

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION



### 1.1 Rationale for the study

Narcotics have been a major problem in Thailand for many years, and the effects are physically, economically, and socially devastating. Concentrated efforts from both government and non-government organisations have been focused on the prevention and solution to the problem. The eradication of poppy fields and opium production in the north of Thailand around 30 years ago was one such undertaking which was somewhat successful. Although the cultivation of poppies and production of opium still exist today in the more remote areas of northern Thailand, the amount produced is quite small and no longer poses the serious threat to the Thai society as it once did.

However, the supply of opium into the Thailand has continued due to its location within the Golden Triangle. This area, especially Myanmar, continues to produce large quantities of opium, which can also be purified into heroin. In addition, problems related to narcotics have been further complicated with the introduction of new drugs such as methamphetamines, ecstasy, ice, and the like, into Thailand in recent years. This has led to a larger portion of Thailand's population, particularly the younger population, to experiment and become involved with these new drugs.

Over the years, the Thai government has developed a number of policies to address narcotics problems throughout the country. The main government body responsible for countering narcotics problems is the Office of Narcotics Control Board (ONCB). Its policy framework includes: 1) narcotic crop control, 2) narcotic suppression, 3) narcotic prevention, and 4) treatment and rehabilitation. There are also assorted non-governmental organisations that have developed a variety of campaigns and programs aimed at helping to solve the problem directly and indirectly in both rural and urban areas. Nevertheless, the programs of both the government and NGOs

have not been highly effective in the long-term. According to 2003 ONCB statistics,<sup>1</sup> the number of drug addicts and users in Thailand was actually increasing.

The ultimate failure of these programs led to the Thai government's declaration of its "War on Drugs" in 2003. Under this campaign, drug addicts must be treated and drug traffickers must be punished strictly and seriously. The "War on Drugs" campaign was carried out in operational periods, continuing until the present time. Despite the government's claims that the number of drug users has decreased, traffickers have been arrested, assets have been seized, and the drug supply into the country is also down, there has also been much criticism of the campaign. These criticisms argue whether or not the strategy is suitable and sustainable over the long term in eradicating the narcotics problem in the country.

In addressing the illegal drug problem in Thailand over the past several decades, there have been several policies, approaches, and programs which have been used. Some of these include campaigns for drug-free schools, distribution of leaflets regarding illegal drug awareness, seminars, various kinds of treatments for drug addicts, and the suppression of drug producers and traffickers. These policies and programs did not seek to create "power" among the people to tackle the narcotics problems from within.

Although drug suppression and prevention policies by the government are important and necessary, it can be argued that to be more successful, programs sponsored by both the government and other organisations should focus more on creating "power" amongst the people to help solve the problem at a community level. This is because each community is comprised of different groups of people including drug dealers, drug users and addicts, high risk groups such as youths, along with other community members who are not involved with drugs. These different groups are connected or related in a variety of ways because they all reside in the same community. Therefore, it had been suggested that each community be empowered to implement its own holistic programs aimed at involving all the groups within the

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<sup>1</sup>Kongphetch Kulsudjaritkul, Thailand drug abuse and control report 2002 - 2003 (Bangkok: ONCB, 2003).

community in both the prevention and solution to drug problems, rather than simply focusing on those involved with drugs directly.

It is important for programs developed in each community to reflect the community's internal factors or mechanisms. The study which was used for this particular research project focuses on community work to address narcotics problems in rural northern areas where problems have historically been most severe due to their close proximity with border areas where drugs are trafficked into the country. This close proximity means that drugs are more readily available and at a cheaper price. Subsequently, the government and other organisations are unable to effectively deal with the problems.

Rural people, although often illiterate, are very capable of expressing their local reality which is often very complex. If they do not identify drug abuse as a problem to be solved, there is little hope of reducing drug use. However, if they view drugs as a problem and are aware of how drugs affect their lives, they are also often intuitive in initiating approaches to solve the problem, either by their own means or through support from outside the community. This project emphasises the initiation and the participation of community members in problem solving as a means of developing immunity within the community against a variety of drug-related problems and to achieve sustainable community development.

Although increasingly exposed to a modern way of life, the culture of rural communities in the north largely remains unique in that the relationship among family and community members is still close. Local beliefs and traditional events and ceremonies are still shared among all community members. This layering of interconnectedness within the community comprises the bulk of the community's social capital which then leads to mutual development of community organisations that enable people to develop and enhance different aspects of their lives, particularly that which relates to the development of a drug-free community.

Bottom-up community development in a community in Chiangmai province, Maehugpattana village, is an example of the fight against drugs by community members. This village was chosen as a case study for this thesis because of its success

in community development in the fight against drugs, the end result of which the community was claimed to be a drug-free community. The success of Maehugpattana residents in the development of their community has led to recognition and awards from the government. The ONCB has also taken the development work of the community to be a model for sustainable community development against drugs in the north.

