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Healing, Opportunity, Peace and Engagement (HOPE) for Youth in
Pattani, Thailand Activity

Final Report

1st August 2012 - 30th September 2015

1. Program Overview/Summary

Program Name:	Healing Opportunity Peace and Engagement (HOPE) for Youth in Pattani, Thailand Activity
Activity Start Date And End Date:	August 1, 2012 to September 30, 2015
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	Kenan Institute Asia
[Contract/Agreement] Number:	Cooperative Agreement Award No. AID-486-A-12-00004
Name of Subcontractors/Sub awardees:	N/A
Major Counterpart Organizations	Prince Songkhla University, Pattani Campus
Geographic Coverage (cities and or countries)	Pattani, Thailand
Reporting Period:	August 1, 2012 to September 30, 2015

1. Executive Summary

The Kenan Institute Asia (Kenan), a Thailand registered, not-for-profit development organization, was awarded US \$494,230 in funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for a three-year cooperative agreement to implement the Healing, Opportunity, Peace and Engagement (HOPE) project for Youth in Pattani, Thailand. The project aimed to mitigate violent conflict in the Deep South¹ of Thailand.

HOPE built a model for conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation in six communities in Thailand's Pattani province. To accomplish this, HOPE focused on promoting cross-cultural interaction, student leadership training and youth community activities in order to create a social environment where people could interact naturally and safely. In addition to students and parents, teachers, principals, and community and religious leaders were also included in project activities to advocate for institutional change and ensure a lasting impact. Another central component to HOPE's design was the inclusion of a number of connectors such as educators and local NGOs to help bridge the divide between the ethnic Malay and Thai communities.

The project design followed a "do no harm" approach and took into account the security of all staff and participants involved. Also, HOPE provided a conflict communication's expert to train all involved stakeholders on how to hold serious discussions without inciting confrontation. Finally, the project thoroughly addressed the role of gender and incorporated the special needs of ethnic Malay youth. Prince of Songkla University-Pattani and King Prajadhipok Institute that located in the Deep South, were selected to help with the initial hurdles of trust-building and community outreach, as well as to conduct youth group mentoring. Because the NGOs' capacity in these areas was weak, Kenan conducted capacity building sessions to allow the organizations to sustain an impact beyond the HOPE project.

Over the course of its lifespan, the project directly benefited 723 students and 1,452 community members, including parents, teachers, principals, and community and religious leaders, as well as 10 staff members from the Prince of Songkla University-Pattani and King Prajadhipok Institute. The number of students and community members exceeded the targets due to strong relationships and the attractiveness of the activities. In addition, Kenan requested a no-cost extension until September 30, 2015, which was approved by USAID's Agreement Officer in order to implement all actions according to project objectives and include a new action focused on ensuring project sustainability.

Context and Conflict Analysis

Thailand's region known as the "Deep South" consists of the three southernmost provinces in the country, Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. Though escalating since the eruption of violence

¹ Thailand's region known as the "Deep South" consists of the three southernmost provinces in the country, Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat and parts of Songkla.

in January 2004, when the current situation known in Thailand as “the Fire in the South” ignited, it is important to realize that the Deep South has been a restive region for Thailand since it absorbed the historical state of Pattani, and that a separatist movement has been active in the area for nearly a century.

Though much information exists on the resulting violence, few comprehensive studies have been conducted as to the root causes of the violence. Perhaps the most comprehensive study to date was undertaken by the Mahidol University Research Center for Peace Building with the cooperation of the Peace Information Center at Thammasat University, and the Chulalongkorn University Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, “Community Approaches in Conflict Situation: An Area Based Study in Three Southernmost Provinces in Thailand,” the summary of which was released on November 30, 2008².

The Mahidol study identified five key elements that are contributing to the conflict, which can be summarized as follows: 1) Geographical factor – people in the Deep South are more akin to those in Malaysia and feel alienated from the Thai State; 2) Power politics – locals are not granted power to govern themselves. Consequently, there is a lack of civic participation and empowered civil society in the area; 3) Unequal distribution of natural resources and government budget; 4) Lack of integration between secular and religious education – ethnic Mala students face a paradox in the current education system. If they study at a pondok, they have less of a chance to continue their studies in a Thai tertiary education institution, and hamper future economic opportunities in an already difficult labor market. If they study in a secular school, they will not be able to contribute to the teaching of Islam in their communities; and 5) Unemployment is very high in the area. Young people who earn higher degrees have fewer job opportunities than those in other areas in Thailand—they see very little hope for the future.

The Mahidol study points to the need for community collaboration, across religions (Buddhist/Muslim) and cultural divides, as key means of reducing tension, even in communities experiencing a crisis of trust. The study specifically recommends the promotion of cross-religion projects to “create social space where people can interact naturally.” In locations where actions have been successful, the Mahidol study identified three key “factors contributing to (the) decreasing of violence and resentment against the State”: 1) “Civil society approach, which includes civic participation and self-management of natural resources; 2) Capacity-building in terms of project management is important as well; and 3) Moreover, the building of public awareness, along with collaboration in community projects will in turn build a culture of peace through which people learn to solve conflict by peaceful means.” As such, any project aimed at reducing tensions must take these factors into account.

² Mahidol University Research Center for Peace Building, “Community Approaches in Conflict Situation: An Area Based Study in Three Southernmost Provinces in Thailand,” November 30, 2008.

Kenan's stakeholder meetings are a testament to the study's findings. The message that any project activities in the Deep South must be slow, deliberate, and build trust amongst all groups was heard clearly. Additionally, the stakeholders and research stressed the need to address youth projects for both boys and girls, as women are increasingly taking on leadership roles in the family, due to men being at greater risk of death in the conflict. Unfortunately, many women are ill prepared for their role as the family/community leader. At a meeting organized by the World Bank to discuss their support for community projects in the Deep South, it was stressed by the design team that all activities needed multi-sector participation, including local, education, religious and community leaders³. It was further stressed that local buy-in was critical, and that it could take years for a project to gain trust.

However, despite the calls to comprehensively address this conflict situation, there are few specific projects that are addressing the root causes of the crisis as outlined by the Mahidol study and by key stakeholders, and very little is being done on a people-to-people level in these communities. As pointed out by the Mahidol study, there are not many "development projects supported by other sources of funding, e.g., NGOs, international organizations," being administered in the Deep South. One of the major difficulties in working in the Deep South, aside from the obvious security issues, lack of trust of government officials, the need for Thai government permission, and the current civil and religious divide, is the lack of a strong civil society and NGO presence. There is simply not enough capacity in the Deep South for multilateral organizations to engage local stakeholders on a large scale. One stakeholder at a World Bank meeting stated that we need to focus more on engaging community individuals as partners, as opposed to community organizations, as there were not enough community organizations to engage. Furthermore, projects targeted specifically at youth were also extremely limited, and there is a pressing need for such programs. Though the Suk-kaew Kaewdang Foundation has been working to establish youth clubs, there is a shortage of trained facilitators and people to train them, according to its Chairman, Dr. Rung Kaewdang⁴.

