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Mid-Term Evaluation of "Strengthening urban climate governance for inclusive, resilient, and sustainable societies in Thailand project (SUCCESS)"



Implemented by Thailand Environment Institute (TEI),
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Acronyms

CODI	Community Organization Development and Institute
CSNM	Center for Civil Society and Nonprofit Management
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
SCF	Songkhla Community Foundation
SEZ	Special Economic Zones
SUCCESS	Strengthening urban climate governance for inclusive, resilient and sustainable societies in Thailand
TEI	Thailand Environment Institute
VA	Vulnerability Assessment

Background and Purpose

The Thailand Environment Institute (TEI), in partnership with the Centre for Civil Society and Non-Profit Management (CSNM)/Khon Kaen University, Songkhla Community Foundation (SCF) and University Maastricht (UM) are implementing the project “Strengthening Urban Climate Governance for Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Societies in Thailand”. Funded by the European Union, this project started on 31 October 2019, and will run until 30 October 2024.

The aim of the action is to engage and enhance the adaptive capacity of urban communities in the Northeast and South of Thailand through improved climate governance, state-of-the-art knowledge and shared learning. The project aims to build the knowledge and capacity local communities, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, on urban climate resilience and sustainable development. The action also engaged multi-stakeholders including academics, local government actors and private sector to increase information-sharing and cooperation on climate resilience and urbanization.

At the midpoint of this project, the Tea Leaf Center was engaged by TEI to conduct a mid-term evaluation to assess progress and achievements while providing feedback and making recommendations for improvements.

Methodology

This mid-term evaluation was conducted during August and September 2022, with fieldwork from 22 August to 2 September, 2022. The evaluation was conducted by the Tea Leaf Center, a social enterprise research training and consulting company based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The evaluation was led by Aileen Thomson, Director of the Tea Leaf Center, and assisted by Rapeepun Maoyos, Research and Training Assistant at the Tea Leaf Center.

Evaluation Questions

This evaluation uses OECD and EU evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, GESI and sustainability, to assess the progress of the project toward its objectives. As this is a mid-term evaluation, impact is not included as a separate criteria, though potential areas of impact are flagged in the report. The evaluation uses a primarily qualitative approach to measure progress, including identifying opportunities and barriers, and provide recommendations to promote effective implementation of the remainder of the project.

Data Collection Methods

The evaluation consisted of:

1. Document Review, to get information about the project and understand the context of each study area, including reports from the Thailand Environment Institute (TEI) and partners, the project logframe, workshop materials, SUCCESS newsletters and Vulnerability Assessment (VA) reports;
2. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), to know about the project implementation achievements, challenges and issues related to management. Questionnaires were created for each stakeholder group and then tailored based on the individual’s involvement in the project. KIIs were divided into two parts as follows:
 - 2.1. KIIs with the project staff including TEI, Songkhla Community Foundation (SCF) and Center for Civil Society and Nonprofit Management (CSNM); and

- 2.2. KIIs with the key stakeholders including government officials, academics and community leaders from project areas.
3. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were divided into two groups as follow:
 - 3.1. The VA teams, with timeline and power mapping activities applied through the discussion. These participatory activities were used to collect information of process and results, and relationships with relevant stakeholders.
 - 3.2. The project staff, discussion and power mapping activities were applied through the conversation. These activities were used to collect overview and background of the project, and relationships with relevant stakeholders.

Sample Selection

The SUCCESS project was conducted in the Northeast and Southern part of Thailand, including six cities in Northeast (Khon Kaen city and Ban Phai in Khon Kaen province; Sam Phrao and Nong Samrong in Udon Thani province; Sra Khrai and Nong Khai city in Nong Khai province), and six cities in the Southern part (Boyang, Kuan Lung, Padang Besar and Phatong in Songkhla province; Tanod Duan, Phatthalung province; and La-ngu, Satun province).

For the SUCCESS Mid-term evaluation, the evaluation team selected three case studies from each part (total six case studies) which are Khon Kaen city, Nong Khai city and Sa Krai in the Northeast; and Boyang, Phatong and Kuan Lung in the South. These case studies were selected using the following criteria:

- 1) Diversity in stakeholders involved in the vulnerability assessment
- 2) Diversity of issues addressed, e.g., water access and water-related disaster, infrastructure development, and others
- 3) Locations are accessible to the Evaluation Team within the timeline of the evaluation.

KIIs were held with thirteen interviews with fifteen interviewees, selected based on their involvement in the project, particularly the selected case studies, and for diversity among government, academic and community leaders. Overall, three KIIs were conducted with the partner organizations (one each from TEI, CSNM and SCF), three were local government actors, two were academic actors and seven were community leaders. There were eight FGDs held with a total of forty-one participants which consisted of fifteen men and twenty-six women. Of this, thirty-five were VA teams (thirteen men and twenty-two women) and six were the project staff (two men and four women).

Table 1: Details of persons interviewed for the evaluation

Type of interview and stakeholder	Relevant Partner Organization	Total Interviews	Total Interviewees	Gender Ratio
KIIs – Project Staff (3 interviewees)	TEI/national level (remote)	1	1	1 F
	CSNM/ regional level	1	1	1 M
	SCF/ regional level	1	1	1 M
KIIs – local government (3 interviewees)	Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), Northeastern Office, Khon Kaen	1	1	1 F
	Chaloem Phrakiat Health Station, Phatong sub-district	1	1	1 F

	Meteorological Center of South East Coast, Songkhla	1	1	1 M
KIIs – academic (2 interviewees)	Lecturer of Nakhon Phanom University	1	1	1 M
	Teacher of Learning Center (University of Life), Nong Khai Province	1	1	1 F
KIIs – community leader (7 interviewees)	Mittraphap community leader, Khon Kaen city	1	2	2 F
	Sra Khai community, Nong Khai	1	2	1 M/1 F
	Phatong community, Songkhla	1	1	1 F
	Laem Son On community, Bo Yang, Songkhla	1	1	1 F
	Khlong Tam Phrutsachat Community, Kuan Lung, Songkhla (remote)	1	1	1 M
Total		13 Interview s	15 Interviewe es	6 M/9 F
FGDs – Vulnerability Assessment Team (35 participants)	Khon Kaen city team	1	3	1 M/2 F
	Nong Khai team	1	6	3 M/3 F
	Sra Khrai team	1	8	2 M/6 F
	Phatong team	1	8	5 M/3 F
	Boyang team	1	7	7 F
	Kuan Lung team	1	3	2 M/1 F
FGDs – project staff (6 participants)	CSNM	1	3	1 M/2 F
	SCF	1	3	1 M/2 F
Total		8 interview s	41 interviewee s	15 M/26 F

Evaluation Findings

Main Findings

Relevance

- The project was relevant within each community because it identified problems from within the community, and chose topics based on problems in the areas identified by CSOs, government actors and academics who work in the community.
- Targeting civil society in urban areas is important/relevant because civil society is not strong in urban areas – especially northeast – so it is good to build their capacity.
- The issues of urbanization and climate change are relevant – especially urbanization due to changes happening within the cities and communities included in the project. Climate change is also relevant but participants had a harder time seeing relevance of climate change.
- TEI, partners and community groups did a good job involving relevant local stakeholders, but the level of success in getting those stakeholders' cooperation, especially government representatives, depended on existing relationships of the partners and VA team members.
- Many of the relevant agencies make decisions/policy at provincial or national level, so there is a need to involve provincial- and national-level stakeholders in order to solve some of the problems identified in the VA.
- The project adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic well by moving activities online as much as possible. There were inevitably delays, but the delegation of responsibility to regional partners helped mitigate disruptions since those partners could still make visits and small meetings, depending on the phase of the pandemic. In the end, this appears to have strengthened the partners' independence and ownership of the project.

Effectiveness

- Local CSOs and VA teams have increased their knowledge of urban climate resilience and sustainable development, though there are still gaps especially around climate change. Local COSs and informal groups have increased their knowledge of the problems in their communities related to urbanization and the environment, including a deeper understanding of the root causes and differential impacts of those problems on different vulnerable groups. All Vulnerability Assessment teams reported increasing their own knowledge of these issues.
- In the end, the partners and VA teams were able to create tools that allowed them to collect relevant data and learn important information about urban climate resilience and vulnerability in their communities. Some were more effective tools than others. However, the process was quite difficult for all involved, and the groups, along with the partners and the Technical Facilitators, had to make a lot of adaptations to the tools. Despite this, many on the VA teams still had a hard time understanding how to ask questions to get at the concepts; much of the tool design was done by academics or lead partners
- Despite starting from different levels, all VA teams increased their capacity to conduct vulnerability assessments. – the COVID-19 pandemic shortened the time available to learn and conduct the Vulnerability Assessments, which made it more difficult especially for less-

experienced teams. Some ended up relying more on Technical Facilitators and partners to draft tools, conduct research and/or do analysis. Even without COVID, some teams likely would have struggled to learn the concepts and tools, and to conduct the assessments.

- Stakeholders mostly agree that the Vulnerability Assessments have developed new information that is “not scientific, but reflects the real situation of the community.” These can be seen as in-depth case studies that are useful for interventions in that community, but might have less applicability outside the community.
- Members of VA teams now know where to go for specific problems, and have learned how to identify solutions in some cases. They can identify advocacy points and interventions that would improve the situations in their communities, and some have a closer relationship with key stakeholders in their communities and relevant local government officials.
- Factors affecting relevance include the attitude and participation of formal community leaders, which government agency’s participation is required to address the specific problems in the community, and the diversity and cohesion of the Vulnerability Assessment team.

Efficiency

- Many delays and outside factors impacted the efficiency of this project. First among these is the COVID-19 pandemic, which slowed implementation of the project because it prevented in-person meetings, travel between provinces, and data collection. Other delays came from delays in transferring funds from the EU to TEI, which impacted partners’ ability to conduct activities.
- During the Vulnerability Assessment process, it took some teams longer than anticipated to build cooperation and communication between the team members, and it took most teams longer than anticipated to localize the tools provided for the data collection. In addition, many teams had difficulties writing up the results of the reports, which led to delays and partners and Technical Facilitators had to help a lot in the writing process.

Sustainability

- While it is difficult to assess sustainability at the mid-point of the project, there are some indications of increased capacity of partners and VA team members that can help promote sustainability in this project. Overall, most VA teams feel confident to conduct a similar assessment in the future, but not without some technical support from partners and/or academics.
- Groups that have experience working together in the past may be more able to conduct vulnerability assessments and similar work in the future, as may groups with individual members experienced in research and other similar community work.

Coherence

- Promoting coherence with other organizations, including EU-funded projects, and government agencies was difficult in this project because there are few others working on urbanization and climate change in Thailand. Many CSOs focus on rural areas, or approach

climate change and urbanization from a technocratic approach and are less interested in social vulnerabilities.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

- This project addressed gender equality through ensuring equal participation of women in project activities, but lacked a broader gender perspective and incorporation of a gender analysis of the impacts of climate change and urbanization.
- In terms of social inclusion, the Vulnerability Assessment teams included assessments of most of the vulnerable groups in their communities, including elderly, disabled and single mothers, but most teams included in this assessment did not include more marginalized communities, especially migrants from other parts of Thailand and from other countries in the region.