## **1.2 Objectives**

1. To study the drug situation in Maehugpattana village.
2. To study internal factors and mechanisms developed by the Maehugpattana community in its fight against drugs.
3. To study the successful outcomes in fighting the drug problem in Maehugpattana village which were the result of external factors.

## **1.3 Hypothesis**

The success in solving the narcotics problem in Maehug village stemmed from internal factors and mechanisms in the village.

## **1.4 Scope of study**

- This is a study of Maehugpattana village, Sansai district, Chiangmai province.
- The focus is specifically on the narcotics situation in Maehug village but also includes other related factors such as the overall narcotics situation in Thailand, the role of government policy in tackling the country's narcotics problem, as well as the politics of narcotics in society in general.
- The study covers the lives of the people of Maehug village (since its establishment in 1979), in relation to the historical background as well as the social, cultural and economic development of the village. However, the main focus will be on developments since 2001 when the community began to attempt to find solutions to the narcotics problem in the community.

## 1.5 Expectations

- 1) The results of this study will contribute to the study of assorted aspects of the dynamics of northern communities in Thailand and how they play key roles in community development against drugs.
- 2) The results of the study may be used as a model for community development against drug problems in other rural areas in both Thailand and neighbouring countries in which similar cultural, economic, social and political factors exist.

## 1.6 Literature review

Opium was the earliest narcotic substance to become a major problem in Thailand. In his book, *Opium Reduction in Thailand 1970-2000: A Thirty-Year Journey*,<sup>2</sup> Ronald Renard traces its development in relation to production, trade, and consumption. The cultivation of opium as a cash crop came to Thailand in the late nineteenth century, in the aftermath of Britain's Opium Wars with China (1839-1842). To overcome a trade deficit with China, Britain sought to expand its trade in opium grown in British India with China. When the British won the Second Opium War in 1858, the Chinese agreed to legalize opium. Local Chinese authorities encouraged opium growth, especially in Yunnan and Sichuan and primarily by upland minority groups who later moved south to the Thai-Burma-Chinese borders. By World War II, opium cultivation in Thailand primarily supplied users in opium dens in the cities. Most of these users were often Chinese laborers. In China, after Mao Zedong took power in 1949, opium production, trade, and consumption was essentially eradicated by the mid 1950's. Production in other Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand and Laos consequently increased in order to meet demand in the world market.

Thai Field Marshall Sarit Thanarat banned the cultivation, sale and use of opium. However, because of an already heavy reliance on revenues earned from sales of opium, the Harmful Habit-Drugs Act did not take full effect until 1959. Despite the Act however, Thailand lacked sufficient expertise and facilities for drug treatment and

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<sup>2</sup>Ronald Renard, *Opium reduction in Thailand 1970 - 2000: A thirty-year journey* (Bangkok: Silkworm Books, 2001).

rehabilitation as many users continued to use opium. When opium proved too difficult to obtain, urban users turned to heroin. Opium was still widely available in the remote hill-tribe areas but users switched to heroin after the 1980's, when poppy cultivation was reduced through development projects.

Various methods have been used to reduce opium production in the hill tribe areas by government and non-governmental agencies, usually funded by foreign countries and the United Nations. Although the original purpose of high area activities focused on crop substitution, this focus later shifted towards more sustainable development, such as supporting higher living standards through education, public health, and obtaining Thai citizenship. Participation of the local people in the projects was increasingly encouraged. Currently with a history of more than 30 years of development work, it can be said that the vast majority of opium production has been eradicated and hill tribe people now derive the bulk of their income from various types of work such as agriculture and handicrafts. A number of highland development projects are still being carried out to maintain support to these hill tribe groups in a variety of ways.

According to an ONCB paper written by Kongpetch Kulsudjarit entitled "Thailand Drug Abuse and Control Report 2002-2003,"<sup>3</sup> the narcotics situation in Thailand has changed in many ways. The abuse of opium and heroin has decreased in recent years, in contrast to the increasing use of other drugs such as marijuana and methamphetamines. In addition, ecstasy has become increasingly popular among teenagers, students and entertainment workers, and there is also evidence of rapid expansion in the abuse of ketamine and cocaine. The mixture of methamphetamine abuse and unprotected sex has led to an alarming increase in HIV/AIDS patients while more than 50% of the injecting drug addicts have already been infected with HIV/AIDS.

New laws and policies have been developed to deal with the drastically changing and more serious narcotics situation in the country. The infamous "War on Drugs" campaign declared in early 2003 was later implemented in phases throughout

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<sup>3</sup>Kongpetch Kulsudjaritkul,, Thailand drug abuse and control report 2002-2003.

the term of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's government. The driving concept behind this campaign was that drug addicts must be treated and drug traffickers must be strictly punished. At the time that this project was written, it has been suggested that the first three-month phase of the campaign was a success, if one examines the extent to which major drug syndicates' structures were dismantled, the drug epidemic was brought under control, a large number of abusers and addicts were treated in both voluntary and mandatory manners, and a large amount of drugs were seized throughout the country and intercepted along border areas.