HOPE project team

The HOPE project was led by Chief of Party Peeranun Panyavaranant who managed the entire project. Sofia Jeana as Deputy of Chief of Party and Field Coordinator Fadel Hayeeyama oversaw the day-to-day implementation in Pattani. The local Kenan team received technical and resource support from experts and management at Kenan's Bangkok headquarters. Prince of Songkla University-Pattani and King Prajadhipok Institute were important project partners.

³ Meeting organized by the World Bank to discuss their support of the Royal Thai Government "Piloting Community Approaches in Conflict Situation in Three Southernmost Provinces in Thailand" project, held on 28 January 2008 at the World Bank office in Bangkok, Thailand.

⁴ Meeting with Dr. Rung Kaewdang, Chairman of the Suk-kaew Kaewdang Foundation on 6 January 2009.

The team also included local stakeholders and advisors from the University's Muslim Studies faculty. Kenan ensured that the team represented the demographics of the region. This meant the team was multi-cultural and balanced by gender. This way all groups in the community had team members representing their perspective. Therefore, all decisions the team made took into account these varying points of view.

Project Highlights

In order to build a model for conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation in six communities in Pattani, the project successfully implemented the following activities:

For objective A: To establish trust and understanding between ethnic Malay and Thai people in Pattani. The project conducted 29 actions such as establishing advisory committee and stakeholder meetings as neutral social spaces for more than 200 Muslim and Buddhist community members to discuss youth and community development. The results showed that community members talked more freely about different topics of their interest, some positive and some negative. They had productive dialogues regarding what information they felt needs to be shared with their community and external parties. In these meetings information on key community problems and challenges were addressed openly. Furthermore, these discussions gave community members a chance to embrace their community's cultural memories and find commonalities between groups. The monk from Yaring community said that "I want to be friends with people from different religions. I believe that things will be done more effectively if we are close friends." This quote shows the significant steps made towards empathizing with and wanting to forge a better relationship with members of other ethnicities. These types of P2P actions promote peace within the community.

For objective B: To develop principals and teachers and youth leaders with the knowledge and skills that empower them to mitigate conflict and develop strong relations between ethnic groups. Knowledge and leadership skills, such as positive communication, community development, self-critical thinking and reasoning was provided to 787 direct beneficiaries including youth leaders, youth club members, teachers, principals and community leaders. As the result, many students noted a positive change in their attitude towards peers from different religions. One student said that "Through my education and receiving new information, I believe that a violence-free approach is a good way to solve our problems." The education imparted through HOPE activities made progress in altering children's opinion of their neighbors from other ethnic groups

For objective C: To establish mechanisms that enable the communities to continue to mitigate conflicts and develop strong relations between ethnic groups in their communities. The project led to local stakeholders collaborating to create a social platform for cross-cultural activities. These events and actions took into account the culture of all ethnicities and religious groups. For example, there were 18 community projects led by youth leaders

and there were more than 1,090 community members who participated in the community day events. One example of a youth project was the “Saiburi Historical Culture” project implemented by Saiburi Chang Prachakarn School. A multi-cultural group of students developed the project to promote a narrative of Saiburi Culture from the past to the present. Students wrote community folk stories and collected photos in order to create photo books and postcards that promote the Vasukri beach, Saiburi Palace, the Christian Hospital, and an ancient building influenced by the mixing of Thai, Chinese, and Malay cultures. These projects and events showed that community members from all backgrounds can come together and embrace their local culture.

From summarizing the results from implementation of HOPE, it was found that from carrying out project activities both in the classroom and outside, the youth as well as community members had positive responses. In addition, a development in relationship building in the community could be observed, and development of leadership skills among the youth. This also had an impact on the social mechanisms which consist of community leader groups, religious leaders and community members for which the level of development could be observed in two levels:

(1) Youth and school level: The clear development that was observed was the leadership of the youth over time. The youth were braver about expressing themselves, the activities portrayed creativity and attention to detail. Planning was carried out with steps and processes and they were able to solve problems when they occurred. This was a result of planning the project implementation themselves. In addition, there was consideration of coexisting in society with members from different backgrounds, different experiences and memories. The youth also learned how to interact with people of different religious backgrounds and culture without violence and overcame many stereotypes about each other.

(2) The community level and social mechanisms: Acceptance at the community level as satisfactory, measured from evaluations as well as from the level of relationships in the 6 target communities, which was trending to improve. The target community members increasingly expressed their opinions, discussed and exchanged information with each other (observed from meetings which community members participated in). In the beginning, it was clear that the level of participation was low and gradually got better in the implementation that followed, especially in terms of social mechanisms. The mechanisms included community leaders, religious leaders with a positive attitude towards the Project and towards building relationships within multicultural communities. Many felt this was a new and different process which was interesting and resulted in discussions and exchanging opinions in order to lead to the rehabilitation of relationships of community members. They were also interested in seeing the process implemented at a wider level, beginning with the community members.

In addition, it was found that implementation of HOPE was a start for discussion for all parties in communities and beginning to look at the future together (both Muslim and Buddhist). This created rebuilding of relationships via stories and memories and the way of life in the past. Planning with the local authorities to encourage discussion in the community to provide advice and consulting for the community development projects implemented by the students. This was also to return memories to community members and bring good things or memories in the community to light such as culture and traditions as well as important members in the community or other positive aspects. These could be communicated to the community through a small group or tradition, stories in the community which could also be communicated to people outside the community. The process will lead to a sustainable strength in the community. Overall, a positive dialogue was born in the area that will be crucial in the next stage of the peace process.

2. Details on program analysis and progress achieved towards objectives and key indicators

GOAL - To build a model for conflict mitigation, peace and reconciliation in six communities in Thailand's Pattani province.

To achieve the goal, Kenan broke the project down into three overarching objectives (A, B, and C) and had multiple indicators to measure these objectives. The objectives and indicators are listed below and correspond with the Performance Management Plan (PMP) sheet.

OBJECTIVE A: To establish trust and understanding between ethnic Malay and Thai people in Pattani.

Indicator (A1) – Number of recommendations mutually agreed upon

Indicator (A2) – Number of stakeholder meetings held

Indicator (A3) – Number of stakeholders participated – disaggregated by gender and religious group

Indicator (A4) – Number of advisory committee meetings held

Indicator (A5) – Number of advisory committee members participated – disaggregated by gender and religious group

Indicator (A6) – Number of community leaders training sessions held

Indicator (A7) – Number of community leaders trained – disaggregated by gender and ethnic group

OBJECTIVE B: To develop principals and teachers and youth leaders with the knowledge and skill that empowers them to mitigate conflict and develop strong relations between ethnic groups.

