

# Factors Promoting and Developing the Strength of Border Communities: The Case Study of Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to: 1) study the level of SDGs in the area; 2) study factors influencing the SDGs; and 3) provide the framework for fostering and enhancing the community's strength. The research is mixed-method research. Interviews and surveys are used for data collection.

393 people of Ban Kha sample population is selected for quantitative study using Yamane's method to determine the sample size. After the surveys, frequency, percentage, mean, Standard Deviation, and Multiple Linear Regression were used for data analysis. For qualitative study, 10 key informants were selected using non-probability sampling and purposive sampling method.

The research found that: 1) the level of opinions towards SDGs is at a moderate level; 2) hypothesis testing from Multiple Linear Regression found that factors influencing Sustainable Development Goals in the area are 'natural resources and environment', 'economic', 'community leaders', and 'cultural and learning'; 3) To encourage successful development, a framework for building and strengthening community strength must be centered on the area's distinctive identity using BANCA Model comprised of 5 major components which are 1) B: Basic factor, 2) A: Agricultural Model, 3) N: Network, 4) C: Capacity building, and 5) A: Aided Self-help. BANCA Model focused on 3 important aspects

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which are: 1) establishing ‘Stability’ across all dimensions whether it is the economic, social, environmental, political, social harmony, and stability in life, employment, and income.; 2) establishing ‘Prosperity’ in local economy by lowering poverty and distributing equal benefits in the community; 3) establishing ‘Sustainability’ by creating steady income and quality of life in the community following the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. These three pillars—stability, prosperity, and sustainability—can serve as the foundation for the community business model that will benefit the Ban Kha community in the future. It can help strengthen local economy, build careers, create income, and increase quality of life following 17 Goals of SDGs.

**Keywords:** Community strength, border communities, SDGs, Ratchaburi

## Introduction

The Community Development Department [CDD], part of the Ministry of Interior, has implemented Action Plan following the vision “stable economy, strong sustainable community, following the Sufficient Economy Philosophy”. The Action Plan focused on the 4 aspects which are 1) create strong and independent community, 2) promote grassroots economy, 3) create cooperation and promote networking community development, and 4) Create a contemporary organization that supports strong governance and competency. The CDD recognizes the value of developing an area-based approach, especially with the district following “Strong district by the Sufficient Economy Philosophy”. In accordance with the CDD’s operational plan, the department has established a flagship for district development following the Sufficient Economy Philosophy focusing on the 3 dimensions which are ‘stability’, ‘prosperity’, and ‘sustainability’. (CDD, 2022)

The development of strong communities is therefore considered an important mechanism to help develop the overall economy of the country. When the community is strong, the strength of the community will help solve problems at the community level as well as the national development together in an integrated manner (Community Organization Development Institute [CODI], 2022). The strength of the community is a crucial foundation to a civil society where the people is considerate of each other, learning together, and working together to solve community problems. Community development cannot be successful unless it is done in an integrated manner (CDD, 2022). The strength of the community is dependent upon the strength of community organisation and under networked community.

Ban Kha is one of the districts of Ratchaburi province. The area originally belongs to part of Suan Pung District, but was announced as Ban Kha district on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 1997. Ban Kha district is divided into three Subdistricts which are Ban Kha subdistrict, Ban Bung subdistrict, and Nong Pan Jan subdistrict (Provincial Community Development Office of Ban Kha, n.d.). Part of the area is adjacent to Thai-Myanmar border. As a result, the region has become a hot spot for Myanmar asylum seekers. This boosts local investment and the local economy because there is more employment accessible to the villagers. However, the drawback is that the influx of foreign investors and tourists caused more congestion in the neighborhood. In addition, there is the spread of unlawful items and diseases among local flora, animals, and people (Chavanavesskul & Meksangsouy, 2016). Integrating "stability," "prosperity," and

"sustainability" while transferring resources to the following generation is the foundation of appropriate community development.

Ban Kha district is located close to a far-off border, which the authorities may not always adequately monitor. We have discovered that Ban Kha has problems with stability, narcotics, and arable land in addition to typical challenges. With this reason, the researcher therefore selected Ban Kha District as a research area. It seeks to lift people out of poverty by bolstering the local economy and enabling them to be self-sufficient in all dimensions and without leaving anyone behind. At the conclusion of the study, the researcher will provide a development framework for Ban Kha District in Ratchaburi province that aligns with the three pillars of community economic growth in accordance with the SDGs.

### **Research Objectives**

- 1) To study the level of SDGs in the area
- 2) To study factors influencing SDGs in the area
- 3) To suggest a framework for community development

## **Literature Review**

### **Concepts Regarding Community Strength**

#### *Strong Community*

Wichai (2012) describes the characteristics of a strong community as consisting of four key aspects: 1) Learning Community: People within the community learn and stay up-to-date with current events, continuously acquiring various forms of knowledge and information. 2) Self-Managing Community: The community manages itself through effective systems, focusing on four main activities: good planning, organizational management, execution of plans, and thorough evaluation. 3) Community with Spirituality: This involves a sense of awareness and pride in the community, with internal guiding principles or beliefs. 4) Peaceful Community: The community enjoys tranquility and quality among its members, characterized by resilience, ethical conduct, and peaceful coexistence.

Wasi (as cited in Phuangngam, 2010) defines a strong community as one where members can continuously manage their affairs and develop their potential to solve problems and handle crises. Strength arises from shared objectives, collective thinking, joint action, and collaborative learning within

the community, fostering the ability to tackle challenges. This notion of "community civility" encompasses not just individual members but also all types of organizations working in unity.

Nakabut (1993) identifies three key elements of a strong community: 1) Knowledge and wisdom that adapt to external changes. 2) Ethical and wise community leaders and organizations. 3) Platforms and processes for learning that keep pace with changing circumstances and external challenges.

#### *Characteristics of a Strong Social Community*

Wichai (2012) identifies the characteristics of a strong social community as follows: 1) Learning Community: People in the community learn and stay up-to-date with current events and continuously acquire knowledge and information. 2) Self-Managing Community: The community employs effective management systems for four main activities: planning, organizational administration, plan implementation, and final evaluation. 3) Community with Spirituality: There is a collective consciousness, pride in the community, and internal guiding principles. 4) Peaceful Community: The community enjoys harmony, with strong moral values and peaceful coexistence among its members.

#### *Characteristics of Building a Strong Community*

The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (2001) outlines the attributes of a strong community as follows:

1. Community members have confidence in their ability and in the community's potential to address problems and improve their quality of life.
2. Members are ready to collaboratively tackle their own and the community's issues.
3. The community maintains a continuous process of activity, driven by open and transparent leadership that allows for collective participation and accountability.
4. All members participate in assessing the community's situation, setting a shared vision, planning, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and evaluating community problem-solving and development efforts.
5. Members gain knowledge through their involvement in community processes.
6. There is a comprehensive community plan for self-reliance, benefiting all members, and aiming for sustainable development.
7. External assistance is sought to enable self-reliance, not to foster dependence.

8. Collaborative networks with development partners, such as other villages/communities, local and government sectors, private organizations, academics, and businesses, operate on an equal basis.

### **Concepts of Community Development**

#### *Definition of Community Development*

The United Nations [UN] (1955) defines community development as a collaborative process between the people in a community and government officials to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the community, integrating these improvements into national life. This enables citizens to fully contribute to the nation's progress. The UN outlines principles for community development that countries can adopt: 1) Community development should address basic needs and genuinely reflect the desires of the people, initiated by the community itself, starting with simple projects and progressing to more complex ones. 2) The projects should be multipurpose, addressing various problems. 3) The process should change attitudes within the community, integrating this with other activities. 4) The goal is full participation of community members in development initiatives. 5) Local leaders must be identified, supported, and developed in various capacities according to the needs of each community. 6) Women and youth should be included in projects. 7) Governments must provide necessary support services. 8) Planning should be systematic and efficient at all levels. 9) Private organizations, volunteers, and international organizations should participate in development efforts. 10) Plans should aim for community progress that aligns with national development.

#### *Principles of Community Development*

The CDD (1984) outlines fundamental principles for community development work:

1. Dignity and Potential of People: Respect for the inherent dignity and abilities of people, encouraging them to use their potential to improve their community. Development professionals should believe in people's capacity for self-improvement and facilitate opportunities for them to solve their problems.

2. Self-Reliance: Development work should support community self-reliance, empowering communities to build their strength while the government provides backup support for challenges beyond their ability.