However, despite the declared success, the ONCB report also conceded that drug producers, traffickers and abusers in the country may be unanimous in resisting attempts to stop their activities and may still engage in these practices though much more carefully and without noticeable effects. There were still reports of the illegal import of methamphetamines beginning along the border areas in the north and northeast, where external drug dealers adapted their marketing strategies to sell drugs at discount prices in order to motivate internal drug dealers to resume their illicit business. Surveys of public opinion showed some satisfaction with the work and progress the government made, as they saw it as a way to eradicate drugs from their communities.

Nevertheless, the government continued with its campaign strategy and the policy to deal with both the demand and supply of drugs. The supply reduction strategy aimed to continue in dismantling the structure of illicit drug trade organisations by continuing to suppress production, trade, and abuse of drugs in all areas, while exercising vigilance in suppressing the emergence of any new drugs. The demand strategy aimed to provide appropriate treatment and rehabilitation to abusers and addicts who were treated as patients and provided with after-care support, along with development programs for former addicts or abusers which would allow them to return to live normal lives in their communities again.

In the past six years or so, one of the primary illegal drugs which has been seriously affecting Thailand very seriously is methamphetamines.<sup>4-5</sup> The seriousness

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<sup>4</sup>ONCB, Thailand Narcotics Annual Report, 2002.

<sup>5</sup>Kongphetch Kulsudjaritkul,, Thailand drug abuse and control report 2002-2003. p. 1.

of this drug reached its climax in the past two or three years. Some methamphetamines have been produced in the country but most come from neighbouring countries, especially Myanmar. Therefore, the north of Thailand is most affected as it is closer to the production area, allowing easy access to the drug at lower prices than other regions in the country. There has been a large volume of research carried out to examine the drug situation and how drug problems have been dealt with in different provinces throughout the region. The following includes some examples of these different research projects.

In 2002, Sarita Teerawatsakul and others<sup>6</sup> conducted research primarily on narcotics “situations” or epidemics in Chiangmai using Mae Rim district as a case study.

This project determined that every tumbon or district in Chiangmai was involved with drugs in one form or another. There was at least one drug dealer in every other village. Some villages even had between 50 and 100 addicts. The most abused drug was methamphetamines. Some parts of the district are hill areas inhabited by hill tribe groups who often take heroin in combination with or alternating with methamphetamines. Most of the abusers were laborers who worked hard all day and felt that taking drugs would give them more strength. The second group of abusers were youths, both inside and outside school age, who viewed the regular inhalation of methamphetamines to be fashionable and fun. One of the contributing factors to these addictions was the easy access to and low price of the drugs. The wholesale price was just 19 baht per tablet, while retail was 40-50 baht per tablet.

Despite the severity of the problems in the district most people who participated in the study did have a knowledge and awareness of the risk in using drugs. They also had a negative attitude and distrust towards drug abusers. More than 90% of the students interviewed acknowledged that being in the same group as drug using friends and participating in night life was risky behavior.

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<sup>6</sup>Sarita Teerawatsakul. Evaluation report on prevention of and solutions to drug problems at district level: a case study of Mae Rim District, Chiangmai Province (Chiangmai: Chiangmai University, 2002).



The aim of Sarita and others' project was to study the situation and policy used to deal with drug problems in the district. It was conducted during the time when the "National Coalition" strategies, which would later help encourage more participation of the local people, were still in the early developmental stage. Therefore the primary organisation responsible was the district government. At this time, the national policy regarding drug suppression and eradication only served to encourage officials to cooperate with one another with their chief aim being to increase the number of "drug-free" communities.

The study concluded that the narcotics problem in Mae Rim became less severe because of the work of the government and other related organisations in trying to control the spread of drugs within the communities. However, this control was seen only as temporary. As soon as officials stopped monitoring or consistently carrying out activities in line with their policies, the problems easily and quickly surfaced again. It was recommended that officials work more closely and holistically with the communities, making them strong in all aspects, social, economic and political, as well as seeking cooperation from NGOs to support the people in order to achieve a sustainable way of solving the narcotics problem in the area.

Jakrit Pinyaphong and others conducted their research entitled "Prevention and Surveillance of Drugs Use Through Community Leaders, Baan Seo, Uttaradit" over a period of 15 months between November 2000 to February 2002.<sup>7</sup> The researchers chose this particular village in Uttaradit because the drug problem had been severe in the province. There were as many as 1,009 arrest cases in 1998 which later escalated to 1,782 cases in 2001. As in many other provinces throughout the country, the primary entity responsible for tackling drug problems had been the government. For its part, the government had set up an ad hoc policy in response to the drug problem in Uttaradit. The researchers believed that the previous strategy of depending only on the government was no longer adequate to solve the ongoing and complex narcotics problem which was increasingly affecting people and their communities.