Relevance

This project was highly relevant, as it addressed pressing needs in the target areas and filled a gap in regards to both support for urban CSOs and communities, and adding a consideration of social vulnerability to work on climate change and urbanization in Thailand. However, a few factors limited relevance of the approach, including the centralization of Thai policymaking, which limits the scope that locally-based action can have.

Responding to identify the problems in the target areas

The project was relevant and responsive to the needs of the participating communities because it identified problems from within the community, and chose topics based on problems in the areas specified by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), government and academics who work in the community.

To identify the problem of each city, before the implementing project, TEI, CSNM and SCF visited local government organizations, CSOs and community leaders in the target area to familiarize themselves with the communities; ask about problems in the area related to urban development, impact of climate change, the inequality and vulnerability of the urban poor; and invite key stakeholders to be part of the project.

Moreover, the Shared Learning Dialogue approach helped involve relevant stakeholders in understanding and adapting the project to their specific contexts. In the Northeast, there was a series of Urban Dialogue workshops. The participants consisted of network partners in academia, civil society/community organizations and the local government sectors. It aimed to talk about problems and solutions from urban growth, local town planning, and disaster management. A meeting was also held to develop a draft proposal for a vulnerability assessment project. This included VA teams from the areas, an academic team, and the CSNM team, discussing the issue, appropriate tools and methods for assessing vulnerabilities in each area. In the South, a series of Southern Academic Network meetings were held in the area to clarify the understanding of the project, exchanging problems, situations, ways to do activities together, including jointly developing the Vulnerability Assessment process in each location.

Such activities create engagement for each team in the target area including suggestions which were derived from the experience of the participants directly.

“...The VA Team is the one pointing out what they want to focus on which areas of study and then design the tool, how to store information.” – Partner staff

“...Together with many parties from both TEI, SCF and CSOs from many sectors, we got to know the main problems related to drought and high temperature. ...” – Member of a Vulnerability Assessment team

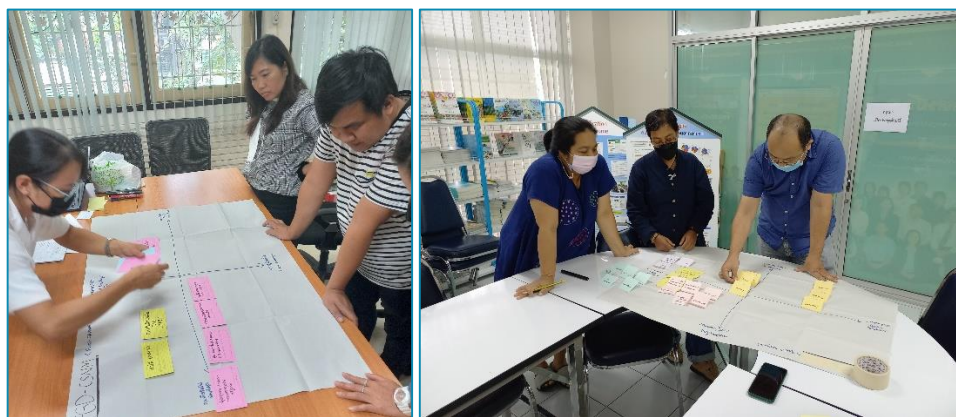


Figure 1: Focus Group Discussions with Partner Organizations

Responding to the need of strengthen the VA teams

Targeting civil society in urban areas is highly relevant because civil society is not strong in urban areas. The SUCCESS project has been strengthening the civil society by supporting the partners in each region, and in each community by establishing a working team in each target area. Some areas were already grouped together, while some areas did not have a concrete working group. The entry of the project was therefore considered to strengthen the working group of the target community very well.

“Civil society in urban areas is quite weak ... In urban areas, the strongest actors are government and business.” – Partner staff

Firstly, the establishment of the VA team, the project takes into account that the people in the team have to consist of various network groups such as the government, academia, and civil society sectors to strengthen and connect between multiple sectors. Moreover, the entry of the project helped with the team formation. Some area members were already working together but there was no official team which came from many sectors.

“...CSNM recommended that the working team should be chosen from representatives of communities, municipalities, women's groups and seniors by picking up 5-6 people. Our team initially didn't have one. We started to form a team when this project came in...” – Member of a Vulnerability Assessment team

Secondly, some VA groups also mentioned that they have not had the opportunity for outside support. Due to some reason; for example, their work may conflict with the government, their groups are not very large, the team is just formed and not quite well known. Therefore, they did not receive attention or assistance from outside organizations. So, they are grateful for this opportunity to develop their capacity. Moreover, project management, especially in finance where some areas do not have experience in this field, can be extended to work on other projects in the future.

“Our group is doing [work by] ourselves without any support from any agency, whether a budget or academic or law. We felt like we were isolated and thought about how we can expand our network. We are always looking for some organization to work as a network to make our work worldwide and get more support in financial, academic, laws, etc.” – Member of Vulnerability Assessment team

“They already have some duties and roles. As soon as we [SUCCESS project] entered, it’s like having a partner join in. So, they became more enthusiastic. Our project has a budget for them to do with it, this also helps them run their project...” – Partner staff

Thirdly, some VA groups have taken part in academic research projects but have not learned to conduct research by themselves. Thus, the project gives these local organizations the opportunity to develop their capabilities and find ways to deal with local problems.

“When compared to government projects, this project helps and is closer to us. If government agency projects, they might even give some money and come up with a project for themselves which does not meet the needs. ... Just give the money to use and run out of money and throw it away. But SUCCESS, they are a partner and help us solve problems...” – Community leader involved in the project

Responding to the current issues

The issues of urbanization and climate change are relevant – especially urbanization due to changes happening within the cities and communities included in the project. Urban expansion is an issue that vulnerable groups in the study area are interested in because it affects their livelihood, especially those who do not have land ownership, such as those who live in the area of the State Railway of Thailand, the Treasury Department and land owned by the private sector. Another issue is the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in community forest areas causing villagers to not be able to use the resources in the area and the construction of industrial plants may have a long-term impact on the health of people in the community as well.

The project helps vulnerable people who already have experience with natural disasters, especially floods, to improve the coping system. The project also increases their understanding of the root causes and impacts of these natural disasters, as well as other factors that can worsen or mitigate their impact.

“...Therefore, we think that by doing projects on climate change, we can prepare ourselves for those risks. We may have previous coping experience. But when it actually happened, it was an unsystematic arrangement...” – Member of a Vulnerability Assessment team

“...At the area of the department store located, there was a large pond which was a catchment area. Before the coming of the Central department store and railway upgrades, water would flow and floods [would end] in a short time...” – Member of a vulnerability assessment team

Climate change is also relevant, but participants had a harder time seeing the relevance of climate change. Some communities had more urgent issues, like housing, that made it more difficult to see the connection with climate change.

“Climate change and vulnerability is a discourse that local governments cannot fully engage with because it’s still outside. We can approach the same problem, urban problem, with

another discourse. I don't know if they're talking about low carbon cities or something, but they're talking about the same problem.” – Partner staff

Participation of agencies at the provincial and national level

Governance in Thailand is highly bureaucratic, and some agencies and functions are highly centralized. To solve the problems mentioned in this project, in addition to the participation of local stakeholders, it also requires cooperation from agencies that can make decisions and set up measures to solve problems that arise. Many of these key agencies center policymaker and rule-making at the central level.

“Submitting a letter requesting an interview with the government relevant agencies takes a long time to cooperate...We have to collect [data] from many sources, especially from the government which has its own territory, which seems to be less cooperative...” – Member of a Vulnerability Assessment team

“...The development structure in our country is centralized. Therefore, policies are primarily set centrally...” – Partner staff

TEI, partners and community groups did a good job involving relevant local stakeholders, but the level of success in getting those stakeholders' cooperation, especially government representatives, depended on existing relationships of the partners and VA team members. Many of the relevant agencies make decisions/policy at provincial or national level, so there is a need to involve provincial- and national-level stakeholders in order to solve some of the problems identified in the Vulnerability Assessments.

“The ... Railway Office's task is only to maintain the railroad tracks. When there is an overall problem, we must go to Bangkok. They won't solve minor problems...” – Member of a Vulnerability Assessment team

“[The Treasury Department is] the owner of this community land, related to the law. If there is a problem, they will come; however, if not, they will not come...In the future, it relates to the community, so we want them to join a lot... We would like to invite them to join us to exchange knowledge. When they come to know our problem, they may help to promote and solve it. Now it's like we don't know about them, they don't know about us...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member



Figure 2: Focus Group Discussions with Sra Khrai VA team

Adapting over COVID-19 pandemic

The first part of the operation period of the SUCCESS project, starting from November 2019 - October 2024 (5 years), overlapped the period of the COVID-19 epidemic, which began in December 2019. During that time the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand has issued a notice in the Government Gazette, effective from March 1, 2020, designating the novel coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 as the 14th dangerous communicable disease¹, including measures to prevent the spread of the epidemic such as closing the city, refraining from traveling, requiring social distancing, wearing a mask, etc. The epidemic has had a significant impact on project activities that require ongoing meetings, talks and outreach.

However, the project adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic well by moving activities online as much as possible. There were inevitably delays, but the delegation of responsibility to regional partners helped mitigate disruptions since those partners could still make visits and small meetings, depending on the phase of the pandemic. In the end, this appears to have strengthened the partners' independence and ownership of the project.

“During the Covid, our activities were stopped for 3-4 months because the area didn't allow outsiders to enter. However, we communicated via the phone and Line application. During that time, we did some activities that we could only do.” – Partner staff

“...A lot of impact, multiple zoom meetings and it takes time to cause delay but not to be an obstacle. Sometimes we go to the area but we couldn't get infected with covid...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

¹ Poovorawan, Y. (n.d.). *Measures to control the outbreak of the government*. Retrieved 7 October 2022, from <https://learningcovid.ku.ac.th/course/?c=8&l=1>



Figure 3: Key Informant Interview with Kuan Lung community leader

Effectiveness²

At the mid-point of implementation, the project has been effective at increasing the knowledge and capacity of local CSOs and VA teams, though some gaps remain including understanding of climate change (compared to other environmental issues) and a shared understanding of vulnerability. The project has also increased the capacity of CSOs and community members to conduct Vulnerability Assessments and created locally-appropriate tools and new locally-produced knowledge. However, effectiveness in each location appears to depend on factors including the level of cooperation of formal community leaders, the capacity and coherence of the team, and the relevant government agencies whose cooperation is required for the specific problems facing the communities (some agencies are less cooperative and/or more centralized, limiting effectiveness).

Outcome 1: Application of urban climate resilience and sustainable development concepts and methods integrated into local urban policy planning processes

Output 1.1: Strengthened knowledge capacity of local CSOs in urban climate resilience and sustainable development.

Climate change and urbanization

One of the SUCCESS activities during the first year is about learning, and the evaluation showed improved understandings of climate impacts, the implications of urbanization and the linkages of climate impacts and urbanization. The evaluation considered that the local CSOs and informal groups have increased their knowledge of the problems in their communities related to urbanization and the environment, including a deeper understanding of the root causes and differential impacts of those problems on different vulnerable groups. However, there are still gaps in participants' knowledge, especially related to climate change.

