



## 2022 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: Sapphaya community-based tourism: From an abandoned old town to a green market

Destination Name: *(include any state, province, or region)*

The Sapphaya Old Police Station Market, Sapphaya, Chainat province

Country: Thailand

Submitter name: Mr. Chakrabhand Tantisereerat

Email address: gdsapphaya@gmail.com

Position: Mayor of Sapphaya Municipality

Submission category: *(Please check one of the boxes that indicates the focus of your story)*

*Please find detailed information for the categories below in the Top 100 training module 'Good Practice Story'.*

- Governance, Reset & Recovery
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Thriving Communities
- Business & Marketing

*Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices in the Top 100 training module "Good Practice Story".*

*Should you have any questions on your submission please refer to our FAQ page or contact [top100@greendestinations.org](mailto:top100@greendestinations.org)*





## DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

*Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.*

### Issues faced ปัญหาที่เจอ

*What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice?*

The Sapphaya Old Police Station Market Community is located in Sapphaya District, Chainat Province. It is a strong community with multicultural capital, which is a historical landmark. In the past, the community was prosperous and their lifestyle was associated with the Chao Phraya River for the everyday use and livelihood for locals, agricultural and fisheries occupation, water transportation by boat, and as a commercial center of the District. Later, when the government constructed the Chao Phraya Dam, as a result the Asia Road was built to cut through Sapphaya District. This caused physical changes in society, the changes on ways of living – people traveling by car more. Therefore, the city became more sluggish commercial economy and was regarded as a commuting-way city used for passing through other cities. The people in the community are mostly elder people. Children and young people leave for main cities such as Bangkok or Nakhon Sawan to study. When they grow up, it is more likely that they abandon their homeland and earn for their living at other places. The bonding and historical roots awareness of the community was likely to be no longer valued. There are four main issues to be highlighted:

- 1) **Physical changes** of a society cause people in the community to **abandon their homeland. There is no connection** to the community, **no recognition on the history** of the roots of the community.
- 2) People in the community are **experiencing sluggish economic conditions.**
- 3) **Archaeological sites, religious sites, and the old architecture** of the community is deteriorated.
- 4) **Customs and traditions of the** community are faded.





Methods, steps and tools applied วิธีการแก้ไขปัญหาเหล่านั้น เครื่องมือหรือวิธีการที่ใช้

*How was the good practice implemented?*

### **Guidelines for Solutions**

On May 6, 2013, a group of people in the community recognized the value of history, ways of living, cultures, and traditions that have been existed for many years. The **Sapphaya Old Market Revival Club** was established, consisting of people in the community, representatives of local groups, organizations, governments, and private sectors. Moreover, they organized the first "The Legend Of The City Of Sapphaya Atthami Puja Worship In Memory" traditional festival in 2015 which is rarely found in Thailand, that refers to the Lord Buddha attained complete nirvana, his body was cremated. This day is called **Atthami Puja Day** where Sapphaya temple and local people showed respect to their local heritage – the Buddha statue in the coffin-150 years old.

Later in 2016, these people intended to preserve the historic sites, religious sites, and architecture of the community to be prolonged and continued to their descendants. They also wanted the new generation to realize the importance of the local history, so they came up with a plan and project to propose for seeking supports to solve problems in 4 main steps as follows:

