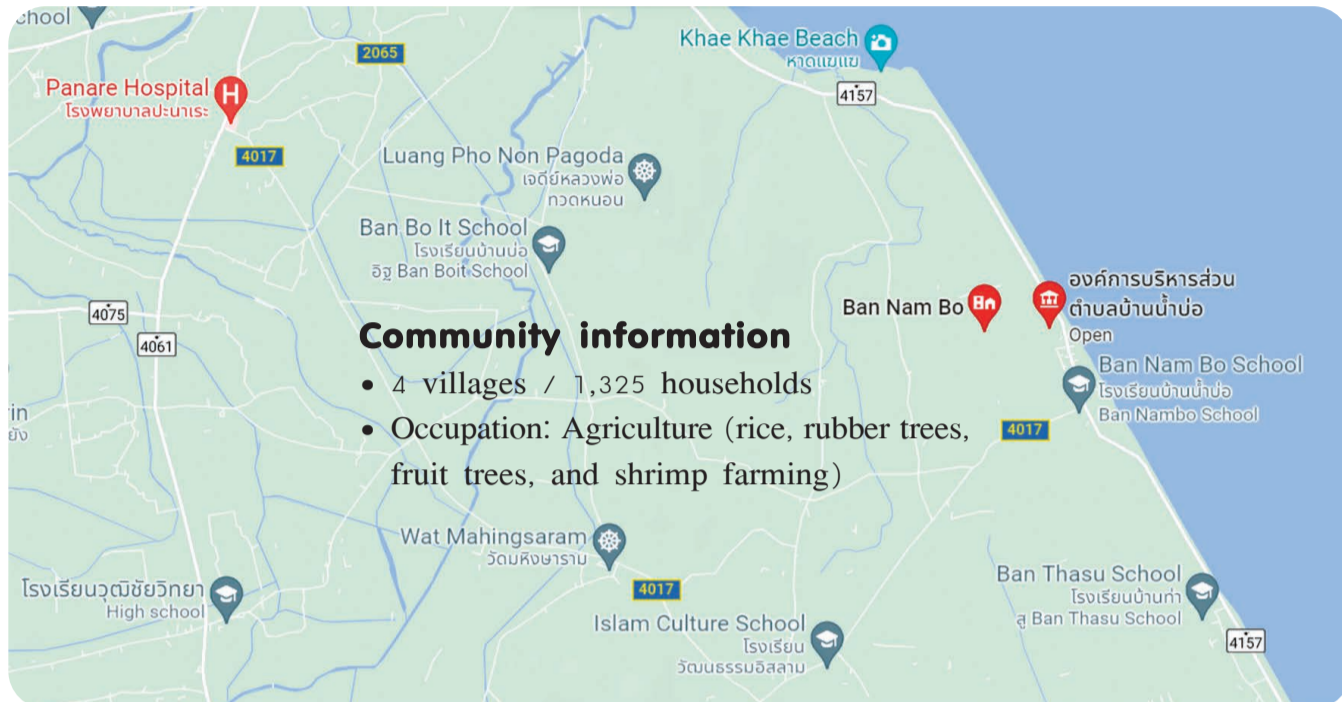
# Story 3

# Alleviating malnutrition problems in students of Ban Nam Bo School following the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy

Ban Nam Bo Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Panare District, Pattani Province

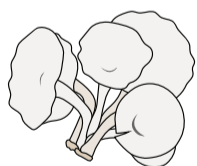
## Community situation

The food production in the community does not attach importance to food safety. The decline in food diversity and nutritional value is primarily attributed to volume-based food production. Food producers heavily use chemicals in fruits, vegetables, and livestock.



## Activities

- Raising happy egg-laying chickens and growing an organic kitchen garden in Ban Thasu School



- Growing organic mushrooms and vegetables in Ban Nam Bo School

## Results

- 97 students in Grades 1–6 of Ban Thasu School learned how to raise egg-laying hens.
- Food (egg-laying chickens) is distributed to children in poor households and orphan students of Ban Thasu School, and is sold in the community.
- 215 families (parents and students) of Ban Nam Bo learned how to do household farming.



## Participants

Malee Toka, 44, has three children, studying in Grade 6, Grade 8, and Grade 11. Malee is a teacher at Ban Thasu School with 154 students. The Ban Nam Bo SAO encourages the local to raise chickens in addition to the Sufficiency Economy project that the school has already been carrying out. Each day, three students from Grade 1 to Grade 6 take turn feeding the chickens and collecting the eggs. During school closures due to the COVID-19 situation, children who come to help at the chick house can take some eggs home. The eggs are sold in the community at 80–90 THB per pack and the villagers like them because they are cheap and fresh.

“Teachers need to do more than teaching. We have to help the community that we are part of. Villagers can’t live on just fish, so we raise chickens for eggs. We have taught our students to raise chickens and do farming. Students who come to help collect the eggs can take some eggs home to eat with their families. When they have some salted fish, they’ll share it with me. The father of one of my students returned from fishing in Malaysia and brought me some large dried squids. Children in the village are proud of and love their teachers. Teachers love them too. The profits from the sale of eggs are used to fund our activities.”



# Building community's capacity in food system management in Yarang

Yarang Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Yarang District, Pattani Province

## Story 4

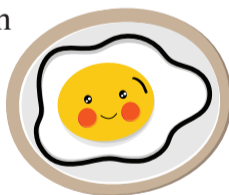


### Community situation

872 children aged 0–12 years (55%) are malnourished. It is necessary to change the food production system to focus on safe vegetables and livestock, and to promote the consumption of nutritious food.

### Activities

- Strengthening the community's ability in food production, developing model households that grow organic vegetables, raise ducks and chickens.
- Training villagers in making compost, another important factor in safe food production.



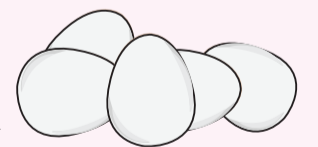
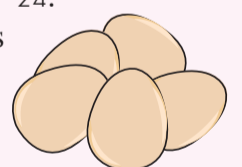
### Results

- One model chicken farming household (egg-laying chickens and ducks) produces 40–50 eggs per day for sale in the community.
- Three model hydroponic gardening households use a recirculating water system, and two model hydroponic gardening households use foam crates as a garden bed. The produce is sold in the community.
- 10% of the sales is donated to the community fund for orphans and underprivileged children while the remaining 90% is distributed to members as dividends and used to purchase agricultural equipment.