3. Participation: Communities should be actively involved in brainstorming, decision-making, planning, and evaluating activities and projects, fostering a sense of ownership.

4. Democracy: Community development should operate democratically, involving discussions, shared decision-making, collaborative implementation, and mutual accountability.

### **Strong Communities and Sustainable Development**

The CODI (2015) defines sustainable development as a strategic approach to managing natural resources, human resources, financial resources, and physical infrastructure to enhance wealth and quality of life. Sustainable development rejects policies and activities that improve current living standards at the cost of depleting resources for future generations. The principles of sustainable development focus on environmental, economic, cultural, social, and political sustainability.

### **Strong Communities Aligned with the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The CDD (2022), formulated an operational plan aimed at achieving the vision of "a stable grassroots economy and sustainably strong communities based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy." The plan focuses on four key areas: 1) Strengthening community self-management for sustainable independence. 2) Promoting and enhancing the stability of the grassroots economy. 3) Building collaboration and promoting roles of development networks domestically and internationally. 4) Modernizing the organization to enhance competence, good governance, and expertise among development personnel. This operational plan aims to align strategies across all levels to meet public needs, solve problems, and develop areas while preparing for changes in various dimensions. The Department emphasizes area-based development, particularly at the sub-district level, recognizing it as a critical point for strengthening community self-reliance and sustainable development.

### **Framework for Strong Sub-Districts Based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy**

A strong sub-district based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy is defined as a sub-district capable of managing itself with public participation under democratic principles. It ensures security in life and property, adopts the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a way of life, conserves natural resources and the environment, and builds a stable grassroots economy through integrated cooperation among all sectors.

*Three Dimensions and Their Components:*

Security Dimension: Includes six components, such as food security, livelihood stability, social harmony, adherence to democracy, substance abuse prevention, and effective community management.

Wealth Dimension: Focuses on reducing social inequality, managing community funds, and building a strong local economy through production, marketing, and consumption initiatives.

Sustainability Dimension: Emphasizes integrating the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy into daily life, conserving natural resources and the environment, fostering self-reliance, and collaborating with networks to develop the community sustainably.

**Dimension 1: Security**

This dimension focuses on ensuring stability and safety within the community. It includes the following components and development points:



**Table 1.** Security Dimension

| Components                            | Development Points   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Food Security                      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Availability of sufficient food sources.</li> <li>2. Sharing food within the community.</li> <li>3. Promotion of safe food consumption.</li> </ol>   |
| 2. Livelihood Stability               | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensuring stable jobs and income.</li> <li>2. Encouraging financial savings.</li> <li>3. Securing housing stability.</li> <li>4. Preparing for disaster risk management.</li> </ol>   |
| 3. Social Harmony                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Activities promoting community service and mutual benefits.</li> <li>2. Fostering unity among community members.</li> </ol>  |
| 4. Adherence to Democratic Principles | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encouraging democratic practices and public participation.</li> <li>2. Upholding democratic principles in decision-making processes.</li> </ol>  |
| 5. Substance Abuse Prevention         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preventing and reducing substance abuse.</li> <li>2. Implementing measurable and impactful anti-substance abuse initiatives.</li> </ol>  |
| 6. Community Management               | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilizing community development data and tools effectively.</li> <li>2. Integrating collaboration through community development plans.</li> <li>3. Mobilizing community development through inclusive participation.</li> <li>4. Enhancing community-level information systems for quality-of-life improvement.</li> </ol> |

**Dimension 2: Wealth**

This dimension emphasizes the economic well-being of the community. It includes:

**Table 2.** Wealth Dimension

| Components   | Development Points   |
|--|--|
| 1. Creating Opportunities and Reducing Social Inequality | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyzing and addressing poverty in all dimensions.</li> <li>2. Initiating targeted activities for poverty alleviation across all age groups.</li> <li>3. Supporting and monitoring low-income households.</li> </ol>                  |
| 2. Community Fund Management                             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Managing community funds with principles of good governance.</li> <li>2. Expanding services of community funds to benefit a wide range of members.</li> <li>3. Managing resources and profits to benefit the community.</li> </ol>     |
| 3. Strong Local Economy                                  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing production, processing, and marketing groups to strengthen the community.</li> <li>2. Supporting sustainable and growing economic activities.</li> <li>3. Developing marketing systems for community products.</li> </ol> |

### **Dimension 3: Sustainability**

This dimension focuses on long-term development that integrates environmental, cultural, and community principles. It includes:

**Table 3.** Sustainability Dimension

| Components   | Development Points  |
|--|---|
| 1. Application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopting the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in daily life.</li> <li>2. Promoting activities that embody this philosophy.</li> </ol>   |
| 2. Conservation of Natural Resources and the Environment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Efficient waste management and recycling (3R: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle).</li> <li>2. Conserving and managing natural resources responsibly.</li> </ol>  |
| 3. Promoting Learning for Self-Reliance                  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilizing local wisdom for community development.</li> <li>2. Establishing community learning centers to support lifelong learning.</li> <li>3. Encouraging the use of learning centers for practical applications in the community.</li> </ol> |
| 4. Networking and Collaboration                          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building partnerships to foster development.</li> <li>2. Leveraging networks to provide benefits for the community and its members.</li> </ol>  |

### **Strong Sub-Districts Based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy**

A strong sub-district based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy refers to a sub-district capable of self-management, where the people participate according to democratic principles. It ensures security and safety for life and property, adopts the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a way of life, preserves natural resources and the environment, and builds a stable grassroots economy through integrated cooperation from all sectors. The sub-district demonstrates strength in the following three dimensions:

*1. Security Dimension:*

The sub-district is equipped with the ability to manage itself effectively. Ensures food security and a stable livelihood for its people. Promotes social harmony, solidarity, and adherence to democratic principles. Implements systems to monitor and address community problems and guarantees safety for life and property.

*2. Wealth Dimension:*

The sub-district fosters a local economy built on production, marketing, and consumption that utilizes community resources. Works to reduce social inequality and ensures access to community funds under principles of good governance. Develops robust economic groups and networks within the community.

*3. Sustainability Dimension:*

People in the sub-district embrace the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a way of life, fostering self-reliance. Actively conserves natural resources and the environment. Encourages collaboration among all sectors to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs).

### **Related Research**

Phattanachatchai et al. (2023) studied the model for innovative financial community for sustainability, the case study of Thai-Cambodian border, Kab Cherg District, Surin province and found that factors affecting work management includes local context, local economy, and cultural context. External environment includes macro-level economy and society, technology and innovation, and government policy towards public financial institution. Strengthening factors comprised of internal strengthening factors such as core knowledge, economic environment, community culture, networking, and government regulation and policy. Innovation contributed to the stability of financial institution is the innovative management of learning organisation.

Suwanprasom & Boonpunth (2023) conducted a study on the factors that contribute to the success of managing OTOP (One Tambon One Product) innovative tourism communities in Songkhla Province. The research findings identified the following factors that affect the success of managing OTOP innovative tourism communities:

1) Economic Factors: This success is partly due to the involvement of government agencies that provide support in various ways, such as funding and sending staff to assist in community group formation for development. This includes organising training to raise awareness and instill a sense of responsibility in the community to value and protect local resources.

2) Social Factors: Community leaders in the OTOP innovative villages play a crucial role in driving government policies and coordinating activities at the grassroots level. They facilitate the availability of materials, equipment, and venues, which help ensure the success of government projects. When leaders are strong and proactive in driving community development, it encourages community members to unite and work together for the benefit of society.

3) Cultural Factors: Local wisdom is a key strength of the community. This knowledge, passed down through generations, is widely recognized and accepted within the community as a foundation for development. Community leaders are expected to contribute selflessly to society, without seeking personal rewards, fostering a culture of public service.

4) Natural Resources and Environmental Factor: The sense of public-mindedness and generosity within the community, where people treat each other like family, creates a strong sense of belonging. This leads to greater participation and social interaction, resulting in collective planning and community development.

However, some challenges and obstacles were identified regarding OTOP innovative tourism communities in Songkhla Province. These include: Lack of alignment- Government support does not always meet the specific needs or context of the community. Discontinuity in support- There is a lack of continuity in funding, activities, and social, economic, and tourism infrastructure development. Neglect of resources- There is insufficient attention from the government in maintaining and developing natural resources and the environment, such as waterfalls, mountains, and rivers, which are beyond the capacity of the community to maintain on its own. These factors highlight both the successes and challenges in fostering sustainable development within OTOP tourism communities in Songkhla.