- 1) **Planning process:** in this process Sapphaya Old Market Revival Club working with Sapphaya municipality to organize Congregation Meeting – engaging local gurus, community leaders, and stakeholders find problems and solutions, repair, renovate, and restore archaeological sites, religious sites. architecture, traditions & culture in the community. Secondly, appointing a working group- consisting of community representatives, group/organization representatives' schools, public and private sectors and lastly, preparing project proposal to engage with various agencies for in kind support and budget allocation.
- 2) **Building historical knowledge:** To explore basic information in the community by searching for historical databases and providing training sessions with historical experts to learn about the history of local communities in order to raise awareness of "love for the hometown", and to organize workshops for community participation. The local community have a field trip to exchange their ideas with other communities to trigger ideas and create inspiration-can do with their team. As a result, the first curriculum called "Sapphaya local historical study" initiated for local schools from kindergarten to high schools in 2015. The young local interpreter club was set to encourage new generation telling stories of their hometown including Wat Sapphaya, Old police station-121 years, stories of Buddha statue in the coffin and Ramayana stories related to Sapphaya mountain that became the logo of Community Based tourism development.
- 3) **Creating learning resources in the community:** The Sapphaya Old Market Revival Club joined with local municipality and local schools to prepare Sapphaya storytelling schemes with including interpretation guidebook, website, signages, tourist attraction map etc. The main objective is to let local schools and local people play more attention to meaningful local history and tangible cultural heritages in their community. Local schools created fun activities such as excursion, tour guiding workshop related to learning resources in the communities.





#### 4) Developing the areas as a tourist attraction by the community:

From this stage, the Sapphaya Old market Revival Club was trained by several experts under the budget of Sapphaya municipality to set up community-based tourism and develop tourist attractions. Interpretation training program with local schools, connecting with tangible heritages, historical data that discovered numerous unique cultural attraction and local wisdom connecting with more locals to develop knowledge of community-based tourism management and environmental management for preparing the long-term plan. From the unknown town, where the budget in tourism development was an obstacle, local leaders and team organized the cultural event by themselves. From these efforts, the several media came to spot the event and Sapphaya community. In 2017, the cultural attraction "Sapphaya Old Police Station Market" received the budget to support the **Project of "Promoting tourism, lifestyle of the City of Sappaya (Sapphaya)"** under the concept of "Old Live Market" to develop infrastructure and expand network. This included to preserve, restore, and inherit local cultural heritage and wisdom in Sapphaya District to be ready for stronger community-based tourism development. The community requested for an expert in the areas of CBT management for the club committee, community leaders, children and young generation, executives and municipality officials, group of teachers, and local stakeholders. This was taken by providing training sessions and organizing workshop to create an engagement process of the community to manage participative learning, planning, implementing, and making decisions. It is followed by cooperating, monitoring, evaluating, and receiving sustainable benefits both economic, social and environment. The concept "Community Based Event of **Green Market**" was initiated to strengthen the community participation. The Green market rules and regulations was set to refraining from using foam and single-use plastics, including wearing Thai traditional costumes to preserve traditional culture. This included to encourage people to use environmental-friendly materials and anything which is not harmful to health. In addition, the Green market creates different local cultural and religious themed event to encourage locals and visitors to aware of stories behind local culture and tradition for their pride.

### Key success factors อะไรคือปัจจัยแห่งความสำเร็จนั้น

*What helped you tackle the issues?*

#### The community engagement process is blended in our key success factors include:

1. **The municipal executives has leadership and a broad vision.** They formulate a strategy for systematic and continuous local development and listen to third party's opinions to solve problems and meet the people's needs. The municipal team plays significant roles to coach the community as well as self-evaluation and learning new knowledge and actively develop new skills to support local communities.
2. **The community is strong,** collaborative, cooperative in local development. Community leaders and members are honest, sacrificed, and patient. They are interested in learning and developing themselves. This enables effective community mobility. Community Based Tourism and event management are their great contributions by participative approach.
3. **Advisors and consultants help coaching** and focus on the community's needs and finding solutions upon agreement of locals. There are four experts coaching the Sapphaya municipals and local community including, history and culture, sustainable tourism development, heritage architecture and local product development.
4. **Supporting staff in the municipal are highly knowledgeable** and responsible as mentors to local community. They shall have a conscienceness, the homeland pride, sacrifice and dedication to the community.
5. **Integration from other related agencies** which includes the participation of private and public sectors contributed to the community development.





Lessons learned บทเรียนที่ได้เรียนรู้ และวิธีการข้ามผ่านปัญหาที่เจอ

*While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome?*



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October 2018 (Fiscal Year 2019) was the first month of official events (after testing the market). The event's organizer announced to welcome shop operators to sell products on pedestrian streets in accordance with the guidelines for "Green Dee Night Market" that mainly focused on "100% foam-free, single-use plastic-free".