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<sup>7</sup>Jakrit Pinyaphong, Prevention and surveillance of drugs use through community leaders, Baan Seo, Uttaradit (Uttaradit: Uttaradit Rajabhat University, 2004).

Focusing on the drug issue, the research team went into the Baan Seo community and conducted Participatory Action Research in order to gather as much information regarding the village as possible. The study revealed that drug problems were occurring in villages long before any formal research was conducted. It was simply that very few villagers spoke about the problems, let alone sought to find solutions. In 1999 alone, there were as many as 307 community members (out of a total of 2,693 people living in the village) who were arrested because of their involvement in drugs. As many as 59,561 methamphetamine tablets were also seized that year. The research process also included monthly meetings during which community members were encouraged to come and share information regarding drug problems. These problems were then discussed in subsequent meetings and community leaders were to monitor drug usage and sales in the community, as well as to try and implement solutions from the villagers themselves.

Within the 15 month period of the study, researchers were able to help the village to form various interest groups that subsequently took part in solving and preventing drug problems in the community. These groups were comprised of housewives, youths, leaders, and government officials. The project was successful in that it helped community members to begin to think, decide, set up plans, and follow the results of their activities in the problem areas that were under surveillance. However, the researchers felt that in order to maintain sustainable development in the community, the viability of community leaders and local groups or organisations must be further strengthened, and a strong community network must be well established, developed and maintained.

Another group of researchers led by Thanad Baiya and others<sup>8</sup> conducted the study “Community Organisations and Community Networks Dealing with Drug Problems in Nan Province” in 2001. It was found that there were many local groups in different communities which had worked together and formed networks to solve drug problems in the province. These groups were formed firstly because of the severity of the drug problem in the communities and secondly because there were many

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<sup>8</sup>Thanad Baiya, Community organisations and community networks dealing with drug problems in Nan Province (Nan, 2001), p. 1.

concerned governmental and non-governmental organisations which helped with the set up and development of such networks.

In 2001 the drug problem was very severe in Nan province and strategies such as suppression, raids, arrests, prevention methods, public health promotion, and public relations were not working effectively. Out of 816 villages in the province, 674 reported drug problems and as many as 23 villages were considered to have very serious drug problems. The network of communities that were set up to tackle these problems did not focus only on drug issues. This was because residents saw that in order to make the communities stronger, other aspects of life, such as health, occupation, income, education, and the like were all important. The study revealed networks of activities including a wide variety of issues such as the environment, preservation of local culture and traditions, integrated and sustainable agricultural development, community businesses, financial savings techniques, and health.

Although these community networks were working together in terms of activities and the sharing of information and knowledge, different communities had their own characteristics in terms of prevention and solution of drug problems. For example, some communities had set up their own village rules in dealing with those involved with drugs. Some had committees which were responsible for monitoring and providing support to a number of families in the community and reported the movement or changes at regular village meetings. Some communities offered to send addicts for treatment or rehabilitation to hospitals or centers providing such services, while other communities had their own treatment and rehabilitation centers at the local temple or organized family therapy activities within their community.

### **1.7 Related theories on community development**

The term “community development” has a variety of definitions. The following definitions have been taken from an article by Suwit Yingvorapunt:<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Suwit Yingvorapunt, “Community development,” *Journal of Social Science* 3 (January, 1965), pp. 79 - 85.

- “Community development is a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation, and if possible, on the initiative of the community, but if the initiative is not forthcoming spontaneously, by the use of techniques for arousing and stimulation it in order to secure its active and enthusiastic response to the movement” (definition given by Cambridge Summer Conference on African Administration in 1948).
- “The term community development has come into international usage to denote the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of government authorities to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of communities to integrate the communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to the progress” (definition given by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1956).
- “Community development may be described as organised efforts to improve the conditions of community life, and the capacity for community integration and self-direction. Community development seeks to work primarily through the establishment and organisation of self-help and co-operative effort on the part of the residents of community, but usually with technical assistance from governmental or voluntary organizations” (definition given by A Dunham in 1958).

Other academics tend to view community development as a more complex term with a variety of underlying principles. For example, according to James Cook,<sup>10</sup> characteristics of community development are associated with notions of self-help and participatory democracy, where communities are treated as systems, conceived as entities differentiated from its surroundings and have some kind of boundaries and interactions taking place within the environment across the boundaries. Therefore communities are subject to change and new patterns of behavior can be learned and development is a concept associated with improvement; it is a positive change. Whatever constitutes development is a judgment that is best made by people according to their own values, aspirations and expectations. In the case of community systems, this must be a collective judgment.

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<sup>10</sup>James Cook, Main concepts of community development theory (Department of Community Development, University of Missouri - Columbia). [online] Website located at <http://muextension.missouri.edu>.