In the Northeast, there was a forum under the theme "Growth of the City, local town plan and disaster management" with the objective to present the project including exchanging learning experiences, building a network that leads to the implementation of future projects. This was to allow network partners and other stakeholders to understand the climate change situation arising from urban

² Note: Outcome 3 (City-level evidence-based knowledge, community vulnerability and urban climate governance practices integrated into urban development and climate action planning processes) and Outcome 5 (Transferable approaches and methodologies for urban climate governance adopted by local governments across the country) are not included in this evaluation as they work on those objectives had not started at the time of the evaluation.

development and the context of the study area. Moreover, in the south, the learning process was organized workshops and meetings jointly with academic teams and civil society teams, including a team of academics which mentors continually visiting the area by providing knowledge of the city and urbanization linked to climate change and people affected by this problem.

“...In the past, we knew there was a problem in the area, but we didn't understand what they called it. Through the project, we find that everything has been gathered into the name of vulnerability including water and waste problems...We never know what vulnerability causes. We got to know through this project.” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“The Community Forest Conservation Group, in the past, only spoke about industrial detention and urban development. But now they are starting to talk about natural ecosystems, flood prevention, preserving forests to create food and water resources. There was a lot of enthusiasm. In the case of Mittraphap Mankong Cooperative, from the past they only talked about the garbage problem but now they started talking about the flood.” – Partner staff

The evaluation also noted that participants learned about the environment and how urbanization impacts the problems they are experiencing, and have increased their ability to articulate this connection in order to counter policies and practices based on considerations of economic gain, not sustainability and climate resilience. We believe that raising awareness about this connection will have a positive effect on solving problems in each area in the future such as the cause of the problem, the solution and the policy to be presented to the policy issuing authority.

“I want my children to use this resource again. I don't want to have an impact, not only us, but also the people of the world to get good weather and get good products from our community. I want it to be the last option to be destroyed...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“If we are not aware of climate change now, the danger will come...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

Many participants understand climate change to include all environmental problems (ex. polluted water, trash), though some are increasing in their understanding of climate change specifically. Moreover, participants do appear to have learned a lot about environmental and natural resource management.

“In fact, communities will look at both climate change, the environment, quality of life and the vulnerability in an inseparable dimension. We try to connect climate change to life...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“They know when it will happen and where but they did not see that situation as climate change. They know that this season there will be too much rain and then there will be flooding. ...They know it as a form of the phenomenon but did not look at the cause of the problem...” – Partner staff

Vulnerability

The evaluation considered the concept of vulnerability which is very broad, the word vulnerability is also not too clear to understand whether which is urban vulnerability and which is climate

vulnerability. Therefore, stakeholders had different definitions and they also mentioned that they had trouble reaching a shared understanding.

“...At first, the talk was not clear because the project was open wide. When we come to assess, it must be connected to what causes the limit. The vulnerability is not stable. What we want to learn further, we would like to summarize what the vulnerability in the area or the main criteria should be and clear what vulnerability was in our project...” – Partner staff

“...if the assessor level is a CSO, there may be a very limited and challenging understanding of the definition and scope of vulnerability...” – Academic involved with the project

“The vulnerability is quite an abstraction that is difficult to communicate to understand... The word "problem" in comparison with the SUCCESS language is "vulnerability". When we talk about the problem, there is a lot of excitement that we want to exchange...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member “About the “vulnerability” that is not well understood. The impact of vulnerability on living conditions and the locality are difficult...” – Partner staff

CSOs and VA teams appear to have a good understanding of vulnerability as it applies to health and the physical environment. However, in terms of social and political vulnerability – including marginalization and how power dynamics impact vulnerability – received less focus. Although social information is kept in the vulnerability assessment report of each area, there are not many in-depth analyzes. For example, collecting data on gender vulnerability. Almost all study areas shows that women are more affected than men because they have to work closely with their house and encounter problems while men working outside. However, from the work point of view, it assessed the vulnerability in which the number of women and men is not balanced or that the participants represent only certain groups. This dimension did not look deep enough to understand why or what are the obstacles and how we can solve it to allow all groups to participate.

“...Women are more affected by climate change than men. Women have more responsibilities than men. In decision-making power to solve problems, women are more powerful because they are the ones who live and are affected by problems. So, there are more solutions than men, for example, women have to live and raise children, if the house is hot [women have to solve] ...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member



Figure 4: Focus Group Discussions with Boyang VA team

Output 1.2: New tools, methodologies and indicators tested, refined and adopted by local civil society organisations

In regards to the output 1.2, the evaluation found that in the end, the partners and VA teams were able to create tools that allowed them to collect relevant data and learn important information about urban climate resilience and vulnerability in their communities. Some were more effective tools than others. Technical Facilitators have been established as academic teams in both areas who will assist each VA team.

However, the process was quite difficult for all involved, and the groups, along with the partners and the Technical Facilitators, had to make a lot of adaptations to the tools. Despite this, many on the VA teams still had a hard time understanding how to ask questions to get at the concepts; much of the tool design was done by academics or lead partners. As for the tools section, there was a rough framework designed by TEI, regional partners and Technical Facilitators. Then brought it to the community to add details in that tool, such as questionnaires, interviewee groups, etc. As mentioned above, each team had a different level of work experience. Therefore, the mentors, regional partners and Technical Facilitators, were needed to help design the tool. The use of tools that were not designed by themselves and the language was academic which was quite difficult to understand. This causes problems in using the tool for some teams.

“...It was the official language. When we went to a survey to collect information, we must speak in unreadable terms. It takes techniques such as comparing the past and now and giving examples...” – Vulnerability Assessment team

“...The weakness of this project is the tools. They should have the working group design it themselves because we must be the users of that tool...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...We had a process of understanding the questionnaire among the team. We would talk first, then the team would make their own understanding. Maybe the team would write their words that are not academic words...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member



Figure 5: Group photo with Sra Kbrai VA team

Output 1.3: Strengthened capacities of local civil society organisations to conduct climate vulnerability assessments

Despite starting from different levels, all of the VA teams increased their capacity to conduct vulnerability assessments.

“We have achieved a level where the potential of the community has increased. We start collecting data by ourself, have leadership and expand knowledge to friends in the community to be enthusiastic...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...There is confidence in working in a team system. Working as a team from many communities in the same district are people in the city where different people live but the project brings people together voluntarily for their own community...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

The Vulnerability Assessments strengthened members’ capacity to engage within their communities, and gave them and the Technical Facilitators deeper knowledge of the problems within the community.

“...We have seen more information about the situation in their areas. They have done by themselves, such as collecting data, and they also have closer relationships with the people in the community...” – Partner staff

“...We got to meet and get real information. Some things we know as an overview, when we meet the people, we get to know the truth, see the truth empirically, see with the eyes, and exchange...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

One challenge was a lack of time for team-building to learn difficult concepts and to conduct the field research. If the project can allow time to get to know each other after having a team set up in each area. It might be good to let the team learn from each other, share work experience, and make work more efficient. It was because some teams have never worked together before, and some teams are gatherings of people from different communities/organizations/religions, etc.

“...Initial scheduling may be more than one year because the team is new and takes time to get to know each other...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...it is too heavy to provide academic tools to the public due to less time...” – Partner staff

The partners and Technical Facilitators spent a lot of time and effort mentoring and teaching the VA teams, which strongly contributed to their success. They are intermediary to understand all knowledge from the TEI first, then relay it to the network to understand. They also could speak in a way that villagers could understand and helped translate academic concepts to be more practical.

“... [partner organization] acts as an intermediary to understand as much as possible first and then relay it to the network to understand...” – Partner staff

Writing the Vulnerability Assessment was difficult for partners, who often relied on outside support for that part.

“...Under this project, reporting was quite difficult like doing a thesis, but the project did not expect that much detail...” – Partner staff

“...The SPSS data analysis program, the VA teams cannot do it by themselves. They need to find someone to help...” – Partner staff



Figure 6: Focus Group Discussions with Kuan Lung VA team

Output 1.4: New evidence-based knowledge and community-level data of vulnerable and marginalised groups generated and documented

Stakeholders mostly agree that the Vulnerability Assessments have developed new information that is “not scientific, but reflects the real situation of the community.” These can be seen as in-depth case studies that are useful for interventions in that community, but might have less applicability outside the community.

The data collected includes new information about vulnerability, especially physical and environmental vulnerability. However, there was less analysis of political and social vulnerability.

The VA teams can explain this new information well, and the information is in reports. The VA team members are people in the community plus doing surveys and collecting data themselves. Therefore, they gain more in-depth information and can explain information better through their own experiences and collecting data. Moreover, the information can be used in the plan of the local government and community organization council which is considered a good start for villagers to participate with the government in future development plans.

“...The in-depth interview clearly reflects that the environmental problem is from climate change. It is from the changing of the development in the area where does not gather design to in overview. Moreover, preventing damage in economic areas from flooding is a solution to flooding from one place and causing another place flooding problem. These problems are the community reflection...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“The information from VA to develop a community organization council plan and make economic and capital proposals. Because Sra Khrai subdistrict produces organic rice and vegetables. Therefore, we will use this information to present [about our work].” – Community leader involved in the project

“The information can be used to contact the government...we held a local community meeting on the issue of the problem. As we dig deep from the discussion, on this 6th of September, there will be a meeting to find out how to operate, form and manage in the

community on various problems that arise with administrative, municipal, public health and other relevant agencies take part in the process in organizing a system to solve problems and develop further. In the previous group meeting, we called in government agencies such as electricity and railways in the context of urban communities to come to listen and give suggestions as a guideline for solving the problem as well ...” – Community leader involved in the project

However, the reports are very long and technical, and it is unclear whether this new information is available in a more accessible version between a verbal presentation (and, for some groups, a PowerPoint) and a long, technical report.

“The data is now a database. It was sent to SUCCESS as a report, sent to other agencies that can solve community problems such as Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office, the municipality and the CODI. For the community, it hasn't been printed yet... it was sent it via Line for a summary presented...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member



Figure 7: Focus Group Discussions with Phatong VA team

Outcome 2: Increase participation and consultations of civil society and local communities in national and local urban development and climate action planning processes

***Output 2.1:** Strengthened linkages and relationship between civil society organisations, communities, state-actors and the business sector*

The evaluation found that members of VA teams now know where to go in case of specific problems, and are more confident to approach government actors. Creating learning about vulnerabilities assessed by participating in tool making, collecting data from community and assessed by the community itself, VA team who have experience in community problems gain a deeper understanding of their community issues and understanding of climate change and vulnerability. It also encourages VA teams to relate these to their problems and get to know the cause of such problems. This gives the VA teams the confidence to use the data and bring the information to discuss with other agencies including the local government better.

“We use the information to communicate with relevant agencies to help them solve problems such as sub-district council members and the municipality...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“From my point of view, this project has enhanced the potential of the leaders. Let the VA team dare to speak and dare to approach. It's a matter of communication that we try to do. The local authority does not want to feel ashamed. When we post, they will come to help... bring information about flooding in the community to talk to the municipality without fear, this is a benefit that we can get...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“Going to the government agency, the villagers did not dare, but SUCCESS used the organization to bring the villagers in...” – Academic involved with the project

Connections with the business sector are less developed, and few VA teams involved business actors. Some did involve factory owners in their communities such as Learning Center for Enhancement of Agricultural Product Production³, Sra Khai sub district which has their products of organic agricultural group in the area such as brown rice, etc.; SCF, as a concept of the Global Community Foundation is the elements must come from the private, government and civil society sectors, include the Thai Chamber of Commerce which was established by a group of local merchants and business people⁴ to be part of SCF. However, in the case of SCF, the private sector mainstream concept of development is different from CSOs. They still believe that big projects boost the economy. Therefore, the private sector is trying to push big projects in the area, such as the Chana Industrial Estate, ports, transportation, which are related to infrastructure. From the viewpoint of the private sectors, investment and development of the area make the economy better.

