

PSDT2012 “Learning from those who stayed dry” Project Report

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1) Project description

Each year, Kasetsart University’s Division of Urban and Environmental Planning organizes an International Training Program for students from around the world. The program takes the shape of a two-week research and design exercise centered on a specific planning challenge in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region. It aims to sharpen students’ research, planning and design skills, and offers them an intercultural and interdisciplinary learning experience.

This year’s program, kindly supported by AC21, was meant to see the participation of more students from Asian cities that share particular planning challenges with Bangkok. The 2012 edition was therefore jointly organized by Kasetsart University, Tongji University, and Shanghai Jiao Tong University. The University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands), as in previous years, acted as an associated partner. This means that faculty of these four universities were involved in the preparation and the implementation of the program, and that their students received ‘preferred participant’ status.

The planning challenge around which this year’s program was designed, concerns community flood preparation. The 2011 Thai flood caught many communities in Central Thailand unprepared. Damage and suffering, in result, were unnecessarily high. In the program a community (Krathum Baen) was studied that, unlike so many others, actually did prepare for the advancing water and in result managed to remain largely dry. We set out to hear and discuss their first-hand experiences, and used these to draft a community flood preparation manual for general use in Central Thailand and possibly beyond.

The central aim of the training program was for the participants to gain and exchange knowledge, and learn particular research skills in urban and environmental planning. Themes that occupied center stage include: disaster prevention and preparedness, adaptation through local planning, and community participation. An explicit aim was to let the community of Krathum Baen learn from its own experience, and to let other communities learn from the experience of Krathum Baen.

To achieve this aim, the program was designed to facilitate intense interaction between the students and the community of Krathum Baen: more than 50 per cent of the workshop took place ‘on site’, in the community.

2) Participants and supervision

The program attracted 18 students (target was 20) from five different countries and six different universities: six students from Thailand (Kasetsart University and AIT), three students from China (Tongji University Shanghai, AC21 partner), five students from Japan (Tokyo Institute of Technology), two students from the Netherlands (University of Amsterdam, collaborating partner) and two students from Germany (University of Oldenburg). Annex A provides a full overview of the participants. Originally, it was anticipated that there would also be students from Shanghai Jiao Tong University (the third AC21 partner) participating in the program, but unfortunately and in spite of sustained recruitment efforts, eventually no students chose to enroll.

Supervision of the program was shared between faculty of Kasetsart University (Dr. Bart Lambregts, Dr. Supaporn K. Leopaiojna and Dr. Tanapon Panthasen) and Tongji University Shanghai (Prof. Yi Chen). With no students from Shanghai Jiao Tong University enrolling, it also seemed less expedient to fly in faculty from this university to share in the supervision (as was originally anticipated).

3) Activities and program execution

The program was executed as planned. After support from the AC21 Special Project Fund was granted, the program was further detailed and internationally advertised. Special attention was directed to the selection of the program's case study area. Three potential sites around Bangkok were identified and assessed by means of a field visit. These were Ban Phaeo and Sananrak (mentioned in the original proposal) and Krathum Baen (neighbours of Ban Phaeo). The community of Krathum Baen eventually offered the most favorable conditions, both in terms of the learning experience it could offer and the support that could be provided by local officials and other actors.

The training program itself ran from 7 until 21 August. Annex B provides the day-to-day schedule. The first five days were mostly spent on campus and filled with lectures, a field trip, and tutorials. The second part (seven days) were spent in Krathum Baen and filled with data collection (mainly via interviews), analysis, and the formulation of recommendations for future flood management in Krathum Baen.

The program closed with a seminar held at Krathum Baen's Watergate office. Here the students presented their findings and recommendations to an audience made up of community members, including the Deputy Governor of Samut Sakorn province (of which Krathum Baen is a district).

After the program ended, Kasetsart's supervising faculty used the program's findings to compile a community flood preparation manual for distribution among communities in Central Thailand. At the time of writing (early December 2012) the manual is being readied for printing.

4) Outcomes

The program envisaged three types of outcomes: immaterial outcomes, material outcomes and relationships.