From the literature review earlier, the researcher employed an analytic inductive and content analysis method to analyse factors affecting community strength from 3 major aspects which are 1) people, 2) social, and 3) environment. This involves 5 independent variables which are: 1) community leadership roles, 2) economic, 3) social and community institutions, 4) cultural and learning, and 5) natural resources and environment. The variables were analysed conclusively with dependent variables

retrieved from “Connecting plan, strong community following Sufficient Economy Philosophy and SDGs” of Community Development Department of the Ministry of Interior which are: 1) Stability, 2) Prosperity, and 3) Sustainability. Figure 1 shows detail as followed:

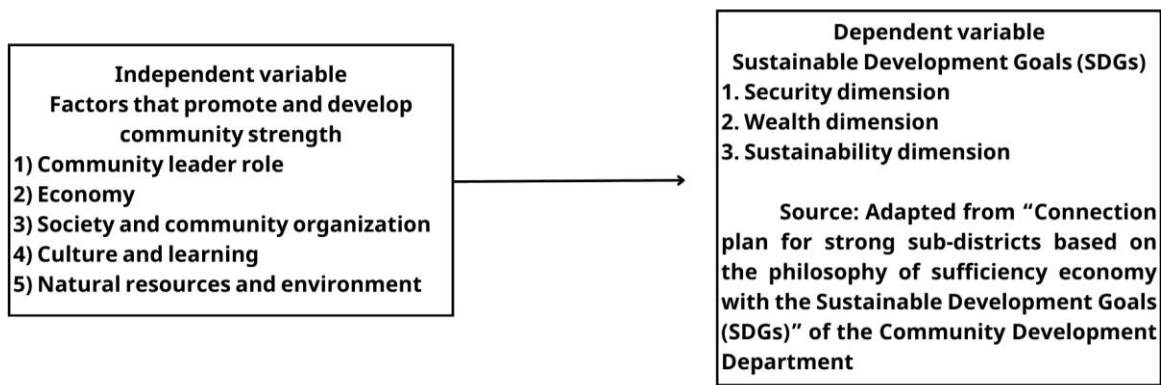


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Factors that promote and strengthen community resilience in terms of community leadership roles affect the SDGs of communities in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

Hypothesis 2: Factors that promote and strengthen community resilience in terms of the economy affect the SDGs of communities in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

Hypothesis 3: Factors that promote and strengthen community resilience in terms of society and community organizations affect the SDGs of communities in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

Hypothesis 4: Factors that promote and strengthen community resilience in terms of culture and learning affect the SDGs of communities in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

Hypothesis 5: Factors that promote and strengthen community resilience in terms of natural resources and the environment affect the SDGs of communities in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

### Methodology

The research employed a mix-method study comprised of quantitative and qualitative method. The population of study is 25,124 people of Ban Kha District (Information as of February 2024 from the Civil Registration Division, Department of Local Administration).

The information showed on Table 4 is as followed:

**Table 4.** Descriptive statistics of Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi province as of February 2024.

| ORDER | DISTRICT     | MALE (PERSON) | FEMALE (PERSON) | TOTAL  |
|-------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|
| 1.    | Ban Kha      | 4,706         | 4,418           | 9,124  |
| 2.    | Ban bung     | 4,844         | 4,648           | 9,492  |
| 3.    | Nong Pan Jan | 3,250         | 3,258           | 6,508  |
|       | Total        | 12,800        | 12,324          | 25,124 |

**Source:** Civil Registration Division, Department of Local Administration

The sample is 393 people selected using Yamane's (1973) method retrieved using Proportional Random Method Convenience Sampling.

### Sampling Method

The study employed a proportional random sampling method followed by convenience sampling. The sample group was drawn equally from all three sub-districts in Ban Kha District as follows:

**Table 5.** Sampling Method

| NO. | SUB-DISTRICT | POPULATION (PEOPLE)  | SAMPLE GROUPE (PEOPLE) |
|-----|--------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1.  | Ban Kha      | 9,124                | 143                    |
| 2.  | Ban Bung     | 9,492                | 148                    |
| 3.  | Nong Pan Jan | 6,508                | 102                    |
|     | <b>Total</b> | <b>25,124 people</b> | <b>393 people</b>      |

Sampling for qualitative study are 10 key informants that is classified into 2 types. The first group is comprised of 1) Ban Kha Chief Executive of the Subdistrict Administrative Organisation., 2) Ban Bung Chief Executive of the Subdistrict Administrative Organisation, 3) Nong Pan Jan Chief Executive of the Subdistrict Administrative Organisation . On the other hand, the implementors level comprised of 1) Ban Kha Subdistrict Headman, 2) Ban Bung Subdistrict Headman, 3) Nong Pan Jan Subdistrict Headman, 4) Ban Kha Village Headman 5) Ban Bung Village Headman, 6) Nong Pan Jan Village Headman, 7) folk

philosopher. The key-informants are obtained via non-probability sampling method using purposive sampling. The research was conducted from February to August 2024.

### Research Tools

This research adopted a mixed-method approach (Mixed Method). Quantitative Research: Questionnaires were used as tools, and descriptive analysis was applied. Basic statistical methods such as percentage, mean, standard deviation, and multiple regression analysis were employed. The researcher conducted a validity assessment of the questionnaire by having three experts evaluate its content validity. The analysis focused on determining the content validity of the questionnaire by calculating the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC). Qualitative Research: Interviews were utilized as tools. Data obtained from fieldwork were verified using triangulation methods.

### Research Results

The results analysis are as follows:

1. The level of Opinions towards SDGs in Ban Kha found that the overall opinions is at a moderate level. By aspect, it was found that the highest aspect is 'sustainability', followed by 'prosperity', and 'stability' as showed on Table 6.

**Table 6.** Levels of Opinions towards SDGs in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi

| SDGs in Ban Kha, Ratchaburi | Level of opinion |              |                |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
|                             | $\bar{x}$        | S.D.         | Interpretation |
| Stability                   | 2.93             | .7373        | Moderate       |
| Prosperity                  | 3.18             | .6710        | Moderate       |
| Sustainability              | 4.26             | .3794        | High           |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>3.46</b>      | <b>.4173</b> | Moderate       |

2. The results of the multiple regression analysis of variables to examine the relationship between factors that promote and develop community resilience and the community's SDGs in Ban Kha District revealed that the model could explain 29 percent of the variance. The R-square value indicates that all independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable by 30.8 percent. In other words, the independent variables included in the equation can explain 30.8 percent of the variance in



the dependent variable. The independent variables, including the roles of community leadership, economic factors, social factors, community organizations, culture and learning, and natural resources and the environment, were used to predict the community's SDGs as the dependent variable.

It was found that the factors most significantly contributing to community resilience, at the 0.05 significance level, were natural resources and the environment, with a result of 43.7 percent (p-value = 0.000), followed by economic factors, with a result of 13.0 percent (p-value = 0.040), the role of community leadership with a result of 17.8 percent (p-value = 0.000), and culture and learning, with a result of 14.4 percent (p-value = 0.050). However, social factors and community organizations had an effect of only 7.0 percent (p-value = 0.410), which was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, as shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Multiple Regression relationship between factors promoting community strength development and SDGs of Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi province.

| Factors promoting community strength   | B            | Std. Error  | Beta  | t            | Sig.           |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------|--------------|----------------|
| The role of community leadership   | -.368        | .092        | -.178 | -3.990       | .000***        |
| Economy  | .111         | .056        | .130  | 1.988        | .040*          |
| Social and Community Institution   | -.049        | .060        | -.070 | -.816        | .410           |
| Cultural and learning  | -.097        | .051        | -.144 | -1.913       | .050*          |
| Resource and Environment   | .315         | .032        | .437  | 9.692        | .000***        |
| <b>(Constant)</b>  | <b>4.329</b> | <b>.469</b> |       | <b>9.222</b> | <b>.000***</b> |
| <b>R = .555<sup>a</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> = .308, R<sup>2</sup><sub>Adjusted</sub> = .299, Sig = .349</b> |              |             |       |              |                |

Note: The level of significance \*.05, \*\*.01, \*\*\*.001

## Summary, Discussion, and Recommendations

### Discussion

*Analysis of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province*

Overall, the level of achievement of the SDGs in Ban Kha District was moderate. The factors that local residents considered most important for sustainable development were centered around the SDGs aimed at community development in border areas. These SDGs are generally in a moderate range, and the core concept of SDGs is “leaving no one behind.” The main goal of development is to transform a country into one with a high income, encompassing sustainable development that is resilient to crises. This is achieved through the 17 SDG targets that reflect the three pillars of sustainability: social stability, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability, as well as the two other dimensions: peace and institutions, and global partnerships for development (SDG Move, n.d.).