Indicator (B1) – Increase in knowledge of youth leaders

Indicator (B2) – Number of principals and teachers training sessions held

Indicator (B3) – Number of principals & teachers trained – disaggregated by gender and religious group

Indicator (B4) – Number of youth camps held

Indicator (B5) – Number of youth leaders trained – disaggregated by gender and ethnic group

OBJECTIVE C: To establish mechanism that enables the communities to continue to mitigate conflicts and develop strong relations between ethnic groups in their communities.

Indicator (C1) – Number of youth clubs established and operating

Indicator (C2) – Number youth members participated in youth clubs – disaggregated by gender and religious group

Indicator (C3) – Number of youth projects initiated

Indicator (C4) – Number of mentors support to youth clubs

Indicator (C5) – Number of community collaboration agreements reached

Indicator (C6) – Number of community day events held

Indicator (C7) – Number of community members participated – disaggregated by gender and religious group

1. Advisory Committee Meetings: Kenan set up an advisory committee composed of 15 members, including youth and peace development experts and representatives from PSU and the community. Kenan met with the advisory committee twice each year to update members on the progress of the project and to resolve critical issues. To ensure that the feedbacks and inputs from committee members will be appropriate in Pattani social context therefore the HOPE team changed the target numbers for Buddhists and Muslims to more accurately reflect the actual population demographics in target communities. The target for men is higher because more men occupy positions of authority in the Deep South.

Results: Under Objective A: The original target in the first year was 20 members on the advisory committee; however, based on the circumstances and recommendations from PSU advisors, Kenan decided that the committee should be a smaller, highly trusted group due to the sensitivity of the action. The target was reduced to 12 and 9 members in Year 2 and Year 3, respectively. In all, there were 15 different committee members over the three years (Indicator A5).

2. Stakeholder Meetings and Selection Committee Establishment: Kenan and the local partners facilitated this activity. The stakeholder meetings were held in 6 communities to

explain and update project activities in detail, as well as to select youth leaders. During the meetings, Kenan also added a workshop on non-confrontational communication practices for all participants to ensure the environment was safe. These meetings involved parents (both mothers and fathers whenever possible), as well as local educational and religious leaders to establish institutional linkages. These meetings took place in safe communities (based upon consultation with local partners). Target numbers for Buddhists and Muslims were set to accurately reflect actual population demographics in the communities.

Results: Under Objective A: The targeted 90 stakeholders participated each year (indicator A3 – aggregated by gender: 45 male and 45 female; and religion: 27 Buddhist and 63 Muslims). Not counting repeats, 213 different stakeholders participated in the meetings (104 in Year 1, 89 in Year 2, and 20 in Year 3) throughout the 3 years. There were 18 stakeholder meetings, which surpassed the target number of 15 (indicator A2).

3. Selection of Youth Leaders: After the establishment of the selection committee for each community, a school administrator represented the HOPE project to gain trust among community stakeholders at the meeting. The selection committee including representative from parents, community leaders and community member reviewed student profiles and approved leadership selections. After the final selection was approved, the HOPE team then contacted the selected students and parents directly.

Results: After 3 selection meetings, 101 youth were picked to participate in HOPE actions. 90 stakeholders participated (indicator B5 – aggregated by gender: 49 male and 52 female; and religion: 40 Buddhist and 61 Muslims).

4. Capacity Building for Partners, Principals and Teachers. Following the selection of youth leaders, capacity building activities for partners and teachers began. A three-day workshop was conducted for local partners, mentors and selected teachers who had a role in facilitating youth activities. The workshop addressed issues such as reporting requirements for monitoring and evaluation, dealing with stakeholder problems and other obstacles. Moreover, Kenan provided instruction on communication skills for conflict resolution. During the implementation of the youth leaders' community projects, teachers played an important role in monitoring the leaders' use of the small grants. The participating principals and teachers were disaggregated by gender and religion because these occupations are generally dominated by females. Similarly more Muslims were targeted because they make up a higher proportion of the population.

Results: Under Objective B: The actual number of training sessions was 10 by the end of Year 3. Kenan aimed to train 40 (partners and mentors were not tracked in PMP) teachers and principals annually (indicator B3 – disaggregated by gender: 16 male and 24 female and also by religion: 16 Buddhist and 24 Muslim). However, due to attrition of some, Kenan was able to add and train 24 additional teachers and principals. Therefore, the activity's actual

number was 64 different participants (44 in Year 1 with 10 members added in both Years 2 and 3).

5. Capacity Building for Community and Religious Leaders: The project held one annual workshop each year on communication techniques for community and religious leaders who participated in the program. Conflict communications experts from HOPE, Prince of Songkla University, and other partners led the workshops. A higher number of males participated due to the gender disparity amongst religious and community leaders. The higher number of Muslim participants reflected the demographics of the communities.

Results: Under objective A: The goal was to hold 3 training sessions (indicator A6) with the same 30 community members each year (indicator A7 – disaggregated by gender: 18 male and 12 female; and religion: 12 Buddhists and 18 Muslims. In actuality, 46 stakeholders participated in all 3. The total number of participants was unrepeated 56 community members (46 in Year 1 with new 9 members in Year 2 and 1 new member in Year 3)

6. Youth Camps: Youth camps took place once a year in Songkla province with a new group of students each time. The purpose of the youth camps was fivefold: 1) take the youth out of their daily environment and place them in a setting where they could openly share ideas and express their interests; 2) provide an opportunity for them to interact with other youth from different religious backgrounds and communities (mix of ethnic Malay and Thai); 3) build leadership and community citizenship skills through training activities; 4) provide a compelling reason for students entering the 7th grade to remain in Thailand rather than joining an Islamic boarding schools (pondok) or leaving school; and, 5) provide a resume builder for students going on to higher education. Each year, the camp focused on students leaving 6th grade and preparing to enter 7th grade. Following advice from the College of Islamic Studies and Prince of Songkla University, the camp was split into boys and girls groups. More girls than boys were targeted because there were more female students in the targeted schools. For the same reason, more Muslim students participated. The two main subjects covered in the camps included:

- Leadership: The object was to learn teamwork, leadership potential, and self-worth, and to establish mutual understanding and respect for each other. The topics discussed included: finding leaders within, understanding leadership, creative thinking, and working in teams (group dynamics), communication skills (for conflicts), meeting techniques, and developing a life map.

- Community Citizenship: This component allowed the students to gain insight into community citizenship. The mission was to increase understanding of community issues, to stimulate critical thinking, to develop the ability to make informed decisions and to instill the commitment to take responsible and community-friendly actions. A range of connector activities took place, such as sports (football), trust building workshops and games, outings

and study groups. A concluding workshop was held after each camp to reflect on the experiences of learning about leadership and community development issues. Campers took tests on their knowledge of the other culture. Buddhists and Muslims received different tests and all scores were averaged together, based on pre and post-test training results.

Results: Under Objective B: the participating youth leaders were required to take a pre and post-camp tests on cultural awareness. The goal was to achieve a 25 percentage point increase in average score from pre to post-test, (indicator B1) and the actual result matched the target (25 percentage point increase).

