

Final Report
Training on Public Participation in Thailand
July 25 – August 5, 2005

Prepared August 5, 2005

Prepared by:

Dr. Martha Rozelle
The Rozelle Group LTD
Phoenix, Arizona, USA

Douglas J. Sarno,
The Perspectives Group, Inc.
Alexandria, Virginia, USA

Contents

1. Background	1
2. Summary of IAP2 Training Experience	1
3. Key Public Participation Issues for Thai Government	3
4. Suggestions for Redesign of the Thai Public Participation Curriculum	4
5. Advice to Public Participation Pilot Project at the Ministerial Level	7
6. Advice to Public Participation Pilot Project at the Provincial Level	8

1. Background

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), founded in 1990, has developed public participation concepts that transcend national and cultural boundaries. IAP2 offers a series of certified programs on public participation in many countries including the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Latin America, and Europe since 1999. Several Thai practitioners and scholars have completed the five-day Certificate public participation training program. They agreed the principles and practices presented in these courses would benefit the people in Thailand and help OPDC achieve its people participation policy mission. OPDC proposed to bring two master trainers from IAP2 to help train the OPDC and others and improve the future public participation training curriculum. The master trainers were to evaluate the training curriculum developed by OPDC and recommend improvements in a final report.

The five-day IAP2 Certificate curriculum consists of three courses taught over five full days:

- *Planning for Effective Public Participation* is two-day course and introduces the foundations of effective public participation programs. Participants learn and practice the five steps of planning a public participation program.
- *Effective Communication for Public Participation* is one-day course which offers an overview of the communication skills used by public participation practitioners.
- *Techniques for Public Participation* is a two-day course and introduces a range of practical tools and techniques used at all five levels of the IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum. Participants learn how to develop a charter for an advisory committee and a process for evaluating public participation programs.

2. Summary of IAP2 Training Experience

Dr. Martha Rozelle and Mr. Douglas Sarno, IAP2 Master Trainers, supported Dr. Orapin Sopchokchai, Commissioner, OPDC, in presenting the five-day IAP2 course in public participation. Dr. Rozelle and Mr. Sarno spent the first three days working with Dr. Sopchokchai to develop presentation materials for the three courses and to help her prepare to teach portions of the course. She was to complete a practicum as an aspiring trainer of the

IAP2 program. The three trainers shared responsibility for presenting the training throughout the week.

The training was attended by 24 Thai nationals, 22 of whom completed all five days of the training and were awarded the IAP2 Certificate of Completion. Participants represented the Thai government, academia, and the Non-Governmental Organization community. (See Attachment A for the list of participants.)

Overall, the training experience was extremely valuable and student feedback rated the course consistently good to excellent.

Key Learnings. The following key points were noted by students as among the most important in their learning experience.

Broader Definition of “Public Participation” – Public participation is much more than information. If used correctly it improves decisions and facilitates understanding for the public. It is not the same as public relations. If the public can truly affect the outcome of a decision, then public participation is appropriate and should begin early.

Sustainable decisions are those that balance the public’s input with economic, environmental, and technical issues. A decision that affects the public directly but was not reached with their input can not be sustained.

Internal stakeholders are as important to consider and plan for as external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders may be other agencies or ministries or departments within a single agency that have a stake in the outcome of a project or policy.

The IAP2 Spectrum resonated with all participants. It provides a systematic way of determining the appropriate level of public participation for a decision. Participants appreciated that each level on the Spectrum carries a promise to the public that must be kept by the sponsor. A copy of the Spectrum has been included as Attachment B.

Effective communication skills are important in the practice of good public participation. Students appreciated practicing the active listening and risk communications techniques. Ways to convey information visually, verbally, and in writing were useful.

Public participation techniques. Students learned about and practiced many techniques and were impressed by the variety of

techniques, their flexibility and the opportunity to combine techniques to meet specific participation objectives.

Student Recommendation. Students suggested reconvening the entire group after three to six months to discuss how well they have been able to apply the principles, techniques, and approach to designing a public participation program. They also suggested using Thai case studies in the training exercises and role-plays.