James Cook believes that the central mode of structuring for community development is the democratic mode. Democratic structuring helps to stimulate development and to support improvement in the quality of planning, adaptation and decision-making within the system. Community development theory suggests that as the levels of complexity and uncertainty increase, democratic structuring becomes more suitable regardless of community size. It takes this position while retaining the idea that democracy must involve significant citizen participation.

However, community development, as seen by James Cook, builds from the proposition that every person is different. Each is distinguishable from the others, indicating that each has something unique in his/her person. It also takes the position that each person probably has some bit of information or insight not available through others. Democracy is valued as a means, not an end—it serves the instrumental purpose of broadening the inputs available to the system. Individuals may profit or suffer from the learning and development gained through their own civic participation. However, the system has a net increase in its potential as individuals become active and as incidents of participation diversify. The theory does not imply that positive results from participation in community affairs fall directly to individual participants. It does not suggest that individuals who increase their civic involvement and/or their participatory skills will necessarily improve the circumstances of their personal life. In principle, their participation, however, leads to the improvement or development of the community as a whole.

According to Susan Kenny,<sup>11</sup> community development takes place among groups of people where sometimes-formal organisations are established for and by a group of people. People involved share a common identity based on any number of factors which could include a common ethnic background, locality, issue or disadvantage. Community development is committed to the idea that people can and should take more responsibility for identifying their own needs and managing their own welfare, resources and directions. It involves the establishment of supportive groups, based on developing and sharing resources, social interaction and participation in self-help and mutual support activities. Community development is also committed to the empowerment of ordinary people in such a way that they have real options for

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<sup>11</sup>Susan Kenny, *Developing communities for the future: community development in Australia* (Melbourne: Nelson, 1994), pp. 7 - 8.

their future. One of the key aims of community development is to build structures that facilitate democratic participation in decision making. This requires the establishment of processes that enables a community to have access to and control of the resources and power structures in the community.

Jim Ife<sup>12</sup> defines community development as interaction of the two main components—community and development.

1. **Community** is understood as a form of social organisation which has five main characteristics:

- I. The first characteristic is *human scale*, wherein a community involves interactions at a scale which can be readily controlled and used by individuals. The scale is limited to one where people know one another or can readily get to know one another as needed, and where interactions are such that they are readily accessible.
- II. The second characteristic is *identity and belonging* wherein to most residents the word community would incorporate some sense of feeling of belonging or being accepted and valued within the group. They are members of the community and the concept of membership implies belonging, acceptance by others and allegiance or loyalty to the aims of the group concerned.
- III. The third characteristic is *obligations* wherein people have both rights and responsibilities to contribute to the life of the community by participating in at least some of its activities and contributing to the maintenance of the community structures.
- IV. The fourth characteristic is *gemeinschaft* wherein a community will enable people to interact with one another in a wider variety of roles.
- V. The fifth characteristic is *culture* wherein the community enables the valuing, production and expression of a local community-based culture, which will have unique characteristics associated with that

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<sup>12</sup>Jim Ife, Community development: creating community alternatives - vision, analysis and practice (Melbourne: Longman, 1995), pp. 90 - 97.

community enabling people to become active producers of that culture and encouraging both diversity among communities and broad-based participation.

2. **Development** is associated with community development and has two main components to alternative development and the wisdom of the oppressed.

I. *Alternative development* models are most commonly carried out by non-government aid agencies and involve little if any reliance on government structures. They include local level development, grounding in the local culture rather than imposing a model from outside, indigenous leadership, specifically address any disempowering structures, and include high levels of participation by local people.

II. *Wisdom* comes from below rather than above. People in the community are assisted in articulating their own needs and developing their own strategies of action in order to have those needs met. An essential component of this community development approach is not only to acknowledge the wisdom of the oppressed and the right to define their own needs and aspirations in their own way, but to also facilitate the expression of that wisdom within the larger society. It incorporates strategies of consciousness-raising and ensures that the voice of the oppressed is heard, acknowledged and valued.

According to Bansuan Sansuke,<sup>13</sup> the concept of community development has faith in human resources—that these resources are the most important factors of all success. Bansuan firmly believes that each individual can develop her/himself within the extent of physical proficiency if s/he has the opportunity and receives the appropriate guidance. When a wo/man is strong and happy s/he can protect

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<sup>13</sup>Bansuan Sansuke, "National pilot project: the community participation model." Paper presented at seminar on national projects for the utilization of community resources for the prevention and reduction of drug abuse (Bangkok), 1984.

her/himself against drugs. Therefore, wo/man and environment should be developed together.

Therefore the main themes of community development as offered by Bansuan Sansuke include:

- *The participation of the community in carrying out activities.* Provision of education and training programs for every aspect of community development to promote quality of life with an emphasis on pre-school children, youth and women. The objective is to build up the ideal, to work as a team, to instill confidence to self-help, to participate in community development activities, and the proper use of resources.
- *The utilization of the resources in a community as much as possible in arranging activities.* The emphasis is put on “group power” through group activities and training.