In each year, the targeted number of youth camps was two - one for boys and one for girls (indicator B4), with a total of 30 youth leaders trained (indicator B5 – disaggregated by gender: 12 male and 18 female; and religion: 12 Buddhist and 18 Muslim.) HOPE conducted six youth camps throughout the 3 year project and 101 children participated.

7. Forming Youth Clubs: Following the camps, the youth leaders invited other students to join clubs. These clubs formed in Year 1 and continued throughout the project with teachers serving as advisors. The youth clubs became a sustainable mechanism for inter-cultural interaction and brought the children into contact with other community and youth groups. Youth participants were not re-counted year by year and were disaggregated by gender and religion. More girls and Muslims were targeted because more members of these groups were enrolled in the schools. At the end of the HOPE project, collaborative agreements were made with the community about supporting the youth clubs’ activities moving forward.

Results: As expected (objective C) the project led to the formation of 6 active youth clubs at 6 schools throughout the communities. The clubs were expected to have a combined total of 180 members each year (indicator C2– disaggregated by gender: 72 male and 108 female; and religion: 54 Buddhist and 126 Muslim⁵). After 3 years, the target was 540 members. The actual number was higher as the clubs totaled 622 members. Also, the two collaboration agreements about supporting the youth clubs were reached (indicator C5).

8. Community Projects: After the camps, the leaders operated community projects that related to the people-to-people approach. Community projects were initiated and implemented jointly by ethnic Malay and Thai youth. Using small project grants (15,000 baht or approximately \$500), the youth clubs designed and implemented community projects that worked towards overall community improvement. Teachers supervised and advised the students on proposal development, implementation and grant management. The initial discussions about the grant projects occurred at the camp and in community day meetings. After the grants were approved, the students started the project under an assigned mentor’s supervision.

⁵ The disaggregation is adjusted from the Year 1 target (gender: 80 male and 100 female; and religion: 80 Buddhist and 100 Muslim) based on the local context.

Results: As indicated in objective C, a total of 18 community projects led by youth leaders were implemented (indicator C3). All 6 clubs conducted projects annually.

9. Community Days: The communities (Muslim and Buddhist) joined together once per year to help the youth leaders come up with a theme (environment, community development, etc.), for youth action and to discuss community needs. This activity became another connector for community members and a substantial number of members participated each year. A higher number of females participated because there are more females in the community and such events tend to attract housewives, mothers, aunts and grandmothers who would be interested in attending such events. Also, the ratio of Muslim to Buddhist participants matched the demographics of the area (75% to 25%).

Results: As stated in Objective C; originally, Kenan planned to host three community days per year (indicator C6) with 840 participants in all (indicator C7– disaggregated by gender: 336 male and 504 female; and by religion: 252 Buddhist and 588 Muslim). Unfortunately, the situation in the first year prevented the activities from occurring, so, to compensate, Kenan increased the target number in the Years 2 and 3 to five days each. The actual result was higher as 16 community days were held over the 3 years for 1,090 participants.

10. Youth Mentorship: Six mentors from Kenan’s team were appointed to coordinate with each youth group in the province. The mentors’ role was to provide guidance for the students on project implementation. In this way, the youth learned how to implement projects efficiently and maintain accountability to meet set goals and objectives. In addition, the mentors taught the students how to engage local community members and leaders about participating in the project.

Results: Under Objective C; 14 mentors supported the youth clubs (indicator C4)..

11. Project Lessons Learned Workshop: At the end of year three, this event was held to bring together key stakeholders to learn about the HOPE model and the experiences of the participants. The students shared their experience in applying leadership during community service activities. Community leaders and principals shared how they supported the project and how they will sustain the project. Kenan and the local partners shared good practice models. Partners and advisory board members provided advice on strategy and approaches for government to sustain and expand the program. Last, a case study featuring lessons learned and best practices were published in electronic form.

Results: 1 lesson learned workshop were held for 100 participants and 1 project case study was completed (Objective C).

12. M&E Activities: The DCOP/M&E consultants worked closely with AOR and RDMA evaluation specialist on the monitoring and evaluation plan and documents such as Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS) and Performance Management Plan (PMP).

In addition, DCOP also partnered with Prince of Songkla University researchers on the monitoring report that was presented during the lessons learned workshop.

During the project implementation HOPE team uses PMP for communication with stakeholders on project feedbacks & progress as follow;

1. HOPE team introduces PIRS and PMP with local partners who responsible for reporting data to USAID to ensure the same understanding about indicators and definitions.
2. HOPE team update the result once the activity complete and also has monthly meeting with AOR to review the progress of the result based on PMP report.
3. HOPE team also uses the explanations of outstanding results or not achieved results for the strategy of future implementation.

In line with USAID's The Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation intent to support programming that effectively prevents, mitigates and manages the causes and consequences of violent conflict, instability and extremism, the Goal of HOPE was to "build trust between Muslim and Buddhists in six communities in Pattani by changing the attitudes of individuals and groups." The Theory of Change is "if youth are used as an important connector to create social space where people can interact naturally, then people will address their grievances through non-violent political discourse, because their attitudes toward those they are in conflict with will change to be more accepting, as barriers are be broken down, trust is established, and links to the home, community and future are be enhanced."

To reach the goal, the project comprised of three Intermediate Results (I.R.) as follows: I.R.1: Creating Social Space: Social space where people of different religious beliefs can interact naturally and discuss community needs, centered on youth and community development, is created. I.R.2: Building Youth Leaders: Youth leaders use their leadership skills to settle grievances and build trust; and, I.R.3: Building Key Actors: Civil society leaders are confident to lead activities in support of community needs.

The theory of change was used to identify appropriate indicators for each I.R. that measure the expected knowledge, attitude and behavior changes resulting from each of the activities and the assumptions underlying the theories. For each I.R., the indicators follow their respective sub-theories of change. The indicators were developed to measure the "if" through inputs, the "then" through outcomes and the "because" based on assumptions. The indicators include:

Objective A: Establishing trust and understanding between ethnic Malays and ethnic Thai in Pattani.

Indicator (A1) – Number of recommendations mutually agreed upon

Indicator (A2) – Number of stakeholder meetings held

Indicator (A3) – Number of stakeholder participated

Indicator (A4) – Number of advisory committee meetings held

Indicator (A5) – Number of advisory committee members participated

Indicator (A6) – Number of community leaders training sessions held

Indicator (A7) – Number of community leaders trained

Objective B: To develop principals & teachers and youth leaders with the knowledge and skills that empowers them to mitigate conflict and develop strong relations between ethnic groups. Indicator (B1) – Increase in knowledge of youth leaders

Indicator (B2) – Number of principals & teachers training sessions held

Indicator (B3) – Number of principals & teachers trained

Indicator (B4) – Number of youth camps held

Indicator (B5) – Number of youth leaders trained

Objective C: To establish mechanisms that enables the communities to continue to mitigate conflicts and develop strong relations between ethnic groups in their communities.

