

LESSONS FOR MULTINATIONAL ENTERPRISES: THE CASE OF EMPOWERMENT
AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THAILAND

by

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AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THAILAND

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The case study portion of this paper was completed during the Spring 2012 semester while studying abroad in Khon Kaen, Thailand on a Development and Globalization program through the Center for International Educational Exchange. This research was completed in collaboration with Taryn Orona and Brenna Kelly. The ensuing case study is the result of a joint effort and four months of living and learning in the villages of Northeastern Thailand.

INTRODUCTION

In order to enact a grassroots strategy of solidarity when advancing new development projects, multinational enterprises must leverage the resources and knowledge base of local citizens. A sustainable platform for growth can only be built when the community buys in to the project or promise at hand. This type of institutional change is enacted through the role of individuals but played out through institutions as a whole. Within the context of the nation of Thailand, a grassroots strategy of solidarity produces financial outcomes for the corporation and social outcomes for the community (Kelly, Yutthaphonphinit, Seubsman & Sleigh, 2012).

In the arena of development, multinational enterprises (MNEs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have undergone four different generations (Panda, 2007). Initially, immediate shortage sat at the center of development work. International NGOs centered campaigns around emaciated children, with an emphasis on providing for the welfare of other nations through tangible, temporal items such as food and clothing donated to individuals. The second generation of development work ushered in a new era of community focus to combat inertia. The international organization worked to mobilize an entire neighborhood towards change.

The third wave began to touch on the need for institutions to defy policy constraints and serve as a more lasting agent of change within the nation as a whole. This era ushered in the movement towards corporate social responsibility and the community as a stakeholder within the business framework. However, only in the

most recent generation of people's movements have MNEs and NGOs focused on developing entire networks of collaboration to provide future vision where it is lacking. While earlier generations reflected the marketing era of exploiting targeted people groups as a way of advancing a cause or project, this generation of development exists in the relationship era, where interpersonal connection is more important than manipulation. This new wave of thinking places the problem on a global scale and utilizes local empowerment to energize the movement (Panda, 2007).

Hugo Slim of Oxford Brookes University outlines an important dimension of the conversation on international development and effective management. He states, "They have to answer another preliminary question- what status are they claiming for themselves; are they claiming to speak AS the poor, WITH the poor, FOR the poor, or ABOUT the poor? How they answer that question will determine the nature of their legitimacy" (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009). In this fourth generation of development work, the modern enterprise should claim to partner *with* the poor as the poor speaks for themselves. Compulsion by the MNE for local agreement cultivates a negative environment, while benefits simply create a relationship whose length matches that of the incentive. For this reason, the most effective manner of MNE and community partnership is self-reliance (Tonami & Mori, 2007).

Just as corporations seek to implement best practices within their corporate structure, this paper seeks to provide recommended best practices for MNEs seeking institutional change and development in Thailand. Best practices will be presented as a package of strategies and tactics focused on local empowerment and

bottom-up management. The ultimate question to be answered is: “How can MNEs utilize grassroots management strategy to increase effectiveness in the developing economy of Thailand?” This paper’s motivation is to provide a framework that avoids ranking and superiority in favor of lasting and sustainable change.

These best practices for MNEs were identified through extensive research in scholarly journals, as well as a case study conducted during time abroad on a development and globalization program in Khon Kaen, Thailand. This case study serves to demonstrate the power of grassroots management strategy in a practical setting of sustainable and empowered growth. These observations occurred through numerous exchanges and interviews conducted with government employees, NGOs, corporations, and local villagers. The grassroots management approach will be compared to a top-down approach by a similar institution. By answering the research question in this format, this paper seeks to provide tangible tactics followed by practical presentation of application.

