

## Thai Community Economic Management Strategy under the King's Philosophy \*\*

Ravipa Thummachote\*

### Abstract

This study has three objectives: (1) to explore strategies for managing Thai community economy according to King's Philosophy; (2) to identify the conditions for success in managing Thai community economy under the King's Philosophy; and (3) to present a model of community economic management in Thailand, based on the King's Philosophy. This qualitative research involves in-depth interviews and a document review. Interviews were conducted with a sample group, consisting of community economic leaders and members in Rayong, Amnat Charoen, and Nakhon Si Thammarat Provinces by applying purposive sampling method. The

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\* Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science, Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok 10240, Thailand. Email: Ravipa@rumail.ru.ac.th

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study findings for the strategic objective are 1) the principle of understanding, including (a) promoting awareness and understanding of community issues and context, and (b) fostering awareness of the wisdom within local communities; principles of access, which have six components: (a) supporting community-led analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges; (b) understanding and accepting the role of local wisdom in the community; (c) joint decision-making to address community issues based on local wisdom; (d) collaborative efforts to promote community activities rooted in local wisdom; (e) shared benefits from community development initiatives; and (f) monitoring and evaluating outcomes; and 3) principles of development, which includes (a) valuing community heritage, preserving uniqueness and local wisdom; (b) using culture, tradition, and local wisdom (soft power) as frameworks for problem-solving; (c) promoting self-reliance in sustainable production, consumption, and marketing; and (d) creating prototypes for disseminating knowledge and passing down community knowledge through generations. Furthermore, there are six key conditions for achieving the community economic management in Thailand: (1) physical aspect, (2) economic aspect, (3) transportation aspect, (4) marketing aspect, (5) network creation aspect, and (6) cultural aspect.

**Key words:** Community economic management strategy, King Rama IX's Philosophy.

## Introduction

Due to changes in globalization, concerning the factors driving the sufficiency economy of 3 steps, communities must learn how to manage the effects of globalization in order to survive and to get advantage from it by preparing to build social immunity based on knowing oneself (Phongphit, 2007). Moreover, they should know how to choose what can be effectively used. The philosophy of Sufficiency Economy can be applied to enhance positive impacts and to build immunity against negative impacts as followed: 1) Increase knowledge and capacity of people in the community to know oneself, to have the potential to learn and know about capital, economic and social life of their own community. They should be able to analyze the information they have to understand for the impact of change (Wattanachai, 2015). As a result, they will gain wisdom and knowledge of knowing others, knowing themselves at the level of oneself, family, community, nation, and global level to push for preparedness and know how to take advantage of situations arising in globalization. 2) Support good management both at the level of managing one's own life within the communities and at the level of community enterprises (Department of Community Development, 2005). This may

start with promoting transparency, good accounting, participating in hearing to other people's ideas with fair treatment to all parties and supporting integration and creation of production and distribution networks. The exchange of knowledge and various information technologies should also be promoted, and 3 ) Apply a holistic development strategy for balance and sustainability. This is a strategy that places importance on preparation and aims to maintain balance in development to achieve sustainability in the equal use of capital in all three areas, namely social capital, economic capital, and resource capital. Each locality has different methods to solve problems according to their characteristics, causes and contexts of each area. But it can create a network of cooperation. to achieve joint learning results including linking local and national interests together to achieve sustainable development (Kamonsiripichaiphon, 2006; Thiengkamol, 2011). They can learn from nature and their own experiences by exchanging with others and become a learning community where everyone helps develop each other. There is inheritance to develop local wisdom and build a stable and sustainable society according to the principles of sufficiency economy (Phongphit, 2007). They can use morality and culture, not money, as the guide.

However, in the 21st century, the concept of community development planning is under the trend of the King Rama IX's Philosophy

and Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Therefore, sustainable development is considered as a prototype concept for promoting community's economic development. The community needs to know and understand the principles of community development under the current concept of The King's philosophy and Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (Subcommittee on Sufficiency Economy Driving, 2004; Phongphit, 2007; Chiang Mai University, 2020). Sustainable development consists of three important principles, namely, number 1) the principle of context awareness. The history of the locality that could be thoroughly developed, including the problems, environment, social conditions, economic conditions, and culture of the community, 2) the principle of access. it is about understanding the villagers within the community by thinking together and by analyzing problems and needs of the community to build trust and acceptance for creating community participation in the development process.