“The private sector has just come to work together because before, we all worked differently. The private sectors had a gathering under the Thai Chamber of Commerce.” – Partner staff

In some cases, the relationship between CSOs, communities, state actors and (in a few cases) the business sector has already improved due to interactions as part of the VA process:

“We are now setting up line groups in the SUCCESS project to share information about the weather as it may affect the lives and property of villagers, such as heavy rain or storms, and warnings have been issued.” – Government actor involved in the project

“The directors of the Chamber of Commerce who participated with us started to understand the perspectives of local people and the dimensions of impact, as well as to understand more about sustainable development.” – Partner staff

“Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office have more knowledge as they get more information from us. And very actively, they ask us to create a suggestion plan and will include it in the provincial plan.” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

³ Department of Agricultural Extension. (n.d.). *Learning Center for Enhancement of Agricultural Product Production*. Retrieved 8 October 2022, from <https://www.opsmoac.go.th/ict-conference-files-421291791796>

⁴ Thai Chamber of Commerce. (n.d.). *About the Thai Chamber of Commerce*. Retrieved 8 October 2022, from <https://thaichamber.org/about>

“We have coordinated with the municipality as well. The municipality allows us to report on the impact of vulnerable groups in the community, what problems are there in our community in order to be included in the municipality's development plan.” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

From the interviews during the evaluation, we found that there are factors that influence success in improving linkages include:

First, the attitude and participation of community leaders, both formal and informal, in each area is important. Having a strong leader who can bring the villagers together and leave no one behind will lead to solving problems in the future. Involvement of formal leaders can also improve communication between the community and government, and encourage government officials' participation in the Vulnerability Assessments. For example, the subdistrict headman (Thai: Kamnan) in Phatong was very involved in the VA team, and supported the process in the community. This allowed the VA team to access relevant government offices and helped build relationships and cooperation between government and community. In contrast, in Khon Kaen one relevant elected community leader is reportedly living outside the community and not involved at all in the VA team. However, he is often the person government offices contact about the community. That creates difficulties for relationships between the community and the government, and the ability of the VA team to communicate with key government offices. The two sample interviews below illustrate the leadership's viewpoint towards the community and the problems that arise:

“When we need him to solve problems, he rarely comes because we live in a community where people think they will soon be evacuated so it does not have any grouping or community development incentives...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...Leaders allow everyone to play a role, participate, and interact. Some people don't dare to tell but here let everyone play a role and participate. Everything else is natural. We don't leave anyone behind. At the meeting time, all departments are present everywhere, from all sectors...” – Government actor involved in the project

Moreover, the attitude of the formal community leaders can also lead to the inside and outside support agencies and/or organizations. For example, when comparing the Mittraphap community in Khon Kaen city and Ban Phai, community which are facing the same housing problems. However, the Ban Phai has a stronger relationship in the organizations both inside and outside the community. Compared with the Mittraphap community in which the formal community leader live outside of the community and are not really involved in their community activities. This makes Ban Phai more likely to get a new house than the Mittraphap.

"Ban Phai is stronger in connection with partners both within and outside the district, for example, internal, government-private joint committee in order to solve the provincial economic problem and to help in the construction, and externally, CODI takes care of housing in particular. So, Ban Phai has a higher chance of getting a new place of residence than Mittraphap community, where a total of 120 households has no rental contract. If the development project occurs, the village will disappear immediately...Both areas have the same risk but different levels of response." – Academic involved with the project

Second, the experience and diversity of the group members is one of the important factors for success. From the evaluation, it was clear that groups with no previous research or project experience may require more time to learn than those with or having had similar work experience. Moreover, having a group of diverse people in the team and having knowledge whether academic knowledge and community knowledge including having representatives of the local government in the group. It will cause an exchange of knowledge with each other to solve problems. For example, the Khon Kaen City team and Kuan Lung team have had experience for previous projects and/or research, and some of the team members also have rich experience for research and relevant projects. So, they are quite advantageous in data collection and report writing. While some of the inexperienced teams were in more challenging situations and needed more help from the partners.

Some statements of experienced teams:

“...In part, I have done research in this area with the university on caring for vulnerable groups and climate change. I put that information in the SUCCESS project. – Government actor and VA team member involved in the project

“...Friends of Homeless officer, one of the team members, graduated from social development. So, there are tools that have already been used. Also, one of the team members used to work on data recording and has been working with village health volunteers (VHVs) for a long time. So, she has skills online and google form... Previous experience, we have worked on urban project before...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

Some statements of inexperienced teams:

“Assessment was difficult because we are inexperienced. We didn't know about the assessment. But we tried to tell our mentor from SCF (Mr. Chakrit) that we had a problem. Then he helped us a lot...Evaluation was more difficult, such as the effect on males and females, we forget about this topic. It seems to be incomplete.” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“TEI and partners want villagers to do it ourselves. Different basic knowledge of villagers and having never done research before is not enough, but they let the villagers think for ourselves. This is the hardest thing in the world...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“It was difficult to write a report. But we have a good mentor because the composition of our team is quite experienced in many areas...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

In fact, it is very useful for the community to do research on their own because it is truly participatory and community-owned research. However, additional training about research may be required for inexperienced teams.

“...The most difficult thing is to allow local people to do their own research, write it themselves, and compete with the government. This is what we want the most...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

Third, contentiousness of issues that are consistent with the needs of the local people who want to solve it. This will lead to a strong team building and working together to deal with these problems.

The strength of this team can also affect and drive many sectors to come together to solve problems as well.

“...Doing the data shows that many agencies have limitations in coming to help. If we can unite and push the problem, the agency will take the information of our problem to push forward and be able to solve it...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

Barriers to success in improving linkages include the fact that many government agencies and departments have their own plans that they do not want to adapt based on outside information. For example, the Provincial Electricity Authority and the Provincial Water Authority have their own plans and budgets to run their own activities, so they reportedly do not cooperate with outsiders much even other organizations or communities.

“...Provincial Electricity Authority, we can't say that they don't know and are not active because they said they don't have direct contact with the community. But if there's a problem, they have a back-up plan to fix it ... They have their own plan and budget. The Provincial Water Authority is in the same manner...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...We found that the work has no intermediary to connect each agency to reach the people because the working style is different. They have their own plans...It is quite difficult for each department to come and talk to each other without intermediaries to coordinate. – Vulnerability Assessment team member

There are examples of drought solutions from Kuan Lang team members who have had experience trying to manage water in Songkhla lake. The lake watershed is divided into different boundaries and it is governed by different departments which they do not talk to each other and have their own plans for each area. However, to solve the water problem, all of the watershed has to participate together. Previous attempts have not been able to promote cooperation. In this project, the VA team tried to make cooperation among affected people including upper stream area officials and lower stream officials. So far, there is a good sign that Thung Tam Sao municipality, which is the upstream area, has joined them.

“Our team was the coordinator and the information was forwarded. We try to help alleviate the situation by bringing the watershed areas together.... In the future, we would like to see the upstream departments like SAO and Municipality more involved. If they had awareness of being a watershed and taking care of the upstream area, it would be great because it is most important...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

Government agencies and departments do not see the relevance of the issues, including because their mandates are segmented and there is little coordinated climate planning.

“Urban Management Research Group (กลุ่มวิจัยการบริหารจัดการเมือง) is dedicated to cities but has little enthusiasm with our project. There is little knowledge of climate change within the project. We invited them to join, but they ignored us. They were doing smart city planning such as city planning and urban development...” – Partner staff

“...They (government part) did not want to talk even though we invited them to join in the meeting they said no I don't want to listen to you...when SEZ comes, all of the local

government will get many benefits from that. So, they don't care what is going to happen after the SEZ starts in our community... The SUCCESS project would be encouraging us to keep moving but not wanting us to oppose the government. We are simply demanding the rights of our community..." - Community leader involved in the project

"...Government agencies such as municipalities, they know their roles but they haven't had time yet, so they don't want to join it. The fact that we went in to inquire made it more work because we were already very busy with COVID. But on the climate change topic, which may or may not occur. They felt it was a distant thing..." – Vulnerability Assessment team member



Figure 8: Key Informant Interview with CSNM project partner

Outcome 4: Improved access to information of urban, climate and disaster to inform community-level decisions

Partners have shared information on climate change, urbanization and disaster through social media and other online tools, as well as through participation in events about related issues.

In the Northeast, there are advertisements through (1) the organization of Technical Facilitators meetings and other forums together with network partners such as Community Organization Development and Institute (CODI), in addition to verbally explaining the project. The project also brings together documents for the meeting that TEI has prepared, project brochure and project summary, given to the network partners who came to join to publicize the project together. (2) public relations through online media about the implementation of the SUCCESS project and other news movements of the CSNM and the Well-Being and Sustainable Development Research Group both on Facebook page and website.

In the South, there are advertises through (1) the Foundation's website, which has a column page for the SUCCESS project; (2) Facebook page called "Plean Muang" which post an article on the work of the area in Songkhla related to the environment and vulnerability group, and Facebook public group called " Kan Plean Muang" which share contents related to climate change, urban development, related innovations, related development ideas and the information; (3) Line group to achieve objective

communication and to share information and the story of each VA group; (4) public forum for their city network to connect and share their activities and project with other networks. (5) a book about SCF works' narrative each year called "The Winged Butterfly".



Figure 9: Focus Group Discussions with Nong Khai city VA team

Efficiency

Many delays and outside factors impacted the efficiency of this project. First among these is the COVID-19 pandemic, which slowed implementation of the project because it prevented in-person meetings, travel between provinces, and data collection. Other delays came from delays in transferring funds from the EU to TEI, which impacted partners' ability to conduct activities. Finally, during the Vulnerability Assessment process, it took some teams longer than anticipated to build cooperation and communication between the team members, and it took most teams longer than anticipated to localize the tools provided for the data collection. In addition, many teams had difficulties writing up the results of the reports, which led to delays and partners and Technical Facilitators had to help a lot in the writing process.

When the COVID-19 pandemic started, many project activities were delayed. However, TEI, SCF and CSNM did their best to adjust to the limitations on travel and gathering. This adaptation was aided by the decentralization of the project. Partners were located in the relevant regions, and had autonomy and flexibility to implement the project according to the project plan. Since they were closer to the relevant communities, they could have small meetings with members of VA teams according to COVID-19 prevention measures. Partner staff also put much effort into teaching the VA team members how to use technology like Zoom, including at times traveling to the community to sit with the community leader during the meeting.

There were also delays because the EU was late in transferring funds. Since most partners are small and do not have many unrestricted funds, they were not able to advance funds for activities. Relatedly, strict paperwork requirements from the EU made it difficult for some VA teams, who are not accustomed to formal accounting, and many are not even accustomed to getting receipts for transactions. TEI did its best to help partners and VA teams comply, including by creating a manual for partners and teams. However, this manual was also difficult for partners to understand, and some

appear to have ignored it. This highlights an important difference in working culture between NGOs, who are more accustomed to international donor requirements, and community-based organizations and loose networks, which may work more on the basis of trust.