Bansuan Sansuke used the themes above to define the main principles of community development as:

- Community development programs should be multi-purposed and aimed at solving community problems and developing facilities of the community in every aspect.
- The community should participate in activities arranged to build up community force. This means providing the opportunity for people to participate in developing their community by mobilizing ideas and making decisions as well as being responsible for the community.
- Local leaders are necessary and this characteristic should be developed and integrated as part of community activities.
- In implementing community development, NGOs, voluntary organizations at local, national and international levels should be encouraged to participate in the program thus allowing the utilization of resources in the community in every aspect of development.



- Children, youth, and women should be accepted and provided the opportunity to join community development programs. In relation to drug problems, drug prevention gives the first priority to youth groups since statistical data clearly shows that drug problems appear as a high percentage in this group.
- Parents groups are realized to be important and influential in the prevention of drugs within the youth groups.

Culture has been the primary part of community development. Culture can be defined to mean the sum total of interactions between human beings, both individuals and groups. Culture implies worth in human behavior—socially, politically and spiritually.

In conclusion, each of the theories cited above emphasises the importance of the culture as the main tool of community development. The current study uses theories related to community organisation and culture which encompass the inner energy of the development of the whole community.

### 1.8 Conceptual framework of the thesis

Since Thailand initiated its National Economic Development Plan, community development has begun to occur in a better organized and planned form, especially when the word ‘social’ was later added to the name thus making it the National Social and Economic Development Plan. Only recently as the Fifth Plan was being implemented, did the government admit that previous development plans had failed. The continuously growing GNP of the country did not imply development. The majority of the population, especially those living in the rural areas, remained poor, or even became poorer.<sup>14</sup> The country’s social and cultural assets began to decline as society became more competitive and many people became individualistic thinking only of themselves and not others.

Among these contributing problems is the narcotics issue. Despite government policies addressing prevention and solution to drug problems in the past decades, drug

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<sup>14</sup>Seri Phongphit, “Introduction” in Seri Phongphit, Back to the roots: village and self-reliance in a Thai context (Bangkok: Rural Development Documentation Centre, 1986), p. 13.

problems in the country remain severe. A detailed discussion of the drug problem and government policies will be covered in Chapter 2. Thailand has learned hard lessons after the failures of one program after another, wasting a lot of time, energy, effort and funds. Programs and projects dealing with drugs are no exception. These types of projects have been evaluated and re-evaluated for mistakes to be identified and gaps to be filled. Finally, it was found that the main cause of the failure of so many community development projects was the exclusion of people's participation in the overall process including both the planning and implementation stages of the programs. Researchers such as Thanad Baiya, James Cook, and Suwit Yingvorapunt (mentioned previously in the Literature Review), all strongly believe that it is only with the full participation of community members that community development work will succeed.

This thesis attempts to discuss community development projects with an emphasis on people's participation in solving narcotics problems in a rural community in Chiangmai. It is strongly believed that unless people participate in a development project, it is not likely to achieve anything of benefit to them. People's participation in development projects may help bring effective social change rather than impose an external culture on a society. The main theory<sup>15</sup> behind people's participation in their development is that real development must be people-centred. The development process should not ignore the 'creative initiatives of people' as they are 'the primary development resource'. Participation can lead to initiatives on the people's part and allow them to assume 'ownership' of the development process. People's participation helps individuals resolve their problems by themselves. The conventional method of expert-dominated decision making processes in people's development is no longer effective and there should be no more 'nonconsultative modes of central decision-making' and 'decision making must truly be returned to the people'.

Other two community development theories that will be used as the primary framework for this thesis. The first theory is the role of community development as

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<sup>15</sup>Netra Khadka, Defining participation: a case study of Nepal, alice spring remote health Services Australia, [online article] website located at <http://www.educ.utas.edu.au/users/tle/JOURNAL.html>

outlined by Louis Miniclier.<sup>16</sup> According to Miniclier, community development is defined as “a social process in which the people of a community:

- organise themselves in planning and action;
- define their common and individual needs and problems;
- make group and individual plans to meet their needs and solve their problems;
- execute these plans with a maximum reliance upon community resources; and,
- supplement these resources when necessary with services and materials from governmental and non-governmental agencies outside the community.”

