



**Gender and Human Security: A Case Study  
of the Resettlement of Rotan Batu  
“Widows’ Village” in Narathiwat Province,  
Thailand**

**By Pontip Vidyavrapat**

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## **Abstract**

The study is on the widow's village, located in Narathiwat province, which is one of the three insurgent Southern Border Provinces, and aims to assess the peace and security situation in the ongoing conflict in that area. This qualitative research collected data from the field study, which involved in-depth interviews with a purposively selected sample of 33 people, namely widows, former insurgents, natural local leaders, chief of staff, and the members of the Royal Thai army. This material is placed in the context of the theoretical work on gender, human security, governance, and participation. This research aims to 1) study on what was the threat faced by widows living in resettlement village 2) to study how the human security of widows is impacted or changed in relation to the post-violence recovery, and what are the soft and hard security impacts of these changes to gender human security 3) study to what extent is the Rotan Batu community (widow's village) able to address women's insecurities in such a way as to help strengthen the transition from emergency to long-term security. In order to explore the aforementioned questions and their link to human security, this research is divided into three main sections. The first section will focus on one threat to the insecurity of widows from the past to the present. The second section will examine the shift in the security paradigm. The third will focus on gender issue in deep south of Thailand from a feminist perspective. Women are also seen in the human security approach as agents who have their own aspirations in the field of participation by both Buddhist and Muslim women.

Key words: Women, peace and security, UN1325, governance, participatory, southern insurgency; border province; Thailand

## **Introduction**

### **Background**

Human security has been a topic in the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) since 1994, which defines the meaning of human security as a common security. It covers the dimensions of the food economy, health, environment, personal, community and political security; all these dimensions mean security from both violent and non-violent threat. It also includes the state of freedom and freedom from the threat to peoples' rights, including safety in

life and property. UNDP's human security definition places great emphasis on human capacity and the opportunity to live fully. In addition, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security defines human security as the means by which people have access to security and can respond to their basic needs. Moreover, they can live in a society with dignity and have equal opportunity to develop their potential (UN, 2009).

Human security is the desired end result of developing countries. In the end, all human beings will want a stable and happy life. It means that a normal life is happy, peaceful and peaceful, or that human security is not affected by the factors that cause suffering. Human security is an enhanced indicator of national development more so than considering the growth of national income. The national income cannot tell the happiness of most people in the country. Virtually 75-80% of the population of 2 million in Thailand are ethnic groups, and the Pattani-Malay identity is one that has been under conflict and the area is a battleground of violence (API, 2014).

Since 2004, there has been an increase in unrest in the three southern border provinces. There is a threat to human security in the area facing the unrest and for those living in areas of suspicion. There is uncertainty in the safety of life and property, as well as stress and fear in these situations, which affects women and families. Women are becoming widows, particularly widows who are responsible as single parents. These women act as both parents, including caring for the elderly in the family. Some families are unable to work as they did before the unrest, resulting in more family problems. As a result, the total number of female laborers in Pattani is 2,480 women, or 36.94%, followed by Narathiwat at 31.98%, Yala at 28.02% and Songkhla at 3.06% (The Economist, 2017).

The loss of the head of a family causes the woman to change her role to become the head of the family unexpectedly. With family burdens including both parenting and working to earn enough money to spend on the family, we can see that these problems affect the women's physical health and their family's psychological health.

The widow's village was created in Narathiwat Province by women who lost their husbands from bombing or ammunition cartridges fired at ethnic protesters. The roads and the forests in that area is considered the most dangerous part of Thailand (Gecker, 2006).

Most of who died were teachers, police officers, soldiers and government officials. In the same year, through the charity work of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, donations have been made to shelter the widows, both Buddhists, and Muslims, with the goal of addressing their suffering, harmonizing Buddhists and Muslims, and teaching the lifestyle of self-sufficiency (Kim 2006). Her Majesty Queen Sirikit donated \$20 million or \$514,000 to buy land in the village. The project was launched in September 2004 (Baxter, 2006). The area was settled by 150 families headed by these widows. The heads of the households are divided into 73 households, and includes both Buddhist and Muslim families. 77 households are dedicated to women and children living in the village, with the exception of the 8 soldiers and family members.