DEFINITIONS

International nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) exist not as a governmental institution or as a corporate institution. While governments are concerned with the welfare of an entire population and corporations are concerned with profit generation, NGOs exist outside of these boundaries and are uniquely designed to serve a niche market and “have an explicitly social justice agenda, whose primary concern is the improvement of the lives of the poor, the promotion of human rights, or environmental protection” (Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009). If we consider government as the first sector of organization and business as the second,

NGOs are often defined as the third sector (Panda, 2007). Existence outside of traditional constraints (e.g., tax payers or shareholders) and the ability to select a targeted market with an entirely social purpose positions NGOs with a unique opportunity for sustainable change. However, this unique position can also provide a strategic opportunity for partnerships with the second sector of multinational enterprises.

Grassroots management exists at three basic levels. First, the group level operates as a “self-identified set of persons having some common interest.” Second, the community level exists as a “relatively self-contained socioeconomic residential unit.” Third, the locality level serves as a “set of communities having cooperative and commercial relations” (Carroll, 1992). When analyzing grassroots management strategy, it is important to note that a unique set of tactics is utilized at each of these levels. Within the group level, staffing decisions impact future strategy and daily operations. The community level serves as the basis around which the NGO must structure its unique set of services. The locality level is a network within which expansion, growth, and development occur. It is important to note that grassroots organizations operate within the physical and lawful boundaries of developing nations, adding another unique layer of complexity (Carroll, 1992).

The relationship between organizational effectiveness and grassroots strategy is evaluated using three criteria: awareness building efforts, people’s participation in projects, and efforts in creating peoples’ institutions (Panda, 2007). First, the efforts of an international organization to build awareness about the relevant cause or project must align with the overall mission of the organization. For

example, Invisible Children came under severe criticism for representing a “White Savior Industrial Complex,” a theory which suggests that Caucasians often believe their attention to a cause is superior and can “save” a situation, in its viral KONY 2012 video. While the video garnered 100 million views on YouTube, critics adeptly observed that views, likes, and retweets do not save lives (Waldorf, 2012). Growing obsession with social media creates a false sense of security (and connectedness) that awareness building is creating tangible impact. This is why organizational effectiveness consists of two more prongs.

The second criteria for analyzing grassroots strategy is found in people’s participation in projects (Panda, 2007). People’s participation in projects does not consist of missionary-style volunteerism, but instead of local involvement. Projects cannot be professionally managed, designed, and manicured in another location and brought to the local level as an experiment—project development at its core must be a participatory process (Oakley, 1991). The very essence of people’s participation requires that the local people be involved in the very planning, organization, and control stages of management discussed in this paper. People’s projects must involve the people from end to end, conception to evaluation.

The third facet of effectiveness in grassroots management is the overarching organization’s efforts in creating people’s institutions (Panda, 2007). Gifts of financial resources or even physical resources (i.e., food and clothing) are, by nature, temporary and consumable. Institutions can be defined as “a complex of positions, roles, norms and values lodged in particular types of social structures and organising relatively stable patterns of human activity with respect to fundamental

problems in producing life-sustaining resources, in reproducing individuals, and in sustaining viable societal structures within a given environment” (Miller, 2007).

Institutionalization is “an embedding in formal structures, such as formal aspects of organizations that are not tied to particular actors or situations” (Zucker, 1987). By definition, institutions are sustained despite change. Resources are consumed, while institutions are utilized. By helping to develop sustainable institutions led by local citizens, MNEs possess the capability to create the greatest amount of lasting change within a community, and to ensure that change comes from within the community and its unique structure.

Douglas North explains institutional theory by stating, “Institutions are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction” (North, 2004). This interaction is manifested by individuals identifying as members of the institution. Because these individuals define themselves as a part of the institution, they are invested in the long-term development of the institution and stand in the best position to facilitate growth and change (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). “Institutional entrepreneurs” harness the ability to facilitate change when their tenure, social position, and inter-organizational mobility is leveraged towards the long-term development of the institution (Battilana, 2006).

