

# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN A FLUOROSIS MITIGATION PROGRAM IN BANGRAKAM DISTRICT, PHITSANULOK PROVINCE, THAILAND

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**SUMMARY:** A Dental Health Bureau survey showed that five sub-districts in Bangrakam district, Phitsanulok province, were at risk of fluorosis as their community piped water contained  $>0.7$  mg F /L, higher than the Thailand Department of Health drinking water standard for fluoride (F) in drinking water of  $\leq 0.7$  mg F/L. Dental fluorosis was apparent in school children in the affected sub-districts. In 2010, a mitigation project was started by the dental team of Bangrakam hospital. The program focused on getting community participation by providing information on the health effects, the amount of F in the community water, and the de-fluoridation alternatives. A community committee made a decision to resolve the problem. In the Plag-rads sub-district the Local Administration Authority member and other community members actively participated at a meeting and discussed some resolutions including seeking new piped water sources and donations to supply bottled water for the school children. The first step for a sustainable fluorosis mitigation program was seen to be gaining active community participation.

Key words: Community participation; Fluoride; Fluorosis mitigation; Thailand.

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