To create a high-income country, it is necessary to drive economic activities at both the micro and macro levels. This research primarily focused on strengthening community resilience, emphasising the importance of micro-economics as a tool to enhance the overall national economy. This is achieved through processes that foster the development of local areas and groups within these areas, aiming for overall improvements in various contexts. Development processes are carried out by community residents through participation, shared learning, and mutual development, utilizing the resources and capital available within the community, with support from government agencies both internally and externally. If these development processes are well-managed, they will improve the quality of life for community members and lead to physical development in the area as well (Phansiri, 2016).

Therefore, community development focuses on starting small—beginning with household income generation—and expanding to strengthen the community as a whole. Economic development in the border areas of Ban Kha District should be interconnected across the three pillars: social stability, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability, in order to reduce the limitations of fragmented development. This aligns with the research of Damrongchai (2018), which emphasizes that the success of sustainable development requires an appropriate development model that focuses on self-reliance, an understanding of the community's real problems, and the creation of systems and norms for working together in harmony, with the goal of mutual benefit for all parties. Furthermore, it is important to have "knowledge" based on a thorough and up-to-date understanding of the community, focusing more on social processes rather than legal ones, underpinned by compromise. Development should be gradual, not rushed, with an emphasis on thought processes, exploration, and the participation of all parties. The development model chosen should be simple, align with the community's way of life, and reflect the research findings of Boonphila (2016), who highlighted the importance of community development

processes in terms of physical space, economy, and social culture in areas such as Ban Ton Na. It was found that the development of communities with strong linkages among social organizations and local professions, as well as access to water resources for agriculture, reflects a long-standing developmental process. However, such developments cannot be sustained without community participation.

Thus, the SDGs in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province, consist of three main dimensions, which are as follows:

1) Stability

According to the National Strategy 20-Year Plan (2023-2027) on Stability, the goal is to ensure stability and safety from both internal and external threats. This includes stability across all dimensions: economic, social, environmental, and political. Citizens should have stability in their lives, with stable jobs, incomes, housing, and safety for both their lives and property (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council [NESDC], 2022). There should also be food, energy, and water stability (National Strategy Secretariat Office, 2017).

In the 5-Year Development Plan of Ban Kha District (2023-2027), reviewed in 2023, key stability issues in the area include drug problems, though at a relatively low level (Ban Kha Administrative Organization, 2023). However, there is a rising trend in drug abuse, with new users continuously entering the cycle, some individuals who have undergone rehabilitation still relapsing, and former users or dealers returning to old habits once released from prison or while on bail. Most of these individuals are employed in casual labor, factories, agriculture, or are unemployed. Arrests have not reduced the number of drugs or the demand from users. Nevertheless, the situation has gradually improved through ongoing work by the police and administrative authorities, who regularly conduct operations and patrols to prevent and suppress drug-related activities. Additionally, local leaders (village heads and community leaders) have been given policies to address and resolve these issues in their respective areas, including setting up community checkpoints and patrols (Ban Kha Administrative Organization, 2023).

*"...Regarding stability, there is high safety. Even though there are occasional issues, they do not have a significant impact on us. Ban Kha is in a high-risk area, but the presence of high mountain ranges as natural barriers (Tanawasi Mountain Range) ensures high stability. Also, we have never caused any problems for others, and they do not cause problems for us. We live in harmony. Furthermore, we have*

*military ranger units and the Phaya Suea Force, along with the Surasiri Camp, which sends the 1206 Public Relations Unit to take care of the citizens in the area. Local leaders are working together in an integrated manner." (Primary informant, 2024)*

In addition to the drug problem, the area faces issues related to land for agriculture, overlapping land with national parks, lack of key production factors such as water sources, and natural disaster risks like drought.

*"...When considering the community's resilience, it is about the cooperation of local authorities, communities, and leaders who are attentive to the problems of the people. They try to assist in all areas, such as the economy. However, agricultural product prices must still follow market mechanisms. What we continue to promote is the concept of the sufficiency economy, like the 'Ko Khon Na Model'." (Primary informant, 2024)*

These issues are critical for local development, as they represent foundational factors in various areas. For example, without land for agriculture, farmers cannot grow economic crops. Likewise, during droughts, businesses like hotels and agriculture are affected. Therefore, "creating stability in production costs, food costs, and energy is like creating the headwaters for strong development." Achieving stability requires cooperation from various sectors, including the community, citizens, community leaders, government agencies, and local professionals to integrate solutions and enhance the community's capacity for greater stability. This aligns with the research by Pharkcharoen (2022), which highlighted that in the Dong Yang Village, there is a strength in being a peaceful community where people live harmoniously and work together. There are coordinators who help communicate with smaller groups in the community, and there is a clear vision for development aiming for a peaceful community: "a beautiful village, a livable community, a strong and secure community, and a good environment." The village has policies to ensure the safety and well-being of its people, including the care of migrant workers and the collaboration with stability forces to address human trafficking and illegal migrant labor. Public infrastructure is provided equitably, with no discrimination against any group.

Thus, stability development also supports several SDGs, particularly:

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Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food stability and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

## 2) Prosperity (Employment, Occupation, Capital, Income)

According to the 20-Year National Strategy (2016-2036) in the area of Prosperity, the objective is to ensure the continuous expansion of Thailand's economy, elevate the country into a high-income nation, reduce development disparities, and allow the population to benefit from development (National Strategy Secretariat Office, 2017). Additionally, the economy should be highly competitive, creating a future economy and society that is sustainable (National Strategy Secretariat Office, 2017).

A study of the 5-Year District Development Plan (2023-2027) for Ban Kha District, established by the Ban Kha Administrative Organization (2023), revealed that the local economy is divided into three key sectors: the service sector, the agriculture sector, and the industrial sector. The service sector concerns various service businesses such as hotels, accommodations, and tourism while the agriculture sector concerns products such as rubber, cassava, and pineapples. The industrial Sector is such as a pineapple canning industry. The development plan aims to enhance the area's economic performance through increasing agricultural productivity and competitiveness, supporting the development of Ban Kha as an eco-tourism destination, and preserving cultural traditions while improving the quality of life for residents sustainably (Ban Kha Administrative Organization, 2023).

However, the local economy faces significant challenges in all three sectors, which can be summarised as follows:

1) Soil: Farmers have been using the land for agriculture for a long time without letting it rest, and most are growing monocrops without proper soil maintenance. Agricultural methods, such as burning weeds, are also improperly practiced.

2) Water for Agriculture: While some areas have irrigation systems fed by reservoirs, most farmers still rely on rainfall for agriculture. The amount of rainfall is insufficient, and its distribution is uneven, leading to water shortages during the dry season (approximately 4-6 months).

3) Land Ownership: Some farmers do not own the land they farm and must lease it for agricultural purposes.

4) Pineapple Prices: The price of pineapples is unstable. The volume of production varies from year to year and often does not match the needs of factories. Additionally, farmers do not use fertilizers correctly or appropriately. There is also a lack of ongoing research for improving pineapple varieties and using suitable technologies.

5) Processing: The supply of fresh pineapples to factories is inconsistent, and there is uncertainty in production volumes each year. Some processors cannot produce high-quality products due to a lack of capital for marketing. In the domestic market, forward contracts between farmers and factories (Contract Farming) are not yet effectively established. Most farmers are small-scale, and farmer cooperatives lack strength, leading to weak bargaining power over pricing.