This research article is interested in studying community economic management strategies in Thailand. Under the trend of the King Rama IX's Philosophy and is a study of the conditions for success in managing the Thai community economy under the King's Philosophy. Moreover, it will develop a model of community economic management in Thailand in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in accordance with the King's Philosophy.

## Objectives

- 2.1 To examine strategies for community economic management in Thailand according to the King's Philosophy.
- 2.2 To identify the conditions for success in managing community economy in Thailand under the King's Philosophy.
- 2.3 To present a model of community economic management in Thailand, based on the King's Philosophy.

## Methodology

The research on “Thai Community Economic Management Strategy under the King's Philosophy” is qualitative research. The researcher applied in-depth interviews and document survey to answer all 3 objectives. The population are selected based on the success in community economic management by considering the award and announcements from the government that are important consideration. After specific random sampling, there are 3 case studies, consisting 1) Pak Nam Prasae Tourism Community, Klaeng District, Rayong Province (Community Organization Development Institute, 2022) 2) Non Kho Thung Community Enterprise Ban Non Kho Thung Phon Mueang Noi Subdistrict, Hua Taphan District Amnat Charoen Province (Agricultural Resource Systems Research Center Faculty of Agriculture Chiang Mai University,

2022), and 3) the cultural market "Lad Chum Thang Thung Song", Thung Song District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province (Thung Song Municipality, 2022b). The researcher also used the principles of content analysis and synthesis according to reasoning principles.

### **Literature review**

#### **History of community economic management in Thailand**

In the early days of national development planning, power was still centralized (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2003). There were not many social problems at that period. Most Thais are still poor. Most of the knowledge in the field of development still resides among civil servant academics. With such context, the process of national development plans, projects, and measures were managed by bureaucrats and academics in order to accelerate the economic. It was the top down process( Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2013).

However, globalization certainly changed the context in that the world's economy, society, and politics were changing rapidly, and became more complicated. Many things were far less expectable than those in the period before. Therefore, it was necessary to change the planning process from “government service for the people” to “people involvement for the government”. The Office of the National Economic and Social

Development Council also adjusted its roles and methods for preparing development plans (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2013).

To be conducive to the changing conditions of national development planning, the turning point in the planning process clearly began in early 1995 in the drafting process of the 8<sup>th</sup> economic and social development plan. The aims of it was that “[p]eople are the center of development,” and the “isolated” development process needed changing into “holistic development.”

### **The origin of the King's Philosophy**

The King's philosophy is considered a new word. It has recently been widely used. After His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej initiated the initiative in 2016 by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister and Head of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) embraced the application of "King's philosophy" in managing the country (Chan-o-cha, 2016). In the broadcast program "King's philosophy for Sustainable Development," the word "King's philosophy" has become more widely spread together with the knowledge and innovation of King Bhumibol. He developed this concept to help Thai people before 2016. Philosophy of sufficiency economy of water management, cooperative management, soil management regarding forest and environmental management. The

science of art and music, the science of education about innovations such as Royal Rainmaking, Vetiver Grass, and the Kaeng Din Project, development of biodiesel from palm oil, Chaipattana Hydrodynamic Water Turbine or Electricity Generating Turbine with the power of flowing water, etc. However, the research will consider the King's philosophy as an important guideline in developing strategies for managing the Thai community economy under the trend of the King's philosophy.

M. R. Disnadda Diskul, Secretary-General of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation under royal patronage, defined The King's philosophy as going down to study and learn from the community. Let the community tell you what is the problem and what the villagers need. (Man Phatthana Library, 2561)

Nopprak defined the King's Philosophy as the knowledge that comes from wisdom through study, research, and experimentation until it becomes the body of knowledge of King Rama IX (Nopprak, 2018). There were 4,685 royal-initiated projects, including environmental factors important to life, including water resources, the environment, agriculture, transportation and communications, public health, social and educational aspects, etc. All knowledge is guidelines for taking action. "Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy" , "The King's philosophy and "Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy" contribute to sustainable development. For the

subcommittee on Philosophy and Theoretical Education, The King's Philosophy (2017, p. 10) refers to all the knowledge and wisdom of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej that has been bestowed through various methods with the intention of developing, preventing, or solving problems for the benefit and happiness of all humanity in order to be able to live a stable life with peace and sustainability.