The widows' village is a community setting. As per the policy, everything is free of charge, including their rent of half an acre of land. There are ducks to feed their households and to earn income, and even an electric rice cooker is also provided. The property belongs to the widow and her family to live on. The women could work in a ceramic factory that was newly created for these women to build their careers, and as art therapists. Women also grow bananas, tomatoes, as well as duck eggs for sale. In order to bring a profit to live, the village adopted the King's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) (Baxter, 2006). In addition, some women earn additional money by making fashion accessories and sewing dresses, while some sell agricultural products at local markets (AFP, 2006).

Despite the fact that the widows' village is not seen as a particular target for insurgents, it is guarded twenty-four hours a day by a Thai military soldier, with numerous checkpoints to give the residents peace of mind (Baxter, 2006). When the widows leave this village to sell eggs or buy groceries, they are protected by soldiers who guard the front gate, and check the IDs and vehicles seeking to enter the village (ibid). Nevertheless, other reports indicate that only a very small number of women are currently involved in decision-making and policy planning in this study area. All the participants in the official peace talks are men. Moreover, the main organizations responsible for violence alleviation are stereotypically male-dominated, and women are marginalized in these efforts. Men also prevail in the official sector that distributes resources in the region, which has significant power. Women in the widow's village are more active in unofficial and civil society organizations, with correspondingly lower input into the development

and peace-building activities. Everything considered women-related are seldom included in the policy-making and decision-making processes that will determine the future for themselves, their families and communities (Srisuwan, Tohmena, & Chareonpolpeera, 2016).

In the Muslim-majority provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala of southern Thailand, more than 3,500 people have been killed since violence erupted in January 2004. Various explanations for the violence range from historical grievances to the central government's long-standing economic and political marginalization of the Muslim provinces. The human rights abuses and mismanagement in the Kru se Mosque and Tak Bai incidents of 2004 further hardened the fear and distrust of the southerners toward the central forces (Tan-Mullins, *Armed Conflict, and Resolutions in Southern Thailand*, 2009).

According to UNDP, "armed conflict affects men and women differently and notes that men involved in armed conflict can be either victim (and/ or) perpetrator, whereas women are mostly seen as victims. The evidence shows that more men possessed guns than women, and as a result of most acts of violence, including gun-related violence, are carried out by men and young boys. Most of the victims of arms-associated violence are also men and young boys" (UN, 2007).

On the other hand, "women's experiences would have been different from those of men because throughout the armed conflict women have to take on both domestic and economic responsibilities" (OECD, 2009). For example, in Southern Sudan, once the conflict began, women had to take on other roles because of the dearth of men. There is also a lack of security for women in conflict areas when they have to conduct routine tasks necessary for survival, such as gathering firewood and water. Previously, men and young boys undertook all agriculture tasks including sowing, cultivating and preparing the soil, as well as trading and selling goods in the market.

Another effect of armed conflict is women being double burdened by extra responsibilities due to the number of deaths among men. This had a distressing impact on their lives, and on the social composition of communities and gender demographics (ibid). Shakya notes that "in Nepal, young women are ready to take leading roles in peace-building because, during the conflict, young women have a chance to explore other geographical areas and interact with different groups of

people that they did not have before displacement. This is also seen in Southern Sudan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Algeria. For example, in Somalia, 40 percent of households are headed by women, increasing dramatically to 75 percent in the Internally Displaced sites” (Shakya A., 2010).

Furthermore, “the starting point of this research is the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security” (UN, 2001). This research represents a major breakthrough for women's rights in the peace and security arena. The overall aspect of the resolution is its systematic insistence on the interconnectedness between gender, peace and security concerns. The resolution asks for changes: firstly, emphasizing that a gender perspective should be adopted in the planning and implementation of peace operations and peace negotiations; and secondly, by asking member states to increase the representation and active participation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding.

Throughout the hundreds of years of the deep southern region being under Thai state’s control, the native Muslims have been struggling for their independence. In response to this event, the Thai government also strengthened their grip on this region by the use of counter forces and cultural assimilation (Crisis Group, 2012). Nevertheless, even though this region has been facing the violence crisis for a very long time, it was just recently that this conflict has been accelerated. In the past decade, the level of violence has been continuously increasing year by year due to similar issues, but fueled by the occurrence of a new context. Firstly, with the emergence of extreme Islamic ideas during the 1980s globalization era, the idea of radical Islam has spread throughout the world, including the three southern provinces of Thailand, and has changed the style of the insurgencies’ operation.