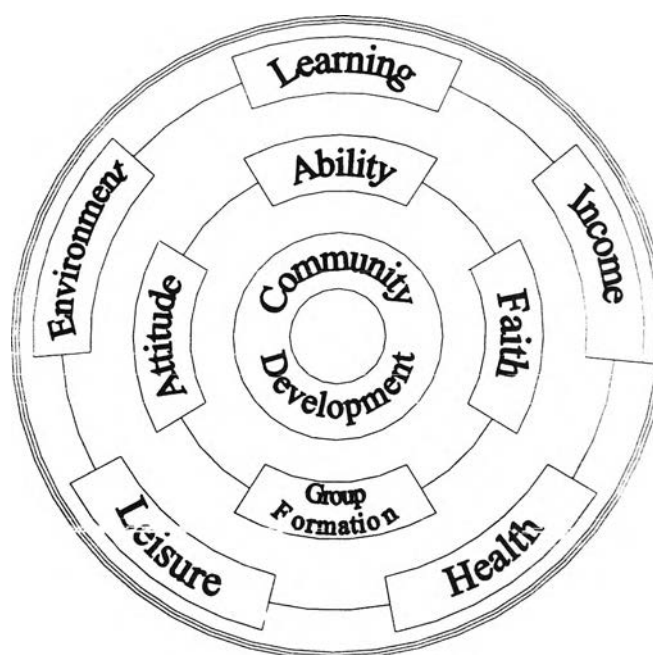
The second theory comes from Phat Bunyarataphan<sup>17</sup> who defines community development as a process of rural betterment affecting both the **concrete** (material or socio-economic) and the **abstract** (spiritual or socio-psychological) natures bound by a philosophy of creating the community dynamic and mobilizing this community dynamic to develop the community. Each community development project must be emphasized in terms of its width, length and depth as illustrated in the development model in Figure 1.

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<sup>16</sup>Community development was defined by Louis Miniclier, in an article titled Community development defined, The community development review of I.C.A., No. 3 December, 1956. The definition used here is cited in Suwit Yingvorapunt, “Community development” p. 83.

<sup>17</sup>Phat Bunyarataphan. Community Development in the Country (Bangkok: Community Development Department, 1975), pp. 9 - 16.

Figure 1. Dimensional community development model by Phat Bunyarataphan



*The first dimension is analogous to width*, meaning the work to develop the “abstract” and “concrete” affairs within the community. The elements of the abstract development include “attitude,” “faith,” “group forming,” and “ability,” while the elements of the concrete development are “learning,” “income,” “environment,” “health,” and “leisure.”

*The second dimension is analogous to length*, meaning the effect-radiation of every project in interrelation and interdependent. There are no longer sole projects, but rather, projects that radiates their effects to other projects and other villages.

*The third dimension is analogous to depth*, meaning that each project must be considered in terms of people’s ability to work, the accomplished result, the use, and the maintenance. The project must not be done in a short period of time and then discontinued without paying attention to the long term range of the project.

According to Figure 1 above, the inner circle refers to abstract development which is the ‘inner energy’ of the community and is comprised of attitude, faith, group forming and ability. People of the same community have pluralistic attitudes which have great influence on their actions. Wrong and diverse attitudes counter with one another; correct, identical attitudes can affect the expressions to support one another

for mutual benefit. Correct attitude means accurate idea, precise fact, clear perception and bright conscience. If a wo/man has faith in anything it is hard to alter her/his belief.

Furthermore, when people have mutual work and mutual responsibility in developing their community, their families and themselves, faith will come from among them. This means that community development is not the work of individuals but of individuals who have formed groups; only group dynamics can have great power in developing and changing a community. There are several factors that contribute to group formation including group leader, shared needs, true willingness to participate, similar surroundings, sex, age, and the like. Finally, community development adds more ability to the group, making it stronger and supporting the activities that ensure the group has concise direction. Group ability is enhanced by providing training, creating activity for the group to take responsibility and assign duties for mutual work, exchanging ideas, and bringing new technology to the group. When the group is enabled, it can grow by on its own.

The outer circle is called concrete development or "the change leading unit" which is comprised of learning, income, health and leisure. New innovation or knowledge brought to the community must conform to the situation, surroundings, and ability of the community. Villagers are naturally interested in and ready to follow what they have learned if it is applicable to their lives. After the people's learning and ability have been enhanced, activities that increase their income should be developed. This requires not only serious occupation training of groups, but also continuous promotion of the occupation in the form of funding and knowledge. Villagers' health will be improved if they have enough income to purchase nutritious food. Responsible agencies can also promote projects such as provision of clean water, protection from epidemics, and the like. While villagers often work all year round, community development work should seek to develop such activities as local festivals, plays, athletic games, hobbies or leisure work that increase families income and such. This helps to maintain community being, to foster unity and to preserve local tradition and culture.

For the purposes of this thesis, the main concept of community development is the value of the ability of community members to help themselves to solve their narcotic problems with minimal outside help. The thesis argues that villagers are capable of understanding their own immediate and personal circumstances—what their problems are and how they would like to go about solving them using their own efforts. Residents may have learned from previous attempts by the government and other organizations to solve the problems which did not work in their community, but proved to be a good learning experience nonetheless. The goal of community development is to empower the people to make their own decisions and determine their own futures.