From various meanings, it can be concluded that the King's philosophy is knowledge that comes from the wisdom of science, liberal arts, life, culture, and various innovations that arise from His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Knowledge that has been put into practice that bring benefits to society. "*If you know then you can really use it without being toxic or harmful*". (Royal advice In the Royal Graduation Ceremony of Srinakharinwirot University on June 22, 1981 as cited in Chuchat, 2016, pp. 27-33)

The Office of the Special Committee for Coordinating Royal Initiative Projects (ROTC) categorized the royal initiatives into 8 categories as followed (National Statistical Office, 2008):

1. Agricultural projects
2. Environmental projects
3. Public health projects
4. Career promotion projects

5. Water source development projects
6. Transportation / Communication projects
7. Social welfare/education projects
8. Other integrated projects

“Pid Thong Lang Phra” Foundation is carrying on these royal initiatives and is adhering to the knowledge in 6 dimensions: water, soil, agriculture, renewable energy, forests, and environment. The principles adopted by the foundation include understanding, reaching and developing (Pid Thong Lang Phra Foundation Continuing the royal initiative, 2022).

Understanding is to create an understanding of basic information by studying information on every dimension of the community, finding the root of the problem, and collecting knowledge of 3,248 royal initiative nationwide projects.

Reaching is about communication and participation. The aim is to communicate and build understanding and confidence with the community. Together they analyze the problems and needs of the community by allowing the community to participate in the development process as much as possible.

Developing is a matter of learning to develop community potentiality by creating a mentor team, course design and program development, as well

as a study tour to exchange knowledge and community practice. A team of mentors are responsible for giving an advice to the community, following up the result, supporting and evaluating the development.

The heart of the King's philosophy is a science and morality that teaches people to be good, ethical, knowledgeable, sufficient, perseverant, mindful, disciplined, sacrificed, united. (Chuchat, 2016, pp. 27-61)

### **The King's philosophy for sustainable development**

- 3.1 The King's philosophy on water management
- 3.2 The King's philosophy on Cooperatives
- 3.3 The King's philosophy on Soil Management
- 3.4 The King's philosophy on Forest and Environmental Management
- 3.5 The King's philosophy on Innovation
- 3.6 The King's philosophy on New Theory of Agriculture
- 3.7 The King's philosophy on the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy

However, the classification of the King's philosophy has already been mentioned. The objectives are to continue the King's philosophy in developing only science and art. which manifests itself in the form of theories, concepts, innovations, or some royal duties that are no longer

classified in this category, such as innovations or royal initiatives in the fields of art, music, museum management, education, and sports, etc. In addition to sustainable community development, they must also study, analyze, and synthesize royal writings, innovations, and royal advice or other elements in a comprehensive and holistic manner. Therefore, synthesis occurs. or it can be concluded that there are many types of the King's philosophy that covers almost every branch.

#### **Strategy analysis community economic management in Thailand under the King's philosophy.**

From studying information from documents, websites and in-depth interviews, it was found that Thai community economic management strategies under the King's philosophy from Case Study No. 1, Pak Nam Prasae Tourism Community, Klaeng District, Rayong Province (Pak Nam Prasae Subdistrict Municipality. 2022). Case Study No. 2 Non Kho Thung Community Enterprises Ban Non Kho Thung Phon Mueang Noi Subdistrict, Hua Taphan District Amnat Charoen Province and case study 3, cultural market “Laad Chum Thang Thung Song”, Thung Song District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province (Thung Song Municipality. 2022a). There are different and consistent information as follows. Strategy for community economic management in Thailand under the current the King's philosophy'

From the study of the three case studies, the results of the study of community economic management strategies under the King's philosophy can be summarized, there are details as shown