Key Recommendations. Dr. Orapin completed her practicum and will be recommended to IAP2 for certification as an IAP2 trainer with the recommendation that she seek additional opportunities to practice and work with Master Trainers. In addition, before the IAP2 course is again delivered in Thailand, Thai case studies need to be developed and several aspects of the course should be adapted to be more aligned with Thai issues and culture. While a fairly minor adjustment to the courses, this would have a major impact in overall effectiveness.

3. Key Public Participation Issues for Thai Government

Implementing effective public participation in Thailand is not an easy task. Building capacity in public participation will require the principles of public participation being into the government culture.

We recommend that OPDC develop a short primer on public participation that presents a strong case for public participation to be used inside government to include:

- Clear purpose and definition of public participation
- The value of public participation in decision making
- The difference between input and buy-in
- What it takes to do it well
- Core Values
- Different levels of public participation

Key issues in Thailand that are important to understand in order to plan effective public participation include the following:

Culture of silence, the loud, angry public meetings typical in western culture simply do not happen in Thailand often. People are not likely to express their anger but rather hold it in and undermine the project later. Thai public participation applications need to focus on how to draw out people who have concerns and issues and make sure that public values are clearly identified prior to decision making.

Low level of reading among Thai population. Because the average Thai reads very little, different tools and strategies need to be developed to educate and inform the Thai public. Techniques that require a great deal of reading will not work, especially in the rural areas. For example the open house technique should include simple displays with many pictures and a short presentation by a team member that explains the project and tells them what is needed from the public. Multiple methods for informing and involving the various stakeholders are necessary.

Hierarchical nature of Thai society. Strategies need to be developed to help “level the playing field” at Thai public events so that all participants feel comfortable and are able to provide input. Techniques that provide equal access by the public should be considered. For example, the computer-assisted technique allows people to participate anonymously and may help overcome the reluctance by the general public to actively participate when Thai officials are involved.

Limited government experience in conducting participation. There is little existing knowledge or understanding of the value of public participation in government decision making. In order for public participation to really start making a difference in Thailand, efforts need to be made to introduce it into the culture of government. One way to do this is to increase the use of participatory processes internally within the Ministries to show government officials the value of participation.

Adapting public participation techniques to Thai culture. All public participation techniques are very flexible. Thai practitioners need to understand that they have the flexibility to apply these techniques to the specific needs of the audience that is being served. Practitioners should not be reluctant to alter and combine techniques to fit their particular objectives.

4. Suggestions for Redesign of Provincial Thai Public Participation Curriculum

Existing Training

A public participation training course for mid-level practitioners at the Provincial level was delivered last year to about 850 officials, with approximately 30 people serving as trainers. The training course lasted two days and was provided to a class size of about 50. The basic outline of the training included:

1. Introduction to public participation
 - Public participation and the Constitution/laws and public sector management
 - Public participation and participatory governance
2. What is the public participation process and public participation techniques
3. Public participation and communication
4. Conflict resolution process and techniques
5. Planning exercise

Concerns that the existing program was not organized in a logical fashion created some confusion about the most important principles of public participation. The conflict resolution approach was based on a formal court-based process and was not useful in addressing actual conflicts. Because of their various backgrounds, the number of trainers, and their limited experience in public participation in Thailand, some trainers were effective while others were not.

New Training Program Requirements

OPDC seeks to train 300 people throughout the 75 provinces. This training will focus on individuals who will comprise the Public Participation Team in each Province. Following the training, each province will receive 100,000 Bhat. This seed funding will help develop a public participation program and policy to move the provincial government culture forward in the practice of public participation. Constraints placed on this training are that it will this training class must be limited to two days and will result in development of a specific plan on how to use the seed money. More detailed instruction can be develop in later courses.