“The situation worsened again when the government of Thaksin Shinawatra, who took office in 2001 decided to dissolve the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center (SBPAC) in 2002. Thaksin understood that the violence occurring in the three provinces were caused by particular groups of people trying to protect their interests. Consequently, without SBPAC conciliating between the locals and authorities, the number of violent attacks had significantly increased” (McCargo, 2007). In the early 2000s, the increase of unrests was followed by the heavy loss of

human lives. The statistical data shows that the number of violent events sharply increased from 100 incidents per year before 2004 to around 1,800-2,000 times per year between 2004 to 2007. However, the frequency of incidents had slightly decreased in the following years to around 1,000 incidents per year from 2008 to 2013. The data shows that in 2014, the number of incidents slightly dropped to around 700 times in that year (UNDP, 2016).

Although the number of incidents has, to some extent, decreased over the past several years, the conflict does not yet reveal any sign of an end since the unrests still continuously occur over the fourteen-year period.

## **Research Questions**

RQ1. What were threats faced by widows living in a resettlement village?

RQ2. How is the human security of widows impacted or changed into relations in the post-violence recovery? What are the soft and hard security impacts of these changes to gender human security?

RQ3: To what extent does the Rotan Batu community (aka widow's village) able to address women's insecurities in such a way as to help strengthen the transition from emergency to long-term security?

## **The Threat of Armed Conflict**

This section analyses RQ 1: *What are the threats faced by the widows living in the resettlement village of Rotan Batu?* The chapter begins by giving a general overview of the village. In the residential area of the project, there are two rai of land for sale. Everybody owns a house and land for life and their descendants. Widows can improve the soil with compost and use it for vegetable cultivation and for growing field crops and fruit trees. This provides not only a source of food, but also supplements their income. The allocated plot includes housing, rice fields, a chicken coop and

ducks, 20 eggs, and fish ponds. Each plot is approximately 400 square meters per household (3 meters wide, 80 meters long), and includes red tilapia, mangrove groves, and fruit trees. In each activity, there are agricultural extension officers, fishermen, and livestock keepers who supervise and assist the widows.

### **The Threat of Armed Conflict**

The security issue is one of the certain features to be expected under the violent conflict situation. Specifically, impacts of the violent conflict typically include such tragic events as population displacement, capital and infrastructure destruction, and school dropout rates, which can lead to the malfunction of society (World Bank, 2006). These impacts subsequently are directly linked to various forms of economic, food, health, personal, community, political and environmental aspects of human security. The researcher considers that while human security in the widows' village can no longer be defended by the military to some extent, it rather will depend on efforts to stabilize the widows' lives, reduce women's inequities, conserve soil and water, and protect those in the community from drug abuse. Unless the government can attain an environmentally sustainable economy, the conflict and violence can be not be expected to decline.

According to the local news agency and the police interviews, the situation of the conflict now is continual fighting. The military still sets up a checkpoint in many areas. The situation is still the same, especially when during times when drugs are detected. It could turn into a very violent situation, such as a car bombing.

Human security in the whole village is generally widespread. Considering the seven indicators, it was found that, in terms of income scarcities, the threat to human security is that women in the village, considering the seven indicators, faces an economic threat after losing their husbands and having been displaced. In terms of food security, the overall criteria are fairly stable, as there is no risk of food shortages. In the demography, almost everyone gets social protection. But since the widows' village is located in the conflict zone, some widows have experienced a psychosocial problem. Challenges to personal security include a high mortality rate from crime, drug abuse at a moderate level and widows cannot be self-reliant. In terms of community security, there was continued fear of the situation and due to from past experiences. In terms of politics, there is gender inequality. Widows in the village have less freedom of expression in public and less



participation in planning and decision making. In environmental terms, there are environmental problems such as floods and water shortages.