However, there are circumstances that are beyond the control of the people. Thus, there is also the need for outside support. Neither of the two main community development theories denies the need for resources, funding, training, education, better income, better help, and the like from outside the community. In the case of narcotic problems, for example, the politics of the drug trade is complex in that it involves influential figures. Without help from the government in terms of suppression, community members may not be successful in solving narcotics problems in their community. Availability of outside help such as financial support, treatment and rehabilitation can also lend more support to the community.

This thesis argues that outside organisations must not offer help in such a manner that this outside help interferes with or undermines problem solving mechanisms of the community which are already in place. This outside assistance should also be offered in such a way that it is not perceived as alien to residents' way of life, even if it is offered with the best of intentions. For example, funds may be raised through village activities like festivals. Also, in many instances, communities may already have social and cultural capital, such as the use of the belief in seniority that enables them to develop control mechanism within their own community. When a village community is close and families are extended, close relationships may be used as part of home therapy for treatment and rehabilitation for drug addicts and users.

## 1.9 Thesis questions

1. Are there narcotics problems in Maehugpattana community? If so, how serious are they?
2. Does the community have any tools for development or problem solving?
3. If community does have these tools, what are they? How do they function in relation to narcotics problems?
4. Have the narcotics problems been solved successfully? How has the success measured?

## 1.10 Methodology

### Documentary research

#### 1. Primary source.

- Interview with a judge of Chiengrai Family and Youth Court to gain a better understanding of local drug issues in rural communities of Chiengrai province.

#### 2. Secondary sources

- Documentary research for basic understanding of available and applicable literature including previous research, books, and internet, related to narcotics problems, government policies on narcotics prevention and suppression, community development works, and the like; and,

### Fieldwork

1. In-dept interviews with key informants such as community leaders, youths, housewives, and senior members of the Maehugpattana community with guided questions and open-ended questions.
2. Participation in community activities such as meetings, workshops and some cultural events.

3. Non-participant observation of lifestyle and behaviour of community members.

4. Use of various documents, such as project proposals, reports, and the like published by the community.

### Data Analysis

Data gathered from the field work component of this project was analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study using the two main theories of community development previously mentioned in the Conceptual Framework section.

#### **1.11 Definition of key words**

A word may be interpreted or defined in different ways depending on a particular discipline. The definition or explanation of key words in this section serves to outline to understanding of these words for the purposes of the present study.

**Narcotics:** Narcotics is a term originally applied to all compounds that produce insensibility to external stimuli through depression of the central nervous system. This term is now applied primarily to the drugs known as opiates—compounds extracted from the opium poppy and their chemical derivatives. Also classed as narcotics are the opioids, chemical compounds that are wholly synthesized, and which resemble the opiates in their actions.<sup>18</sup>

**Community:** A community is a group of people who live in the same area and have close relations and similar occupations. They are related to each other in their immediate families, their extended families, their neighbours and others in the community. People have a sense of belonging and feel that they live in the same community. Community members try to maintain the value of their culture and religion and pass these values on to their children.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Narcotics. Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia Deluxe, [computer software] 2004.

<sup>19</sup>Definition of community by Kanchana Kaewthep, cited in Jakrit Punyaphong, Prevention and surveillance of drugs use through community leaders. Baan Seo. Uttaradit, p. 7.



**Tambon:** Tambon is a Thai word that is generally understood to be a sub-district. Within the Thai municipal structure, several tambons are located within a single district.

**People participation:** People participation refers to the process of development that involves the participation of community members from the beginning until the end of a program or project. That is to participate in defining problems, planning, decision making, collecting and managing community resources, and evaluating the results of their work. Such development process reflects the culture and way of life of the people.

**Social capital:** Social capital is a system or practice that brings people together to become a community or a network where people are interdependent on one another. Such a system may be traditional or newly-developed. It is a capital that is valuable to the people in the society but cannot be measured in terms of financial value. Social capital also includes resources that are produced by members of the community such as basic needs, money, knowledge, local wisdom and experiences. This makes culture part of social capital, but it is often referred to as cultural capital, which includes social norms, and values that are expressed through people's way of life.<sup>20</sup>

**War on Drugs:** War on Drugs is a drug control policy developed by the current Thai government in January 2003. Its framework covers four main strategies: supply reduction, demand reduction, potential demand reduction, and integration management. The policy has been implemented in operational periods or phrases, each with different focus or aims and particular strategies.

**Sustainable development:** In terms of social development, sustainable development means the social, economic and environmental development of the community which includes principles such as: 1) empowerment to enable people to make choices for things that affect their lives; 2) cooperation where people cooperate and help one another; 3) equity where people have equal access to knowledge and community resources; 4) security where people have security in their lives and belonging; and, 5)

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<sup>20</sup>Seri Phongphit, 100 words that you should know (Bangkok: Charuenwit, 2004), p. 77.

sustainability that today's development will not destroy the community resources and leaves no opportunity for future generations of community members, but rather is a basis that enables them to be free from poverty, hardship, and the like by themselves.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 15 – 17.