At the core of this grassroots management lies community empowerment and organizational humility. First, community empowerment involves the hiring and utilization of local citizens both for their insight and for their stability. Staffing decisions must reflect a commitment to the community by utilizing the unique talent

and abilities of insiders to empower the community from the inside out. Second, it requires humility for an MNE to admit that its senior executives, well-crafted action plans, and best intentions may not be what is best for the local community. A truly effective MNE willingly admits that it has much to learn from locals, and leverages the wisdom of people from within the community as the catalyst for change. This is done through active cultivation of relationships with capable professionals, community leaders, and political figures (Pananond & Zeithaml, 1998). Additionally, it is beneficial when “the management is representative of the various nationalities and cultures found encompassed within the business” (Katsioloude, 2006).

CASE STUDY

Context

The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) operates a four month study abroad program focused on development and globalization with the explicit purpose being to facilitate exchanges between villagers, NGOs, and other agents of social change across the villages of Northeastern Thailand. During my experience in this program, I lived in villages ranging from an agricultural community fighting a government wildlife sanctuary for land rights to a protest village in direct contradiction to government orders.

On each homestay, I stayed with a Thai family whose knowledge of English matched my knowledge of Thai—minimal. Through translators, I participated in exchanges with NGO leaders, community members, and government workers where we delved deep into the issues at the core of Thai society. This firsthand look into the issue of land rights from a variety of perspectives served as the catalyst for this

paper. This case study will provide a comprehensive look at grassroots movements in Thailand and how organizations utilize local empowerment as the agent of change.

In Loei Province in the northeastern region of Thailand, many villagers have been threatened or confronted by the government concerning land rights. Until recently, Thailand did not issue title to land. Therefore, in many cases, villagers and their families have been living on the same land for upwards of seventy years, yet are now being told they have no right to the land. Networks have become crucial to the empowerment of locals as they fight these battles across the Northeast. Organizations such as the Four Regions Slum Network (4RSN) connect villagers dealing with similar issues across the country. One man living in a contested railroad slum explained that his particular community received an official lease from the government and was leveraging this to help other communities. “We feel like we have more brothers and sisters,” he explained, “If we go to the north, we won’t have to pay anything because we have brothers there.” (Huay Rahong Village, 2012).

One important distinction for Thailand is that NGO stands for nongovernmental organizer (Thai NGO), referencing the individual as his or her own entity. As one Thai NGO explained to me, he travels from village to village encouraging the people in their fight against the government and providing what resources he can in exchange for a bed and a meal (Local Nongovernmental Organizers, 2012). This type of one-to-one interaction is both sustainable and personal. While international NGOs could not serve the same multitude of people

under this model, it is certainly a model to be emulated in some situations. Another Thai NGO described, “When you go and talk with the village, the feeling you get is that you are one. So if anything happens to the village, we will definitely feel what the villagers are feeling. If they feel their land is important to them, then we feel that too” (Local Nongovernmental Organizers, 2012). This expression of solidarity reflects the appropriate attitude of the modern NGO in the relationship era.

With the upcoming ASEAN 2015 Initiative, villages struggling with land rights will face even more persecution, as a railroad is planned to connect Laos and Thailand across thousands of *rai* (Thailand’s land measurement unit, 2.55 *rais* are about 1 acre). Many villagers asserted that they would not have agreed to this railroad development program given the choice, as this top-down policy will create a double track train through many rice fields and family livelihoods (Huay Rahong Village, 2012). The following case study will provide insight around land rights through the analysis of two government wildlife sanctuaries. One sanctuary chose to work in collaboration with the community, while the other implemented a top-down management approach.

Introduction

Thailand’s rapid development since the 1960’s put a strain on the country’s natural resources. The ensuing encroachment on forest land occurred simultaneously with the government’s campaign to increase preserved forest land. This began with Thailand’s first environmental law, The Wild Animals Reservation and Protection Act of 1960. However, it was The Wildlife Reservation and

Protection Act of 1992 that prompted the creation of the Wildlife Conservation Division (Global Tiger Initiative, 2011).