### **Human Security in Widows' village**

The purpose of this section is to answer the second research question: How is the human security of widows impacted or changed relations in post-violence recovery? What are the soft and hard security impacts of these changes to gender and human security? When it comes to security, it is often understood as that of military engagement, battle or war, which is known as a hard security. Such understanding may be true of the past, when the threat that will affect the nation is the military invasion or armed war. The present day, many armed forces, for example, like the United States, try to keep military equipment to maintain security. Similarly, the Thai army is trying to buy weapons for safety (the journal, 2015). Additionally, "soft security" is a comprehensive term covering various aspects of an economy, psychology, and politics (Spiegeleire, 2013). It is noteworthy that in current understanding, when it comes to security, both hard security and soft security are considered important.

Human security in the case of a widows' village human security was considered along the seven indicators as follows. Women lack food security because: first, they lack the skills or training to do farming and self-rearing; second, it was also a matter of a time burden to go out to work outside the home or attend the training; and third, women still rely on donated food from outside. Lastly, the economic insecurity of women is high. Consequently, it has a certain direct impact on the food security of women. Health insecurity concerns many issues. Firstly, widows and their children receive the special patient ID card, which allows them to receive special care and reduce their medical expenses. The soldiers provide them transportation service during the day and night. There is sometimes a problem when women need an ambulance with medical staff and equipment. But nowadays, soldiers have to send them to the hospital at night time. Secondly, the most common mental health condition in the unrest is posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It is found that most widows who are suffering from conflict-related conditions do not receive appropriate treatment and do not access long-term mental healthcare. Personal insecurity looks at individual security and the safety of each woman in the village. According to an interview, widows had difficulty traveling alone because they were terrified. Secondly, there is also a problem of drug abuse in the village.

From the widow's village case study, community security is a challenge because of the problem of income distribution with widows in the villages and in the three provinces. Then there is the problem about the reliance on money from the state. Widows in the village do not meet the objectives of the self-reliance project. The researcher noted that widows in the village differed from the widows in the three southern border provinces. For political insecurity, due to political issues about the form of the government and the organization of relations within the state between rulers and ruled, the Thai political situation on the southern border is considered to be insecure. The environmental security of the village does not come from a shortage of natural resources. Environmental changes affect human security and the way in which the widow lives. For example, the lack of water during the dry season causes food insecurity. Moreover, the environmental security of the village is low, because it is associated with low economic security. In the dry season and during floods, the widows often face a lack of food and a loss of income from having to buy food from the outside.

### **Participation of widows**

The purpose of this section is to answer the third research question: To what extent is the Rotan Batu community (aka widow's village) able to address women's insecurities in order to help strengthen the transition from emergency to long-term security? The researcher believes that in the unrest area women are the most invisible and silenced. The widows' village is a decent village for them to join. The fact that women are involved shows that a gender perspective in the local peace and security process is very effective. Women attempt to act as family leaders to provide the best care for their families and for their children to be educated. If they have problems they will talk to the village head and the village head will try to help them with everything.

Therefore, the researcher thinks participation is important because both sides can see and understand each other's problems and help each other develop the village. This is a long-term security. It is also found that in order to achieve sustainable human security in the village, gender lens and education are needed to deepen the participation of women.

The study looked at the participation of people in the pilot sufficiency economy village project, which is the core project of the village. Since the project and village was at the inception stage, it will be a good reflection for other matters of participation. Participation overall is at the low level.

In fact, benefit sharing was the highest, then the levels decreased on collaboration to think and make decisions, sharing in an evaluation, and sharing in operating activities. Classifications by personal characteristics showed that there was no significant difference among household representatives with different gender, age, ability and disability diversity and monthly income who participated in the operation of a pilot project. This rejected the research assumption that household representatives with different occupations participated differently in the operation of the pilot project.

### **Key Findings**

Three provinces including Yala, Pattanee, and Narathiwat, and some parts that close to these three provinces of Thailand are well known as a ground for the conflict between radical Muslim insurgencies against Thai authorities. The root cause of this conflict can be dated back to the several hundred years old history.

Throughout the hundreds of years of the deep southern region being under the Thai government's control, the native Muslims have been struggling for their independency. In response to this event, the Thai government also strengthened their grip over this region by the use of counter forces and cultural assimilation. Nevertheless, even though this region has been facing the violence crisis for very long time, it was just last 14 years that this conflict has been accelerated.