### Participants

Hami Hengpiya, a 44-year-old knife maker, has four children, aged 3–24. He is supported by the Yarang SAO in raising 80 egg-laying chickens and 80 egg-laying ducks. Ducks and chickens began to lay eggs in September 2021—50 duck eggs per day and 20 chicken eggs per day. The production is favored by members of the village who buy them for consumption. Chicken eggs are sold at 50 THB per pack and duck eggs at 110 THB per pack. The eggs can be sold at an affordable price thanks to low cost of animal feed. Hami prepares animal feed by growing Napier grass, fermenting it with banana stalks, and mixing it with the dry feed.



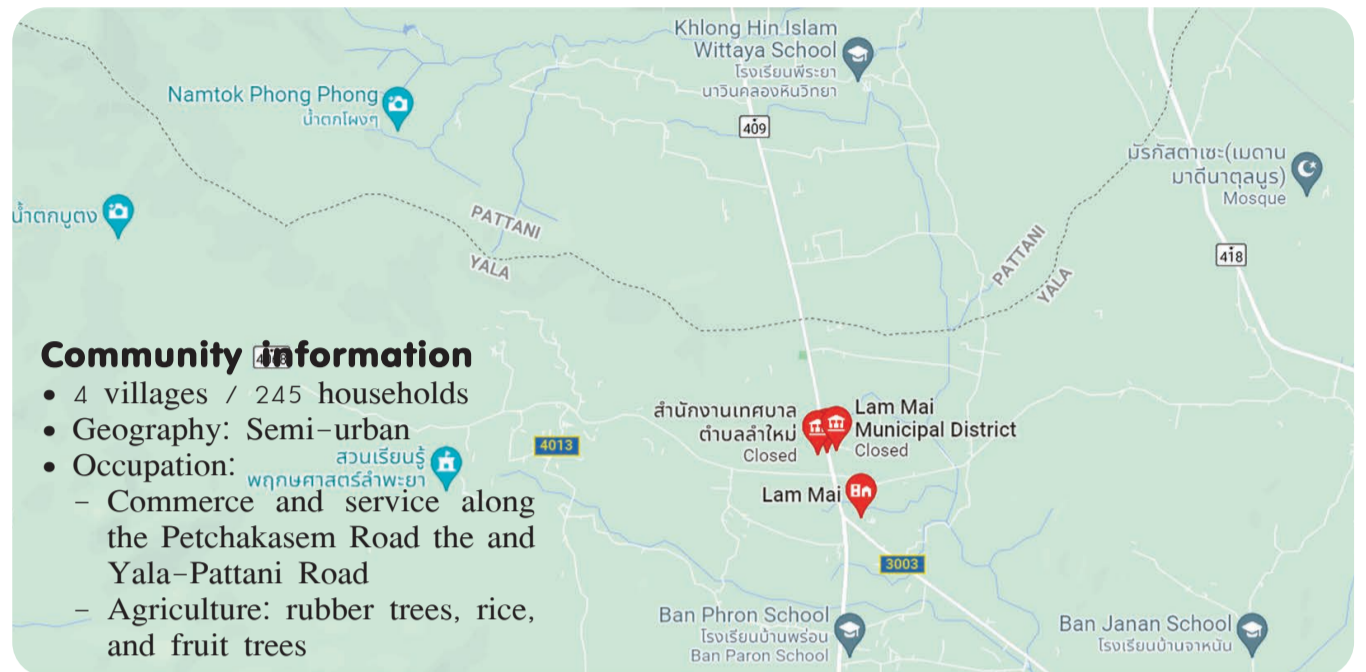
“Raising chickens and ducks gives us incomes and is a way to help our neighbors. We give 1–2 packs of eggs to our community COVID quarantine center at a time, and on each weekend, we donate 1–2 packs of eggs to Tadika School to cook lunches for 100 students. We are now breeding mallard ducks (green-headed duck), which are large ducks and produce large eggs. Now, I have 20 of those ducks at home, and my neighbor is learning to incubate and raise them. The ducks we have are ready to produce eggs. We will continue breeding chickens and ducks so that we don't have to buy from breeders. I'm transforming my house into a community learning center about the hydroponic system and solar cells to make the villagers see that they also can do it. The Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education and the district's agricultural office also visit us to see how we work. I consider this a success after trial and error.”



# Story 5

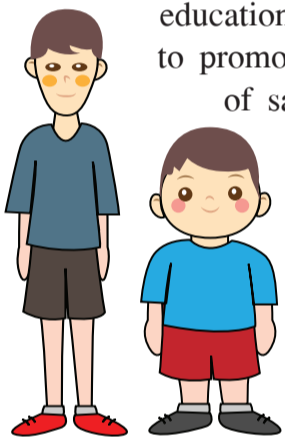
# Promoting a system for food security, food safety and age-appropriate nutrition

Lam Mai Subdistrict Municipality, Lam Mai Subdistrict, Mueang District, Yala Province



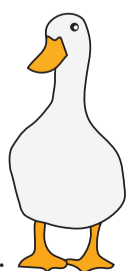
## Community situation

The malnutrition problem is found among children: 31.25% at the Ban Talat Lam Mai Child Development Center and 39.13% at Lam Mai Municipal Kindergarten School. In the Ban Nam Yen Child Development Center, 15.78% of the children are underweight and have short stature. We carried out activities with these three educational establishments to promote the production of safe and nutritious food for children and members of the community.



## Activities

- Growing oyster mushrooms at three educational institutes—Ban Talat Lam Mai Child Development Center, Ban Nam Nam Yen Child Development Center, and Lam Mai Municipal Kindergarten—and preparing mushrooms for students' lunches.
- Encouraging the elderly and members of Ban Talat Lam Mai Women's group to raise chickens as a source of protein for community members.
- Assisting Ban Nam Yen Women's group and the Child and Youth Council in the community to make roasted coconuts for sale in the community markets and nearby areas.
- Encouraging the elderly and the Child and Youth Council to grow vegetables so that people in the community have access to safe vegetables.
- Supporting farmers and youths to raise barbery ducks as a source of protein for the community.



## Results

- Ban Talat Lam Mai Child Development Center, Ban Nam Nam Yen Child Development Center, and Lam Mai Municipal Kindergarten have oyster mushrooms as an ingredient for students' lunch.
- The relationship of the people in the community is improved because they have more opportunities to work together to raise chickens and ducks, grow vegetables, and roast coconuts.
- People in the community have developed vocational skills, such as raising chickens and ducks, growing vegetables, processing coconuts.
- Community members learn from local experts about agricultural techniques and coconut processing.