“The teams that had experience in managing the village finances, they would know the system. They rarely encountered problems, and we got all documents, they could complete the work on time. However, some teams were very new and just started working together. For example, sometimes they paid money before but the evidence was not clear and they didn't write down who they gave the money to. ... One of the challenges was that how they were able to manage [the finances] systematically. This one is very challenging whether ordinary villagers can make their own system or not. The guides we gave and the systems we put in place, why can't they do it? And if we want them to do it, how do we have to fix it? So, there's a lesson to them all the time. They had to adjust next time.” – Partner staff

“...the KKV team (refer to CSNM and TF team) came to help. We send it, if it's not correct, they will send back to adjust. Including the finances must have a signature. It was sent back to dismantle. Finance and accounting are difficult to do correctly...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“Villagers rarely take notes, but every time an activity has to be recorded.” – Partner staff

Internal delays developed in some teams because it took longer than anticipated to build good cooperation within the teams when the members had never worked together before. Some teams also needed more capacity-building on different parts of the process. Thus, some partners suggested that there should be an assessment before the project, and the capacity-development plans be created for each VA team.

“...The VA team selection, if we work with a multi-level of CSOs...have different potential and the difficulty of working will be also different. ... it will be difficult for us to enhance a lot of potential in some groups. That's a lesson in how we should prepare ourselves to cope. We cannot use the same platform in these groups, we may need to find different methods and approaches for development. In the past we used a joint stage, may make some groups catch up and some groups could not... There really should be a separate forum. We will know that each group in each area may have different needs...” – Partner staff

Most teams also took more time to review and ‘localize’ the questionnaires through cycles of development supported by partners and Technical Facilitators, and testing the questionnaire and making sure they could understand the questions and that the answers they were getting matched in information they wanted to get. Relatedly, some VA team members and partners mentioned that communication with TEI was difficult because it was highly technical, and that they had a hard time to understand the project objectives at first because of the academic focus. Partners tried to be a bridge to explain, but the extra layer of ‘localization’ of information added time to the process. Complex language and concepts also create a feeling of difficulty and exclusion for people with lower education.

“...We (partner) will be distributing information because TEI when speaking will be highly academic and international. Some communication with the villagers, we act in the middle of connecting them...” – Partner staff

“...Academic language beyond the knowledge of the villagers, it will cause them to not understand what the project objectives are... TEI should find a way to make it more understandable to the general public...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...TEI focuses a lot on academics which we feel that there must be a balance between academic and social work creating a sense of belonging... Creating a sense of co-ownership” – Partner staff



Figure 10: Key Informant Interview with Boyang community leader

Sustainability

While it is difficult to assess sustainability at the mid-point of the project, there are some indications of increased capacity of partners and VA team members that can help promote sustainability in this project.

Groups that have experience working together in the past may be more able to conduct vulnerability assessments and similar work in the future. In addition, many of these experienced groups have individuals who are experienced in research and social work, including as Village Health Volunteers, or are current or former civil servants. This experience supports them to continue using their knowledge in the future.

Others feel confident to play the same role they have played in this project in the future, but not to lead the project on their own. This means there are still some gaps to build their capacity for full sustainability.

“Yes, [we can do the project again]; the mentor has to provide information first then we can collect data. However, the data design may require someone to help...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

In terms of partners, they have learned from this project how to support community-led research, and how to cooperate with academics and communities.

“...The next period may have a chance to bring them to work again. And there may be research questions for them to continue working on because vulnerability assessment is not systematic research, it's just a case study. If the academic network is interested, they may take it further...” – Partner staff

Some partner staff mentioned that this project and other work has strengthened CSOs' capacity, but the next important step is to continue building the capacity of the community to work on their own. While the communities are not yet organized and active on their own, the partners mentioned they can see progress.

“...the CSO is strong, but we also want people in the community strong too. Now they work based on CSO as the main. The community still can't get up to do anything on their own... We only see it as a network, but we haven't seen the gathering of people in the community to form a group by themselves...” source KKR01-02

“...Community is the most important, whatever it is, if we can create understanding and lead to cooperation with the community. Anything that will be done in the community will be successful, even the local leaders disagree, because people in the community can come together and fight to do what their community wants, determine your own way of life and direction...” source NKR01-04

“...This project is a catalyst for people in the community to get moving and start to understand how we work. Whether the community will succeed or not depends on the community members because when members understand the process, we work on, they are the one who follows the process we set. The measure of success is the community members who understand the process as a guarantee...” source SKR01-03



Figure 11: Focus Group Discussions with Khon Kaen city VA team

Coherence

Promoting coherence with other organizations, including EU-funded projects, and government agencies was difficult in this project because there are few others working on urbanization and climate change in Thailand. In terms of government, many partners and VA team members learned during the VA process that government agencies and offices are siloed into a specific mandate, and don't

find cross-cutting issues like climate change and urbanization relevant to their work. Other volunteer organizations and foundations focus mostly on immediate disaster relief or humanitarian aid to marginalized groups, not addressing structural issues.

“In fact, government agencies are doing it, but only when an incident occurs. It is an immediate help, not under planned any warning system. The government will periodically help from time to time when disaster strikes. For organizations that focus on this issue, we do not see yet.

In terms of CSOs and academics, partners mentioned trying to bring these issues into existing forums and conversations. For example, in Khon Kaen, CSNM focused on trying to be involved in conversations about “Smart Cities” and other urban initiatives. One challenge to that engagement is that most actors are focused on technological solutions. Partner staff reported that people working on climate change and urbanization often see the urban environment as the ‘ideal’ and think that, if the city can be made to be sustainable and ‘smart’ overall, then there will be no problems for vulnerable groups – everyone will benefit.

“Some [people who come to our dialogue events] expect more focus on technological solutions like electric cars, carbon neutrality, etc. That’s not the right idea, we can’t expect these solutions to solve everything. They think that marginalized people are a minority group, if you put everything right in the urban areas it will automatically deal with that issue. ... I think it’s necessary to negotiate with that group, otherwise it will get smaller and smaller, only people concerned w urban poor, it won’t work if we don’t engage with these people.” – Partner staff

Another challenge to coherence is that many civil society organizations focus on rural, rather than urban sectors. Some partners are trying to build a more active civil society sector in urban areas, which will ultimately lead to more potential for cooperation.

“...We want to have a mechanism, a working group of spatial working areas where they already know their own problems but may know only what they know is not covered in many components. Therefore, we have set up working groups from multiple components to be able to work on their own. The goal is to create a CSO in the area to be able to work in the long term...” – Partner staff

“May be a group of Utokepat Foundation doing it but we are not together. We invited them to join for the first time but the views were not in the same direction. It is because the Utokepat is doing an area outside the city, but we are focusing on the urban. So, we didn't continue to work together.” – Vulnerability Assessment team member



Figure 12: Key Informant Interview with academic actor

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

This project addressed gender equality through ensuring equal participation of women in project activities, but lacked a broader gender perspective and incorporation of a gender analysis of the impacts of climate change and urbanization. In terms of social inclusion, the Vulnerability Assessment teams included assessments of most of the vulnerable groups in their communities, including elderly, disabled and single mothers, but most teams included in this assessment did not include more marginalized communities, especially migrants from other parts of Thailand and from other countries in the region. One group, however, realized the importance of this community partway through the process and invited them to participate moving forward. In addition, one Vulnerability Assessment team not included in the data collection for this evaluation was more focused on migrant workers on the Thailand-Malaysia border.

According to most interviewees for this research, gender equality is not a problem in their communities because women are very involved in community work and working outside the home. There was little awareness or analysis of power and decision-making dynamics, or gendered nature of voluntary work, among partners or Vulnerability Assessment teams. This pattern was also present in the analysis within the Vulnerability Assessments, which highlight women's role in managing household affairs and thus being more affected by changes within the community, without analysis of the underlying power dynamics.

Many Vulnerability Assessment teams were made up predominantly of women. This follows the trend many interviewees noted that women tend to be more aware of issues in the community, and more active volunteering.

“...In the community at the meeting time, we ask everyone in the community. Most of the community had more women. Men rarely answer to send women to join. Some go to work, some don't talk.” – Female Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...Women answer more deeply than men because women stay home, so they know more about the problem happening in their place and more affected by climate change than men.... women have more responsibilities than men Decision-making power to solve problems, women are more powerful because they are the ones who live and are affected by problems. And there are more solutions than men, for example, if the house is hot, women have to live and raise children...” – Female Vulnerability Assessment team member

However, oftentimes the men involved in the Vulnerability Assessment teams were participating as members of local government, or academics, and thus had higher status and leadership positions in the teams. Most Technical Facilitators appeared also to be men. Some interviewees noted that on Vulnerability Assessment teams and in communities, women might be more active but either men make decisions, or decisions are made by all community members together, giving equal voice to women, who have the expertise and experience of the issue at hand, and men who were not involved.

“...On climate change, females are perceived better than males because the effects are related to daily life. But participation in problem solving is mostly a function of males because the structure is still patriarchy... Most of them are women because their role is close to the villagers as the Village Health Volunteers. most of which are women. The men were more coordinating and evaluating.” – Partner staff

“It is to be noted that in Thai society women follow men. In Muslim society, women work a lot, but men make up their minds and make decisions. However, small decisions women can make...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“[For the] government and related parties, the supervisor will be a man, such as the school director, the village headman.” – Local government official involved in Vulnerability Assessment

Barriers to men's involvement mentioned by interviewees were primarily that men worked outside the community, while women often stayed home and/or worked informal jobs that allowed them to be present in the community more often. While most acknowledged that women tend to be more active in community volunteering, this was seen as women's strength or evidence of gender equality, not as an additional, unpaid burden on women's time to care not only for their families but their communities.

“...Women are more active than men. If we (women said) don't do it, no one will. We will be dismantled, therefore, we must be enthusiastic, no matter which agency comes in, we must participate. Women are more active than men because women can do anything. Men have to work outside....” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

“...Women answer more deeply than men because women stay home, so they know more about the problem happening in their place and more affected by climate change than men.... women have more responsibilities than men Decision-making power to solve problems, women are more powerful because they are the ones who live and are affected by problems. And there are more solutions than men, for example, if the house is hot, women have to live and raise children...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

While it is positive to appreciate women's knowledge and expertise on issues that affect their communities, it is important to ensure that they are not expected to take up these unpaid responsibilities while men are not. In addition, imbalances in power and decision-making within VA teams and within communities should be addressed through better training and awareness-raising on gender analysis beyond participation numbers. TEI and partners acknowledged that it was a challenge to encourage deeper analysis on this issue.

More targeted gender training sessions that focus on analysis of community power dynamics and question assumptions about gender roles may help VA team members better understand this issue. This should be focused on practical analysis of existing roles and power in the community without normative judgement or assumptions, since many interviewees have strong community pride and may hesitate to participate if they feel an activity is promoting divisions or asking them to criticize men in their community.

Vulnerability Assessment teams were asked to consider different levels or forms of vulnerability in their communities, and did a good job addressing physical and economic vulnerability, as noted in Effectiveness above. Members of different groups within the community, like the elderly and economically-disadvantaged were often included in the process. Despite some challenges within some groups related to power dynamics, particularly related to participation of local government officials, most VA groups appeared relatively inclusive within the existing social structure of the community.