The overall picture of the problem does not seem to cover the situation in the southern border provinces, especially the widows' village, and thus the well-being of women in this area. Unrest has obviously affected the human security of women both physically and mentally, resulting in the lack of opportunity or involvement in overall development.

The researcher uses evidence from research to examine that the threat of violent conflict in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand creates insecurities to women, especially who lose their head of households. A sound intervention with gender sensitivity would provide both hard and soft securities that met women's needs.

In achieving this goal, the researcher addresses three objectives. First, to explore what were the threats faced by widows living in a resettlement village. Second, to examine how the human security of widows is impacted or changed relations in the post-violence recovery, and what are the soft and hard security impacts of these changes to gender and human security. Third, to

examine what extent is the Rotan Batu community (aka widows' village) able to address women's insecurities in order to help strengthen the transition from emergency to long-term security.

The researcher points out that the government must focus and accelerate the resolution of unrest in the southern border provinces seriously.

The first research question is: what were the threats faced by widows living in a resettlement village?

Research indicates that the armed conflict has serious implications for both women and men. Due to the loss of men in their households after men become victims of conflict, women are often pulled suddenly into the public domain – both to secure livelihoods for their families and to try to mitigate, or at least reduce, conflict and violence in their communities. Women are automatically defined as “breadwinners”. Gender is thus a core security issue, as women have crucial roles in protecting their family and community well-being and creating peaceful living between their communities. In terms of income shortage, the threat of human security is that the village, considering the seven indicators, found an economic threat that women faced after losing husbands and having been displaced. Nonetheless, there is a good economic disparity if viewed superficially. In terms of food security, the overall criteria are fairly stable. There is no risk of food shortages. In the demography, almost everyone gets social protection. But since the widows' village is in the conflict zone, some widows have a psychosocial problem. In terms of personal insecurity, there is a high mortality rate from crime, drug abuse at a moderate level and widows cannot be self-reliant. In terms of community security, there is a continued fear of the situation and from the past experiences, this problem has not been seriously treated. In terms of politics, there is gender inequality. Widows in the village have less freedom of expression in public and participation in decision making. In environmental terms, there are environmental problems such as floods and water scarcities.

The second research question is, how is the human security of widows impacted or changed into a relation of post-violence recovery? What are the soft and hard security impacts of these changes to gender and human security?

The research found that there was military security (hard security) with the use of military weapons, tanks, and military fortifications. Nonetheless, they still cannot make the widows in the

village feel safe in their lives. Everybody also has a fear of violence and other forms of insecurity. The case of the widows' village considers human security using the seven indicators as follows.

*Food insecurity:* Women lack food security. First, they lack skills or training to do farming and self-rearing. Second, it was also a matter of a time burden to go out to work outside the home or attend the training. Third, women still rely on donated food from outside. Lastly, the economic insecurity of women is high. Consequently, it has a certain direct impact on the food security of women.

*Health insecurity:* Firstly, widows and their children get the special patient ID card to receive special care and reduce medical expenses. The soldiers provide a transportation service day and night. Secondly, because the most common mental health condition in the unrest is posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), most widows who are suffering from conflict-related do not receive appropriate treatment and do not access long-term mental health care.

*Personal insecurity:* When looking at individual security and the safety of each woman in the village, the interviews found that first, widows have difficulty traveling alone because they are terrified. Secondly, there is also a problem of drug abuse in the village.

*Community insecurity:* From the widow's village case study, community security is a challenge because of the problem of income distribution with widows in the villages and in the three provinces. Then there is the problem about the reliance on money from the state. Widows in the village do not meet the objectives of the self-reliance project. The researcher noted that widows in the village differed in safety compared to the widows in the three southern border provinces based on the above measures. There needs to be a combination of community and security for the purpose of human security in order to address the various issues for enhancing human security. They also have to bridge the gap in community security in order to prevent conflicts caused by inequalities with people in the deep south of Thailand.

*Political insecurity:* Due to the political issues about the form of the government and the organization of relations within the state between rulers and ruled, the Thai political situation on the southern border is considered to be insecure. The environmental security of the village does not come from a shortage of natural resources. On the other hand, environmental changes affect

human security and the way in which the widow lives. For example, the lack of water during the dry season causes food insecurity.

*An environmental security* of the village is low because it is associated with low economic security. In the dry season and floods, the widows often face a lack of food and lose income from having to buy food from outside.

