

Community Foundations within the Context of Thai Society

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Abstract

The research undertaken by Jarusri Jiravisitkul builds upon a current project in Thailand to establish four community foundations. This research project is based on three assumptions: (1) community foundations can help promote a healthy society by engaging the government, local organizations, corporations, and community members to work together on a partnership basis; (2) endowments serve community foundations as mechanisms to promote sustainable development; and (3) community foundations are an adaptable form of philanthropy with the potential to strategically invest in the future of society.

Using Rayong—one of the community foundation sites located on the eastern coast of Thailand—as her test case, Ms. Jiravisitkul explores how to leverage a traditionally unstructured philanthropic culture based on the precepts of Buddhism. She compares good practices for board engagement and resource mobilization, drawing on examples of both US and non-US community foundations in order to highlight customized strategies that work in different environments, societies, and cultures.

After reviewing current practices elsewhere and considering these against the economic, social, and cultural practices in Rayong, Ms. Jiravisitkul offers several recommendations.

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