*“...The problems or needs currently faced in the three sub-districts of Ban Kha are drought, agricultural crop damage, and water shortages for consumption. Even though we have a water bottling plant, it is still insufficient for the population's needs. We have many natural water sources, but we lack the budget to manage them. Most of the funding we receive is for subsidies. Even though there are local taxes, like land taxes, they are still insufficient. The budget is not enough to solve the problems in our area since we have multiple development issues, such as those related to the elderly and education in the area.” (Primary informant, 2023)*

*“...In terms of the economy, most farmers engage in monocropping and are still dependent on external capitalists. The cost of fertilizers, pesticides, and droughts significantly affect the economy. Ban Kha is an area outside the irrigation zone, so water sources are limited to small reservoirs, dikes, and streams. However, due to the ongoing drought problem over the last two years, we face legal issues that prevent us from building new water infrastructure without government approval.” (Primary informant, 2023)*

*“...Here, most people grow monocrops, with pineapples being the dominant crop. This is partly due to the physical environment—Ban Kha is a drought-prone area. Only a few types of crops can be grown here. Crops that require a lot of water*

*are not suitable for this land. Rubber trees can be planted, but their yields are not as good as in southern Thailand. If droughts are severe, it impacts production. Therefore, water is the key issue for the area, as 80 percent of the land is agricultural.”* (Primary informant, 2023)

In alignment with the findings in the Ban Kha District 5-Year Development Plan (2023-2027) (Ban Kha Administrative Organization, 2023), Ban Kha District has specific plans for economic development, including practical measures such as the formation of agricultural and occupational promotion groups, e.g., pineapple growers and asparagus farmers. There are also plans to establish centers or working groups to integrate the promotion of sustainable agriculture, expand the implementation of sufficiency economy principles into community plans, improve product standards, enhance marketing for community products, and strengthen local governance to address poverty and promote grassroots economic development in villages. Furthermore, the local government will provide support for vulnerable groups, enabling them to sustain themselves based on the principles of sufficiency economy.

Thus, the development of ‘Prosperity’ (economic dimension) serves as a strategy for creating jobs/occupations, generating income, providing capital for income generation, and supporting occupations.

*“...The expectation for the development of agricultural products in the area is that if we can improve the quality to a level that it can be included in the Royal Project, it would help boost community income. The key is to create new knowledge for local farmers, such as growing new crops like avocados, passion fruit, and melons. We hope the government will promote agricultural products to fetch higher prices without requiring large-scale production—focusing on good quality varieties.”*  
(Primary informant, 2023)

This is consistent with the research of Pharkcharoen (2022), which found that the community is aware of its unique natural resources that can be developed into tourism attractions. There are many abandoned spaces in the community that, if developed, could create value and benefits for local residents. If the community can seek support and collaboration from the government to provide training and promote the development of local tourism resources, it could lead to more vibrant tourism in the

area, circulating economic activity within the community. This would not only promote main income sources but also generate additional income for residents. Maximizing the use of existing resources is essential. The community should also promote saving and offer credit to members for reinvesting in their livelihoods, or even form community cooperatives to sell local products and essential goods at affordable prices, reducing the role of middlemen. This would help lower living costs and promote a more sustainable income flow within the community.

The development of “Prosperity” also aligns with the SDGs, specifically the following five key goals:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

### 3) Sustainability

According to the 20-Year National Strategy (2023-2027), the sustainability dimension focuses on development that ensures continuous growth in income and quality of life for the people, without over-exploiting natural resources (NESDC, 2022). The strategy aims to promote environmentally-friendly production and consumption that complies with global community regulations, fostering social responsibility and promoting the collective well-being for long-term sustainability. All sectors of society are encouraged to adhere to and practice the principles of a Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (National Strategy Secretariat Office, 2017).

From the Ban Kha District Development Plan (2023-2027), regarding sustainability issues such as natural resource management and environmental concerns, the main challenges identified are:

1) The increasingly severe water shortage each year.

2) The issue of forest fires caused by illegal burning during the dry season.



In Ban Kha, there are proposed solutions involving community collaboration and brainstorming across sectors to address the water shortage issues in the area.

*“...The first issue we need to resolve is water and drought. In particular, Moo 2, Nong Ko sub-district in Nong Phan Chan, is facing a severe water shortage. Although water flows into the Huai Ma Had reservoir, there is no water flowing into the village. People here have to use pumps to bring water into the village and must open and close the water supply at specific times: from 4:00 AM to 8:00 AM in the morning, and from 4:00 PM to 9:00 PM in the evening. If we leave the water on all day, it won't be enough. The tap water available is only partial.”* (Primary informant, 2023)

In addition to these issues, the sustainability dimension encompasses development that benefits people of all ages equally. Thus, development in terms of sustainability aims to promote “good health,” “support for disadvantaged people,” “environmental preservation,” and “comprehensive welfare for all.” Furthermore, the development in this dimension aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the following two goals:

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

Goal 15: Protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, manage forests sustainably, combat desertification, halt land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

As mentioned earlier, the development of Ban Kha District follows a strategy that strengthens the nation's grassroots economy through balanced development across three key dimensions:

1) Stability: “Ensuring stability in production costs, food costs, and energy costs is like creating the headwaters of development.” (Upstream)

2) Prosperity: “Creating jobs/occupations,” “generating income,” “providing capital to generate income,” and “supporting livelihoods.” (Midstream)

3) Sustainability: “Promoting good health,” “supporting disadvantaged people,” “preserving the environment,” and “providing comprehensive welfare for all.” (Downstream)

This approach is consistent with the research by Rawangwongsaa and Chueakham (2023), which argues that sustainable and balanced community development across these three dimensions—economic growth, social and cultural inclusivity, and environmental protection—leads to a higher quality of life for community members. The main goal of community development is to make people happy and strengthen the community, ensuring that the results of development are sustainable in the long term, both socially, culturally, and environmentally.

Such development relies on community participation, where citizens or community members have access to information, understand local issues, recognize their community's resources, and express their needs. They are encouraged to take ownership of the community, take responsibility for problems, participate in decision-making, collaborate to solve issues, share in the benefits, and engage in evaluating the development process from start to finish.

### 3. Multiple Regression Analysis of Factors Promoting and Developing Community Strength and the Sustainable Development Goals of the Community in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province

The multiple regression analysis of factors promoting and developing the strength of communities and sustainable development goals in the Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province, reveals the following key findings: Factors significantly influencing sustainable community development include: Community Leadership Role, Economic Factors, Cultural and Learning Factors and Natural Resources and Environmental Factors. Hypotheses 1, 2, 4, and 5 are accepted, while Hypothesis 3 is rejected. This indicates that factors promoting and strengthening community social aspects and community organizations do not have a significant impact on the sustainable development goals of communities in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

The analysis found that the most significant factor influencing the sustainable development of the community is:

**Hypothesis 5:** Factors promoting and developing community strength in terms of natural resources and the environment influence the sustainable development goals of the community in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

### Natural Resources and the Environment (Accepted Hypothesis 5)

Ratchaburi Province is rich in important and abundant natural resources. The area is adjacent to significant forest regions, such as the Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary, Kaeng Krachan Forest, and areas near the Myanmar border (Department of National Parks, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation [DNP], n.d.). The province also has one national park, Chaloeem Phrakiat Thai Prachan National Park, which covers areas in Ang Hin, Thung Luang, Yang Hak Subdistrict in Paktor District, and Nong Phan Chan Subdistrict.

Field visits revealed that:

- 1) The area is rich in natural resources, including forests and mountains.
- 2) There are government agencies overseeing the use of these natural resources. If the local population wishes to utilize resources in areas under the jurisdiction of these government agencies, they must obtain permission from the relevant authorities.

Interviews with local residents showed that much of the land in Ban Kha District is under government oversight, which creates challenges for community members when seeking permission to utilize the land. Issues include complex legal procedures and restrictions on certain types of land use. Obtaining permission for land ownership—whether for housing or agricultural purposes—requires cooperation from community leaders to facilitate processes such as land ownership verification and navigating bureaucratic procedures to secure land rights.

In line with the research by Norkham, Khunthongwong, and Boonsong (2019), the issues concerning the coexistence of communities with forests in protected forest areas consist of four main components as follows:

- 1) The development of state power and the capitalist system.
- 2) The coexistence of communities with forests in protected forest areas.
- 3) State policies and laws regarding the management of natural resources and the environment.
- 4) Community-based natural resource management and local governance.

In this regard, the state has enacted laws and policies to control natural resources, primarily by declaring protected forest areas that overlap with community lands without excluding the communities from these protected zones. Therefore, to reduce conflicts and jointly manage the limited national

resources for maximum benefit, collaborative management is essential. This requires cooperation between government agencies, the private sector, and local administrative organizations.