## Participants

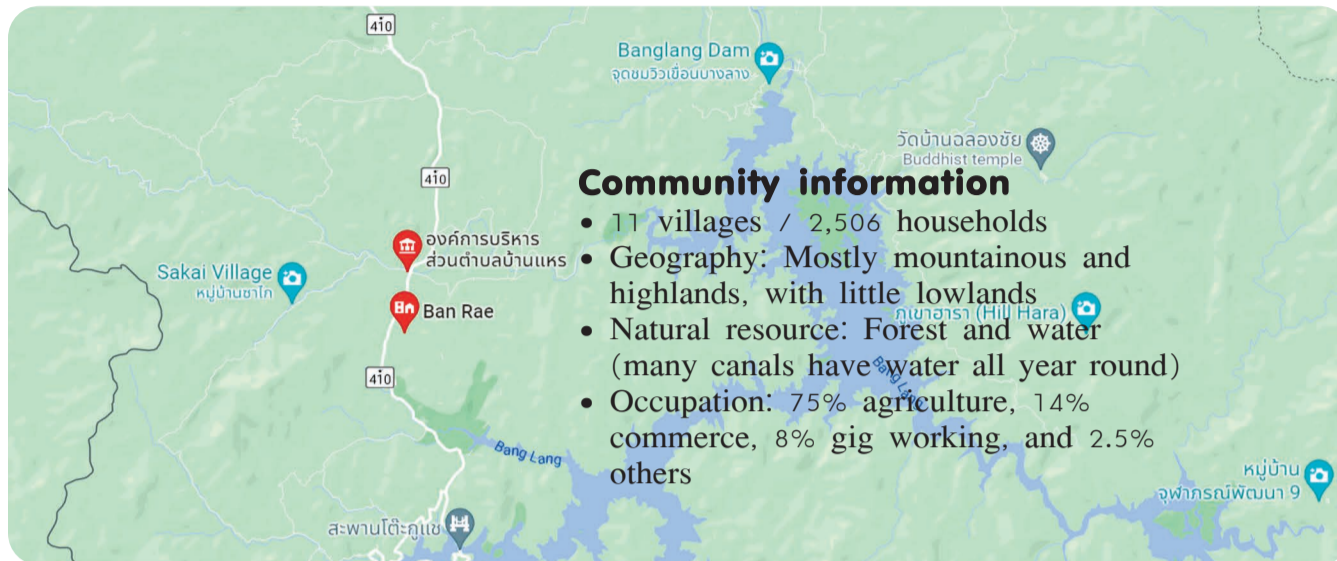
Lam Mai Subdistrict Municipality recruited members from vulnerable groups, such as women, the elderly, or low-income people, who can raise chickens to join the program. The family of Saowakon Boonsricharoen, 65, is one of ten households selected by the municipality to raise egg-laying chickens. Each family received five chickens from the municipality. The Boonsricharoen family has 5 members, including three members aged 39–40, and an 11-year-old child. Currently, four chickens lay 3–4 eggs/day, but the other one has not yet laid eggs. The eggs are consumed in the household. Other families, however, have an average of 4–5 eggs per day because of all the five chickens they received lay eggs.

“When neighbors visit us, they say it’s good that we don’t have to buy eggs. We received financial support from the Prince of Songkla University and the municipality to raise egg-laying chickens. At least, we did not have to spend too much on the starter kit. I have a friend who raises chickens too. He’s 72 years old, has a kidney disease, and needs to eat six eggs a day. When the chickens start laying 3–4 eggs a day, he doesn’t have to buy as many eggs as before. Besides, raising chickens makes me happy. COVID really stresses me out, but I relieve stress by watching and talking to chickens. They make me happy.”

# Promoting food security and quality of life in Ban Rae community

Ban Rae Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Than To District, Yala Province

## Story 6



### Community situation

As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, Yala's governor ordered the closure of four villages, namely Villages 1, 3, 4 and 8, which caused 1,026 households to suffer, unable to work and having to buy food from outside the communities. If the situation continues, unemployment and food shortages will become more serious. The Ban Rae SAO has, therefore, implemented a project to promote food security and improve the quality of life of members of the communities.

### Activities

- Establishing a network of sugarcane and vegetable farmers
- Establishing a young farmers' club to raise catfish



### Results

- The community has successfully established a young farmers' club with 11 members, a Village 4 farmers' network with 13 members, and a fishermen's network with 13 members. All of them participate in building community food sources.
- The communities agree to have the project carried out in their neighborhoods, such as a sugarcane plantation, a fish farm, and vegetable gardens.



### Participants

Firadow Abu, 25, is currently attending a vocational college. The Ban Rae SAO supported six youths and farmers to raise catfish. The youth group renovated an abandoned pond into a 40x20 meters fish pond and released 6,000 catfish into it. The catfish should be available for sale in March 2022.

**"I learned how to raise catfish from friends and senior members of our community. This is the first time that we have received funding from the SAO. We never received funding from anywhere. I am happy to help build a second job for youths and the unemployed, and create a food source for the villagers."**



# Story 7

## Creating food security and food safety with Sufficiency Economy

Bannang Sata Subdistrict Administrative Organization,  
Bannang Sata District, Yala Province

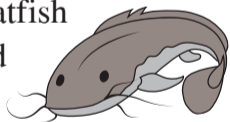


### Community situation

The COVID-19 situation results in the closure of villages and affects the household economy and community members, including children, youth, the elderly, the disabled and the poor. To alleviate the situation, the Bannang Sata SAO is trying to build food security in the community by encouraging children and youths and other career groups to grow vegetables and raise animals to feed the village and build unity.