However, there was less assessment of social vulnerabilities of people who were 'outside' the social and political fabric of the community. This manifested mostly in the Vulnerability Assessment teams' approach to workers who had moved from elsewhere in Thailand or workers from around Southeast Asia (both of these groups are referred to as 'migrant workers' here). Some teams mentioned that migrant workers did live in the geographic area covered by the assessment, but most did not include them in the assessment, considering them outside the scope. Some collected data from migrant workers and/or their employers, but did not include them on the team or in analysis. One team, in Patong in the South, decided partway through to include migrant workers because they were hearing in their interviews that some trash pollution comes from these communities, so they realized that they must be part of the solution. This is a positive change that should be highlighted and other groups should be encouraged to take this perspective.

"...In the past, they were seen as not part of society. This thought system therefore changed that if we were to develop a livable community, these two parts may have to come together and think together and work together to solve the problem. Let them have a presence in society as part of their development and be part of the community..." – Local government official involved in Vulnerability Assessment in Patong

"...Migrant workers become a contributor to the focus group on water use and water impact. If migrant workers have a problem, they will reflect to their employers...Migrant workers are a matter of law. We had a hard time involving them because it wasn't that important in our area. But we listened to their [perspectives about] impact [of climate change and urbanization]." – Vulnerability Assessment team member from another community

For the most part, communities were religiously and ethnically homogenous, though some VA teams in the South worked in areas with Muslim and Buddhist populations. In those cases, VA team

members claimed that both groups' participation and vulnerability to urbanization and climate change were equal, except that women in Muslim communities may be more marginalized. During the assessment with these teams, few Muslim members attended so it was not possible to assess relationships or power dynamics within the group, or get an assessment from Muslim participants of the project's relevance and quality of engagement in their communities.

“Especially Muslim women, in regards to formal engagement, they rarely play a role. But there is a role behind the house in providing guidance and guidance behind the scenes...” – Partner staff

“Adhering to religious principles [in Muslim communities] women are limited and men have more power. When there is trouble, women have to make decisions as well. If men don't fix it, women come fix it themselves...” – Vulnerability Assessment team member

Overall, gender equality and social inclusion was approached through the context of the existing power and social dynamics within communities. VA teams thoughtfully addressed each vulnerable group within their community structure but did so without questioning those roles, for example women's roles as managing the household and volunteering for the community, and often leaving out groups not seen as part of the social community. Moving forward, TEI and partners should build on the inclusion and cooperation achieved within the community to promote a deeper understanding and reflection on these dynamics, including power and expectations regarding gender roles and questioning definitions of community that leave out migrant workers living among or close to other community members. Members of more marginalized groups, including migrant workers and Muslim women, should also be targeted for involvement in future activities.

Recommendations

To the EU

- Support more projects that develop civil society organizations in urban areas in Thailand
- Support convening of relevant stakeholders at national, provincial and local levels for more coordination on climate change policy.
- Simplify finance reporting requirements for aspects of projects that involve support to community organizations without the experience or expertise required to comply with complex requirements.
- Transfer funds in a timely manner so that project activities can continue according to schedule.

To TEI

- Explain complicated concepts like climate change using examples and simple language that the communities and other stakeholders can understand. Target examples to demonstrate how it climate change is related to the work of each government agency involved in the project.
- Engage with relevant agencies and ministries at provincial and national level, and/or support partners and vulnerability assessment teams to network and jointly advocate when they face similar issues, for instance communities living on railway land.
- Continue to build knowledge on climate change, including how it relates to but is not always the same as other environmental issues, for instance pollution.
- Better define and explain the concept of vulnerability, including different types. Support capacity of partners and VA teams to analyze social and political vulnerability within communities.
- Conduct capacity assessments for future community organization/groups and target capacity development to the needs and experience of each group. Include targeted capacity-building including in questionnaire design, analysis and report-writing so the communities can take a more active role in the research.
- Use TEI's convening power to target key, less-cooperative agencies/offices that the Vulnerability Assessment teams are struggling to engage.
- Simplify finance manuals for local teams.
- Provide capacity building for partners and local teams in gender and social inclusion so they can improve their ability to analyze social and political vulnerabilities.
- Support convening of relevant stakeholders at national, provincial and local levels for more coordination on climate change policy.

To CSNM and SCF

- Continue to raise issues of vulnerability, especially in the urban context, in conversations and networks on climate change and sustainable development, to counter narratives focused on technical solutions.

- Review, combine and revise questionnaires used by Vulnerability Assessment teams so that accessible, relevant tools are available for future Vulnerability Assessments.
- Conduct capacity assessments for future community organization/groups and target capacity development to the needs and experience of each group. Include targeted capacity-building including in questionnaire design, analysis and report-writing so the communities can take a more active role in the research.
- Continue to support local teams to comply with financial requirements.
- Provide capacity building for local teams in gender and social inclusion so they can improve their ability to analyze social and political vulnerabilities.
- Support local VA teams to create accessible materials that summarize the findings of the vulnerability assessments in a way that is easily understandable by community members; disseminate the findings in the community.

To Vulnerability Assessment teams

- Recruit and involve local youth in future work to understand the youth perspective and add technical capacity to the teams.
- Involve representatives of migrant workers when they are present in the community.
- Continue to collect data and feedback from community members to update knowledge and continue learning about the community.
- Create accessible materials that summarize the findings of the vulnerability assessments in a way that is easily understandable by community members; disseminate the findings in the community.