Indicator (C1) – Number of youth clubs established and operating

Indicator (C2) – Number new youth members participated in youth clubs

Indicator (C3) – Number of youth's project initiated

Indicator (C4) – Number of mentors support youth clubs

Indicator (C5) – Number of community collaboration agreements reached

Indicator (C6) – Number of community day events held

Indicator (C7) – Number of community members participated

Results: As stated in sections A, B, and C, Kenan oversaw 6 focus group forums with 120 participants and published a final M&E report. The table below shows the indicator and result achieved during the project implementation;

Indicator	3 year totals		Explanation
	Total		
	Target	Actual	
Objective A: Establishing trust and understanding between ethnic Malays and ethnic Thai in Pattani.			
Indicator (A1) – Number of recommendations mutually agreed upon	9	10	The additional recommendations derived during project sustainability planning for youth clubs & community projects
Indicator (A2) – Number of stakeholder meetings held	15	18	Some meetings could not have conclusions due to sensitive issues therefore additional meetings were required
Indicator (A3) – Number of stakeholder participated	110	213	Primarily the same participants plus new members each year
(A3a) Number of stakeholder participated (Male)	55	90	Primarily the same participants plus new members each year
(A3b) Number of stakeholder participated (Female)	55	123	Housewives have more time to attend the meetings during the day time.
(A3c) Number of stakeholder participated (Buddhist)	39	82	Primarily the same participants plus new members each year
(A3d) Number of stakeholder participated (Muslim)	71	131	Primarily the same participants plus new members each year
Indicator (A4) – Number of advisory committee meetings held	6	8	The additional meetings held during project sustainability activity with no cost extension period
Indicator (A5) – Number of advisory committee members participated	9	15	Final target is not cumulative, Actual Number in 2013 - 2015 are attendant basis. Actual Number in Total is 15 different persons who contribute to the project.
(A5a) Number of advisory committee members participated (Male)	6	12	Actual Number of male in Total is 12 because the number derived from local community leader.
(A5b) Number of advisory committee members participated (Female)	3	3	
(A5c) Number of advisory committee members	3	4	

Indicator	3 year totals		Explanation
	Total		
	Target	Actual	
participated (Buddhist)			
(A5d) Number of advisory committee members participated (Muslim)	6	11	Actual Number of Muslim in Total is 11 because the number derived from local population.
Indicator (A6) – Number of community leaders training sessions held	3	3	
Indicator (A7) – Number of community leaders trained	30	56	Primarily the same participants plus new members each year
(A7a) Number of community leaders trained (Male)	18	37	Actual Number of male in Total is 37 because the number of local male community leader is greater than female.
(A7b) Number of community leaders trained (Female)	12	19	
(A7c) Number of community leaders trained (Buddhist)	12	20	
(A7d) Number of community leaders trained (Muslim)	18	36	Actual Number of male in Total is 36 because the number of local Muslim community leader is greater than Buddhist.
Objective B: To develop principals & teachers and youth leaders with the knowledge and skills that empowers them to mitigate conflict and develop strong relations between ethnic groups.			
Indicator (B1) – Increase in knowledge of youth leaders	25	25	Percentage point, post-test higher than pre-test, new group of youth each year. Final target not cumulative; final target/actual is a three year average.
Indicator (B2) – Number of principals & teachers training sessions held	6	10	Additional sessions were held for new teachers who replace the teachers who had been requested to transferred to different location
Indicator (B3) – Number of principals & teachers trained	64	64	
(B3a) Number of principals & teachers trained (Male)	26	35	Additional participants were added to replace the teachers who had been requested to transferred to different location
(B3b) Number of principals & teachers trained	38	29	This actual number of

Indicator	3 year totals		Explanation
	Total		
	Target	Actual	
(Female)			female teachers less than the target number because the registration in HOPE project is based on actual number of population and volunteer basis.
(B3c) Number of principals & teachers trained (Buddhist)	26	15	This actual number of Buddhist teachers less than the target number because the registration in HOPE project is based on actual number of population in Pattani and volunteer basis.
(B3d) Number of principals & teachers trained (Muslim)	38	49	This actual number of Muslim teachers greater than the target number because the registration in HOPE project is based on actual number of population in Pattani and volunteer basis.
Indicator (B4) – Number of youth camps held	6	6	
Indicator (B5) – Number of youth leaders trained	90	101	New youth each year, Male and Female Camp
(B5a) Number of youth leaders trained (Male)	39	49	This actual number of male youth leaders greater than the target number because of the permission from the parents
(B5b) Number of youth leaders trained (Female)	51	52	
(B5c) Number of youth leaders trained (Buddhist)	39	40	
(B5d) Number of youth leaders trained (Muslim)	51	61	This actual number of Muslim youth leaders greater than the target number because the number of student enrolled in the schools and permission from the parent
Objective C: To establish mechanism that enables the communities to continue to mitigate conflicts and develop strong relations between ethnic groups in their communities.			
Indicator (C1) – Number of youth clubs established and operating	6	6	
Indicator (C2) – Number new youth members participated in youth clubs	540	622	The actual number of new youth

Indicator	3 year totals		Explanation
	Total		
	Target	Actual	
Indicator (C2a) – Number new youth members participated in youth clubs (Male)	224	213	This actual number of male students less than the target number because the actual population of male students enrolled in schools is lower than female students
Indicator (C2b) – Number new youth members participated in youth clubs (Female)	316	409	This actual number of female students greater than the target number because the actual population of female students enrolled in schools
Indicator (C2c) – Number new youth members participated in youth clubs (Buddhist)	161	151	This actual number of Buddhist students less than the target number because the actual population of male students enrolled in schools is lower than female students
Indicator (C2d) – Number new youth members participated in youth clubs (Muslim)	379	471	This actual number of Muslim students greater than the target number because the actual population of Muslim students enrolled in schools.
Indicator (C3) – Number of youth's project initiated	18	18	
Indicator (C4) – Number of mentors support youth clubs	11	14	During year 3 implementation, the project gained more interest from local partner (PSU) and they sent volunteer mentors on youth development to work with HOPE youth leaders
Indicator (C5) – Number of community collaboration agreements reached	4	6	The additional recommendations derived during project sustainability planning for youth clubs & community projects
Indicator (C6) – Number of community day events held	9	16	It was requested by community members to hold community days for more than target. The

Indicator	3 year totals		Explanation
	Total		
	Target	Actual	
			additional events were financially supported by community members.
Indicator (C7) – Number of community members participated	840	1090	Increasing of community day events
(C7a) Number of community members participated (Male)	336	432	Increasing of community day events
(C7b) Number of community members participated (Female)	504	658	Increasing of community day events
(C7c) Number of community members participated (Buddhist)	252	252	
(C7d) Number of community members participated (Muslim)	588	838	Increasing of community day events

Project Impact:

Over the three years, HOPE benefitted 723 students and 1,452 community members. Based on focus group interviews, the following impacts were indicated:

Students:

The students concluded that they acquired the following skills in the HOPE youth clubs: project design, community engagement, communication skills and a volunteer spirit. Such skills met both the student personal enhancement and the community’s needs. The students stated that the actions in the HOPE youth clubs were different from other community activities they have participated in, in particular because HOPE actions successfully promote involvement from community leaders who now give support and guidance to the children.