According to the memorandum of agreement, there were 100 shops participating in this event. There are main problems to be solved:

1. **The problem:** "shops" secretly used foam containers, plastic straws, plastic glasses, and plastic bags, etc. due to unawareness of environmental packaging sources.  
**Solutions:** The Tourist Attraction Management Committee, municipalities, and tourism advisors and consultants had meetings to find solutions, as follows:
  1. To provide training on waste management and green tourist attractions to shop operators who sell products on pedestrian streets and to have discussion and meet to solve problems. In the first phase, meetings are held every month.
  2. To appoint a community representative as the store inspector to comply with the memorandum of agreement.
  3. To coordinate with the Environmental Packaging Public Company Limited under the brand name "Grace" to bring packaging safe for health and the environment. Grace packaging company came to exhibit their products at the event's booth, and to appoint the local community to be dealers by offering special prices.
  4. To organize field study to explore in successful areas.
2. **The problem:** "Garbage" was another problem. Visitors littered trashes and dumped it in a same garbage bin without any classification.  
**Solutions:**
  1. To come up with the activity of "Reduce, Redeem, Classify garbage" and Green Cone tanks, together with the public relations of promoting understanding and providing rewards for tourists who participate in the event.
  2. To add more littering points and put on clear signs for classification. Inform visitors from our communication channels both online and off-line.
  3. To meet with vender shops to collect garbage from tourists and separate into the separated bills
  4. To provide waste management and environmental impact exhibitions and workshops for visitors in the market.
3. **The problem:** "interpreting agents" – originally recruiting volunteer youth from upper secondary schools but they have to go out of the community area for their undergraduate degree and some of them don't have time for the community.  
**Solutions:**
  1. To train teachers to have knowledge in tourism and 'interpretation' in order to apply skills to teach students in schools.
  2. To recruit junior generation, like Grades 4 – 6, to be interpreting agents
  3. To welcome more volunteers and seniors and then send them to attend 'Local Guide' trainings from the Department of Tourism.
4. **The problem:** "Tourism Products" or souvenirs – many times tourists mentioned that they want to buy souvenirs for people at their home, but there was no unique tourism products in the community.  
**Solutions:**
  1. In the Fiscal Year 2021, the community coordinated with Industrial Promotion Center asking for guest speakers to provide training on how to promote and create green product/packaging development to have the community's local identity in accordance with market demand.
  2. In the Fiscal Year 2022, the community coordinated with Chainat Provincial Cultural Office to support **the Project of developing cultural capital and carrying on local wisdom in 2022 (Training course aims to expand cultural capital and develop Sapphaya local fabric into a new product).**
  3. Sapphaya Municipality allocates the budget for the Thai Community Economic Promotion Program for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023.





Results, achievements and recognitions ผลลัพธ์ การศึกษาวิจัยที่รับรองความสำเร็จนั้น รางวัลที่ได้รับ

*What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice?*



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### Results and Achievements

The below are general results/achievements of the Sapphaya:

**Economic contribution:** The number of visitors who came to Sapphaya was rapidly increasing from a small number, (less than 500 visitors/year) to 875,122 visitors (between 2019-2021) during Green Market Community-based Event. This event also generated total income of 4,383,530 baht to all local vendors in the market, created new job opportunities such as tour guide, local wisdom demonstration trainer, local heritage food vendors, stage performance staff and MC as examples. During Covid-19, The Sapphaya Old Market Revival Club was set up new online platform to sell local products from this link <https://www.facebook.com/sapphayashop> The result shows that there are 6,837 followers, and high engagement from content posts, which are created by local communities both young and elderly adults to promote Sapphaya products and destinations. In 2022, the online channel generates more incomes to community and also help to promote the concept of Cultural Innovation: Sapphaya Old Town Market Community that bring more visitors to the Green market community-based event.