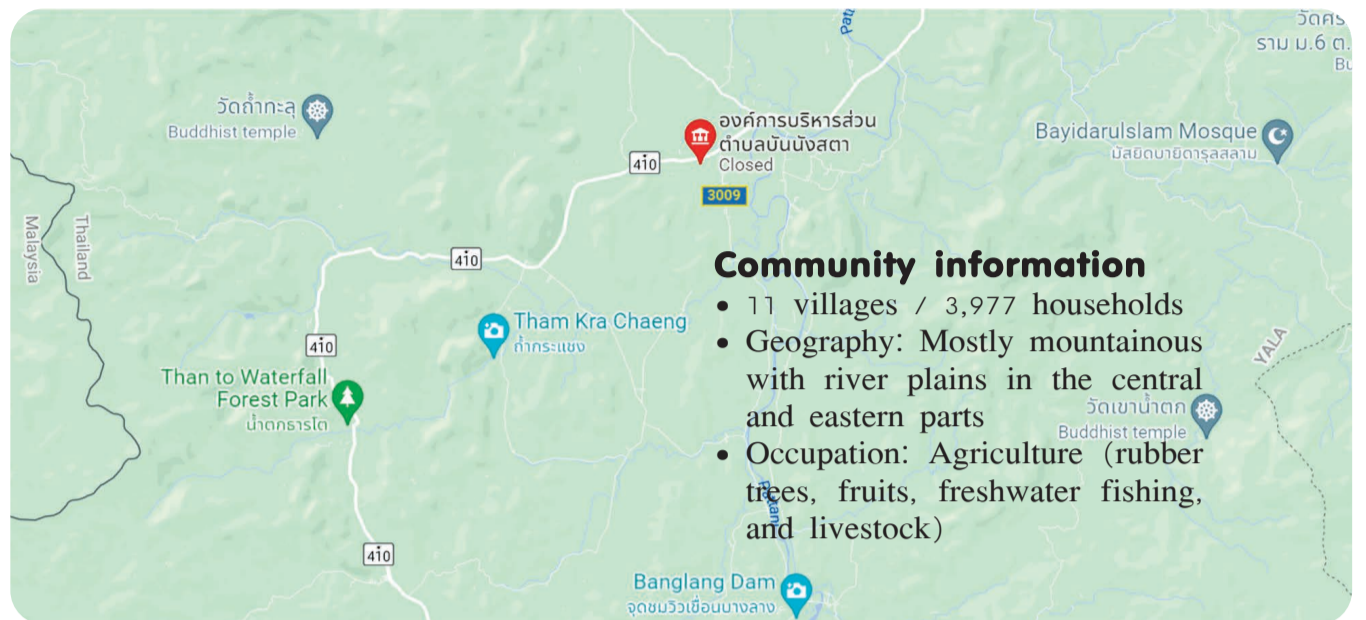
### Activities

- A farming project for students at the Ban Than Thip School
- A kitchen garden project for the Sufficiency Economy Group of the Ban Nang Ku Wae community
- Engaging youths of the Ban Pa Wang Nok Youth Group in growing a kitchen gardening and building check-in booths to keep them away from drugs
- Supporting the Ban Ka Sot Youth Group to raise catfish in a cement pond



### Results

- 30 household members of the Sufficiency Economy Group, Village 4, Ban Nang Ku Wae, grow oyster mushrooms and sell



them at 50 THB per kilogram or 10 THB per bag. The proceeds are used to purchase vegetable seeds to distribute to members of 10 households who are ready and have some free space to grow vegetables.

- 20 members of the Ban Pa Wang Nok Youth Group, Village 11, who are unemployed, built check-in booths at community tourist attractions and grow vegetables at those check-in booths. This activity created jobs for them and helped them stay away from drugs.
- 5 members of the Ban Ka Sot Youth Group, Village 5, dropped out of compulsory schooling. These youths are now raising catfish in a cement pond and sell the fish to schools, child development centers, and the Tadika School which cook the fish as students' lunches. During the outbreak of COVID-19, fish are given to villagers in the quarantine.

### Participants

The family of Kamila Hengdada, 36, consists of 10 members, aged 5-35. Kamila is the chairwoman of the Ban Nang Ku Wae Group, which has 40 members. The group's activities include making compost, insect repellents, EM liquid fertilizer, fruit hormones, growing vegetables, and raising chickens and mushrooms at the community learning center. The group received support from the SAO. Activities at the learning center are divided into 2 parts. The first part is a collective agricultural plot at the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center for members who have time but do not have land to grow vegetables on the common plot. The members share responsibilities in growing vegetables, raising egg-laying chickens, and fish. The second part is to give vegetable seeds to members who have farming area at home.

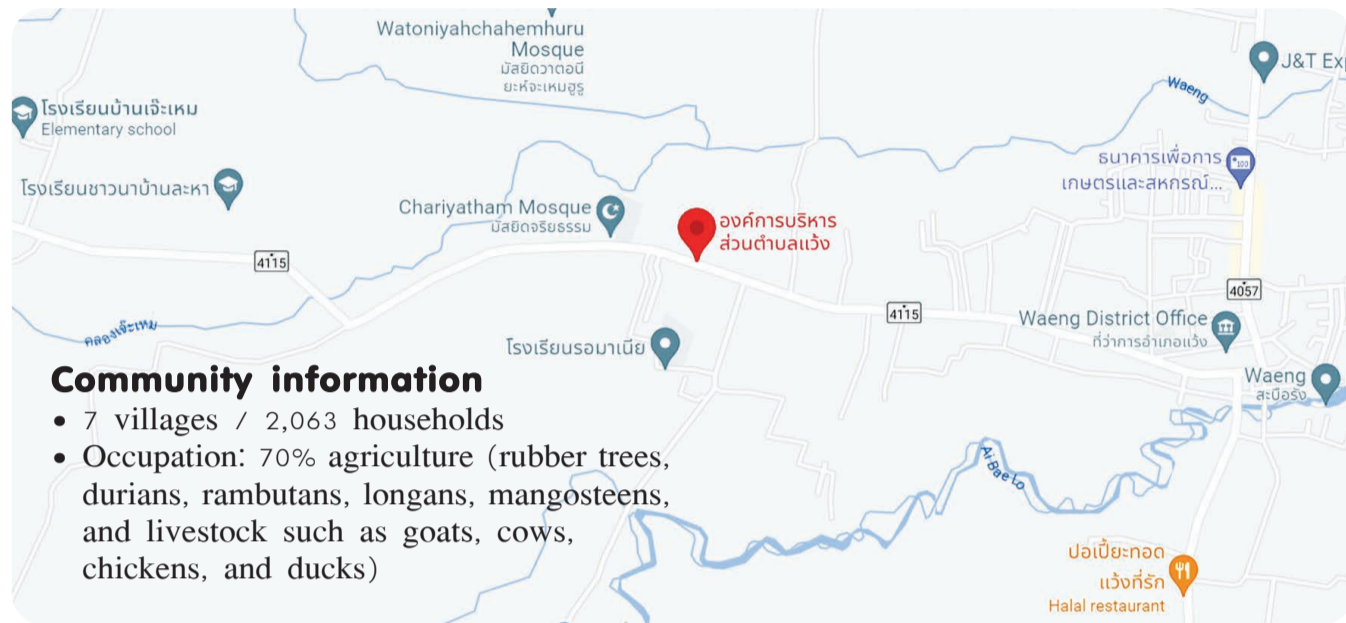
**“This is the first time the Sufficiency Economy Learning Center received support from the SAO. It helps us work more easily with the SAO and accelerates the construction of the learning center. We are able to produce high quality food. Our produce, such as vegetables, is bought by three community restaurants every three days. Our group has a stall at the city's flea market that runs every Monday. We sell the produce from our collective plot, such as mushrooms and eggs, and the produce from the members' plots, such as eggplants, peppers, and cucumbers. The villagers and middlemen in the community buy our produce because it's affordable. We make compost ourselves, and do not use chemicals. We also share the produce with families in the COVID quarantine center—five eggs and one bag of mushrooms per family once a week. If our members are sick, we give them the produce too.”**



# Build food security from safe food production to eradicate hunger

Waeng Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Waeng District, Narathiwat Province

## Story 8



### Community situation

The data from Waeng Subdistrict Hospital indicates that in 2021, 22.95% of pregnant women have anemia, 6.28% of children between 0–5 years old are underweight, 6.90% of children between 0–5 years old are short, and 3.67% of children between 6–14 years old are overweight. Students attending religious classes on the weekends do not have lunch because the school does not have enough budget. To solve the problem, the community applies the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in community farming to produce safe food for lunch in the Tadika School and child development centers. The community also encourages children to grow their own vegetables to create a safe food source for people in the community.