Regarding the legal aspect, the government has recognized this issue, with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment being the main agency responsible for addressing these challenges. It is necessary to expedite the resolution of land-use conflicts between farmers and areas designated for conservation. This involves revising outdated laws and regulations that are not aligned with modern technology and current societal changes. The overlap of agricultural land with protected areas has increased, highlighting the need to update these laws to keep pace with societal changes. However, the government, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, acknowledges the basic livelihood needs of the people, particularly the need for land to sustain their way of life. The National Park Act, B.E. 2562 (2019), which has been amended, is expected to benefit all parties involved in a balanced and sustainable way. (DNP, 2022)

3) The difficulties in proving land rights for agricultural land in the Ban Kha area. From field observations, it was found that most of the residents have lived and worked on the land before parts of Ban Kha District were declared as a national park. As a result, when the area was designated as a national park, it created significant obstacles regarding land tenure for local residents. These residents need to prove their land rights, as the Cabinet resolution stipulates that aerial photographs from 2002 should be used as the standard for land surveys to check land ownership and usage changes.

The process for recognizing land rights involves determining whether the land was occupied before the area was designated as a national park. If it can be proven that the land was occupied prior to the designation, rights will be recognized under the National Forest Reserves Act of 1964, Section 16, allowing the use of the land for agricultural purposes. However, in areas that are ecologically sensitive, even if prior occupancy can be proven, new land must be provided for the residents, and they are required to relocate to government-designated areas. For areas where it is proven that residents settled after the national park designation, relocation from these areas is required. If relocation is not possible, the government will strictly enforce land-use restrictions to prevent further encroachment (Yakorn, Boonchai, & Laosuwan, 2018).

*“...Regarding land title documents, this issue affects the household economy in the area. The Local Land Tax document indicates that the land is ours but it is still under the forest management. Later, it may be converted into Land Reform for Agricultural Purposes Office, and the land title document serves as the proof of ownership (non-transferable except for agricultural use). There are problems when applying for necessary assistance, such as the government's policy to build water ponds: Mr. A has land with Land Title Deed, but Mr. B has Local Land Tax land, which will not be eligible for government assistance. The community wants to convert their land to a Land Title Deed so that the government can help solve the problem, such as converting it to Land Reform for Agricultural Purpose, but it is rare for Local Land Tax land to be converted. It may be possible to convert it to Land Reform for Agricultural Purpose instead.” (Primary Informant, 2024)*

*“...Regarding land security, here we have the issue of unclear legal documents. For example, Local Land Tax Document from 1965 previously indicated land ownership. The Forestry Department used to acknowledge the land use and tax payment as proof that the people lived there before the forest. However, with new issues of encroachment and forest protection, the interpretation of this document has changed. The law now clarifies that the 1965 tax law applies to farmland, not land in a protected forest area. In fact, this area was designated as a national forest reserve in 1984, long after the residents had settled there.” (Primary Informant, 2024)*

*“...The Cabinet resolution of 2020 stipulated that all land in forested areas must be authorized for use before being utilized. The government classified Ban Kha area as “forested land.” According to this classification, if the land is to be used, the residents must apply for permission within 180 days, with local government budgets requiring approval from landowners before use. In the end, after submitting projects to the relevant agencies, we were told that the land in question had already been used by the people. Therefore, the local administrative organization (PAO) can maintain and manage the area, but maintenance does not mean construction. This*

*led to a dispute between the Land Reform for Agricultural Purposes Office and the Forestry Department.” (Primary Informant, 2024)*

Therefore, residents in the area must also recognize the value of natural resources and live in harmony with the forests. This aligns with the concept of "Forests Thrive, People Prosper" for developing land that provides stable living and agricultural spaces for the people while involving them in forest conservation through multiple dimensions. An example of implementing the "Forests Thrive, People Prosper" concept is from Chong Subdistrict in Trang Province, where land use conflicts occurred due to overlapping agricultural land with state-owned lands. These conflicts led to disputes with government officials, as they were only following their duties. This resulted in the local people banding together to resist government action. This is a policy-level problem that cannot be permanently resolved for the people who are suffering (CODI, 2022)

**Hypothesis 2:** Factors promoting and developing community strength in economic aspects influence the sustainable development goals of the community in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

### **Economy (Accepted Hypothesis 2)**

In economic aspect, it was found that the key economic sectors driving the province can be categorized as follows: 1) Agriculture (pineapple cultivation), 2) Industry (canning fruit processing plants,) 3) Tourism (accommodation businesses, hotels, restaurants), 4) Ecotourism (e.g., Aom Yim Market, Thai Retro Lifestyle Market in Chom Bueng, O-Poi Market, etc.). According to the district development plan for Ban Kha District, the area faces several key economic challenges:

- 1) Poverty: Many residents have insufficient income to sustain their livelihoods, leading to increased debt.
- 2) Quality and quantity of household industrial products or local community products are not competitive with industrial factories, resulting in a disadvantage in market competition.
- 3) Impacts from the global economic situation. (Ban Kha Administrative Organization, 2023).

The government has made efforts to address economic issues through key projects such as the Public Market Project or Talad Pracharat aimed at stimulating the local economy. In Ratchaburi Province, over 36 public markets have been opened, including:

- 1) Public Market for Smiling Thai People

- 2) Local Public Market for Happy Communities
- 3) Provincial Public Market of Excellence
- 4) Public Market for Modern Trade
- 5) Public Market for Local Community's Good Products
- 6) Public Market for Tourism
- 7) Cultural Heritage Public Market (Ministry of Interior, 2018).

Ratchaburi Province has various advantages that can be leveraged for further economic development. The economic system serves as an important indicator of household income and also reflects dimensions of poverty. This aligns with the Local Economic Development concept promoted by CODI, which emphasizes local communities' ability to self-manage and sustain themselves economically.

The goals of community economic and capital development are outlined in four levels:

1. Family Level: Ensuring that every family has a good quality of life, has enough food, warm shelter, capital assets, and reduced debt.
2. Group/Community/Village Level: Strengthening community organizations for economic and capital development, ensuring food security and abundant resources.
3. Area/Subdistrict Level: Strengthening economic bases and community capital to lead to self-management by local communities.
4. Provincial Level: Connecting economic and capital networks to solve policy-level problems, aiming to make the province economically self-sufficient and sustainable.

When community economies are strong, citizens can depend on each other, form groups, and generate stable income, which will have a positive impact on the national economy. This is in line with the Community Organization Development Institute's focus on supporting community economic and capital development, emphasising that local communities should have stable economic systems, be self-reliant, and manage their own affairs sustainably.

This approach aligns with a case study on "Grassroots Economic Development and Safe Food Value Chains" in Kanchanaburi Province, by Tanpichai et al. (2021). The study highlighted three key elements for driving grassroots economic development and safe food: 1) Collaborative networks as a

mechanism for development, 2) Processes that create value through upstream, midstream, and downstream activities, and 3) Community management. Each area should be developed in accordance with the local ecological learning model, which ties into the development of community economies based on the BCG Economy Model for sustainability.

An example is from Kok Yang Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province, which applied the BCG Model in a quadripartite partnership, involving:

- 1) Government and local administrative organisations to support policies and budget.
- 2) Education sector at all levels to develop learning curricula and use community resources as a foundation, including university research to create tangible outcomes.
- 3) Private sector to further develop local products and distribute them to consumers.
- 4) Civic and social sectors to strengthen the local community.

In addition to developing communities with strong grassroots economies, each community, district, or sub-district should manage local products and develop Community Business Models (CBMC). This model involves designing business operations for the community with a holistic approach, emphasizing capacity building for community entrepreneurs in areas such as mindset change and specialized skills (including knowledge, skills, and networks) to ensure sustainable community business development (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, n.d.).

**Hypothesis 1:** Factors promoting and developing community strength in the roles of community leadership influence the sustainable development goals of the community in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province.

### **The Community Leadership roles (Accepted Hypothesis 1)**

In terms of community leadership, it was found that the role of leaders in the community does not necessarily have to be limited to official leaders. It also includes respected elders and religious leaders, who hold significant influence in the community. This aligns with the four types of community leaders proposed by Phukpu et al. (2019), who defines leaders as individuals who play a crucial role in guiding the community toward development and change. Leaders are essential in managing and determining the direction of community development to ensure a better quality of life for the people. The term "leader" in community development is not limited to those with formal legal positions but



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can be categorized into four types: 1) Official leaders, 2) Political leaders, 3) Religious leaders, and 4) Spiritual leaders. All these types of leaders play a role in promoting and driving development within the community.

