



Regional Expert Meeting on “Revitalizing Rural Development for Poverty Eradication in Asia”

**Regional Expert Meeting
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Udon Thani, Thailand

Date: 1-4 August, 2017

Organized by Thammasat University and Partners

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About the Meeting

The Regional Expert Meeting on “Revitalizing Rural Development for Poverty Eradication in Asia” 1-4 August 2017, Udon Thani, Thailand

One of the objectives of this meeting is to continue Dr. Puey Ungphakorn’s 100th anniversaries celebration which was started in 2015. In that year, UNESCO named him as one of the world’s most important people due to his remarkable role in laying foundations of Thailand’s economic development. Dr. Puey served the nation as former Governor of Bank of Thailand, former Dean of Faculty of Economics and Rector of Thammasat Universities. He was highly recognized as "a prominent educator and civil servant of impeccable ethics". On the other hand, the expert meeting aims to critically review experiences on rural development and its impact on poverty eradication in Southeast Asia. The event will allow practitioners, scholars, and policy makers to explore the state of art, identifying knowledge and policies gaps as well as developing sound recommendations for improvement in the areas relating to rural development, e.g. ‘Natural Resources, Environment and Energy’, ‘Rights and Democratization’, and ‘Livelihood and Wellbeing’.

Background to the Meeting

Over the last half century, the growing economies of Southeast Asian countries have transformed themselves into middle income countries. Vast industrialization and urbanization have driven the conversion of agricultural land to commercial, industrial, tourism and infrastructural uses. Despite accelerating growth and reduced number of the population living below the international poverty line, most countries of Southeast Asia share many common problems centering on socio-economic inequality, environmental degradation and the deteriorated transformation of the rural landscape. Gaps in societal development, especially in rural area, have been widening in parallel with rapid developmental changes over the past decades. Among ASEAN nations the concrete lesson learnt on rural development is scattered. Experiences and knowledge sharing session in this meeting will support policy makers and practitioners in identifying solutions for rural development and poverty eradication.



Program of Meeting

Program at a glance

This meeting will bring together a range of scholars, practitioners, researchers and policy makers working on and/or in the countryside of several Asian countries to exchange their perspectives on rural development and poverty eradication. In addition, some NGOs, international development donors and community leaders will also be invited. The program is composed of keynote speeches, thematic panel discussions, field visits and group discussions. The meeting is designed for knowledge users: government and development agencies, the private sectors and practitioners. Participants will have an open and lively discussion, deliberation and informal networking.

Keynote Speech

To be delivered by **Mr. Sanjit “Bunker” Roy** – an Indian social activist and the founder of Barefoot College. He was selected as one of Time 100's most influential personalities in 2010 for his work in educating illiterate and semi-literate rural Indians. Mr. Roy has received:

- The Stockholm Challenge Award for Information Technology (Category Environment) Stockholm Sweden October 2002
- Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, World Economic Forum Geneva, Switzerland – 2002
- The St Andrews Prize for the Environment, Scotland - 2003
- The Ashden Award for Sustainable Energy London – 2003
- Tyler Prize California USA - 2004
- The Skoll Foundation - 2005
- The Robert Hill Award from the global Solar Community – 2009
- Blue Planet Prize - 2011
- The Distinguished Educationist honor by Rocheston Accreditation Institute, New York - Jan 2017
- and etc.

Special Dinner Talk

To be delivered by **M.R. Pridiyathorn Devakula** – President of Foundation for Thailand Rural Reconstruction Movement Under Royal Patronage (TRRM). TRRM was co-established by Dr. Puey Ungphakorn and has been acknowledged as the creator of professional NGOs in Thailand for few decades. M.R. Devakula used to serve the nation as former Governor of Bank of Thailand as well as former Deputy Prime Minister of Royal Thai Government in 2 cabinets).

Panel Discussion

Each thematic panel discussion will be comprised of 3-4 panelists who have outstanding



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performance in their careers in their countries, if not in the region. They are drawn from academia, researchers, practitioners and policy makers in the area related to rural development according to the 3 themes: (a) Natural resources, environment and energy; (b) Rights and democratization; and (c) Livelihood and wellbeing.