In particular, students from the Pathum Khongka Anusorn School expressed their appreciation for the HOPE actions in changing their once negative perception towards their peers of different ethnicities. Such negative perceptions were also fueled by family influences, having prejudice towards those of different religions, mainly due to cultural differences, such as life-style and language, which causes distrust and misperceptions.

The HOPE actions provided a safe space and opportunity for students, both male and female, Muslim and Buddhist to come together to plan, share and talk collaboratively. Collaboration employs understanding of one another; students understood that culture and appearances do not dictate their friendship. Changes in perceptions were also brought back home, thus through their children, parents start to be more open and understanding towards other groups of people.

Teachers and Mentors:

The skills that were gained and expressed by the teachers and mentors from participating in the HOPE activities were life skills, multiple intelligence on community engagement and

interpersonal skills. Teachers stated that such skills were employed to help them become better educators as well as applying them to practice in their everyday life. Both teachers and mentors said that their highest achievement was encouraging an attitude change among their students. They described changes they observed in their students. For instance, students showed increased responsibility, team work and took initiative with very minimal supervision. This was most clear during the Community Day event when students were eager to work together to make the event a success. The students enthusiastically planned, designed, and managed the day's activities and worked with children of all ethnicities to do so. Teachers now believe that "even though the students are young, they have the ability to lead and conduct community development projects."

Community Members:

They expressed opinions that HOPE is a good activity that helps empower youth with strong leadership approaches. According to their observations, after participating with several HOPE actions, the children were more willing to offer support to others without hesitation. They are more outgoing and confident in terms of communicating with community members and friends.

Some of the community leaders said that the HOPE activity helped close the gap between the generations. For example, now the students openly talk to senior people in the community about culture and history to gain knowledge to support their community project.

From taking part of the focus group interviews, it can be inferred that there is opportunity to rebuild relationships among Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslims in the community. The stronger relationships can mitigate the tension before the violence is triggered by the separatists. Project advisor Mrs. Jiraporn Bunnag, former deputy secretary general of the National Security Council and member of the Deep South think-tankers, commented that the success of HOPE and its grassroots approach will contribute significantly to the on-going peace process.

Sustainability:

This project aimed to ensure that the beneficiaries and stakeholders will be able to sustain implementation of the people to people approach through youth development activities in cross culture communities after the end of USAID funding. The objective of the community representatives' trip to meet funders in Bangkok was to raise awareness of the HOPE model and the Hakam brand in order to sustain activities. The main event brought youth leaders and community leaders to Bangkok to present the HOPE model and share their experiences with key stakeholders in the government and private sector. This was done through outreach meetings and a display event. Kenan built the capacities of the leaders on resource mobilization and networking before the outreach activities. Before the meetings, materials were prepared by the communities with input from the project consultants and advisory board members. 18 participants joined with representatives from each of the 6 communities. The beneficiaries met with companies such as AIS, SCG, and KTB and Thai government and other agencies such as TICA, King Prachathiphop Institute. A total of 60 leaders and stakeholders participated.

Project branding and marketing:

Due to security concerns, the project had a blanket waiver on USAID and Kenan branding. This created challenges in getting out the word about the project. According to advisory committee and local partner feedback, the Pattani community is skeptical about any project that receives international funding due to violent conflict situation between ethnic Malays and Thais; this skepticism is higher when such projects require involvement from multiple stakeholders, including youth, parents, school and religious leaders. Therefore, the project worked to create a ‘culture link’ to win acceptance from the community. In the Bahasa language, the HOPE project was named “Harapan Kampong;” Harapan means “hope” and Kampong means “community”. The local team based out of Pattani was able to speak Bahasa, English and Thai.

3. Problems encountered if any;

1. There were a number of violent attacks including bomb explosions, shootings and security threats made by a group of separatists. Schools are considered a government symbol, so attacks usually happen around or on the way to schools. Kenan acted with caution to ensure the safety of all participants, particularly at organized events and during travel. At times, it was necessary to delay or postpone events to guarantee safety. Also, Kenan recruited mentors who knew proper precautions.

2. In this multicultural society, language and community are sensitive issues that can cause conflict. Thus, HOPE utilized Muslim and Buddhist advisors who approved all sensitive content before it was presented to the community. The name of project (HOPE) was translated into Harapan Kampong the local language.

3. As for the reason of professional development for teacher in Thailand, the HOPE teachers required to be transferred to other schools for advance practices. Since HOPE teachers were needed to serve as mentors for the youth, the HOPE project invited new teachers to training workshops to ensure that there were always enough mentors.

4. Information on cost overruns if any;

No cost extension was granted in 2015, but the project remained within budget. The extension was due to slow progress during the initial start-up phase. During Y1, the actions took longer than expected to get started due to the amount of time needed to build trust and understanding with the partners, advisors, teachers and principals and, most importantly, the community members. In particular, the first youth camp was scheduled for the 5th month of the activity but due to the delay and the timing of the school year, the team had to wait until the 11th month (June) in Y1 and Y2. Many actions, particularly the implementation of the community projects, were dependent on the youth camps being completed. To catch-up in Y3, we held the camp in October 2015. Consequently, the assistance to the Y2 and Y3 two cohorts of youth changed to April - June 2014. Therefore, a one month no-cost extension until from Aug 2015 through September 2015 was requested to ensure enough time to organize the lessons-learned workshop and complete the M&E and reporting.

5. Success stories and lessons learned

At the conclusion of the project, Kenan evaluated the progress made and the impact on stakeholders. There were a number of success stories, such as:

Areeya Ali Finds Her Voice

Areeya Ali is a thirteen year old student from Sanorpittayakom School in the Yarang District of Pattani, a 100% Muslim community. Generally known as a shy and timid girl growing up, Areeya developed an interest at school for science, an enthusiasm that was encouraged by her teachers. It was not until she joined other students participating in the HOPE Project, however, that Areeya was able to develop the skills necessary to share her love of science with others. Areeya's teachers commented that participating in HOPE greatly helped Areeya develop her communication, presentation, and public speaking skills. Many of them were quite surprised at her transformation from a quiet, timid student into someone who shared her ideas and passions regularly with others. Areeya's friends and teachers both say that the HOPE Project has given her inspiration not only to improve her public speaking, but also to create and foster positive social interactions within the community.