As of 2009, Thailand's fifty-seven wildlife sanctuaries occupied 22.63 million *rais* of land across the nation (East & Southeast Asia Biodiversity Information Initiative, 2005). While these sanctuaries work to preserve biodiversity, their creation has caused conflicts in communication between local villagers and government officers. In order to monitor preserved lands, sanctuary officials use a standard model of laws and regulations. However, there is variation in how these regulations are executed. These differences in structure are demonstrated in the interactions between villagers and the officials of Pha Peung and Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuaries.

This piece will strive for a holistic understanding of these two different wildlife sanctuary models from the perspective of local villagers, government officers, and NGOs. The history behind Pha Peung and Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuaries will be explained along with a description of current leadership. Names have been removed for anonymity purposes. How can a sustainable living be provided for both inhabitants of the forest and those who govern it? How is community collaboration relevant and possible in each model? These questions can be posed to better understand the models presented and to examine what the future holds for Thailand in regards to best practices in wildlife sanctuary management and development work at large.

Background on Wildlife Sanctuaries in Thailand

According to the Wildlife Conservation Division, “Protection is the first priority in wildlife sanctuaries.” Thailand’s fifty-eight wildlife sanctuaries were created under the National Park Act, the Wildlife Reservation and Protection Act, and the National Forest Reserve Act (East & Southeast Asia Biodiversity Information Initiative, 2005). These laws establish a standard protocol and structure for the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE). The MNRE’s Department of National Parks contains a Wildlife Division overseeing all of Thailand’s wildlife sanctuaries. Within the Wildlife Division, a Law Enforcement Patrol ensures laws are followed properly. The patrol collects data, conducts a debriefing for sanctuary employees, clarifies discrepancies, and gives this information to the site official and patrol leader. From there, reports are generated, evaluations conducted, and strategy meetings are held to discuss continued preservation within the forests. This cycle illustrates the internal process of the wildlife sanctuary.

The structure is strictly enforced because Thailand lost about 9 million *rais* of its forests between 1990-2005 (Global Tiger Initiative, 2011). Concern with protection is also outlined in Thailand's environmental laws in regards to poaching, endangered species, and hill tribes. Law Enforcement Patrol handles these issues through monetary fines and arrests. These procedures constitute a government-supported process utilized by the majority of wildlife sanctuaries in Thailand (Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary, 2012).

Pha Peung Wildlife Sanctuary

Declared an official wildlife sanctuary in 2000, Pha Peung Wildlife Sanctuary consists of 181,000 *rais* of land in Chaiyaphum Province. Since 2000, there have been four head officers of Pha Peung, each following similar models based on the government-supported process. The current head officer, age 45, has been in the position since March 2012 (Pha Peung Wildlife Sanctuary, 2012). Pha Peung is considered a small sanctuary and its working model contains three main goals: protect animals within the wildlife sanctuary, establish public relations and academic work within natural education, and prevent harm to the wildlife sanctuary land. Because the previous head officers have followed this model, it is difficult to differentiate their methods of communication with villagers. Generally, head officers of Pha Peung emphasize administrative tasks in their sanctuary's operations that follow the policies founded by former officers. The rigid structure of the model does not allow for village-specific adaptation and can lead to difficulties in communication with surrounding communities.

Established as a forest reserve in 1973, problems arose when Pha Peung expanded in order to achieve "sanctuary" status in 2000. This expansion created an overlap of 719 *rais* of farmland with reserved land. Toong Lui Lai is a village abutting Pha Peung where several farmers possessed land that was "annexed" by the new Pha Peung boundary lines. When interviewed, the villagers of Toong Lui Lai voiced frustration with Pha Peung officials. A 69-year-old Pha Peung Area Land Reform Committee member explained the process of the expansion: "[Pha Peung] just told us not to worry and did not give us more information when they marked

the area. They knew it was villager land.” The Chairman of the Committee elaborated that Pha Peung “never called or coordinated or contacted the villagers about the wildlife sanctuary or the expansion - we were never informed.” Pha Peung’s model focuses heavily on the protection of the animals and land. To this end, villagers say that communication with local communities has not been a top priority of the wildlife sanctuary (Toong Lui Lai Village, 2012).