### Activities

- Raising catfish and growing oyster mushrooms at the Islamic Education Center, Ban Krue So Mosque
- Raising egg-laying ducks and growing vegetables at the Islamic Education Center, Ban Kuwa Mosque
- Raising chickens at the Islamic Education Center, Ban Kholo Tuwo Mosque
- Raising egg-laying chickens and ducks and growing vegetables at a farmer school
- Growing vegetables at two child development centers



### Results

- Parents invested money and labor in creating a safe food source, such as bamboo troughs for growing vegetables at the child development center.
- The community donated animal feed.
- People in the community and members of the six groups worked together to raise catfish, chickens and ducks, and grow mushrooms and vegetables.
- Members who helped in the agricultural activities were encouraged and rewarded with the safe food they produced.

### Participants

Baharuding Lomae, 43, has 6 children aged 2–14. He works on a rubber plantation and is a member of the Ban Krue So Volunteer Group consisting of 15 members. The activities of the group are growing vegetable gardens, fish farming, and making fermented fish. Baharuding has been raising catfish and carp for more than 2 years. The produce is sold to the Tadika School and child development centers at 50 THB per kilogram and 60 THB per kilogram to neighbors.

“I’m happy to be able to do these activities with friends, to share my knowledge of fish farming, which is easy to do. It is a source of income and food for my children and for the students.”



# Story 9

## Organic agriculture in schools following the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy

Palukasamo Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Ba Cho District, Narathiwat Province

### Community situation

The Palukasamo SAO initiated organic agricultural projects at child development centers, schools, and the Tadika School. The students can have lunch from locally grown and safe produce. In addition to having good food, the students can also learn about farming from activities outside the class, and other values, such as self-reliance and independence according to Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.

### Activities

- Organic agricultural plots at child development centers
- Organic agricultural plots at the Tadika School



### Results

- The produce from the agricultural plots of the Baan Cherng Khao Child Development Center is cooked as lunch for the students. The produce is distributed to three other child development centers, as well as to students' parents so that they can have safe and affordable food.
- Parents, students, and monks cooperate in farming activities at schools.



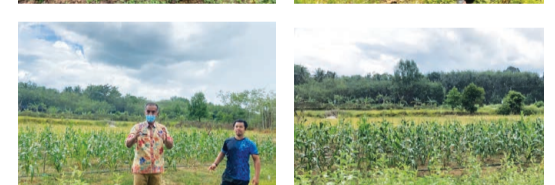
### Community information

- 10 villages / 2,174 households
- Occupation: Agriculture (rubber trees, fruits, rice, livestock such as pigs, buffaloes, cows, chickens, and ducks), fish farming (and also from natural sources), and commerce, and gig working

### Participants

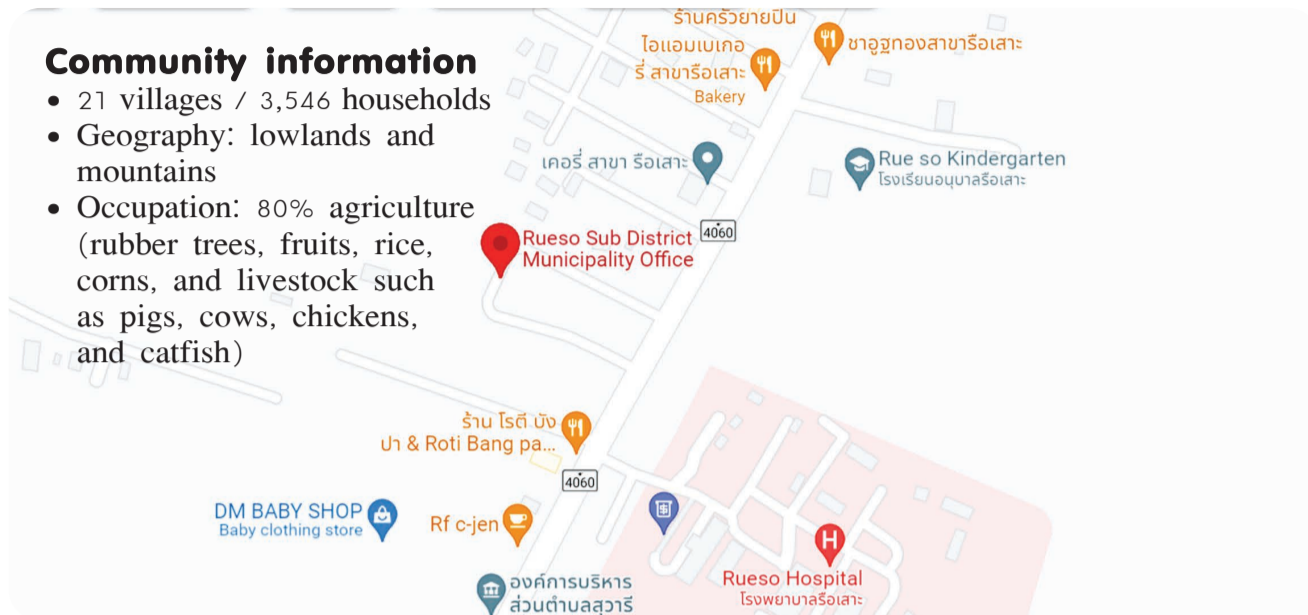
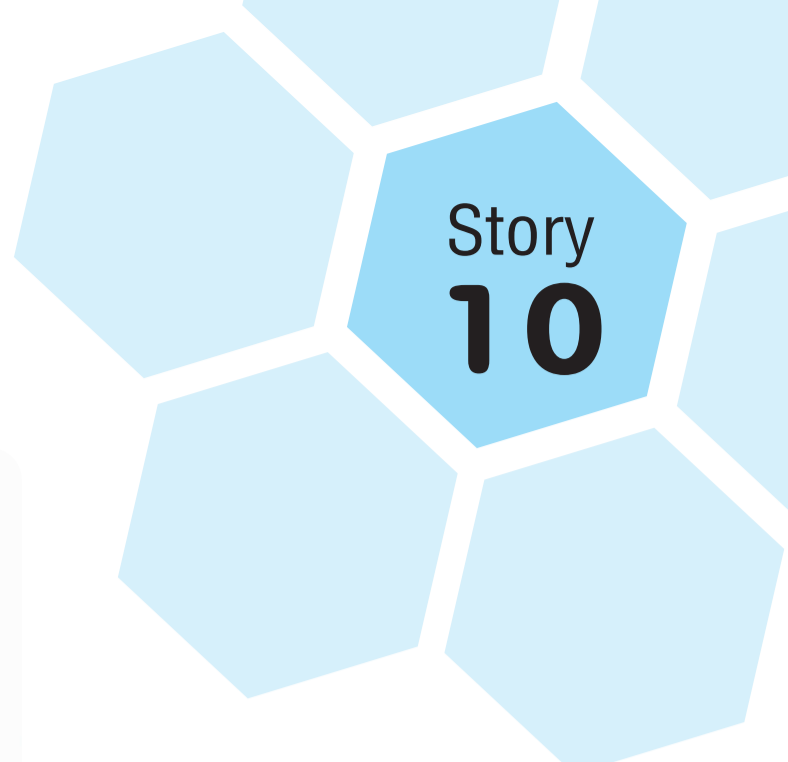
Saipim Thongdaeng, 53, is a teacher at the Baan Cherng Khao Child Development Center with 33 students. The Palukasamo SAO supports the continuation of the center's agricultural activities and helps expand vegetable growing plots at the Cherng Khao Temple. Parents and students helped grow vegetables and water them. The produce is used to cook lunches for the students at the center and distributed to three other centers. The rest of the produce is sold to parents and students at a low price. When the rainy season ends, more vegetable plots will be built with bricks and topsoil.