Annex

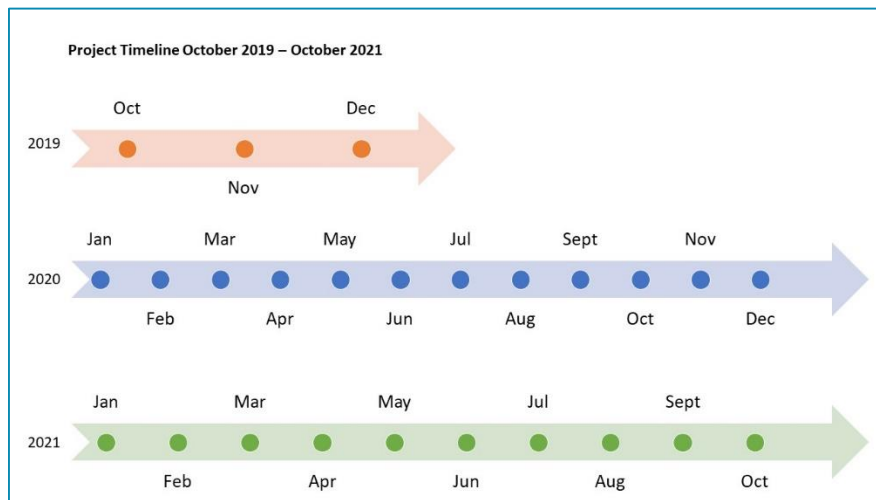


Figure 13: Example of Timeline activity

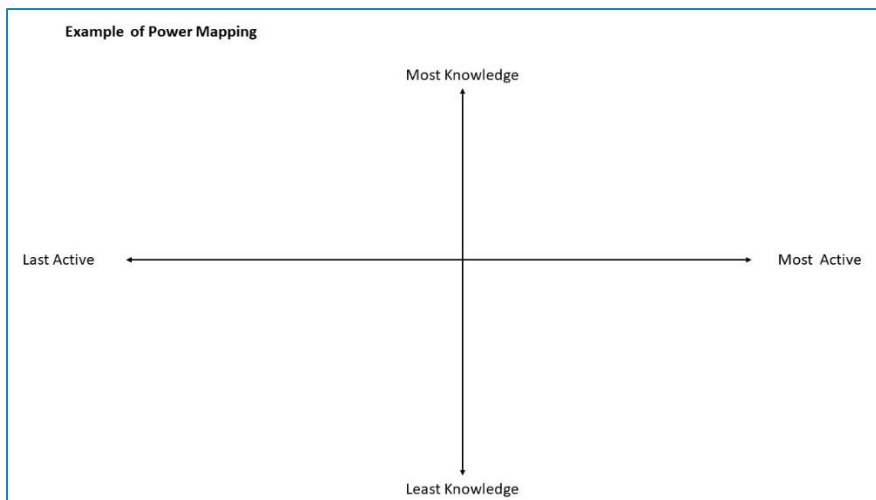
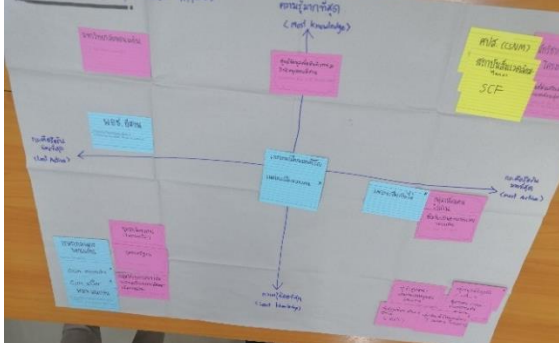
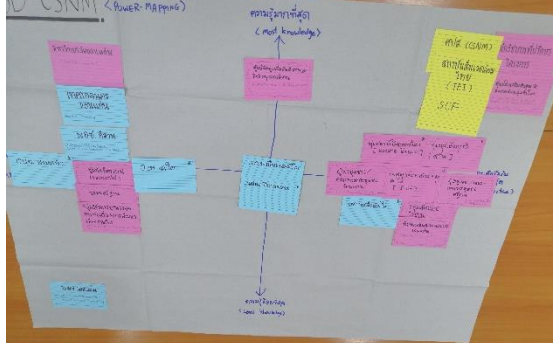
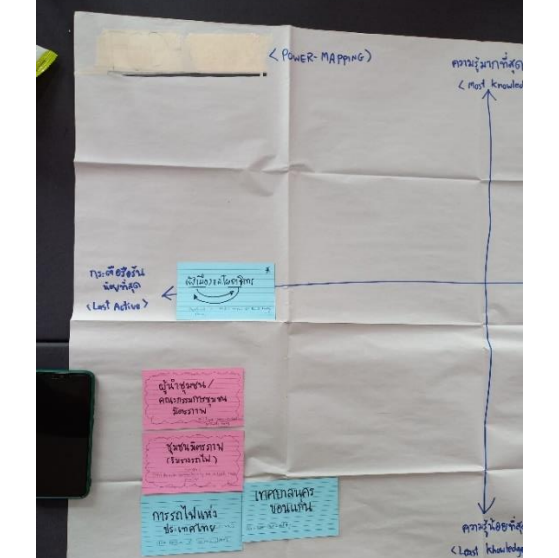
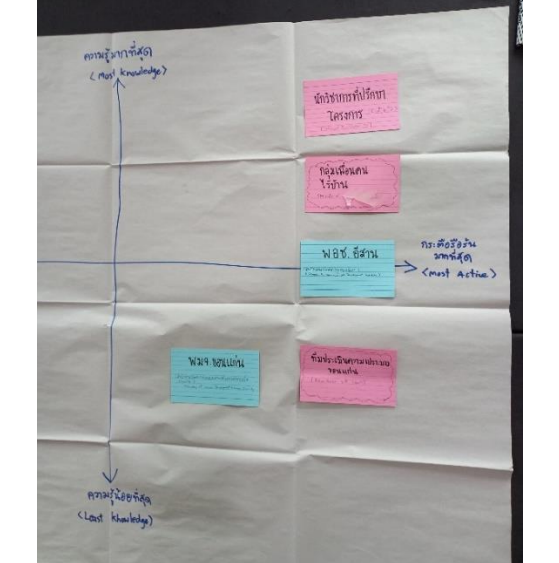
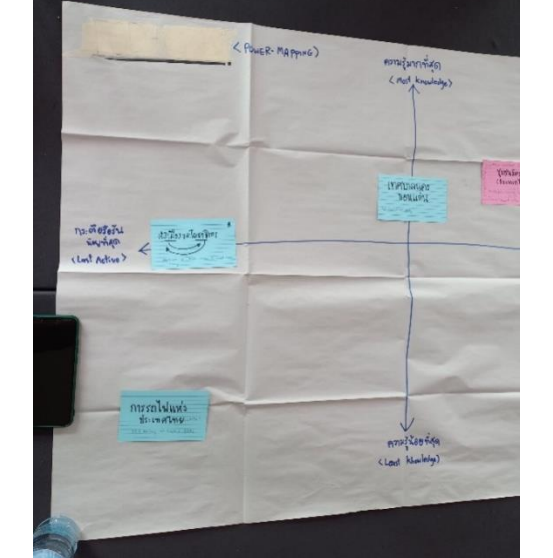
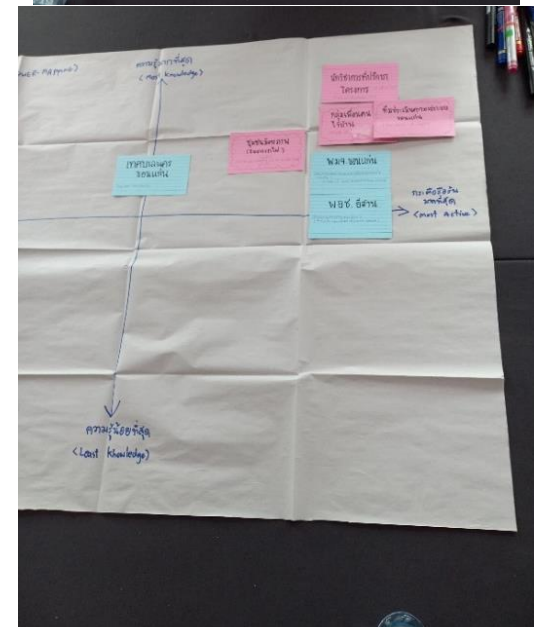
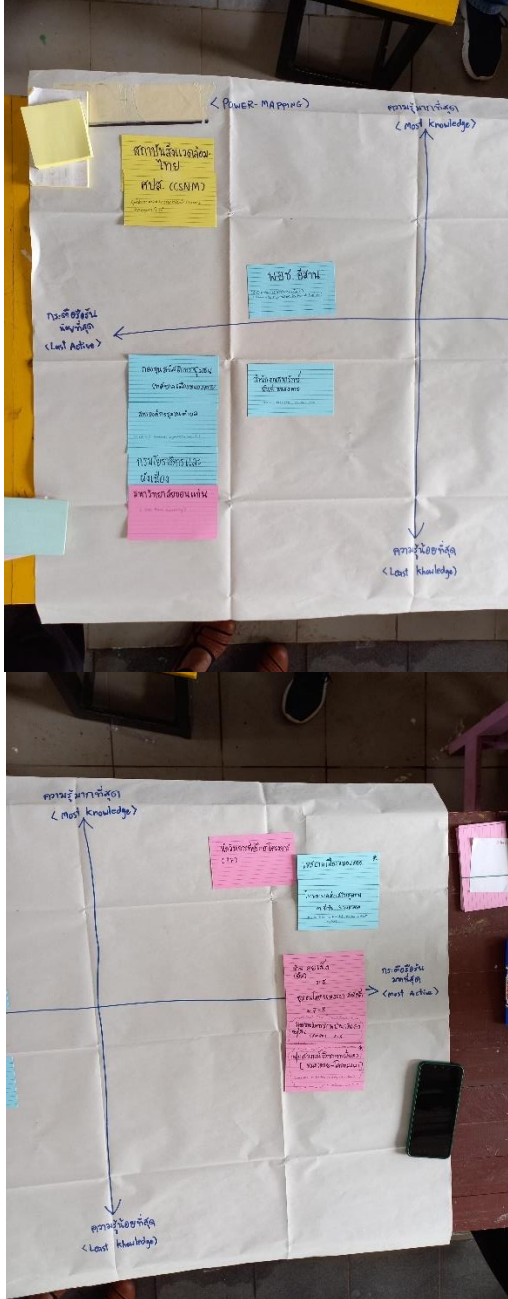
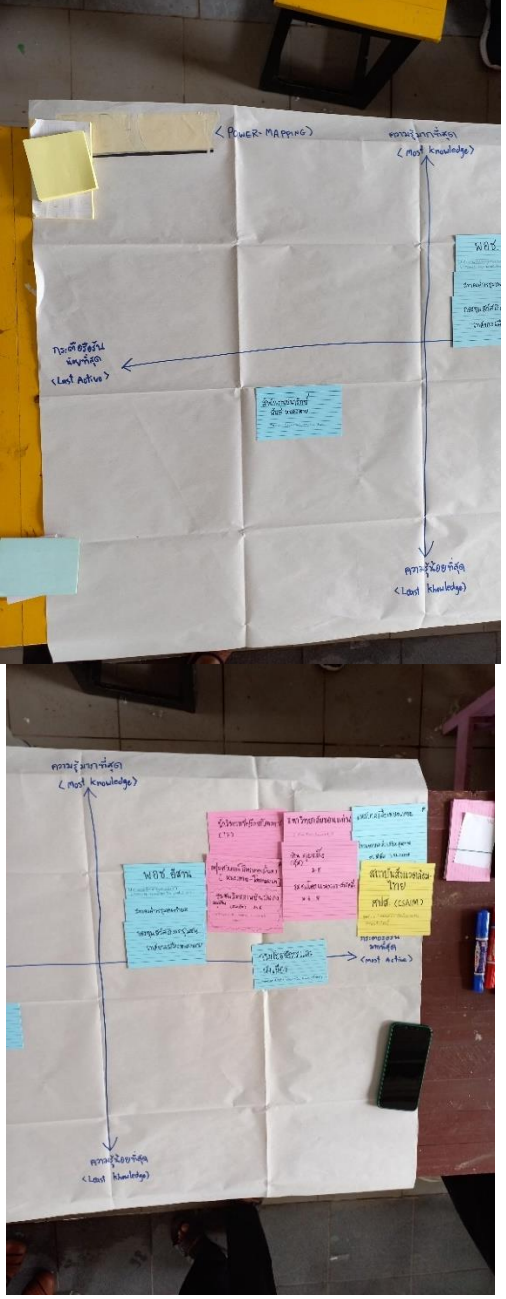
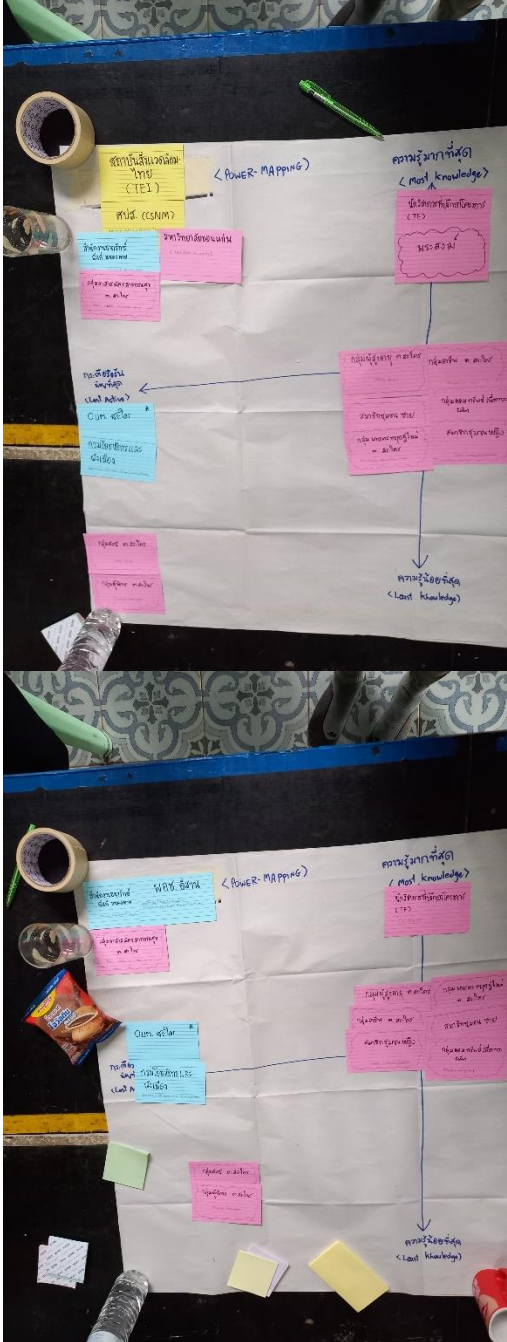
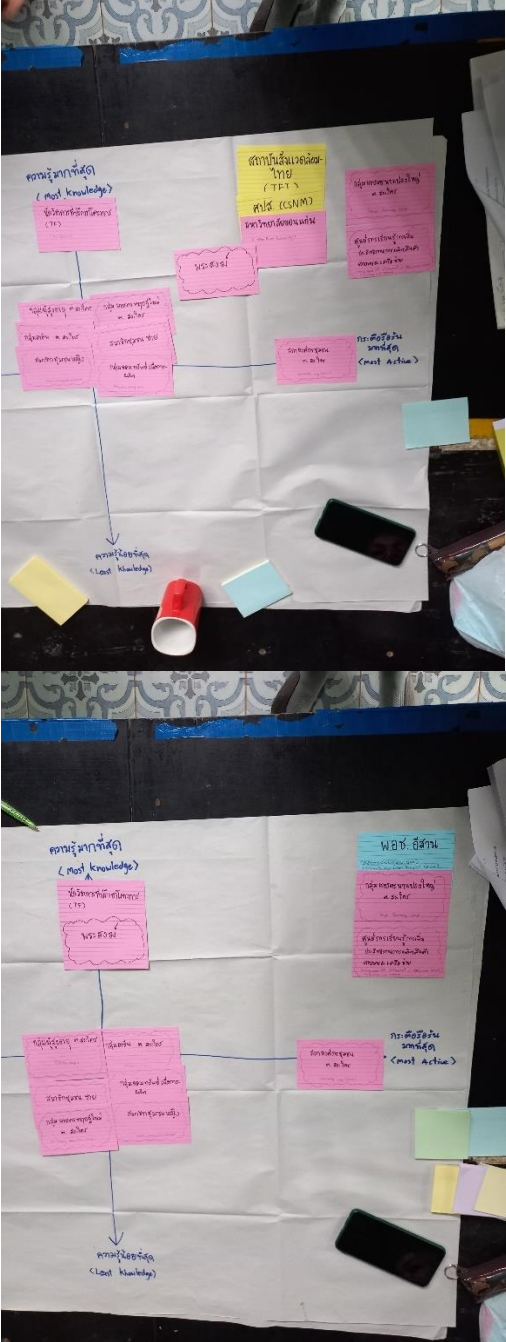