A key aspect of this concept, as well as the views of local residents in Ban Kha District, is that community leaders play an important role in addressing local issues and driving community development. For example, official leaders and political leaders have been instrumental in helping people resolve land and livelihood issues, particularly since the area overlaps with a national park. The process of proving land rights has been essential in addressing this problem. Because the legal procedures are complex and detailed, capable community leaders are critical to driving efforts to resolve these issues.

Moreover, community leaders have formed strong groups to address issues such as illegal border crossings, drug trafficking, and the smuggling of migrant workers. These issues can affect local security and stability. In response, community leaders have united to create strong teams, such as the Village Defense Volunteers, to help maintain stability and address these challenges. A clear observation from this field study is that community leaders have successfully formed strong networks and earned the respect of local people.

*“The community has worked together with village headmen and local leaders to address drug problems by rehabilitating addicts. Once individuals have completed rehabilitation, the community provides opportunities for them to earn a living, such as raising livestock or growing various types of vegetables. These successful models are then used as a blueprint to address drug-related problems in the area” (Primary informant, 2023)*

This view aligns with Techathik (1995), who described the components of a community-based organization as a large system with various sub-systems that form a cohesive community organization. Strong leadership is essential for the success of the organization and the community. If leaders are respected, capable, and have a genuine concern for the collective good, they can guide the community to success and strengthen the organization. This view is also supported by Nawa (2019), who argued that both community leaders and the members of the community are two key factors in ensuring the

community's development. Even if a community has good infrastructure, a favorable environment, and sufficient community capital, without committed leadership and cooperation from community members, development will not be sustainable.

**Hypothesis 4:** Factors promoting and developing community strength in cultural and learning aspects influence the sustainable development goals of the community in Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province

#### **Cultural and learning (Accepted Hypothesis 4)**

From field research and the study of the Ban Kha District development plan, it was found that Ban Kha District, located along the border with Myanmar, is home to the Pga-Kayaw (Plong) ethnic group, making the area culturally diverse (Ban Kha Administrative Organization, 2023). This is consistent with the findings of Sawangsi (2018) who noted that Ratchaburi Province is ethnically diverse due to its geographic location, which facilitates an open society and the emergence of multiculturalism. This has led to the migration of groups from Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and northern Thailand, with each ethnic group striving to preserve their traditions and cultures through the establishment of cultural preservation centers. These centers serve to counter the influence of modernity, which threatens the cultural identity of these groups. Examples include the Thai Song Dam Cultural Center at Baan Hua Keo Chin, which serves as a community development hub for the Thai Song Dam people.

The study of the Ban Kha District development plan in Ratchaburi also reveals that a key strength in the area's cultural and learning development lies in its unique local customs and traditions. These can be leveraged to create economic opportunities for the community. For instance, residents have formed groups to produce local handmade products, utilizing traditional knowledge and skills to create a variety of goods. This not only preserves local cultural heritage but also provides alternative livelihoods for the people (Ban Kha Administrative Organization, 2023). The use of cultural capital has proven to be an essential tool for sustainable community development. The management of cultural resources can be adapted based on the specific needs of each community. Patmasiriwattana (2004) presented cultural capital as the knowledge, wisdom, and creativity developed by local experts through research and discoveries, as well as the values and beliefs that bind society together. These elements help create social order and establish norms that provide collective societal value. Cultural capital also includes the transmission of knowledge and practices from one generation to the next. This is aligned with the

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research of Kaewkamon et al. (2021), who found that cultural capital plays a significant role in development across three key areas:

1. **Economic development:** Cultural capital can enhance the value of goods and services, create differentiation in the marketplace, and improve the competitiveness of products and services.

2. **Social development:** Cultural capital contributes to the development of social values, norms, beliefs, and traditions.

3. **Natural resources and environmental development:** Cultural capital, including traditional customs and lifestyles aligned with nature, can be used to manage natural resources and the environment sustainably.

Additionally, the findings from Chaiyawong, Jirakitnimit, and Chimpanao (2022) support the idea that culture is a critical factor in strengthening communities. Using a model of empathy, adherence to traditions, and shared learning from local wisdom, communities can enhance their self-confidence and create sustainable development. When communities can integrate cultural practices into the economic sector, they can generate economic value from their cultural heritage. For example, the development of cultural tourism can transform communities into cultural tourism destinations, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These SDGs include:

SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

SDG 15: Protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, manage forests sustainably, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

From the above, it is evident that the cultural and learning factors in the area, when well-managed, are interconnected with community development in other aspects, including community leadership, natural resources and the environment, and the economy. These factors must be coordinated and integrated appropriately, taking into account the local context, in order to achieve stable, prosperous, and sustainable community development.

Regarding the social and community organization factors, although the results indicate that these factors do not have a significant impact on the strength of the Ban Kha community, the study of the Ban Kha District Development Plan (2023–2027) revealed that the area has relatively strong community organizations. This is driven by community leaders who lead projects, as well as by local group initiatives aimed at creating jobs and generating income for residents. Community leaders are also working to push key agricultural products from the area into various markets to improve residents' income. For example, the promotion of new-generation farmers and the upgrading of farmers to *Young Smart Farmers* and *Smart Farmers* who understand the principles of "market-driven production" and value-added processing. Additionally, efforts are being made to develop business and marketing networks both domestically and internationally.

4. In qualitative research, the conclusions of the study on factors promoting and developing the strength of border-area communities, using Ban Kha District in Ratchaburi Province as a case study, can be used to create a model for strengthening the community economy in border areas through the BANCA Model. This model can be explained as follows:

### Summary

From the researcher's fieldwork and literature review, it was found that development models in different areas must take into account the unique identity of each location to ensure effective development outcomes. The BANCA Model therefore considers development through five key components: 1) B: Basic factors, 2) A: Agriculture model, 3) N: Network, 4) C: Capacity building, and 5) A: Aided self-help. The details are as follows:

**1) B: Basic factor** – These are the foundational elements within the community, which may vary from one community to another, affecting the development approach. The basic factors in the community can be viewed from two perspectives:

1.1) Human capital: In the Ban Kha area, human capital serves as a driving force for economic development. This includes both formal and informal social leadership roles, such as community leaders (e.g., village heads, subdistrict heads), leaders from government organizations (e.g., local schools, provincial governors), community business leaders, local scholars, and representatives from community enterprises or groups, along with the participation of the general public.

1.2) Social capital: The area has a social capital that supports the community's safety and strength. For example, the physical characteristics of the area, such as mountains, serve as natural buffers, particularly since Ban Kha is located near the Myanmar border. This can be important in times of conflict. Additionally, community leaders have worked closely together to create networks for maintaining order in the area, following the Baworn principle (Household, Temple, and Community).

1.3) Physical capital: There is physical capital that still requires development to support future economic investments. This includes infrastructure such as street lighting, the development of barren land, and water supply systems for consumption and agricultural use.

1.4) Natural capital: The area has rich natural resources under strict management by both the community and the government, including natural water sources and protected forests. However, the community faces challenges related to land use because much of Ban Kha is designated as forest reserve, limiting the community's access to natural resources. If the issue of land use can be addressed, a sustainable development model that allows both people and forests to coexist could be achieved.

1.5) Financial capital: Social groups in the area have been organized to pool resources for funding livelihoods and generating income, such as large-scale farming groups. This helps to manage agricultural outputs more effectively and ensures better quality products that meet government standards.

1.6) Cultural capital: The area is culturally diverse, with various ethnic groups, including Thai Buddhists, ethnic minorities, Christians, and Muslims, living together harmoniously.

**2) External Factors** – These factors include risks from epidemics, natural disasters, fluctuations in agricultural product prices, and support from external entities. The researcher suggests that understanding both internal and external factors is akin to conducting a SWOT analysis to identify weaknesses, strengths, barriers, and opportunities, which will help community leaders and citizens plan for the future.

**3) A: Agriculture Model (Modern Agriculture)** – This model is based on the approach of “market-driven innovation to increase income.” Its key principles are “Group-based farming, Innovative agriculture, Safe agriculture, Technological farming, Agro-processing, and Sufficiency farming.” In the Ban Kha area, agriculture is the primary occupation, with a focus on monoculture crops, especially sweet pineapples. However, issues such as falling prices, oversupply, and drought during certain seasons affect production and income. The model aims to transition farmers from traditional monoculture to modern, innovative farming. The emphasis is on creating high-quality products that meet international standards (e.g., GAP, GMP, HALAL, CODEX), developing premium products with added value, and fostering eco-friendly practices. This is done through both domestic and international market mechanisms, including online and offline sales and contract farming.