**Table 1 The comparison. Community economic management strategies under the King's philosophy**

Community economic management strategy	Case study 1 Pak Nam Prasae Community Group, Rayong Province	Case study 2 Ruamjai Non Kho Thung Community Enterprise Group Ban Non Kho Thung Amnat Charoen Province	Case study 3 Thung Song Market Community, Nakhon Si Thammarat
Principles of understanding	Being aware and trying to understand community context consists of problem conditions, environment, social conditions	Knowledge and understanding of problem conditions, the environment, social conditions, and community culture	Knowledge and understanding of problems, situations, and community wisdom

	economic conditions and community culture		
Access principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness of necessity and urgency of problems affecting community development</li> <li>-Acceptance and understanding of the target group</li> <li>-Ability to create wisdom to solve problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Acceptance and understanding of the target group</li> <li>-Awareness of the community's strengths</li> <li>-Awareness of the community's weaknesses</li> <li>-Awareness of community opportunities</li> <li>-Awareness of community obstacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Community analysis of community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and obstacles.</li> <li>-Joining together to decide on planning and setting criteria for market management.</li> </ul>
Community economic management strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case study 1 Pak Nam Prasae Community Group, Rayong Province</li> <li>Case study 2 Ruamjai Non Kho Enterprise Group</li> <li>Case study 3 Guidelines for community economic management and planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case study 2 Ruamjai Non Kho Enterprise Group</li> <li>Case study 3 Guidelines for community economic management and planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case study 3 Guidelines for community economic management and planning</li> </ul>

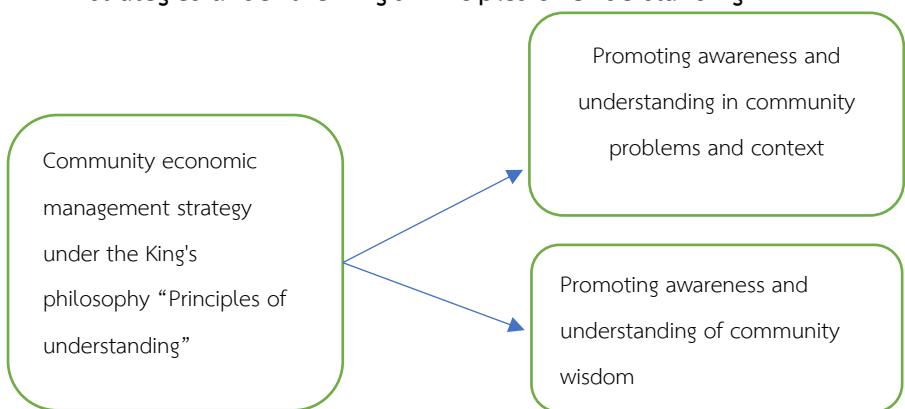
		Thung Amnat Charoen Province	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Joining together to push community activities</li> <li>- Sharing benefits</li> <li>-Monitoring and evaluation to create a strong and sustainable community</li> </ul>
<b>Development principles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Consider the problem together</li> <li>-Participate in corrective actions</li> <li>-Can be self-reliant</li> <li>-Create prototypes for use in disseminating knowledge creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Activities to reduce costs and increase productivity by relying on themselves</li> <li>-Activities to reduce marketing costs by relying on themselves</li> <li>-Activities to increase quantity and price</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Promote knowledge of the community's origins, maintain its uniqueness, and local wisdom.</li> <li>-Promoting the community to have knowledge</li> <li>Understand the context of community problems and support the introduction of cultural traditions and local wisdom</li> </ul>

			becomes a framework for solving problems. -Promote self-reliance in production, consumption, and marketing.
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From the results of the study and analysis of community economic management strategies under the King's philosophy, it was found that all three case studies of the phenomenon of Thai community development management shows management innovation and management of the three civil society organizations. The public and private sectors can reflect the community economic management strategies under the King's philosophy. "Principles of understanding" consist of 2 components: 1) promoting awareness and trying to understand community problems and context include economic conditions, social conditions, political conditions, culture, etc., and; 2) promoting awareness and understanding of the wisdom of local communities. In addition, from considering community economic management strategies. "Principles of Access" consists of 1) Supporting the joint analysis of the community to its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and obstacles; 2) acceptance and understanding of the target group in local wisdom to solve community problems; 3) planning and determining ways to solve community

problems based on local wisdom; 4) pushing community activities based on local wisdom; 5) sharing benefits from community development operations among people in the community, and; 6) monitoring and evaluating the result in order to create a strong and sustainable community. "Principles of Development" consists of 4 elements: 1) promote to Know the value of the origins of the community Maintain the uniqueness of local wisdom; 2) promote the use of culture, traditions, local wisdom as a framework for solving problem; 3) promote sustainable self-reliance in production, consumption, and marketing, and; 4) create prototypes for use in dissemination in knowledge creation, which can pass from generation to generation. The community should have knowledge management in place to serve as a model for transferring it to lead to further practice. Details according to conceptual framework 1, 2 and 3 are as detailed below.

