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NARONGSAK NOOSORN: PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT OF WASTE DISPOSAL. DISSERTATION ADVISOR: ASSISTANT PROFESSOR NANTAVARN VICHIT-VADAKAN, MS., M.P.H. Dr.P.H., DISSERTATION CO-ADVISOR: ASSISTANT PROFESSOR PIYA SIRIPHANT, DDS., M.P.H., Ph.D. 349 pp. ISBN 974-9599-86-1

The general objective of this study was to develop a sustainable waste disposal management model in the Yom riverside communities. The specific objectives were to create a sense of ownership in the waste disposal management among the villagers and encouraged the community to identify problems based upon their socio-cultural background. A participatory approach was applied in developing a continual learning process between the researcher and stakeholders. The study comprised of three phases starting with an investigation of the riverside people's way of life focusing on waste generation and disposal behaviors. The first phase enabled the villagers to find solution to problems using their own local wisdom, systematic brainstorming process and other acceptable methods. After the solutions were obtained, processes and mechanisms were developed for participatory evaluation with the assistance of the researcher, to assess whether the solutions for the waste material problem met the needs of community. In the last phase, the researcher conducted an assessment of the whole process to check if it served the aim or original goal effectively. Tupperng community of Srisamrong, Sukhothai province was purposely selected as the location to conduct this study. With a population of two hundred and forty households, 40 stakeholders were carefully selected from the community to be member of the research team and to be referred to as the 40 leaders in the text of this report. The selection was based upon their ability to provide information, respectability in the community, leadership qualities and proven dedication to public service. Data were collected through observation, focus group meeting, group discussions, note-taking and tape-recording of interviews and of meeting minutes. The data analysis was done by indexing, typology and taxonomy comparison and interpretation. The result of this study was as follow:

A combination of methods to solve the problem was created to maximize its effectiveness using the participatory research process, by adhering to the concept of a triangle moving a mountain and the principles of the Four Noble Truths. From a participatory process in learning and analyzing problems in the suffering stage, to finding the causes of the problems in the causes stage, which was conducted by studying the lifestyles related to the current ongoing waste generation and disposal behaviors, new knowledge was derived from the exchange of ideas derived from the findings, and by establishing the intended objective in the cessation stage, to finally participatory planning and practice, including evaluation in the path to the cessation of suffering stage. Participation in this problem-solving process initiated the gathering together of the community. The participation of the community in propagating the resolutions of the 40 leaders was regarded as the start of the triangle that could move an increasingly bigger mountain. This gathering of the stakeholders--the villagers, the community organization members, the local politicians, the community leaders, and the local government officials, all led to the effectiveness of the problem-solving.

The way of life of the Tupperng people as related to waste generation and disposal can be viewed from different angles, namely: 1. Occupation. The villagers usually discarded or cleaned insecticide containers into the Yom River. Tobacco and vegetables growing on both sides of the Yom River created waste water from their farms. Toxic wastes such as produced by the use of insecticides were found from the farming activities. 2. Consumption. Reliance on food bought from the market that usually come with a lot of non-destructible packaging materials were improperly discarded. These wastes are such as plastic bags, plastic bottles, leftover vegetables and fruits were thrown into the river where people looked upon as a convenient place to get rid of their wastes as it was close to their houses and they did not have to pay any service charges. 3. Traditional activities. In holding ceremonies and other festivities such as ordination, wedding, community fairs and other merit-making ceremonies, food would be prepared to give to monks and to entertain people who came to join the ceremonies but after the event, garbage that were left around were just summarily dumped into the river. 4. Environmental hygiene: Waste water from dish and clothes washing, bathing, toilet water, cooking and cleaning of farming materials were directly drained into the Yom river without any prior treatment.

The sustainable waste disposal management model in the Yom riverside communities includes: building simple waste water treatment wells; providing buckets for toilets; building earthen dykes to prevent the wasted water into spilling into the river; digging garbage holes; sanctioning and withdrawing privileges of people who got caught throwing garbage into the river, establishing a garbage collection center or a garbage bank. The evaluation team asked the villagers whether they felt satisfied with the final solution model and found that most of them were very satisfied and expected positive changes to take place further and they thought that this kind of solution model was easy for them to put into practice.

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Field of study Health Systems Development Advisor's signature.....

Academic year 2004..... Co-advisor's signature.....