Pha Peung Villager Reflections

Due to this lack of communication, the wildlife sanctuary and the villagers of Toong Lui Lai struggle to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship. One villager said, “It is hard to talk to Pha Peung. They ignore the problems of the villagers...and they ignore the poor.” However, villagers are not ignored when they farm or trespass onto wildlife sanctuary land. He listed Toong Lui Lai’s grievances, “[Pha Peung] would not allow us to go onto our land again. They have charged us with civil and criminal cases and if we do not cut down the rubber trees then the officers will do it and charge us for expenses.” He added, “And then [Pha Peung] says ‘If you do it wrong, I’ll arrest you,’” referencing the cabinet solution of 1998 (Toong Lui Lai Village, 2012). This solution states that villagers can continue working on the land they owned prior to the establishment of the reservation, but cannot trespass onto any other land. The solution is difficult to navigate for villagers because many of them do not have official land titles to prove that the land is rightfully theirs, as land is often passed through long-standing family relationship and formal land titles are a recent phenomenon. Many of the rules and regulations surrounding Toong Lui Lai are based on laws established to be inclusive of all Thai National Parks, and are not

specific to the situation in Pha Peung. Despite the fact there have been four separate head officers, the wildlife sanctuary and villager relationship remains tense because the past twelve years have been characterized by the same strained interactions.

With only two months at Pha Peung, the head officer's employment has been too brief to see tangible results. "There are rumors that the present head claims that he will pull out the markers and signs on the farms - but I have not seen it yet," said one villager. More often, villagers speak of the former head officer. He said, "I think [the former head officer] was acting on his own judgment...trying only to use law." Villagers claim that while the former officer relied heavily on the law to charge villagers, he also disregarded a 2010 cabinet solution stating that the wildlife sanctuary could no longer make arrests. After the solution was signed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, two more villager arrests were made by Pha Peung officers. A villager said, "The former head officer did not listen to the cabinet solution...[it] meant nothing to him." The villagers felt abandoned in the past, and there has not yet been enough evidence by the new head officer to elicit their faith in Pha Peung. There still seems to be a great emphasis on law, according to an NGO that works closely with these villagers. She explained, "The most common model uses law enforcement" (Local Nongovernmental Organizers, 2012).

Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary

Declared in 1999, the Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary stretches across 146,000 *rai* of land in the provinces of Udonthani, Pechtchaboon, and Nong Bua Lumphu. Under the leadership of its first nine head officers, Phu Pha Daeng followed

a model similar to that of Pha Peung in its villager interactions. In late 2011, a new officer, age 43, became the tenth head officer of Phu Pha Daeng. He introduced a model developed during his time at Chaeson Wildlife Sanctuary in Lumpang province near Chiang Mai. While running the Chaeson Wildlife Sanctuary, he strayed from the traditional model of villager arrest and attempted to use collaboration whenever possible. "I didn't intentionally ask to come here, but the department sent me," he explained, "They sent me here to prove my model. My style is against the upper level. My style of working is to focus on communities in the area." One example of his Chaeson model was the Villagers-Temple-Government (VTG) Project, which brought together these three parties to clean a local weir. "Villagers felt ownership," said the new head officer (Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary, 2012). Featured on Thai PBS, it was this project that seems to have led to his relocation. With the Chaeson model as a base foundation, he is now attempting to implement changes at Phu Pha Daeng.