**4) N: Network** – A network consists of community organizations formed with the purpose of engaging in activities that benefit the community. The key aspects of a successful network include:

1. Common perception: Sharing the same view.
2. Common vision: Having a unified vision.
3. Mutual interests/benefits: Having shared interests and benefits.
4. Stakeholder participation: Involving all members of the network.
5. Complementary relationships: Building relationships that enhance each other.
6. Interdependence: Relying on each other.
7. Interaction: Engaging in reciprocal exchange.

In this research, three main types of networks were identified:

1. Spatial networks: These networks are based on geographic areas, such as village-level, subdistrict-level, district-level, and provincial-level networks.

2. Issue-based networks: These are based on shared concerns, such as drug-related issues or community forest management.

3. Functional networks: These networks can be divided into: Government networks, such as the Ministry of Interior’s Community Development Department and national parks. Private sector networks, such as the Chamber of Commerce or Industrial Council. Civil society networks, such as community scholars or farmers' networks.

**5) C: Capacity Building** – This refers to processes aimed at strengthening and maintaining the capacity of individuals, organizations, and society to define and achieve their own development

objectives. The approach involves starting from existing skills and improving them, increasing flexibility, and ensuring local leadership in the process. The key steps in capacity building include:

1. Need Assessment: Identifying the problem, the target group, available resources, and support mechanisms.
2. Design: Developing a process to address identified issues, considering resources and objectives.
3. Implementation: Carrying out the activities, involving policymakers, implementers, and practitioners at various levels.
4. Monitoring: Tracking progress and evaluating results at different stages (before, during, and after the activity).

**6) A: Aided Self-help** – This approach aims to develop self-reliance within communities, where the government provides assistance based on the community's opportunities and needs. The goal is to foster self-reliance (Self-Reliance), believing that strengthening the community's capacity allows them to develop independently. This approach is supported by the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEF), which includes TERMS: Technology, Economy, Resources (natural and environmental), Mindset, and Society.

The development of the community economy in border areas through the BANCA Model can be summarized as follows:

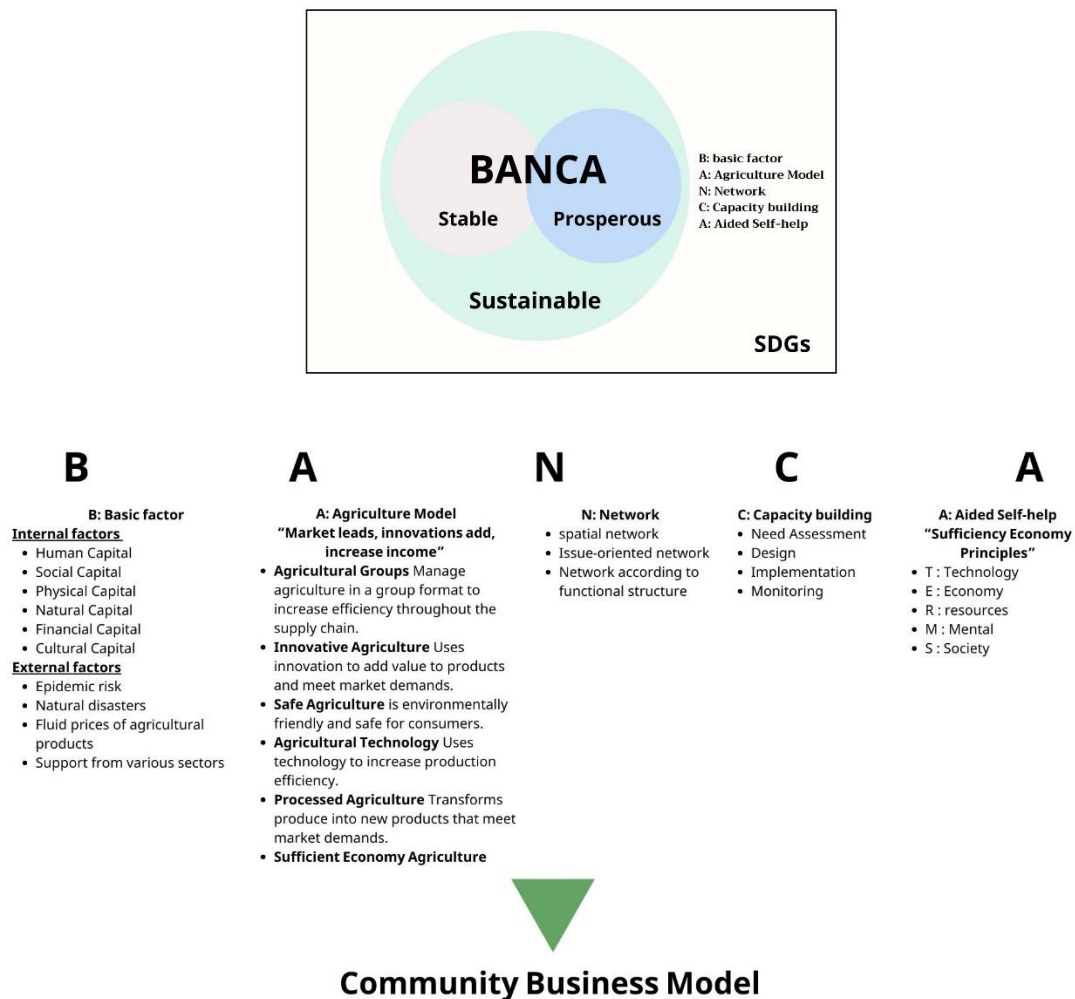


Figure 2. BANCA Model

The development model outlined above operates within the five key components of BANCA, and it is guided by three critical goals. These goals focus on ensuring Stability, Prosperity, and Sustainability in the area:

1. **Stability:** – This refers to creating a stable environment in the community, free from both internal and external threats and changes. Stability is achieved across all dimensions, including economic, social, environmental, and political spheres. It ensures that the people enjoy stability in their lives, with secure jobs and steady income.

2. **Prosperity:** – This goal emphasizes creating ongoing economic growth and development within the community. Prosperity involves reducing poverty and ensuring that everyone benefits equally from development. There is an expansion of human, intellectual, and financial capital that supports



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continuous development. This ensures a thriving economy where the community's wealth increases and resources are distributed equitably.

3. **Sustainability:** – The final goal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of development. This involves creating income and improving the quality of life for the community in a way that does not overuse natural resources. Sustainable development is characterized by environmentally friendly production and services, with community members being socially responsible. People are encouraged to pursue shared benefits in a sustainable manner, following the principles of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.

When the BANCA model is implemented with these three key goals—Stability, Prosperous, and Sustainability—it leads to the ultimate objective of creating a Community Business Model that is tailored to the unique characteristics of Ban Kha. This model aims to strengthen the local economy, create jobs, generate income, and improve the quality of life for the people in the community, all while aligning with the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), addressing all 17 goals effectively in the process.

## Research Recommendations

### Policy Recommendations

From the study on “Factors Promoting and Developing the Strength of Border Communities: The Case Study of Ban Kha District, Ratchaburi Province” the researcher offers the following comments and suggestions for future application:

1. **Qualitative Research** – It is recommended to conduct qualitative research with a longer observation period in the area than was possible in this study. The research should focus more on active participation with the community across all sectors to truly understand the root causes of problems. Additionally, there should be greater involvement of the local population in data collection. In this study, most of the data was gathered from community leaders, so future research could benefit from a deeper understanding of the perspectives of the general population.

2. **Development and Application of the BANCA Model** – The next step is to move from the conceptualization of the BANCA Model to its practical implementation in the area, to ultimately lead to the creation of a Community Business Model tailored specifically to the Ban Kha area. This requires a broader knowledge base than what was covered in this research, as well as a longer time frame and cooperation from multiple stakeholders to ensure success.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

1. Expand the population scope in future research to study a broader population group.
2. Conduct comparative studies of development across different areas to explore similarities and differences in Ratchaburi Province for future planning.
3. Collect data through in-depth interviews and tailor-made questionnaires for specific groups. Increase the number of interview participants to obtain a wider range of responses and opinions. Future research may emphasize the perspectives of local residents in Ratchaburi Province.

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