Recommended Structure of New Course

DAY 1

1. Understand Principles of Effective Public Participation (90 minutes)
 - Develop a specific definition for public participation for use in Thailand
 - public participation is about input not buy-in and results in better decisions
 - The value of public participation in making sustainable decisions and accessing the public participation
 - Public participation is a process, not an event

- Public participation is based on values
 - IAP2 Core Values
 - IAP2 Code of Ethics
 - Public participation requires clear goals and objectives and a specific promise to the public
2. Apply public participation in the Thai Context (1 hour)
 - Public participation and the Constitution/laws and public sector management
 - Public participation and participatory governance
 3. Apply Levels of Public Participation (30 minutes)
 - Using the IAP2 Spectrum to help identify levels of public participation
 - Understanding the potential for public influence on decision-making
 - Setting clear goals and objectives

 4. Assess Opportunity for Public Influence Exercise (1 hour)
 - Students from individual provinces will work in groups to discuss issues and decisions facing their province and evaluate the real potential for public influence.
 5. Conduct an Internal Analysis (30 minutes)
 - Understand the real opportunities for public input to influence decisions
 - Understand the commitment of decision-makers and other key internal stakeholders for doing effective PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
 - Identify the specific questions on which we will seek input
 - Identify available internal resources and skills
 6. Complete Internal Analysis Exercise (1 hour)
 - Public participation team from province will work together to conduct an internal analysis of the capacity to conduct effective public participation and identify strengths and weaknesses to be addressed in their province
 7. Conduct a Stakeholder Analysis (30 minutes)
 - Identifying stakeholder voices
 - Importance of inclusion and balanced participation
 8. Complete Stakeholder Analysis Exercise (1 hour)
 - Provincial public participation teams will identify the key stakeholder voices in their province and the individuals and groups who are important representatives of those voices

DAY 2

1. Review of Day One (30 minutes)

- Trainer will demonstrate the use of the Focused Conversation technique to evaluate day one
- 2. Link public participation and Effective Communication (1 hour)
 - Basic model of communication
 - Principles of effective communication for public participation
 - The importance of attitude and behavior
 - Active listening
- 3. Complete Active Listening Exercise (30 minutes)
 - Participants will conduct a listening trios exercise with speaker, listener, and observer
- 4. Review Public Participation Techniques (90 minutes)
 - Importance of matching techniques to objectives
 - Identify techniques over the entire decision process
 - Best techniques customized for use in Thailand
 - Strategies for effective public meetings and workshops
 - Interviews
 - World café
 - Dialogue technique
 - Focus Groups
 - Advisory Boards
 - Card storming and Nominal Group Technique
- 5. Plan for Evaluation (45 minutes)
 - The importance of evaluation
 - Evaluation process
 - Evaluation tools
- 6. Complete Final Exercise: Planning the Provincial Program (2 hours)
 - Provincial teams will identify specific projects to use their seed money and develop a plan of how to approach the projects.
- 7. Conduct Course Evaluation and Review (1 hour)
 - Instructors will provide specific feedback to the provincial plans and conduct a plus-delta evaluation on the day.

General Recommendations Regarding Delivery of New Course

The following should be taken into account when planning for future public participation training in Thailand.

- Trainers must have extensive experience in public participation, as it is not effective to train public participation without extensive experience and case studies to draw from.
- Segment training to audience and their roles. Those who have to actually plan and conduct public participation will need more detailed training in planning and techniques while those who are not less involved can focus on basic principles and the role of the public in decision-making.

- Identify and customize specific techniques for use in Thailand accounting for the culture of silence, limited reading, and hierarchical nature of society.
- Integrate concepts of conflict resolution into lecture about behavior and communication.
- Coordinate this training with future efforts. There have been many efforts to train public participation throughout Thailand in recent years. We recommend that all of these training efforts be coordinated to ensure consistent approaches, principles, and words are used to promote and explain public participation in Thailand.

5. Advice to Public Participation Pilot Project at the Ministerial Level

Dr. Rozelle and Mr. Sarno worked with a group of officials Ministry of social Development and Human Security, Ministry of Public Health, and the Department of Public Relations seeking to develop a public participation policy that would be consistent across the three agencies. A one-year grant from OPDC will be used to fund this effort. Dr. Rozelle and Mr. Sarno recommended that they involve key stakeholders in the development of the policy, perhaps forming an advisory board to guide the effort. They cautioned that they keep it simple and straightforward and use the principles in the IAP2 five-step Planning process. They also recommended that the advisory board identify a specific project that could be completed in about six months. This pilot project could be used to demonstrate the implementation of the public participation policy. The project should include a clear problem statement, focus on an issue that the public cares about and can influence the decision. A project addressing the issue of malnutrition in young children was discussed.

