1. Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. Back in the days, older persons have been regarded as the pillar of the community.

3. Thailand has an aging population of 10.1 million people, which is 15% of the total population. By 2035, up to 30% of the estimated total population will be older.

4. From my personal experiences, I have seen and lived with older persons and that struck me on how many older persons live alone.

5. Ruth Center was founded in 2008 in Bangkok, dedicated to “improve the quality of life for the elderly with determination”, under the vision of “loving in a family environment.”

6. Our work focuses on the elderly living in the slum communities. In Bangkok, there are over 470 older persons across 14 slum communities we are assisting.

7. We help them meet their needs by giving them necessities and organizing special activities. The key to this activity is to assist them to live in dignity and to be included in the community.

8. We also became good friends to them by lending our ears to listen to their stories and giving them warmth and love.
9. We do home visitation, five days a week to check-in with them mainly on their food, health and living concerns.

10. Slum communities are overcrowded with no proper physical distancing. Some households have over 7-8 people, and they are all living in the same room of 32-40 sqm. The land they are living on does not belong to them, so they do not have the rights to live there. Hygiene conditions and ventilation systems are not affordable and hence making older persons accessibility more difficult.

11. Due to their living conditions, we then help them fix their roofs, sidewalks, bathrooms, floor, and other parts as needed.

12. We also help them generate an income through our “Dream project”, where they sew and sell embroidery.

13. In addition, we also help them open their bank accounts and teach them how to use the ATM. This is also very crucial as they need the bank account to receive the pension from the government.

14. Although we are just a small organization, we are trying as hard as we can to support them and make them smile, though at times it can be quite challenging due to the limited budget and lack of staff.

15. We hope our story can warm your hearts and that our government can also continue to support our mission so that our senior citizens can continue to be a pillar of our community.

16. Thank you for your time and attention.