With community collaboration as his focus, the new head officer hopes this pilot project will spread as a model to other sanctuaries. "We do not ignore the law, but we are not using it first. We try to have the participation of the community as the first thing," he explained. With the villagers of Huay Rahong, he marked the borders of Phu Pha Daeng into clear zones of strict preservation, flexible land, and community farmland (Huay Rahong Village, 2012). These borders are currently in the process of being codified into maps. He acknowledges that the purpose of a wildlife sanctuary is to protect forests from destruction and maintain a living space for wild animals. However, he also acknowledges the importance of incorporating

locals into the process. He stated, “The people living here—they love it. They live here and they die here, so they love it more than us, a thousand times more. I wanted to demonstrate that people who live in the forest can support the forest” (Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary, 2012).

Under the new head officer’s model, the next step for Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary is developing ecotourism in the local communities, an idea that generated positive effects at Chaeson. “Thai tourists need a tourism they can learn from, education tourism,” he explained. He believes local communities like Huay Rahong and Huay Gon Tha would benefit from feeling increased ownership in the preservation of the forest. Simultaneously, tourists would gain an understanding of the mutually dependent relationship between the land and the locals. The construction of an eco-friendly campsite with fresh water showers, lessons in local handicrafts, and a Plant-A-Tree program are just some of the elements of his current plan. Additionally, he hopes to set up another forum with the community to increase understanding about the sanctuary’s actions. “If the people in the communities learn to trust me, then it will work. I have no hidden agenda. If I have clear goals, then I am not afraid” (Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary, 2012).

However, the new head officer’s actions have not received strong support from his governmental superiors, which he identifies as a weakness in his model. While no one has spoken to him directly, he is aware that officials in the upper levels of his department do not condone his actions. Despite the lack of support, he continues to endorse a non-traditional approach. He believes that villagers should be a part of the conversation on preservation. “I don’t give the villagers fish, I teach

them how to fish,” he explained. He is aware of the government-supported model utilized by Pha Peung Wildlife Sanctuary. “There needs to be a forum with him, me, and the communities from both areas,” he stated. This medium of communication could allow for a greater understanding of both models’ advantages and disadvantages (Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary, 2012).

Phu Pha Daeng Villager Reflections

The villagers of Huay Rahong are receptive but wary of the new leadership position. “[The new head officer] seems pro-community, but he still has to prove himself before we will have 100% confidence,” said one villager in Huay Rahong, age 51. As his village strives to gain a community land title, he hopes the government will see the significance of the partnership between Huay Rahong and the wildlife sanctuary. Under the villager’s leadership, the community organized internally into the Phu Pha Daeng Forest Preservation Group in 2005. By self-regulating through warnings and fines, this committee ensures member accountability. Additionally, the committee has provided legal and financial support to arrested villagers. However, no arrests have been made since the new officer became head officer in 2011. The villager spoke of former Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary officers in contrast to the new officer. “I think this model should be preserved and continued,” he said, “We don’t have conflicts with government officers now” (Huay Rahong Village, 2012).

According to the head man of Huay Rahong for the last seven years, community collaboration has not always been a priority in Huay Rahong’s relationship with MNRE officials. The previous head officer of Phu Pha Duang,

forced villagers out and planted trees on the villagers' land. For the first five years after Phu Pha Daeng's creation, no visual boundaries of the wildlife sanctuary existed. The head man of Huay Rahong and a local NGO traveled to Bangkok in 2004 to urge the Department of National Parks to create visual boundaries for Phu Pha Daeng. While some visual boundaries were established, arrests and lawsuits occurred until the new head officer's employment in 2011. Encouraged by the recent lack of arrests, the local Thai NGO stated she would like to see the current Phu Pha Daeng model institutionalized. "For me, what we don't trust is not [the new head officer]. If a new person comes, they might not accept this," she explained. She expressed concern that a future relocation of the new head officer could dismantle the community's partnership with Phu Pha Daeng (Local Nongovernmental Organizers, 2012).