The third research question is to what extent is the Rotan Batu community (aka widow's village) able to address women's insecurities to help strengthen the transition from emergency to long-term security?

The study looked at the participation of people in operating the pilot sufficiency economy village project. Participation overall is at the low level. In fact, benefit sharing was the highest, while the levels were down on collaboration to think and make decisions, sharing in an evaluation, and sharing in operating activities. Classification by personal characteristics showed no significant difference among household representatives with different gender, age, ability and disability diversity and monthly income who participated in the operation of a pilot project. This rejected the research assumption that household representatives with different occupations participated differently in the operation of the pilot project.

## **Discussions**

### *Hard security*

The research found that military security or hard security of unrest with the use of military weapons, tanks, and military fortifications. Nonetheless, they still cannot make the widows in the village feel safe in their lives. Everybody also has fear of violence and other insecurity.

The military fort is located one after another, making hard security visible, but it is just an illusion to believe that there is security.

### *Soft Security*

In the case of a widows' village, soft security was considered in the seven indicators as follows.

***Economic Security Discussion:*** This village was founded by the Royal Project, which is the core of the village or the extension of the village. The main purpose is to enable women to be self-reliant and stop the 4500-baht subsidy from the government, which is an emergency aid during the first three years. As a result, women have been relying on this money for 15 years. For this

reason, the widow is not seriously trained and did not train to do farming. At the beginning of the village, in the first 5 years, many trainers came down to train, but the widow did not have time to learn fully.

The Royal Project was designed to be a one size fits all. But it cannot be used in the widows' village due to the issues of gender, religion, and violence in the area, and without a gender analysis to the project.

***Gender Discussion:*** Widows must raise children and raise money to bring up their children. Military and government do not look at the widow as a single mother. Widows had requested child care during training and attending meetings for the Royal Project, but were rejected. No projects offered child care during training, because in other royal projects, men usually work and attend these meetings primarily. On the other hand, women had responsibilities as wives, mothers, and elderly caregivers at home. Women lack the opportunity to practice their work skills. They have to use all their time to raise children and make money. The widow was not involved in a Royal Project, because it is seen as a man's job not a woman's job from the beginning.

***Food Security Discussion:*** Widows do not lack food because of the economic conditions. They still rely on food from the outside.

***Health Security Discussion:*** There is a moderate level of security in the medical field. However, due to the context of the three provinces, the ambulance does not receive patients at night. Moreover, the widow it is not safe if she has a mental illness.

***Personal Security Discussion:*** Women do not dare go out alone out of fear, and the fact that there is no ambulance running at night. Soldier uniforms also change while traveling. Buddhist women wear hijabs on the go, which reflect insecurity. There are certain aspects that need to look at security, including drug trafficking and the illegal oil trade which are a towering security challenge.

***Community Security Discussion:*** The group of widows is concerned about their careers and about the potential of being cut off from the government subsidy of 4,500 baht. This village is a community in the Royal Project, but people in the community do not engage in this project. On the other hand, the project is hiring male workers, because the project has a budget for outsourcing. People in the village will benefit from the sale of their own produce as a farmer and will be rewarded from sales of products from the project.

*Political Security Discussion:* The political and military control is a big structure when looking at governance, since the most violent incidents over the past 15 years has been in the three southern border provinces. Military officers of the security forces, local officials, and village headmen work together on the ongoing violence in these areas, which are considered insecure.

There are other aspects of political security for Muslim women in the three provinces, including the issue of prayer time and praying on Fridays, creating a bathroom for women in the Royal Thai Army Headquarters, and being a Muslim second wife with legal rights. The leadership of women is reflected in the family leader and the widow is viewed superficially as a woman who lost a loved one. But in fact, those women are responsible for many functions that are not risky for men and soldiers.

*Environmental Security Discussion:* There are floods and toxic substances caused by warfare, which are environmental insecurity.

### **Participatory approach**

Cohen and Uphoff (1977) have proposed that the context for participation consists of 1) characteristics of the project which considering the complexity of the technology, the resources needed, the benefits to be achieved project link and flexibility of the project, and access to project management 2) work environment or project activities in various factors including physical and biological factors, economy, politics, society, culture, and history.