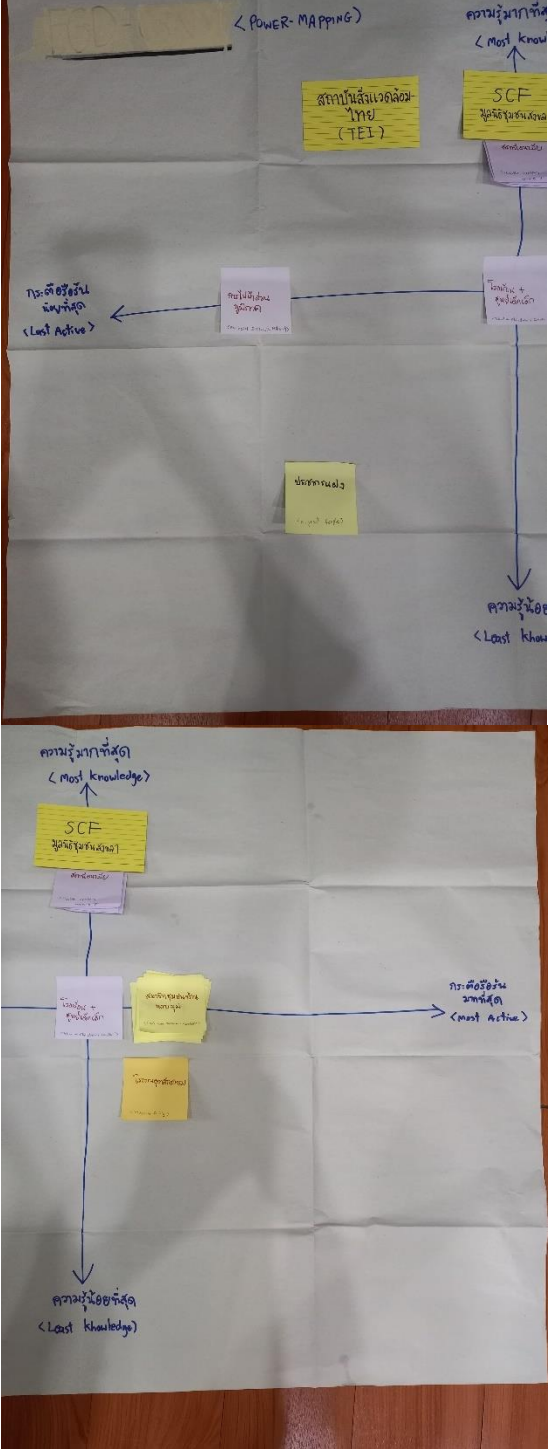
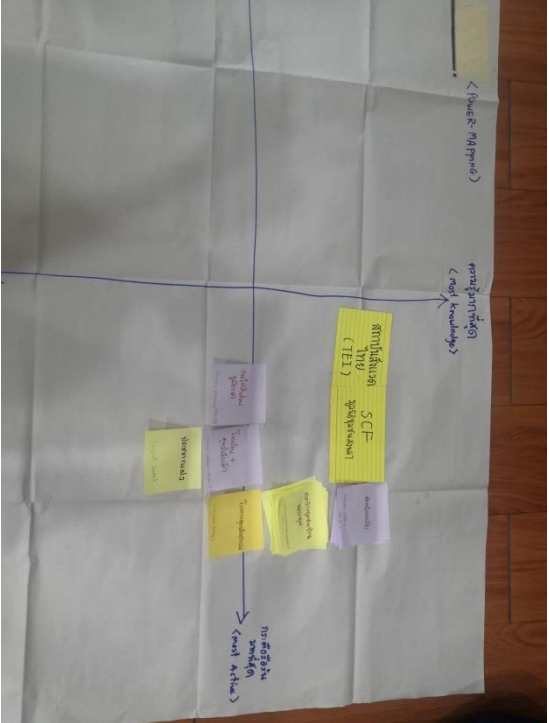
Figure 14: Example of Power-mapping activity

Table 2: FGD of power mapping activity

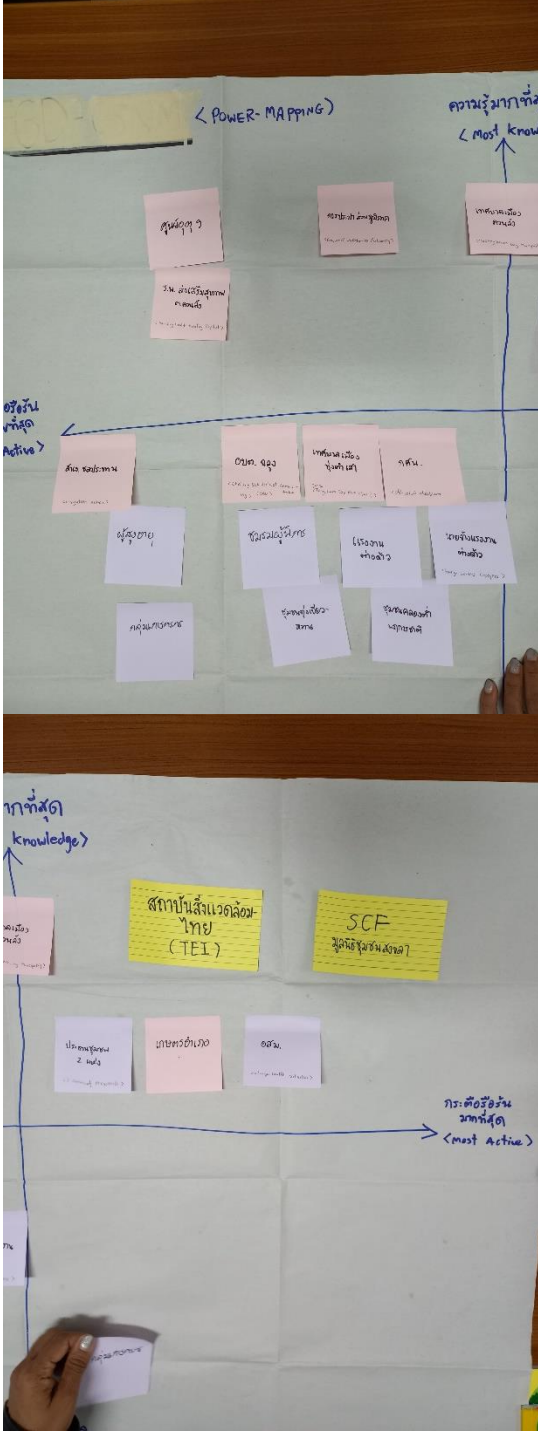
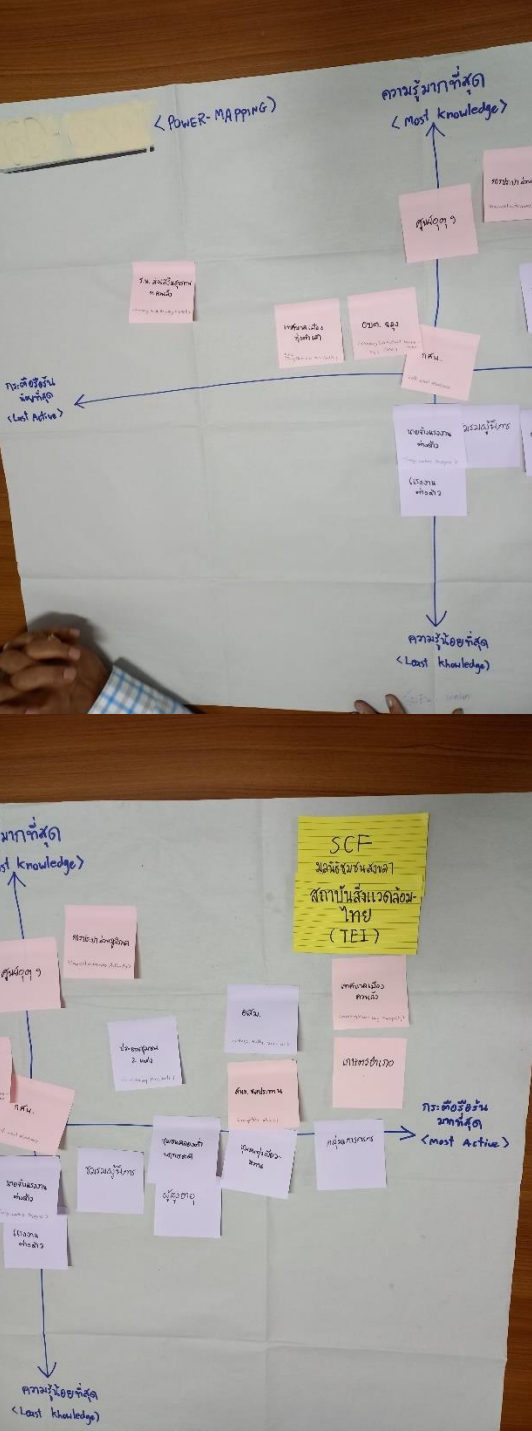
Team	Before SUCCESS project	Mid-term of SUCCESS project
FGD with CSNM Partner Organization		
Khon Kaen city VA team	 	 

Team	Before SUCCESS project	Mid-term of SUCCESS project
<p>Nong Khai city VA team</p>		

Team	Before SUCCESS project	Mid-term of SUCCESS project
Sa Krai VA team		

Team	Before SUCCESS project	Mid-term of SUCCESS project
Phatong VA team	 <p>The top diagram, titled "< POWER-MAPPING >", illustrates a knowledge flow. At the top is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". Below it is a yellow sticky note labeled "SCF". To the left is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". To the right is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". A blue arrow points from the top sticky note to the bottom sticky note. Another blue arrow points from the left sticky note to the right sticky note. A third blue arrow points from the right sticky note to the bottom sticky note. There are also some smaller, less legible sticky notes and arrows.</p> <p>The bottom diagram shows a similar flow. At the top is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". Below it is a yellow sticky note labeled "SCF". To the left is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". To the right is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". A blue arrow points from the top sticky note to the bottom sticky note. Another blue arrow points from the left sticky note to the right sticky note. A third blue arrow points from the right sticky note to the bottom sticky note. There are also some smaller, less legible sticky notes and arrows.</p>	 <p>This diagram shows a knowledge flow. At the top is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". Below it is a yellow sticky note labeled "SCF". To the left is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". To the right is a yellow sticky note labeled "ความรู้จากที่รู้ (Most knowledge)". A blue arrow points from the top sticky note to the bottom sticky note. Another blue arrow points from the left sticky note to the right sticky note. A third blue arrow points from the right sticky note to the bottom sticky note. There are also some smaller, less legible sticky notes and arrows.</p>

Team	Before SUCCESS project	Mid-term of SUCCESS project
Boyang VA team	<p>The 'Before' section contains two photographs of a sticky note map. The top photograph shows a map with 'Power-Mapping' at the top, 'Most knowledge' in the center, and 'Lost Active' on the left. The bottom photograph shows a similar map with 'Most knowledge' at the top, 'Most Active' on the right, and 'Lost knowledge' at the bottom.</p>	<p>The 'Mid-term' section contains two photographs of a sticky note map. The top photograph shows a map with 'Power-Mapping' at the top, 'Most knowledge' in the center, and 'Lost Active' on the left. The bottom photograph shows a similar map with 'Most knowledge' at the top, 'Most Active' on the right, and 'Lost knowledge' at the bottom.</p>

Team	Before SUCCESS project	Mid-term of SUCCESS project
Kuan Lung VA team		

Team	Before SUCCESS project	Mid-term of SUCCESS project
FGD with SCF Partner Organization	