The next steps for the villagers of Huay Rahong involve spreading the word about the model and holding the new head officer accountable for his actions. "When he declared he would help the community, it encouraged us to check on him," said one villager. The villager outlined the village's plan into two goals: to pursue sustainable agriculture and to work with Phu Pha Daeng to develop local ecotourism. By hosting a seminar in May 2012, the village hopes to increase awareness on the provincial level about the policies surrounding these issues. He explained, "We strongly hope for a change in Thai society, but our hope hasn't been achieved." Additionally, the head man of Huay Rahong hopes to see other wildlife sanctuaries adopt a more pro-community stance. "I want to tell Pha Peung to bring this model as an example and do what we are doing here. The number of officers is

less than the number of committee members, so to say only officers can protect does not make sense" (Huay Rahong Village, 2012).

Conclusion

Wildlife sanctuaries struggle to balance land preservation, animal protection, and villager rights. This is illustrated by the contrasting policies of the Phu Pha Daeng and Pha Peung Wildlife Sanctuaries. Phu Pha Daeng emphasizes collaboration outside the sanctuary, while Pha Peung policies focus on internal collaboration. Currently, the major difference in wildlife sanctuary policy lies in the human capability to live sustainably within the environment. Pha Peung's policies revolve around the belief that villager interaction with natural resources is inherently destructive. The head officer's priority is to preserve the wildlife sanctuary, hence why law enforcement remains prevalent. Phu Pha Daeng's current policies revolve around the belief that humans can coexist sustainably with natural resources. This conviction enables the head officer of Phu Pha Daeng to focus on community collaboration, rather than law enforcement.

For both wildlife sanctuaries, increased communication and accessibility from the head officer hold the potential to generate positive change. According to a local NGO, the ideal solution involves the government maintaining the forest and the villagers retaining their farm land (Local Nongovernmental Organizers, 2012). The questions can now be raised: Is policy change necessary to secure this future? And more importantly, how can both the inhabitants of the forest and those preserving the forest coexist?

LESSONS FOR MULTINATIONAL ENTERPRISES

When applying the concepts of solidarity and grassroots movements to MNEs, it is important to consider the process as one which takes time and diligence from multiple stakeholders. Klaus Meyer warns, “Higher standards are expected to increase the positive effects of MNEs on their host economies, although some argue that too rapid a rise of standards may undermine countries' competitiveness and thus inhibit economic growth” (Meyer, 2004). The most effective means for sustainable change in the relationship between the MNE and the community is found in benchmarking. Benchmarking can be divided into the arenas of management effectiveness, financial sustainability, community engagement, and program performance (Saul, 2004). By evaluating progress in each of these separate arenas, the MNE can effectively determine how to allocate resources and employees to achieve long-term growth.

Additionally, it is crucial that MNEs find and develop institutional entrepreneurs from the host country, such as the new head officer of the Phu Pha Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary in Thailand. These institutional entrepreneurs “create a whole new system of meaning that ties the functioning of disparate sets of institutions together” and allows the community and the MNE to work together in partnership (DiMaggio, 1988). Leveraging these fully capacitated networks allows grassroots NGOs, local governments, and MNEs to harness their resources and mission statements towards a goal that serves all parties (Roberts, Jones, & Frohling, 2005). The combination of inputs and intermediaries serves to generate the output. Providing input allows the individual to feel a personal role in helping a

larger cause (Rosen Robinson, Irmak & Jayachandran, 2012). When all three sectors are providing inputs, a mutually agreeable output of empowerment can be reached.

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ABSTRACT

Institutional change occurs when individual actors behave in a manner beneficial to the long-term development of the organization. The current era of international development focuses on peoples' movements, which utilize local institutional entrepreneurs to guide the future of the organization through empowered action. With a triple sector approach, government, business, and nongovernmental organizations work together with local citizens to cultivate a culture of empowerment within development projects. This paper presents a case study conducted during four months of research in the villages of Northeastern Thailand. Through translated exchanges with villagers, nongovernmental organizers, corporations, and government officials, various management methods within wildlife sanctuaries are compared and analyzed in the context of empowerment. This research yields lessons for multinational enterprises in Thailand, suggesting benchmarking and local partnerships as an effective means of creating sustainable development projects.