This transformation led to Areeya being selected several months ago to represent Sanorpittayakom School at the Provincial Sciences Competition. The competition required students to not only possess knowledge of certain science-related issues, but also to demonstrate such knowledge through presentations and public talks. Using skills she learned through the HOPE Project, Areeya won first prize at the Provincial Sciences Competition and received a seat in the next level of competition, which will be held in Yala Province. She hopes to place in the top three at this next competition and get a seat in the ASEAN Youth Science Competition, held in Singapore at the end of 2015. Areeya plans to continue improving her public speaking and presentation skills while she studies and hopes to inspire others within the community to find their voice.

PSU Student Fight to Make the HOPE Project Sustainable

Mr. Wareibrahim WareBueraheng, a final year student in Prince of Songkhla University's Social Development Program, joined the HOPE Project as a youth mentor in April, 2014. Before joining the project, Mr. Wareibrahim was a student activist interested in youth empowerment and collaborating with youth to solve community issues in Thailand's Deep South.

While participating in the HOPE Project as an assistant during Youth Camp activities, a student capability builder during Youth Clubs, and an assistant at Community Project and Community Day activities, he gained a full understanding of how the HOPE project works. Using that knowledge, Mr. Wareibrahim applied for and won a grant amounting to one

million Baht from the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center to run a one year Youth Development Project that follows many of the HOPE procedures and concepts.

The HOPE Project taught Mr. Wareibrahim that youth can bring the diverging factions of a community together and allow them to talk and interact naturally. The Youth Development Project relies on HOPE's model of selecting youth leaders, developing those leaders through youth camps, and supporting them as they carry out activities within their community. In essence, Mr. Wareibrahim's new project furthers HOPE's goal of creating trust in multicultural societies.

Currently, Mr. Wareibrahim and his friends from four local universities (Yala Rajabhat University, Fatoni University, Prince of Songkhla University, and Princess of Naradhiwas University) are coming up with a new project known as the "Community Model for Peace." This project will also follow the HOPE Project model and will be implemented in Thailand's 3 southernmost provinces, targeting youth leaders from selected schools.

Education as a powerful tool to promote a message of peace.

Muhammad Saidee Pradoo (or Saidee) is fifteen years old. He is in the ninth grade at Sanor Pittayakom School in Pattani province, Thailand. Saidee is a very good student with good grades and is proud of his good English language skills.

Saidee was born and raised in Sanor sub-district, an important historic community in the Islamic faith in Thailand. Saidee grew up in a very religious family. Saidee was taught from a young age to follow the teachings of Allah and to be a good person. Saidee was always interested in the Islamic teachings and follows current events very closely. Every time he heard about killings of fellow Muslims both in Thailand and abroad, Saidee got very angry and had visions of revenge. In Saidee's words, "the prophet Muhammad said any Muslim is a brother of any other Muslim; he should not leave him alone in his troubles because we are but one body, if a part of our body hurts, the rest of us will hurt too." Saidee believed that the only way to save his fellow Muslim brothers was through Jihad (an Arabic word, often mistranslated solely to describe a holy war undertaken by Muslims, but more broadly meaning "exerted effort" or "striving" toward a religious goal). By doing so, he believed, the faithful will not only help their brothers, but Allah will reward them for their efforts.

Fortunately, Saidee was recruited to join a HAKAM club under the HOPE project, where he participated in activities and exchanged his ideas with friends and members of the

community through the various club events. From such exchanges, Saidee saw and heard about different ideas and opinions from fellow club members. Saidee became even more immersed in the idea of education and yearned for information. Through activities that encouraged self-critical thinking and reasoning, Saidee sought out information through his own curiosity and found that there are others paths besides Jihad where he can help his fellow Muslims and live up to teachings of Muhammad. One of them is to assist his community through information dissemination. Saidee's idea of giving information is to educate and provide facts and understanding to fellow community members that Muslims are not terrorists and there is a peaceful path for community activism.

In Saidee's words, "I believe that through education and receiving information, free from the use or the need for violence is a good way to solve problems."

Communication builds trust and understanding

Patcharamanee Petchnoi (or Tontoey) is studying in the 8th grade at Pathumkongkha Anusorn School. Tontoey was raised and born in Tuyong sub-district in Pattani province, Thailand. In the Tuyong community, both Muslims and Buddhists have lived side by side since before she was born. Tontoey's Buddhist grandmother told her stories about her best friend from her childhood who was a Muslim. The story she remembers best, unfortunately, was the time Tontoey's grandmother was in need of help from her Muslim friend and was turned away. This was a terrible insult in the local culture, which not only ended the friendship, but clouded her view toward all Muslims. Thereafter, Tontoey's grandmother believed Muslims were untrustworthy and unworthy friends. Such thoughts are often passed on from generation to generation. These ideas affected Tontoey's view of her Muslim neighbors.

Tontoey never had a Muslim friend, even though many of her classmates and children in her community were Muslims. According to Tontoey, this was because of the stories her grandmother told her. Such beliefs were then enhanced by the fact that Tontoey and her family do not speak Yawi, which is the language used by most Muslims in the southernmost provinces of Thailand. As a result, every time Tontoey hears her classmates speaking in Yawi, she becomes upset and feels that they are bad mouthing her or gossiping about her.

Tontoey joined the HAKAM club under the HOPE project in her school and participated in many of the club's activities. Club activities were the first time Tontoey communicated and actively worked with fellow classmates who were Muslims. Through these interactions, Tontoey saw how dedicated her Muslim classmates were and, to her surprise, made new

Muslim friends along the way. Tontoey discovered that they had similar hopes, dreams and problems as she did. Tontoey saw that, in fact, everyone has good sides and good qualities. Tontoey is no longer prejudiced against her Muslim friends, thanks to developing a better understanding of both their religion and their culture. Now, Tontoey has taken it upon herself to tell her family about the club's activities and her interactions with her Muslim peers in an effort to make them more accepting.

In Tontoey's words, "I see how dedicated all my friends are in our community development projects, every one of my friends has many good qualities even though they may be different. I think we should concentrate on looking at good qualities rather than bad." Though there is still work to do, her grandmother is proud of what Tontoey has achieved as a student leader.

Students Demonstrate "Soft Power" in Conflict Areas

Regular meetings among community leaders and members have been held, resulting in mutual learning, linkages, and strengthening of relationships among the people in these multicultural communities of Pattani. Communication skills learned under the HOPE project is the main factor that allows these people with different religions and cultures to understand each other and accept their differences. Without such skills, inter-religious community interactions can lead to violent incidents and enlarge the gap between community members.

These meetings were part of the community development plan towards peace mitigation. However, the challenge remains in terms of avoiding the word 'peace', which has shown to result in negative feelings and alarm among the community. To tackle the challenge, the concept of Peace or Non-Violent Communication was employed through a series of steps. First, an expert on Peace and Non-Violent Communication from the Prince of Songkla University led discussions and planning sessions. Second, the discussions were started by having informal and casual talks with community members and leaders. This helped maintain a peaceful discussion and members gradually came to trust other members. Thirdly, after an understanding and dialogue formed between communities, the discussion turned towards 'Positive Communication' where members talked about what they are happy about instead of only problems and conflict. Forth, through their education, youth leaders served as bridges between sectors of the community.