**"I am happy to be able to build on the existing activities and make them more concrete. There are many groups in the community who come to help. I think in the future, we will be able to share the profits from vegetable sales with the community and sell our produce at the Tonsai flea market."**



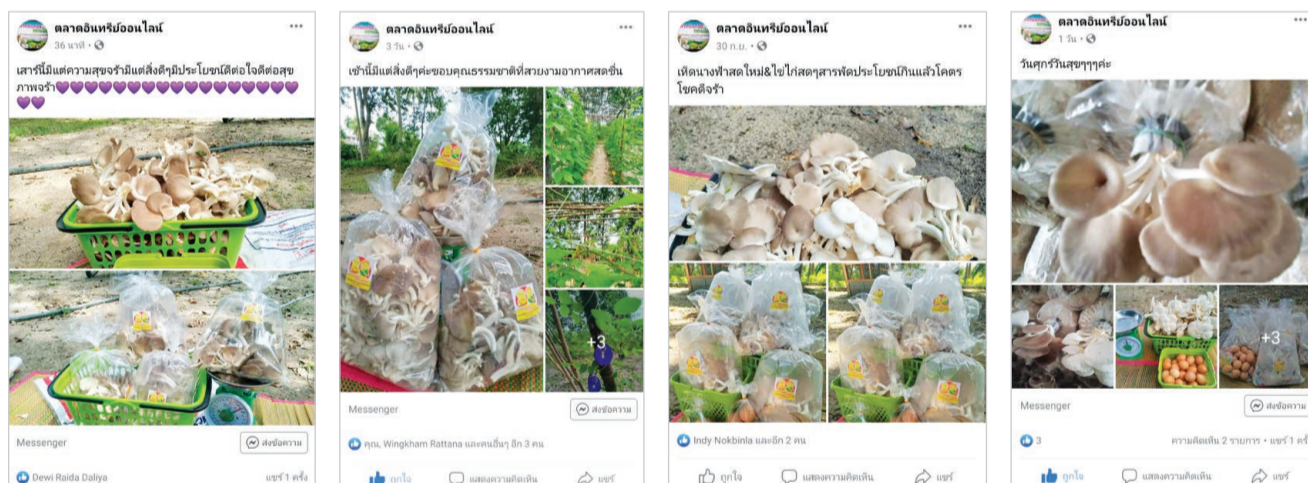
# Grandparents grow vegetables for grandchildren.

Rueso Subdistrict Municipality, Rueso District, Narathiwat Province



## Community information

- 21 villages / 3,546 households
- Geography: lowlands and mountains
- Occupation: 80% agriculture (rubber trees, fruits, rice, corns, and livestock such as pigs, cows, chickens, and catfish)



## Participants

The Community Learning Center of the Rueso Subdistrict Municipality arranges an area in the center for agricultural activities, including fish and chicken farming and a medicinal plant garden, and invites interested people to join in the agricultural activities. Chutima Rattanakitsoomboon, 42, has a 10-year-old child. Chutima is in charge of raising catfish and has released about 1,000 fish, which are bought from markets or donated by neighbors, in the pond. When the fish are large enough for sale, she contacts sellers in fresh markets who come to buy them, but during the COVID-19, markets are close and she cannot find fish buyers.

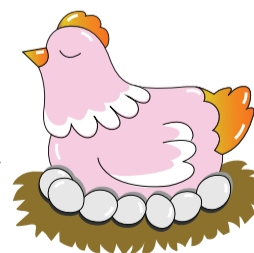
“When I do the farming, I bring my child along. During activities at the center, I get to exchange ideas with friends. Our group has saved up some money. When the government or private agencies see our activities, they will give us funding. So, we have to work to make them recognize us. At the center, there is a zone for the elderly to do activities to keep them busy, to spend their time usefully, and to exercise.”

## Community situation

The Rueso Subdistrict Municipality oversees one child development center which cares for 48 children. At this center, most of the lunch ingredients come from local markets and are not free from chemicals. It is also found that the cost of food ingredients is higher, from 2,000–3,000 THB per week to 4,000–5,000 THB per week. The municipally-run “Happy Elderly School” with 72 senior citizens has also been hit by the coronavirus outbreak and forced to close. The Rue So Subdistrict Municipality has, thus, implemented the project “Grandparents grow vegetables for grandchildren” for the elderly during the school closure in order for them to use their free time creatively, to earn incomes from farming and livestock keeping, and to produce food for child development centers.

## Activities

- Encouraging farmers, villagers and the elderly in the “Happy Elderly School” to grow organic vegetables, raise chickens, and catfish based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy at the elderly learning center
- Organizing an online market for the locally grown organic produce based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy



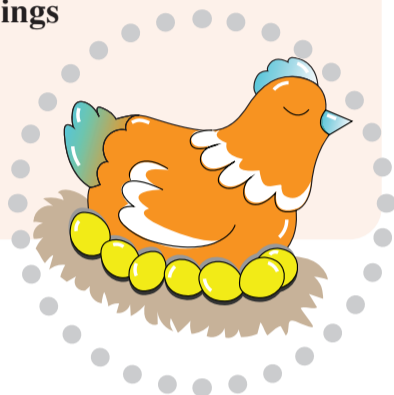
## Results

- Agricultural produce from the elderly learning center under the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy has become another source of safe, organic and affordable food for villagers.
- The online market for local produce is established and popular among municipal officers and the general public.

