

Management of Natural Disasters with Local Community as Centre

The Fourth National Health Assembly

Having considered the report on Management of Natural Disasters with Local Community as Centre,

Noting that natural disasters tend to occur often in Thailand whether they are of the types that are immediate and cause serious damages or are predictable and cause extensive damages, that there are seven types of disasters, i.e. flood and land and mud slide, tropical cyclone, earthquake, tsunami, big flood, drought and forest fire and haze, causing enormous losses of life, property economy, society and environment each year,

Aware that natural hazard management is a task beyond any public agency to do it alone, that there are limitations in the development of the National Preparedness Plan and that efficient measures are still lacking, e.g. the warning system, planning of prevention and systematic problem solving, drilling practice of prevention and problem-solving agencies, unified command over the event, and understanding of the personnel in the operation whether in normal circumstances or in critical situations, thus making it impossible to manage emergency situations in a concrete and efficient manner,

Concerned that society and local community do not have adequate knowledge and understanding to appreciate the complexity of the problem and diversity of natural disasters in such a way that it is not possible to set preventive measures and handle disasters, which are public dangers, correctly and suitably,

Worried that the government is still not clear about the concept of management of natural disasters by local community as centre and does not have specific policy for each type of disaster, that the regulations and law relevant to prevention of public danger, land use, and building control are not effectively implemented, that too little importance is attached to the issue of natural disaster management by community, and that little lesson has been learnt about how to work in the face of each disaster such that no improvement is made when tackling other similar situations,

Has, therefore, passed the following resolutions:

1. Requesting the National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Board, with the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation serving as Secretariat, to be the lead agency working in conjunction with the Office of Economic and Social Development Board, Emergency Medical Institution of Thailand, National Health Security Office, Thai Health Promotion Foundation, Community Organizations Development Institute, and Department of Local Administration to carry out the following:

1.1 Put in place a process to review and improve the National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan by involving the participation of all sectors and attach importance to the management of natural disasters by local community as centre by taking into consideration the Proposed Guidelines for the Improvement of National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan with Local Community as Centre as seen in the annex to the main document (Health Assembly 4/Main 4/Annex 1);

1.2 Develop mechanisms and systems for budgetary support and/or monetary support for a national fund for the work.

2. Requesting every type of local government agency in the risk area, by the support of the Ministry of Interior, to develop preparedness plans for local community networks to cope with natural disasters, focusing on the participatory process of the people sector and on linking between areas in the target districts as a whole and to allocate budgets of the locality, local health security funds or any other fund to subsidize the work of the networks, outlined as follows:

- 2.1 Development of preparedness systems
- 2.2 Prevention and impact reduction
- 2.3 Management of emergency and medical healthcare
- 2.4 Rehabilitation, construction of temporary shelters, healthcare and environment
- 2.5 Support of disaster management networks of local community and society.

3. Requesting the government to establish a national fund to support the establishment of mechanisms for disaster management, management of logistic support, evacuation of victims, as well as to promote disaster management in other areas, especially at the local community level, by issuing Prime Minister Office regulations and by entrusting the Emergency Medical Institution of Thailand together with the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation to act the lead agency in the implementation.

4. Requesting the government to provide budgetary support for Thailand Research Fund (TRF) to manage so that universities, academic agencies and local communities can undertake research and create a body of knowledge on disasters as well as to collect all the knowledge gleaned from a multitude of lessons and experiences of the people sector to support policy decision making and management at every level.

5. Requesting the Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) to allocate sufficient frequency waves for use for television, broadcasting radio and radio communication in coping with natural disasters in particular with the involvement of public agencies and non-profit private organizations and to ensure that they have appropriate potentiality to undertake the tasks.

6. Requesting Thai Health Promotion Foundation (ThaiHealth) to support the development of diverse networks of civic volunteers to handle disasters at the local community level as well as the national level, including systematic disaster knowledge management and dissemination of necessary knowledge to the public caught in the disasters in the central and regional areas,

7. Requesting every province in risk areas to support the organization of provincial health assemblies to advocate natural disaster management in their areas and its implementation in a concrete manner.

8. Requesting the Secretary-General of the National Health Committee to make a progress report to the Fifth and Sixth National Health Assemblies.