The dialogue discussions took place during the stakeholder meetings, which were initiated by the student community projects and aimed to connect community members and foster positive relationships. The results showed that community members talked more freely about

many different topics, some positive and some negative. They talked among themselves about what they felt was vital information that needed to be shared within their community and to external parties. As an outcome, the community formed a unified vision about local problems and challenges. The discussions also gave community members a chance to share cultural memories. These dialogues fostered a sense of a community spirit, in which community members want to create new stories, memories, and traditions. More importantly, the members agreed on a mutual plan with local administrators to appropriately develop the community. Children and youth who have leadership skills can act as a significant “soft power” source to bring community members together and bridge divides.

The most important lessons learned amongst the HOPE team over the three years are: 1) To ensure buy-in and trust from the communities at large, creating positive changes amongst the youth is critical ; 2) The activity actions must take into account the special needs of both male and female youth, especially ethnic Malay youth, who need to be separated by gender for some interactions; 3) The activity field coordinators must study and prepare for any sensitive issues before interacting with communities and stakeholders. Though this may take additional time, it is worthwhile in order to limit risks.

In June of 2015, Kenan organized 106 participants, including teachers, students, community leaders, and CSOs to discuss the results of the project. At the workshop, participants exchanged success stories and crucial lessons. The workshop participants identified several key factors that allowed the HOPE Pattani Project to be successful:

1. Participants understood and trusted one another.
2. Available resources with were allocated efficiently.
3. HOPE’s ideas, working groups, and working areas were expanded to reach more of the community.
4. HOPE activities were integrated with teachers’ routine work, in order to avoid any additional burdens.
5. HOPE supported the development and improvement of students, teachers, and community leaders.
6. HOPE activities allowed the youth to share their thoughts and become more assertive.
7. HOPE continuously conducted project activities and used several techniques that were able to catch students’ attention and convince them to regularly attend activities.
8. HOPE developed a diversity of applicable tools and techniques that are very useful for both teachers and students.

Student Growth

The case of youth from Ratmunirangsarit School is one of the most outstanding stories from Y3 Q4. Ratmunirangsarit School is one of our demonstration schools located in Napradu community, Kokpho district which, as a Buddhist majority community, rarely saw interactions between the Buddhists and Muslims.

Two of the students from this school were given the opportunity to be school representatives in the HOPE sustainability program at Central Hotel, Bangkok. For the program, students from six demonstration schools presented their communities and projects to stakeholders and potential funders.

Ms. Anyamane Phuentang (Aun) and Ms. Kanchana Sirisathian (Fon), the representatives from Ratmunirangsarit School, were to be the presenters. Initially, teachers worried about student performance, as the two students had never presented in front of a big crowd. However, they worked extremely hard to prepare by drafting scripts and rehearsing often.

On event day, Aun and Fon were the fifth to present and their friends from the first four schools presented well. Once Aun and Fon started their presentation, it was one of the liveliest presentations of the day, and they successfully told the story of their school and community.

Aun and Fon explained that they were truly shy and introverted girls because they grow up in a tense atmosphere. However, joining a HAKAM club served to open them up to a new world. As a result, Aun and Fon have been able to talk with friends from different cultures and communities. They learned that there is an abundance of resources (books, songs, and TV programs, etc.) that can be used to learn about the outside world. They understand the relationship between acquiring knowledge and sharing it confidently with friends and family members. After two years, they were surprised and excited, to see that they were more confident and acquired strong interpersonal skills.

Fostering Cross-religion and Community Trust through Collaboration

The root causes of violence in the southern provinces of Thailand go back many years and are difficult to untangle. One of the main results of the conflict is a profound lack of trust between the Muslim and Buddhist communities who live in the region, which has prevented peace from taking hold. One of HOPE's major objectives was to build trust between the

Muslim and Buddhist communities by creating a social space where people with different religious beliefs can interact naturally and discuss community needs, in particular youth and community development. Correspondingly, the actions planned and implemented to meet this objective focus on the promotion of cross-cultural activities that will bridge community divides and make a lasting impact on peace in the region.

To help address and resolve this lack of trust between Muslim and Buddhist communities, a capacity building event for community and religious leaders was held from September 1st-8th, 2014. The objective was to provide a venue for community and religious leaders to exchange ideas and discuss the key message they wanted to share with the general population regarding the second year of HOPE's implementation. In addition representatives from provincial offices, student parents, and prominent community figures from all six provinces were invited to participate.

Focusing on positive communication, meeting participants were encouraged to discuss any issues or challenges they were facing. Taking this unique opportunity for engagement, a representative from the Saiburi sub-district voiced his concerns about the lack of coordination between and within local communities by citing a community fund raising plan to buy back the Saiburi Palace for the community. While implementing the plan, information was not communicated clearly to the relevant stakeholders, but rather broadcast outside the community, which resulted in confusion, doubt about the buy-back plan, and, ultimately, a loss of community support that was necessary for successful fundraising.

Meeting participants listened to these issues and decided that community leaders should take a more proactive role in communicating within and between communities. Following this example, the HOPE team introduced community members to Saiburi Looker, a local NGO working in the region. In the past, such collaboration was frowned upon due to a lack of understanding and openness between communities of differing religions. With a new common goal of cooperation in mind, however, Saiburi Looker was able to work with the Hakam Club at Saiburi School. Their innovative collaboration attracted the attention of both the local and national media, including Thai PBS which mentioned the Hakam youth club's successful work with Saiburi Looker in a report on the conflict in the Deep South. Such success, cooperation, and trust would have not been possible if the community leaders had not participated in HOPE meetings and agreed that change and communication were needed.

Participants also discussed a similar set of challenges facing the Buyong community, where community members have become distant and less unified. In the past, Muslims and

Buddhists lived together in relative peace, sharing ideas and celebrating cultural events together, but relationships have changed in the past several years and many people have become estranged from the larger community. This is due largely to the current unrest, as well as to the reallocation of community members. The meeting participants agreed that increased communication among community members would help mitigate the problem, and suggested that community activities should reflect back to the past, when relationships between different ethnic groups were stronger. Project activities were, therefore, designed to promote a sense of unity through sharing past memories. In particular, the youth community members are now interviewing older people about what the community was like in the past, and recording and sharing those stories with other community members. This will allow information about all cultures to be shared within the community and create a new sense of pride and unity.

Though the capacity building meeting was centred on the implementation of youth projects, it was also able to successfully unify community members on a number of issues and increase their chances of future cooperation. Sharing community problems and discussing solutions in a collaborative manner are simply not possible if there is a lack of trust between partners. At this meeting, however, participants shared stories, listened respectfully to each other, and discussed solutions to problems.