## More stories from the communities

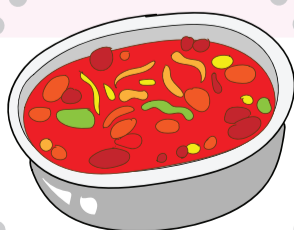
**Gosem Si-de**, 48, lives with his 17-year-old daughter in Pujud Subdistrict and works as a gig worker. As a low-income household, he is supported by the Pujud SAO to raise 10 egg-laying chickens.

**“It is a good activity and this is the first support I received from the SAO. I can produce my own food. When the chickens lay eggs, I can sell and eat them. I’m glad that the SAO cares about this and I want this initiative, or other skill trainings, to be continued. My daughter is studying, but she also helps with the chickens. She brings food waste from the restaurant where she works to feed the chickens.”**



**Usman Wama** is a teacher at the Ban Nam Bo School, which has 215 students ranging from kindergarten, primary, and secondary levels. The school is funded by the SAO to do mushroom farming and other agricultural activities. Mushroom farming is carried out at the school ground while other agricultural activities are for students to do at home, which are counted as schoolwork as well. Parents and students are involved in growing vegetables. Schools follow up by having students take and submit pictures. So far, the activity has worked well. Students grow a lot of vegetables and can cook them at home.

**“By doing agricultural activities at home, students can acquire skills and experiences and learn from their parents, leading to better family relationship. Parents can cook agricultural produce for breakfast, lunch and dinner. During school days, many students rarely have breakfast at home, but will buy food from hawkers or the school canteen. Most of the students here are poor. Their parents have low income, on average 70 THB per day, from fish cutting. Some families have five children, and their incomes are barely enough for their children’s pocket money. The agricultural initiative of the school will increase food supply for families, and the community also benefits from increased food sources and green spaces.”**



**Usuman Yuso** is the chair of the Ban Klong Khuan Youth Group, which plays a role in the management of the village fund. The Pulohpuyo SAO supports the group, which has 40 members, to raise 40 hens. Currently, the group can harvest 40 eggs per day and sell them in the village at 100 THB per pack.

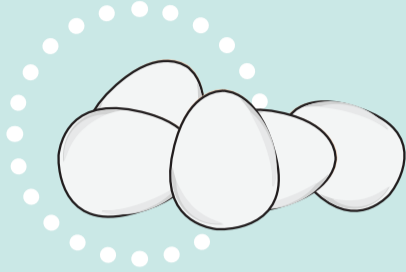
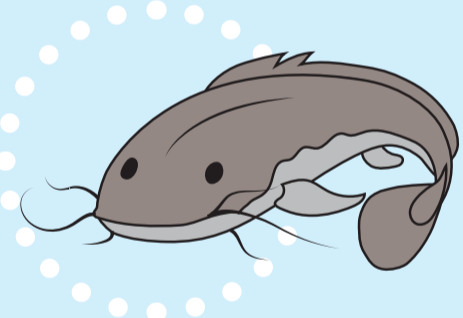
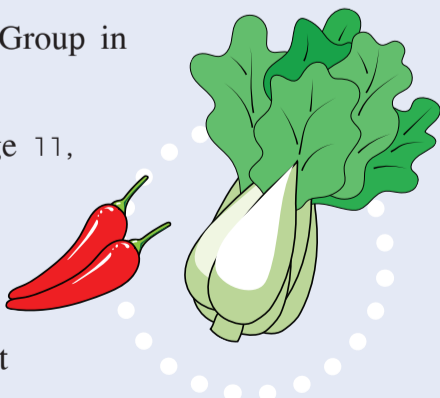
**“We receive support from the SAO to raise chickens so that our community has fresh eggs for consumption. We have also added iodine to the chicken feed because according to a study it helps increase the nutrition in the eggs. At first, we sold the eggs among the members. Our eggs are delicious and fresh. Kids love them because the yolk has a pretty color. We learn from this activity how to manage and add value to community products. Once we have saved up more money, we would like to give back to the community. Once, we organized the Mawlid Day (Prophet’s Birthday) and collected 15,000 THB from the community. We used that money to buy shirts and dresses for orphans to wear on Eid al-Fitr.”**