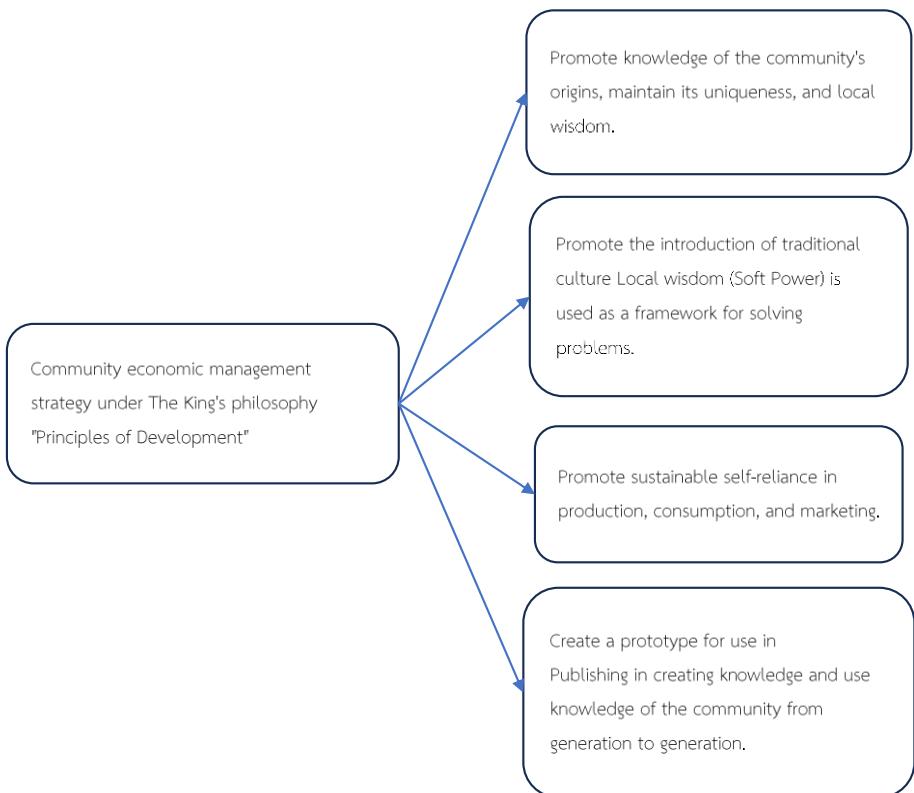
**Conceptual framework 1 shows community economic management strategies under the King's Principles of Understanding**



## Conceptual framework 2 Community economic management strategies under the King's philosophy "Principle of Access"



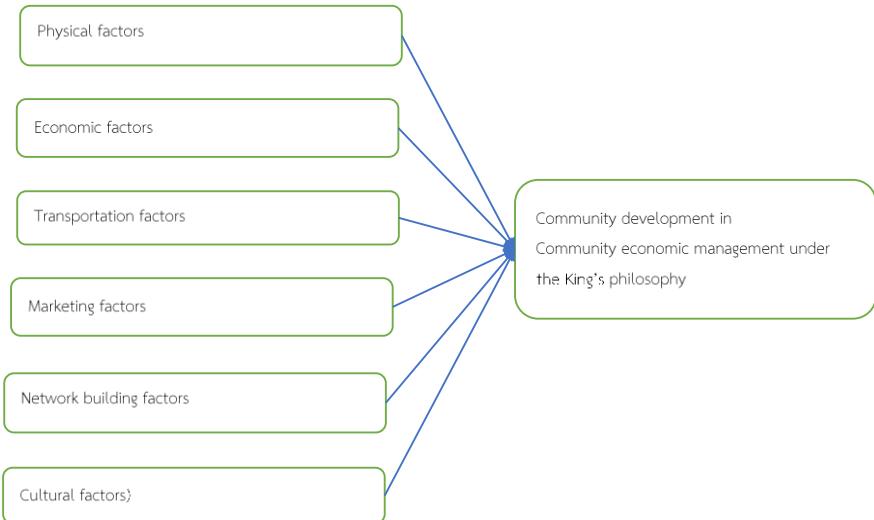
**Conceptual framework 3 Community economic management strategy under The King's philosophy "Principles of Development"**



From the study of the three case studies, it can be concluded that the results of the study of conditions for success in community economic management under the King's philosophy are detailed as shown in the table 2.

