

## **Thailand Community Network Appraisal Program as a Tool for Community Initiated Social Services and Welfare**

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In Thailand, local governments are provided a legal framework to have an autonomous status in managing social services and welfare. To ensure widest participation in the governance and to achieve transparency and social accountability; evidences should be employed to indicate the unmet needs and the social services and welfare. Hence, it is essential for the local government to establish the community-owned database system.

To support decision making of local government and leaders of civil groups, community organizations and public sectors, data should be gathered based upon all aspects of life and human conditions that affect health. Previously, community organizations and public sectors accumulated data for own use. To combine data from all aspects of health and human conditions as evidences for community actions, the Thailand Community Network Appraisal Program (TCNAP) has been developed and modified to be a unified database system. To encourage participation of community leaders and members including those of the civil society groups, TCNAP was intended to also include the learning process along with the database system management. The learning process is well designed to encourage self-initiated learning in community problems, community social capital, and assets, via activities in data collection, data analysis, and data utilization in undertaking community actions. TCNAP, an online program, comprises of 7 parts of community-wide data; social capital; communication system; health care; population and education; economy; natural resources and environment; and political and conflicts management. There are two sets of questionnaires, the households and the community. To encourage TCNAP implementation, training were provided to the community teams comprising of management team, data collection team, data analysis team, and data utilization team. The objectives of the training packages were twofold; increasing skills of those community teams and in increasing participation of the community leaders and members. Since 2010, 84 training centers were established and over 2380 local governments have implemented TCNAP as community database system. As a tool for community strengthening, TCNAP shows data indicating some factors influencing human living conditions and health indicators which leads the local government and other community organizations including civil society groups to develop initiatives and healthy public policies for local people to live safety, healthy, and connected for mutual cooperation and assistance.