

## Wellbeing of Rice Farmers: Strengthening Networks of Farmer Organizations

The 8<sup>th</sup> National Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on "Wellbeing of Rice Farmers: Strengthening Networks of Farmer Organizations"<sup>1</sup>,

*Realizing* that wellbeing is the state of human being which is perfect in physical, mental, spiritual and social aspects, all of which are holistic in balance, that for better understanding it can be divided into internal wellbeing, i.e. mental, spiritual and intellectual and external wellbeing, i.e. physical, economic, social, and environmental wellbeing, and that the factors that have impacts on farmer wellbeing have become more complex and severe,

*Aware* that the creation of farmer wellbeing needs concerted efforts of groups and networks at community, sub-district, provincial, regional and national levels to work together in an integrated manner, set the goals that cover all aspects of the issue, including immediate problems on production costs and income, strengthen farmers' ability to enjoy a good quality of life in the family and community, and to have security with an ability to lead a self-reliant life based on the principle of Sufficiency Economy,

*Concerned and worried* that there are a large number of government agencies relating to farmer affairs whose administration tends to be fragmented into activities under different ministries and departments, with insufficiently integrated policy, strategies and work plans, with an adverse impact on their efficiency and effectiveness, causing a wider rift between achievement and problems and that, as a result, private organizations, foundations, associations, academic institutes, independent organizations and the civil society sector (e.g. National Farmer Council and Federation of Thai Farmer Associations) have come to the rescue but that on account of their large numbers of the groups formed by farmers are diverse with little coordination, thus having no strong policy, strategies and plans of their own, and that the government work tends to deal with agriculture as a whole with no specific policy on rice farmers,

*Understanding* that the health assembly process is a new instrument believed to be useful to the present situation especially after the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) and the cabinet have understood the farmers' plights from the earlier problematic populist policy, that Thailand's interim constitution of 2014 spells out reforms in 11 areas, that despite no direct reference being made to farmer wellbeing reform can be developed into a public policy which can then be used as a framework linking policies of various sectors and taken up by agencies concerned to consider advancing their policies further, leading to a secure and sustainable drive toward farmer wellbeing,

*Appreciating* the efforts of farmers and various partner organizations and networks for their action in various forms to alert the Thai public and demand reform on farmer wellbeing as part of a serious reform package of Thailand,

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<sup>1</sup> NHA 8/Main 2

*Admiring* the National Farmer Council, Federation of Thai Farmer Associations, and farmer-related organizations and networks for showing their will and intention to see the unity of farmer organizations that can be used a bargaining force in the protection of farmer interests, justice and security designed to maintain farmer dignity, a better quality of life, and greater self-reliance, making sure that every issue proposed is based on correct information and reasons, while the demand and proposal are practicable , taking into account political, economic and social dimensions both domestically and internationally,

Has passed the following resolutions:

1. Requesting the National Farmer Council and Federation of Thai Farmer Associations, together with partner networks concerned, e.g. networks of small organic rice farmers, Office of Farmers' Reconstruction and Development Fund, and local civil society, to coordinate with such government agencies as the Rice Department, Department of Agriculture, Department of Agricultural Extension, Royal Irrigation Department, and Cooperative Promotion Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives; Community Development Department, Department of Provincial Administration, and Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior; Department of Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce; Ministry of Industry; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Public Health; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Science and Technology; Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; Ministry of Culture; and Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, including Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives, Hydro and Agro Informatics Institute ( Public Organization) , Community Organization Development Institute ( Public Organization) , consumer networks, NGOs, and private business organizations, to undertake activities related to farmer wellbeing, i. e. promoting production with no chemical use and genetically modified organisms to an acceptable standard, supporting the principle of marketing before production, strengthening and developing the quality of farmer life to be self-reliant in a sustainable manner;

2. Requesting the Rice Policy and Management Committee (RPMC) and Joint Public-Private Sectors Consultative Committee for Solving Economic Problems (JPPCC) at the national and provincial levels, to consider improving the mechanisms and structures of their committees based especially on the participation of partner networks, agencies and organizations related to farmers and to include representatives of the National Farmer Council, Federation of Thai Farmer Associations, and other farmer organizations as committee members;

3. Requesting the Provincial Farmer Council, together with provincial health assemblies and partner networks from all sectors concerned, e.g. organic farmers who follow the principle of Sufficiency Economy, a new generation of farmers, producers of natural fertilizers who understand the farmer way of life, local wise men, and farmer community knowledge centers, using the health assembly process as a basis for learning to raise the cooperation level and promote the development of local farmer organizations of every level everywhere to the quality standard, for example, by developing community plans in every village in line with the local context, managing basic community resources for rice production (soil, water, and forests), community rice centers, rice strain preservation centers, community learning centers for farming promotion, and formal and informal learning centers on farmer wellbeing;

4. Requesting members of the National Health Assembly to consider the proposed strategies in Document NHA 8/Main 2/Annex 1 for use as guidelines for driving forward actions at local level;

5. Requesting the Secretary-General of the National Health Commission to report the progress to the 10<sup>th</sup> National Health Assembly.