First of all, the training program aimed to provide the participants with experience, knowledge and skills, not only with respect to the academic issues at stake (flood management), but also as responsible and reflective global citizens. Students were enabled to bolster their (academic) knowledge about particular themes and approaches (e.g. disaster prevention and integrated flood management) and were given an opportunity to enrich and test their knowledge by hands-on experience. From the feedback forms filled out by the students after completion of the program we may derive that the program delivered in this respect. The community of Krathum Baen, in turn, received new knowledge and ideas that may help them to be better prepared for the next flood event.

Second, in terms of material results the training program was meant to produce a generic community flood preparation manual that can be used by communities across Central Thailand, and possibly even beyond. This manual is currently (early December) being readied for printing and will also become available online. There will be a Thai language version for distribution among Thai communities and an English version for distribution among the international participants and possibly beyond. In addition, insights gained from the program will be presented in various flood management seminars that will be held in Bangkok in December 2012, January 2013 and possibly later on. In the process they will also find their way into one or more academic papers.

Finally, the program has been very helpful in creating a collaborative relation between the four universities involved (notably between Kasetsart University, Tongji University Shanghai and the University of Amsterdam). Especially the fact that Prof. Yi Chen (of Tongji University Shanghai) was able to stay at Kasetsart during a substantial part of the program, has been very instrumental in deepening the ties between Tongji and Kasetsart. Intentions are there to join forces again next year, in PSDT2013. The students, in the meantime, are still in contact with each other on Facebook, meaning that the program has also helped to create lasting (at least for the time being) relations between them.

5) Follow-up

The collaboration between the four universities in PSDT2012 has laid the foundation for further collaborative activities in the (near) future. Intentions have been expressed to seek each other's cooperation again in the organization of PST2013 in July or August 2013. Meanwhile, Kasetsart University and the University of Amsterdam have agreed to jointly organize a research seminar about the "Next wave of Globalization" in April 2013 (in Bangkok). The year 2013 will also see explorations into the scope for an MoU between Kasetsart University and Tongji University and possibly Shanghai Jiao Tong University, which could form the basis for a further extension of collaborative activities also in the domain of regular education.

Annex A: PSDT2012 participants

	Name	University	Department	Level
1	Ms Carla Kuhmann	University of Oldenburg	Institute for Biology and Environmental Sciences	MSc
2	Ms Sarah Wolff	University of Oldenburg	Natural Science	Ma
3	Mr Gaochao Chen	Tokyo Institute of Technology	International Development Engineering	Adv. Ba
4	Mr Tianyang Min	Tokyo Institute of Technology	International Development Engineering	Adv. Ba
5	Mr Wataru Saito	Tokyo Institute of Technology	International Development Engineering	Adv. Ba
6	Mr Zhenqiang Shi	Tokyo Institute of Technology	International Development Engineering	Adv. Ba
7	Mr Shizhi Zhang	Tokyo Institute of Technology	International Development Engineering	Adv. Ba
8	Mr Koen Tulleners	University of Amsterdam	International Development Studies	Adv. Ba
9	Mr Timo Boekel	University of Amsterdam	International Development Studies	Ma
10	Ms Zhaoying Zhu	Tongji University Shanghai	College of architecture and urban planning	Adv. Ba
11	Mr Jiajun Chen	Tongji University Shanghai	College of architecture and urban planning	Adv. Ba
12	Mr Tian Xue	Tongji University Shanghai	College of architecture and urban planning	Ma
13	Ms Chidchanok Apipoonyanon	Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)	<u>Regional Rural Development and Planning</u>	PhD candidate
14	Mr Apichart Chomboon	Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)	Urban Environmental Management	MSc
15	Mr Arkarat Kunvitaya	Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)	Urban Environmental Management / SERD	PhD candidate
16	Mr Nares Washirapantsakul	Kasetsart University	Faculty of Architecture	PhD candidate
17	Mr Somparb Suwangaveegran	Kasetsart University	Faculty of Architecture / MUEP	Ma
18	Puvadach Tananpokin	Kasetsart University	Faculty of Architecture / MUEP (participant and local liaison officer)	Ma