**Social contribution:** Community and municipal improved their skills to prepare for community-based tourism development. The number of trainings, the number of traditional cultural heritage stories and performances integrated into the community events. Local schools, children, parents, elderly clubs (in total 644 residents since started) have been strongly engaging with the authentic food, performance, and old building to preserve the local cultural heritage, increasing community pride and happiness in society both young and elderly adults. The number of tourism businesses from local community members were initiated from green market such as homestay, hostel, café and restaurant, souvenir shop, boat trip activities from fisherman community. Importantly, cultural Heritages in Sapphaya are well preserved and young generations seek more opportunities to connect with their own local wisdom from their families. Local residents' satisfaction survey rated 3.27 out of 4.0 for their satisfaction level and well-being after setting green market and tourism.

**Environment contribution:** There are two significant achievements to be highlighted and set as indicators of sustainability. Firstly, the waste management and number of garbage are improved from 496 kilograms to 53 kilograms/event. Local community integrated with Sapphaya municipal to learn how to set up the garbage journey and separate bin facilities system including onsite-educational experiences with exhibitions related to current situation of waste for visitors to learn in the market. Secondly, raising awareness of environmental issues to locals and visitors which has created new behaviors in local schools, local community, not to use single-use plastics, and bring their own containers and separate garbage daily.





### Recognitions

1) **The Wattanakunathorn Award** was presented to the **Old Market Revive Club** in 2018. It is an honorary award of the Ministry of Culture at the national level, which is awarded to recognize and honored individuals and organizations that work to preserve the national arts and cultural heritage. This includes outstanding contributions to the work of promoting religious, artistic, and cultural work that incorporate with sacrifice, persistence, creativity, and initiatives. All these works must be manifested to collaborators and the public which benefit to communities, society, and the nation.

2) **National Award Winners in 2018 from Ministry of Tourism and Sports** for the competition of providing quality tourism information, "Landmark Building Competition" under the concept of telling Thainess in the lens of New Thai Perspective.

3) **The 9<sup>th</sup> Honorable Mention Award** in 2018 for Thailand Food Tourism Challenge – 20 Trips / 55 Second-Tier Cities from The Tourism Authority of Thailand

4) The community has participated in **Thailand Village Academy under the support of the Department of Cultural Promotion. The Ministry of Culture** is organized this in order to raise the added value of the cultural community to learn about Thai culture for young tourists around the world. The Sapphaya Old Police Station Market Community was one of the 20 communities that received the highest votes, and **the winners of the Contest won the 4<sup>th</sup> place.**

5) **The Old Police Station building or Old Sapphaya Police Station building** was built in 1901 during the King Rama V's reign. It was awarded **the Preservation of Outstanding Architectural Arts in the Building Type from the Association of Siamese Architects under the Royal Patronage of the Year 2018**

6) Community Tourism Certification (Excellent Level) in 2019, Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sports

7) Community Tourism Certification (CBT Thailand Standard 2020 – 2022), Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sport

8) **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Best Rural Village Award for Responsible Tourism Village** in the aspect of the Best Responsible Tourism, Thailand Rural Tourism Award 2020

9) Tourism certification by ASEAN community in 2021 from the Travel Authority of Thailand

10) The Selection of the 10 best model communities under the concept of "Community Tour and Experience local ways of living" by being considered a virtuous community at the provincial level.

11) The 6<sup>th</sup> place of the Digital Talents Village Project in 2021 among the 42 communities nationwide.

Additional references รูปภาพและวิดีโอ





*Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from YouTube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/ One Drive) download URL (not WeTransfer).*

SAPPHAYA VDO – ENG VERSION: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rdVq2vB7Vw>

Official website: <http://www.sapphaya.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sapphayashop>

Photo albums: <https://www.facebook.com/sapphayashop/photos/>

Media & Recognitions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zP2zQC5PIms>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7k1yWugvagE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jkvrGestVQ>

<https://www.thailandvillageacademy.com/22-villages/the-sapphaya-old-police-station-market-community-chai-nat/>

<https://www.trtaward.com/en/>