**Table 2 A comparison of the results of the study of important conditions for community development in community economic management under the King's philosophy.**

Conditions for community economic management under The King's philosophy	Case study 1 Pak Nam Prasae Community Group, Rayong Province	Case study 2 Ruamjai Non Kho Thung Community Enterprise Group Ban Non Kho Thung Amnat Charoen Province	Case study 3 Guidelines for community economic management and planning
1. Physical factors	★	★	★
2. Economic factors	★		
3. Transportation factors	★		★
4. Marketing factors		★	
5. Network building factors		★	
6. Cultural factors			★



### Conclusion and recommendations

The study of "Thai Community Economic Management Strategy Under the trend of the King's Philosophy" has 3 objectives: 1) to study strategy Community economic management of Thailand under the King's philosophy, 2) to study the conditions for success in community economic management in Thailand according to the King's philosophy and 3) to present a model of Thai community economic management under the trend the King's philosophy. Qualitative research methods include in-depth interviews and document surveys. It was an interview with 3 sample groups of community economic leaders and group members. The

purposive sampling was used by selecting the interviewees who have been successful in community economic management. These were considered on the award and announcements from the government as important criteria. The results of the study are summarized according to the following objectives.

**1. To study community economic management strategy of Thailand under the King's philosophy.**

The study finds that all three case studies show management innovation and management of the three civil society organizations. The public and private sectors can reflect that community economic management strategy according to the King's philosophy. “Principles of understanding” consists of two components, namely

1) Awareness and effort to understand are promoted. Community problems and context include economic conditions, social conditions, political conditions, and culture, etc.

2) Promoting awareness and understanding of the wisdom of local communities “Access principles” consist of 6 elements as followings

2.1) Supporting the joint analysis of the community regarding its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and obstacles.

2.2) Accepting and understanding of the target group in local wisdom to solve community problems.

2.3) Collaborative decision-making to plan and determine solutions to community problems based on local wisdom.

2.4) Working together to push community activities based on local wisdom

2.5) Sharing benefits from community development operations among people in the community.

2.6) Monitoring and evaluating the result to create a strong and sustainable community

“Principles of Development” consists of 4 elements as followed:

1) Promote awareness of the value of the community's unique origins. local wisdom.

2) Promote the use of culture, traditions, local wisdom (Soft Power) as a framework for solving problems.

3) Promote self-reliance in sustainable production, consumption, and marketing.

4) Create a prototype for use in disseminating knowledge. and use the knowledge of the community from generation to generation are the result of such studies. The community should have knowledge management in place to serve as a model for transferring knowledge to lead to further practice.

**2. To study the conditions for success in community economic management in Thailand. Under the trend of the King's scientific ideas**

The study found that there are 6 important conditions, which are physical factors, economic factors, transportation factors, marketing factors, network creation factors, and cultural factors. For example, physical factors includes topography, abundance of natural resources, etc. and transportation factors includes the availability of transportation by land, water, and air. These are the conditions for success in community economic management.