6. Advice to Public Participation Pilot Project at the Provincial Level

Dr. Rozelle and Mr. Sarno also worked with a group of officials seeking to design a program to better implement public participation at the provincial level. Provincial governments have not yet identified the value of public participation in making decisions. There are plans to implement a public participation team at the Provinces to promote better participation. A one-year program with some financial support is being conducted. Recommendations are to focus this project on a limited number of projects that are manageable and achievable within the one-year timeframe. Specifically we recommended conducting two pilot projects.

- **One project to focus on using participatory processes within the government and with key stakeholders to develop more effective public participation policies.**
- **A second project to work on a specific issue at a local level to show how broad-based public participation can be used to solve a specific problem.**

Attachment A List of Participants

No.	First name	Last name	Title	Organization
1	Ms.Sujaree	Suangtho	Analyst 8	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
2	Miss Perawan	Jittiwatana	Human Resource Development Officer	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
3	Mr. Wiched	Sriwong	Analyst 6	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
4	Dr.Kanokkan	Anukansai	Resercher	Center for Philanthropy and civil Society
5	Ms. Arpatat	Boonrod	Resercher	Center for Philanthropy and civil Society
6	Ms. Pimrumpai	Panvichatikul	Resercher	Center for Philanthropy and civil Society
7	Mr. Soomol	Srisookwatana	Chief of Public Sector Development Group, Health Department.	Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health
8	Mr. Prapoj	Petrakard	Chief of Public Sector Development Group	Department for Development of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine. Ministry of Public Health
9	Mr. Sumej	Meenapa	Professional Engineer Level 8	Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning
10	Dr. Soparatana	Jarusombat	Asst. Level 8 Public Administration	Thammasat University
11	Dr. Thawilwadee	Bureekul	Director and Research Specialist	Research and Development Dept. King Prajadhipok's Institute
12	Mr. Khian	Nirannoot	Training Officer	Research and Development Dept. King Prajadhipok's Institute

Final Report: Training on Public Participation in Thailand

No.	First name	Last name	Title	Organization
13	Ms.Rattima	Mukda-anan	Chief of Radio Program	Radio Thailand
14	Mrs.Nutthanun	Rajakorn	Public Officer 5	Public Sector Development Group, The Public Relations Department
15	Mr.Prasak	Bandhunark	Director of Management System Development Office	Department of Rural Roads Ministry of Transport
16	Dr.Chamnan	Wattanasiri	International Relations Sub-Div.	Community Development Department Ministry of Interior
17	Mrs. Prempimol	Pimpan	Forest Officer Level 7	Royal Forest Department Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
18	Dr. Krittiya	Atthakorn	Senior Information Specialist of The Constitutional Court	The Constitutional Court
19	Mrs.Yaowaluck	Tangboonyasiri	Public Sector Development Officer 8	Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
20	Mrs.Areepan	Charoensuk	Public Sector Development Officer 7	Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
21	Mrs. Wipada	Trirakarn	Public Sector Development Officer 8	Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
22	Mrs.Pornrat	Sadangharn	Public Sector Development Officer 7	Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
23	MissVipada	Rittirote	Public Sector Development Officer 5	Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
24	Ms. Wanida	Saratikoon	Public Sector Development Officer 5	Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
25	Dr.Lampang	Manmart	Assistant Professor of Faculty of Humanities and social Sciences	Khon Kaen University

Attachment B Spectrum

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Developed by the International Association for Public Participation

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fact sheets ● Web sites ● Open houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public comment ● Focus groups ● Surveys ● Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workshops ● Deliberate polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Citizen Advisory Committees ● Consensus-building ● Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Citizen juries ● Ballots ● Delegated decisions