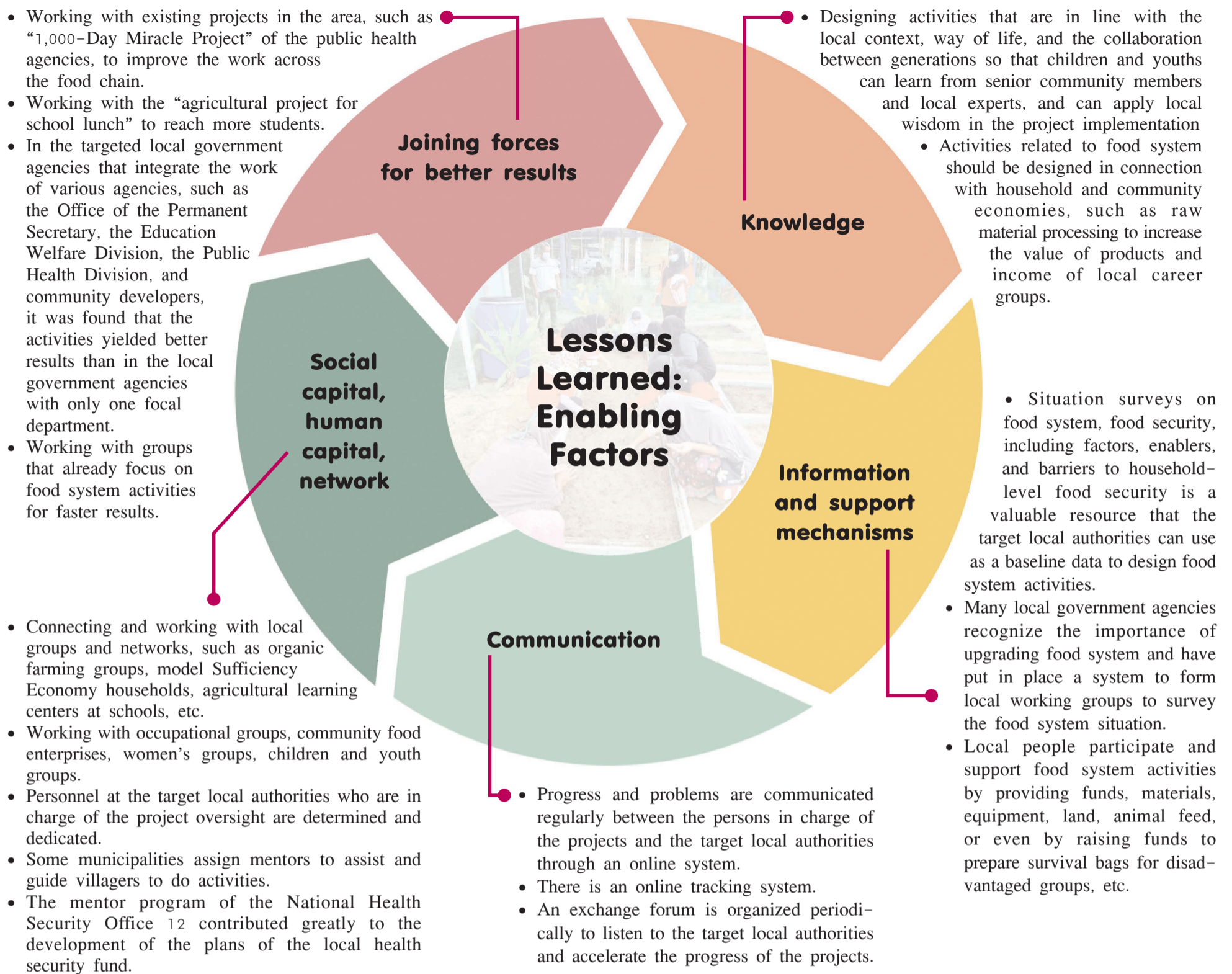
**Su-aine Waeming**, an 18-year-old student who dreams of pursuing a university degree in nursing, lives in Lam Mai Municipality and joins the coconut roasting group to make a side dish for Khao Yam, a local delicacy. The coconut roasting group was formed in September 2021 by 11 members – 3 men, 8 women and 5 youths (high school and university levels). Men are responsible for peeling coconuts, and women for roasting and selling them. The group buy coconuts from neighbors to roast 3-4 times a week, and obtain 9-10 kilograms of roasted coconuts each time. The product is sold at 65 THB per kilogram to grocery stores and Khao Yam restaurants which usually use 10 kilograms of roasted coconut per week. Members will receive 3 THB for each peeled coconut and 30 THB per day for roasting and selling coconuts.

**“We can make money and create jobs from coconuts in our community. People who buy roasted coconuts are supporting the community, and when they see that we really do everything by ourselves, they support us.”**

# Project development framework based on the community project funding

Topics	Details
<p><b>Building capacity for individuals, groups, and networks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a model food security network</li> <li>• Training target populations on food safety</li> <li>• Organizing workshops on making compost and salted eggs</li> <li>• Creating model households and strengthening community's capacity in managing the food system, food security, food safety and age-appropriate nutrition</li> <li>• Teaching target populations to make water fertilizer and to conduct sustainable organic farming</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Creating an environment that contributes to the accessibility of healthy food</b></p>	<p><b>Upstream: Creating community food sources through the following activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture: Encouraging target populations to grow organic kitchen gardens, elevated vegetable gardens, mushrooms and sugarcanes, or growing organic vegetable gardens in schools, child development centers, and public places in the community, or growing food for students' lunch at schools, houses, child development centers, the Tadika School, and Islamic studies centers</li> <li>• Livestock: Promoting poultry farming, such as egg-laying chickens, Javanese ducks, and barbary ducks</li> <li>• Fisheries: Promoting freshwater fisheries, such as catfish farming</li> </ul> <p><b>Midstream</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a product distribution system through a variety of markets, such as Line, Facebook, community flea markets, and community radios</li> <li>• Organizing an online organic market, coupled with setting selling points at schools and the Rueso Subdistrict Municipality Office</li> </ul> <p><b>Downstream</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing agricultural produce with schools, child development centers, underprivileged groups, and people in Covid-19 quarantine facilities</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Strengthening/ adjusting the systems, mechanisms</b></p>	<p><b>Leveraging various mechanism and networks in the target communities to improve the food system, such as</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the Ban Nang Ku Wae Sufficiency Economy Group in vegetables farming</li> <li>• Supporting the youth group of Ban Pa Wang Nok, Village 11, in vegetables farming and check-in booths construction</li> <li>• Supporting youth groups, such as the Ban Ka Sot Youth Group, in career building</li> <li>• Supporting the Happy Elderly School in Rueso Subdistrict</li> <li>• Supporting the farmer school in Waeng Subdistrict</li> </ul> 





### Problems and Obstacles

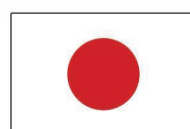
- Activities and project implementations were modified due to the coronavirus outbreak. Originally, each project had to begin with a survey of the situation and problems of each area and then the project and its implementation would be designed around the main problems encountered. However, in the current situation, we are unable to explore the full range of the situation and have to resort to an expedited survey instead. Therefore, the survey results may not give the most detailed picture of the situation and problems of each area in order to draw up the best project plan.
- The project aims to achieve systematic outcomes from the upstream (food production), midstream (distribution) to downstream (consumption) which will ultimately contribute to the food quality of the target households. However, the local governments mainly focus on the food production, particularly on vegetable farming, livestock, ducks, chickens, and fish.
- The duration for project implementation was short, and as a result, it is still difficult to perceive the sustainability of the newly established local food system. Although every project produces concrete results in accordance with its objectives, long-term monitoring and evaluation will require more time.
- The outbreak of COVID-19 in our target areas has been quite severe. COVID control measures prevented the implementation of the activities that the local governments had planned. In the case of some local authorities, the project staff were close contacts and had to self-quarantine, which delayed the implementation of the plan. Despite of the unfortunate events, every project sees concrete results.
- There is little background information of the nature of the problems regarding food security and food safety. For the information on the nutritional situation, it is available at the local government and public health agencies and at the online database, or the HDC, of the Ministry of Public Health. A field survey of the food system situation in the target area is needed to design a local community food system action plan.
- The coronavirus situation means that the meeting between representatives and leaders of local government agencies to discuss the plans and projects for food system is not possible in some areas. Some leaders still do not understand how to make an online plan, or how to follow the model plan.

### Opportunities for Development

- Tracking the progress and outcomes of the early stage of each of the project will ensure the continuity of the project implementation and pave the way for the final outcomes that the projects aim for.
- Leaders and responsible persons in all of the 10 target areas have a better understanding of the food system than before they participated in the project. The Public Policy Institute will improve and build on this understanding and past operation.
- The leaders of the local administration agencies are better at using the online planning system, drafting comprehensive plans, and tracking the progress of plans that are already in the system.



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