Group discussions

All participants are requested to share their experiences or expertise in one of the three respective sessions. They will have 7 minutes to present their crystalized knowledge or experiences from long experiences in their countries. Chairpersons in each session will ensure that all have equal rights to speak, listen and ask. At the end, results of sessions will be summarized and presented in the full plenary.

Field visits

Field visits to key sites in/nearby Udon Thani to allow participants to see different successful rural development projects related to; (a) Natural Resources, Environment and Energy, (b) Rights and Democratization and (c) Livelihood and Wellbeing fields.

Final sessions

Participants are requested to form 2 groups and work out two proposals

Group 1: Proposal for further international cooperation program (if necessary)

Group 2: Proposal for policy recommendations to governments and international organizations regarding rural development and poverty eradication.

Once the proposals are consent by the plenary, both proposals will be taken up by concerned persons, organizations.

Concluding Speech

To be delivered by **Mr. Sulak Sivaraksa**, an influential advocate for social and political change in Thailand. He is well-known as one of the fathers of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists. He initiated a number of social, humanitarian, ecological and spiritual movements and organizations in Thailand. Mr. Sivaraksa received many awards:

- o Swedish Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Noble Prize) in 1995,
- o UNPO (Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization) award in 1998
- o Indian 'Millennium Gandhi Award' in 2001.
- o He was also nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by the American Friends Service Committee in 1994, and etc.



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Meeting Agenda

August 1, 2017	
Time	Activities
10.00-18.00	Participants’ arrival and check in Centara Hotel & Convention center, Udon Thani province
August 2, 2017	
08.00-08.30	Registration
08.30-09.30	<p>Opening Ceremony</p> <p>Welcome Note by Mr. Chayawut Jantara, Governor of Udon Thani province</p> <p>Introductory note by Prof. Dr. Somkid Lertpaitoon, Rector of Thammasat University</p> <p>Opening speech by Mr. Teerakiat Jareonsettasin, M.D, Minister of Education</p>
09.30-10.45	<p>Keynote speech by Mr. Sanjit “Bunker” Roy (Founder of the Barefoot College)</p> <p>“DEMYSTIFYING EDUCATION :THE BAREFOOT GANDHIAN MODEL”</p>
10.45-11.00	Coffee Break
11.00 -12.00	<p>Panel Discussion 1 : Natural Resources, Environment and Energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director of Mekong Institute • Ms. Angela Hogg, Regional Environment Office Director , USAID – Thailand • Dr. Chris Oestereich, Expert in Solid Waste Management, School of Global Studies, Thammasat University • Prof. Dr. Hiroyuki Konuma (Former Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative of UN-FAO)
12.00-13.00	Lunch
13.00-14.00	<p>Panel Discussion 2 (Rights and Democratization)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Tyrell Haberkorn (Australian National University) • Mr. Trinh Huu Long (Luât Khoa Magazine) • Ms. Jitanuch Premchaiporn (Founding director, Prachathai Online Newspaper)



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Angkana Neelapaijit (Board member, National Human Rights Commission of Thailand)
14.00-14.45	Coffee break
14.45-15.45	<p>Panel Discussion 3 (Livelihood and Wellbeing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Ahmed Ashir (Grameen Communications and Kyushu University) Associate professor Dr. Rossarin Gray (Mahidol University) Prof. Surichai Wankaew (Chairman – UNESCO’s MOST programme – Thailand) Dr. Susan Vize, Social Sciences Advisor, UNESCO – for Asia & Pacific
15.45-16.00	Introduction to Group session
16.00-17.00	Group session (divided into 3 groups, each group starting with participants’ self-introduction, followed by his/her own synthesis on rural development and poverty eradication)
18.00-21.00	<p>Special Dinner Talk by M.R. Pridiyathorn Devakula</p> <p>Welcome party & Cultural Show</p>
August 3, 2017	
08.15-08.30	Administrative/ general information
08.30-10.45	Group session continued
10.45-11.00	Coffee Break
11.00 -12.00	Plenary discussion (summary report from 3 groups)
12.00-13.00	Lunch
13.00-18.00	<p>Field Studies (related to the 3 sub topics)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Natural resources, environment and energy field visit: Huay Yang village, Dong Muaeng Am sub district, Khao Suan Kwang district, Khon Kaen Province Right and democratization field visit: 2 sites in Muaeng district, Udon Thani province (community rights vs. invasion of new industry and infrastructure development) Livelihood and well-being field visit: Baan Rai village, Pon Thong sub district, Po Tak district, Nong Khai province
18.00-20.00	Dinner