Annex B: PSDT2012 day-to-day program

Day	Time	Activity
Tue 7/8 Nakorn Srivijarana Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Faculty of Architecture	12:45	Registration
	13:00	Opening & welcome by Dr. Tanapon Panthasen, Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Architecture
	13:15	Introduction to the workshop (Dr. Bart Lambregts)
	14:15	Coffee break
	14:30	Lecture 1: Introduction to the 2011 flood (Dr. Bart Lambregts) and a first-hand flood experience account (Dr. Tanapon Panthasen)
	16:30 17:30	Introduction to the field trip (Dr. Supaporn K. Leopairojna) Joint buffet dinner (at Faculty canteen)
Wed 8/8		Field trip to Pathum Thani / Nonthaburi to visit some areas that were hard hit by the 2011 flood
	09:00	Leave KU
	10:00	Arrive at TU, attend a presentation about the 2012 flood in TU by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Parinya Thewanaruemittkun - Vice Rector for Student Affairs, TU
	11:00	Visit TU and AIT
	12:00	Lunch at AIT cafeteria
	13:00	Visit Nava Nakorn Industrial Estate
	15:30- 17:00	Back at KU, presentation about the 2012 flood in KU by Dr. Supaporn and discussion about impressions from the field trip
	Thu 9/8 Nakorn Srivijarana Meeting Room, 2nd Floor	09:15
09:30		Lecture 2: Reading rural landscapes, understanding water management in the Chao Phraya Delta (Assist. Prof. Dr. M.L. Vudipong Davivongs, Faculty of Architecture, Division of Landscape Architecture, KU)
10:45		Coffee break
11:00		Lecture 3: Flood resilience strategies in Thailand (bottom-up approaches) (Dr. Pakamas Thinphanga, Senior Researcher at the Thailand Environment Institute)
12:15		Lunch
13:00- 17:00		Preparation fieldwork: identifying themes for study, split-up in subgroups
Fri 10/8 Room 2402, 4 th floor	09:30	Lecture 4: Flood management strategies in Thailand (top-down approaches) (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eggarin Anukulyudhathon, Faculty of Architecture, Division of Urban and Environmental Planning, KU)
	10:45	Coffee break
	11:00	Preparation fieldwork: identifying actors and developing research strategies
	12:15	Lunch
	13:00	Lecture 5: Community, governance and participation in (rural) Thailand (Aj. Tanaradee Kumya, Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, KU)
	14:15- 17:00	Preparation fieldwork: identifying actors and developing research strategies
Sat 11/8 Nakorn Srivijarana Meeting Room, 2nd Floor	10:00	Presentation fieldwork plans
	12:00	Lunch
	13:00	Lecture 6: Experiences from Shanghai (Prof. Dr. Chen Yi, College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University, Shanghai)
	14:15- 17:00	Adopting fieldwork plans on the basis of comments
Sun 12/8		Free
Mon 13/8	09:00	Move to Krathum Baen, check-in at accommodation

	11:30 13:00 15:00-17:00 18:00	Lunch with Deputy Governor of Samut Sakorn and other government officials (at homestay) Lecture 7: Introduction to Krathum Baen's flood days by the Deputy Governor of Samut Sakorn Province, at the Watergate office First survey of the area Dinner at homestay
Tue 14/8	09:00-17:00	Fieldwork: learning about how Krathum Baen prepared for the flood – Interviews with stakeholders
Wed 15/8	09:00-17:00	Fieldwork: learning about how Krathum Baen prepared for the flood – Interviews with stakeholders
Thu 16/8	09:00-17:00	Fieldwork: exploring how Krathum Baen can prepare even better – Interviews with stakeholders
Fri 17/8	09:00-17:00	Fieldwork: exploring how Krathum Baen can prepare even better – Interviews with stakeholders
Sat 18/8	09:00-17:00	Analyse findings and prepare for presentation
Sun 19/8		Free
Mon 20/8	09:00-17:00	Test presentation and prepare for final seminar
Tue 21/8	09:30 09:45 10:00 11:20 12:00 12:30 13:30 14:30 17:30	Final Seminar (location: Watergate office Krathum Baen) Registration and coffee Introduction to the seminar (Dr. Bart Lambregts, Faculty of Architecture, KU) Student presentations Discussion Closing ceremony Lunch Return to accommodation Return to Bangkok Farewell dinner in Bangkok