

# The Role of farmer leader in Participatory rural development

## - Case Study of NGO in Thailand -

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bio- organic fertilizer, self-reliance*

### 1. Introduction

Participatory rural development is important strategy and methodology on the development aid field. The purpose of participatory development strategy is the self-reliance of people in development countries by taking part in the process. Eco-Community Vigor Foundation (ECVF) is NGO in Thailand, which supports rural area by way of participatory learning and action. Main activity is encouragement the farmer leaders through organizing a farmers' group and doing group activity. Definition of the farmer leader, in this study, is not a leader in a village such as a village chief or a village committee but who facilitates community development. In this study, it aims to clarify the role of the farmer leaders that play in the participatory rural development with the case study of agricultural development project supported by ECVF.

### 2. Outline of case study

Study area locates Takianluean sub-district, Nakhon Sawan district, Nakhon Sawan Province in North Thailand. Takianluean sub-district consists of 12 villages. Main agricultural crop is a banana plantation. In 2000, agricultural development project had been done for improvement of quality of life. So, bio-organic fertilizer (BOF) cultivation would be designed. Then ECVF held participatory workshop. Farmer leaders in every village took part in the workshop, and then they discussed by brainstorming and learned how to make BOF. After workshop, the farmer leaders went back to their village and organized BOF group.

I surveyed by observation, interview, and questionnaire to find how the farmer leaders affects the agricultural development project.

### 3. The role of farmer leader

**(1) Introduction and movement:** The farmer leaders organized two groups to introduce making BOF among the village. Subsequently, the group activity moved to manage the BOF factory. At present, many farmers in Takianluean are utilizing BOF.

**(2) Diversification:** The farmer leader found a proper way using BOF by trial and error. So that, farmers apply many kinds of BOF e.g. manure, BOF of the factory, and commercial BOF to their field.

**(3) Promotion:** The farmer leader gives information about BOF cultivation to other farmers. Besides, the farmer leaders often go to study about BOF cultivation at other prefecture, or are working at sales promotion of products as BOF cultivation. The communicating between farmer leaders and other people promotes the community development.

### 4. Prospects

This study indicates that methodology which NGO encourages the farmer leader facilitates the self-reliance of farmers. As an opinion, fostering the farmer leader is one of effective development methodology for sustainable community development.