Participation in the Royal Project overall was at a low level. Women's participation in project implementation, operation, and decision making was at a low level. The benefits received and the monitoring and evaluation were also low.

Research shows this may be the case because most women are rarely engaged in participating in the project. Most women have no chance to comment and provide suggestions in the planning which was launched from the Bangkok office. In the decision making in project activities, women's participation was low in informational decision making, in organizational activities of the various groups, and in defining the operating principles for the Development Sufficiency Economy Village. Women also lack the opportunity to practice their work skills. They have to devote all their time to raising children and making money.

For the implementation and operation of women, participation in the development of community participation activities is low. Women's involvement in the committee for community



development projects is also at the low level. Based on the findings, women work as cleaners and food caterers, while people working on the project itself are male laborers hired from outside the village.

Since women have no opportunity to participate in an activity, she is not involved in the project's activities and has no chance of being a board member committee. The appointment of the committee will be made only by the participants who participate in the project. It found that the participation in the development of Sufficiency Economy project is at a low level from the gender perspective. Overall, villagers are involved in low-level community management.

In terms of receiving and sharing benefits, women do not benefit directly from community development programs. There was a low level of opportunity for community development projects, while income from community development projects and participation in development projects were also low. Women receive indirect benefits from cleaning and cooking work that is reproductive work, but not as a skilled worker.

It was also found that for monitoring and evaluation, women had the opportunity to monitor the activities of the project and find ways to improve their participation in the community project and development team. Women in the area who monitored the progress of community development projects was at a low level. The development team responsible for the project informed women about the progress of the evaluation activities by hiring an outsourced company to evaluate with the document.

### **Recommendations from the Research**

1. The findings show that participation strengthens the community. Women should be involved in different agencies and should organize activities to demonstrate the importance of community. When projects come into the community, agencies should be monitored and evaluated and build more leaders. Strengthening the community is different. In order to organize activities or projects, the target group should be considered for each social status. Those who should participate in more activities should include people who have a high income or low-income people, young and old, people with single or marital status, people with high education or low education, people with other agricultural and occupational backgrounds, and people with few or no household members. Strengthen the community can be done by mobilizing the participation of all people.

2. To resolve the issue of time, the government agencies should schedule to meet the widows every month. It might be scheduled for the first Monday of the month. There are also group meetings every month. The timetable must take into account the availability of members. In addition, the government should support the care of young children during the transition period. Mothers should come to the meetings, as members to participate, receive feedback, and provide information through a variety of networks. There is an opportunity for women to participate in the proposed activities, and to encourage women to come together as a community. It should also include activities to promote learning and opportunities for all widows. Women should be able to participate in these events, express their needs through the activities, and report any problems reports or suggestions.

3. The government should have an activity for exchange on the initiatives. It should be open to the public to participate in resolving barriers that arise during project activities with the government's support. It should also promote group activities to carry out local development to be more prosperous.

4. To increase revenue and stimulate interest, government agencies must show the benefits to the community, including that of unity and cooperation. They should encourage women in the community to learn together, work together, and give participants the opportunity to get results from their own actions or from participating in various activities. Government agencies should give the women access to participate in analytical meetings, such as budgeting and in the preparation of plans and projects, as well as on the feasibility of implementation and in Joint projects with the local administration. Moreover, agencies should encourage women to develop a vision by visiting the Sufficiency Economy of other successful communities, and to see how to improve and use this information in their communities.

5. The government should allow women to participate in the project due to the urgency of community development. Women should be involved in the assessment to find problems in the village development. In addition to addressing demand issues, and listening to performance reports, they should implement and provide proposals for the project plan or development activities.

6. Thailand should begin to translate the essence of the UN 1325 to spread the word in Thai. There should an invitation for exchange and to set the stage for moving to creating gender

equality through the framework of each organization. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), in conjunction with UN1325, includes the dissemination of knowledge by raising awareness through workshops that have been ongoing for almost a decade.

*Firstly*, all stakeholders should seek opportunities to follow up on developments and report progress. Calls on all Member States to identify two concrete actions.

*Secondly*, provide high-level support to women's peace and security, and support the selection of the highest government delegates. Provide sufficient funds for the operation of UN 1325.

*Thirdly*, identify and engage women as senior citizens at the regional and national levels.

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