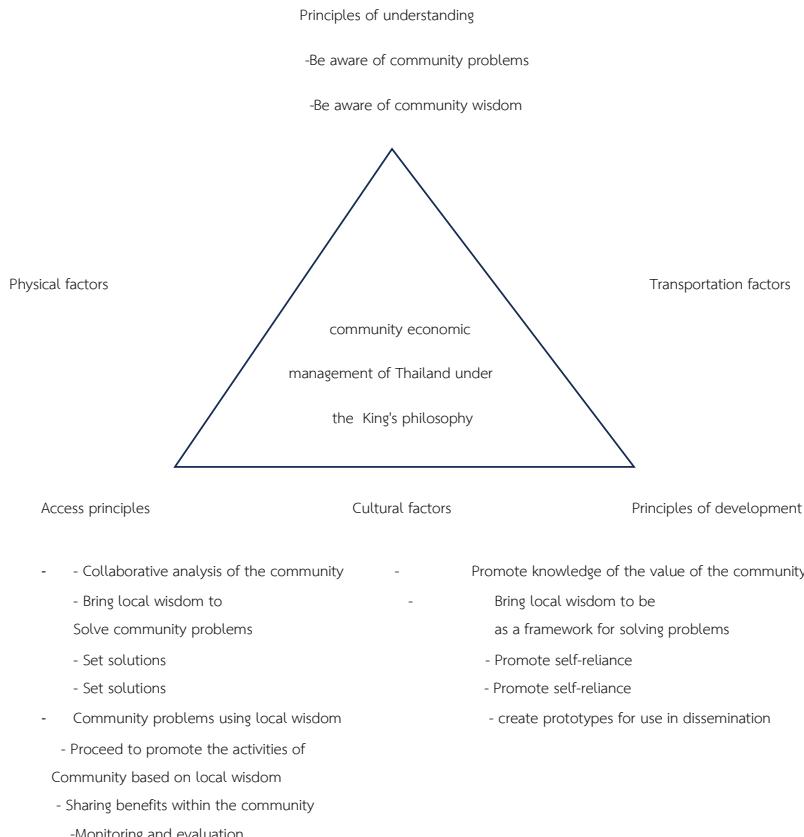
**3. To present a model of community economic management in Thailand under the King's philosophy.**

The study found that Thai community economic management strategies under the King's science concept from Case Study No. 1, Pak Nam Prasae Tourism Community, Klaeng District, Rayong Province, Case Study No. 2 Non Kho Thung Community Enterprises Ban Non Kho Thung Phon Mueang Noi Subdistrict, Hua Taphan District Amnat Charoen Province and case study 3, cultural market “Laad Chum Thang Thung Song”, Thung Song District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

From the study of the three case studies, the researcher proposes a model of community economic management in Thailand under the

King's philosophy, which can be considered as community economic management in Thailand according to the King's philosophy. It consists of 3 principles for managing the Thai community economy, which are 1) the principle of understanding which must be promoted to the community, be aware of the problems of the community, and be aware of community wisdom, 2) access principles with jointly analyzing the community by using local wisdom to solve community problems, by determining guidelines for solving community problems using local wisdom, by pushing for community activities based on local wisdom, and by jointly receiving benefits within the community following up and evaluation, 3) principles of community development, which should promote the knowledge and values of community by using local wisdom as a framework for solving problems, by promoting self-reliance, and by creating prototypes for use in dissemination. However, the study finds that the success level of community economic management of Thailand under the King's philosophy also depends on physical factors such as transportation, and cultural factors of each community. As the detailed in the model below.

## Model of community economic management in Thailand Under the trend of the King's philosophy



### Author's suggestion

#### 1. Guidelines for promoting the principles of understanding

1.1 Promoting awareness and attempting to understand the problem and context of the community, especially in terms of economic conditions, values and social culture including the environment of the community.

1.2 Promoting awareness and understanding of community wisdom or intellectual culture which can be applied to develop a strong community economy

#### 2. Guidelines for promoting accessibility principles

2.1 Supporting and promoting an atmosphere of democracy in the community by specifying citizens participation in community analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and obstacles of the community.

2.2 Surveying community opinion by organizing the public relations for public participation in expressing their opinions to understand the target group in local wisdom for solving sustainable community problems.

2.3 Promoting and pushing community activities based on local wisdom. It is a mechanism for driving community economic development instead of relying on capital groups, such as organizing a community market to trade community products.

2.4 Promoting understanding in receiving benefits within the community with distribution of income opportunities and share income in the community. This may appear in the form of established fund or in the form of a community cooperative, etc.

2.5 Monitoring and Evaluating development operations by cooperating between community leaders and government agencies. It is obviously seen the change of community economic including improving, and solving the problems and promoting the promoting the creation of strong and sustainable communities.

### 3. Guidelines for promoting development principles

3.1 Promoting knowledge management and promote appreciation of the origins of communities that maintain their uniqueness. local wisdom.

3.2 Encouraging villagers in the community to adopt cultural traditions. Local wisdom is used as a framework for solving community problems. It may be to promote the creation of development networks with the government, private sector, civil society, and educational institutions, etc.

3.3 Encouraging people to learn and understand the principles of self-reliance in sustainable production, consumption, and marketing.

3.4 Creating a prototype for use in knowledge dissemination, the community knowledge is conducted from generation to generation through the process of socialization.

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