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August 4, 2017	
08.30-09.00	Administrative /general information
09.00-10.30	Final session Group 1: Preparing a new proposal for international cooperation Group 2: Preparing conclusion and recommendations to governments and international organizations
10.30-10.45	Coffee break
10.45-11.15	Proposal presentation and consensus seeking
11.15-12.00	- Concluding Speech by Mr. Sulak Sivaraksa - Closing ceremony
12.00-13.00	Lunch
13.00 onwards	Departures of Participants

Targeted Participants

Targeted meeting participants are experts in rural development area from various countries (scholars, policy makers, researchers, and practitioners from government and non – government sectors, including community, private, media, and civic society) about 80-100 participants. They shall be drawn from different categories of countries.

1. Participants from 8 ASEAN countries including Laos People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand, 6-8 participants from each country (Thailand participants may be increased up to 20 participants)
2. Participants from South Asia including Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, Bangladesh, and Bhutan
3. Participants from the US, Europe, China, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, etc.)
4. Additional participants from Thailand (beyond 10 selected ones, they are not given 7 minutes opportunity to share their views in the Group session, except making inquiries in the plenary and/or sharing views with other participants during free time)

Invited participants under (1) category shall be fully financed by organizers and/or with partners of the organizing hosts. Each country must be represented by diverse professionals:

- 2-3 scholars/researchers
- 2 government officers (practitioners and/or policy makers)
- 2-3 non-government officers and/or civil society leaders



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Note: the combination of each profession may be adjusted but not ignoring any profession

Other participants are compliant for their own transportation, food and accommodation costs. However, for those who need support from organizer, i.e.; for transportation or accommodation or food subsidies or all of them can submit their request in advance. Sponsorship is based on qualifications and date of application.

Registration

Registration to attend the meeting can be made via e-mail to the chair of the organizing committee at: jitti_m@yahoo.com or to the secretariat at: pankhonputsa@gmail.com

Registration fee is categorized into 3 groups:

1. Full sponsorship (No registration fee): for invited speakers and invited participants from targeted countries in target participants # 1 and 2 mentioned above. Travel and full boarding and lodging is covered by organizers.
2. Partial sponsorship (pay partial fee): for those exceeding number of target countries and from other countries may be partially sponsored by the organizing committee, for example, for the accommodation and foods. They must apply for partial support to the organizing committee in advance.
3. No sponsorship (self-supported): for those who attend the meeting by themselves, they are requested to book own hotel or pay hotel bill including food cost by their own. Nevertheless, the organizing team will not charge additional fee for documents, sitting the meeting as observers and cost for field visit.

Organizers and partners: Thammasat University in partnership with Japan Society for the Promotion of Sciences (JSPS), UNESCO’s MOST programme – Thailand, Mahasarakham University, Udon Thani Rajabhat University and the municipality of Udon Thani

Organizing Committee:

Chairman Assistant Professor Dr. Jitti Mongkolnchaiarunya,
Dean of Puey Ungphakorn School of Development Studies,
Thammasat University
Tel. + 66 (0) 2564-4440-79 ext. 1321 Fax. + 66 (0) 2564-4429
E-mail: jitti_m@yahoo.com

Committee Secretariat :

Dr. Panarasri Khonputsa Tel. 085 364589 Email: pankhonputsa@gmail.com or
Ms. Supawadee Innupat Tel. 086 9525006 Email: peung30@gmail.com