

Unofficial Translation

First National Health Assembly
Agenda 3.7

Revised Draft Resolution 1/7
12 December 2008

**The Role of Local Administration Organizations in the
Management of Health, Natural Resources and the Environment**

The First National Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on The Role of Local Administration Organizations in the Management of Health, Natural Resources and the Environment Issue,

Aware of the provisions in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2550, Chapter 5: Directive Principles of Fundamental State Policies, Part 3: State Administration Policy, Article 78 (3) and Chapter 14: Local Administration, Articles 281 to 283, which prescribes that the state decentralize power to local administration organizations (LAOs) and establish laws which clearly indicate decentralization process plans,

Aware of the powers, responsibilities and mission of local administration organizations in providing public health services, including the fostering of good health for people in their responsible areas, providing public health services and creating health security for area inhabitants, as prescribed by the Act Determining Plan and Process of Decentralization, B.E. 2542, the Public Health Act, B.E. 2535, the National Health Security Act, B.E. 2545 and the National Health Act, B.E. 2550,

Aware of the significance of local administration organizations having participatory roles in the development of personnel on health and providing local health security,

Informed and committed to the importance and necessity of conducting health impact assessments before driving any public policy toward practice or before project implementation or before engaging in any activity which may create serious impacts on the community,

The National Health Assembly hereby issues the following resolutions:

1. Calling upon local administration organizations to:

1.1 Arrange to have in place a process of exchange of learning in the community in a harmonious manner, in order to build up knowledge and understanding on the determination of public policy for health and on the management of natural resource and environment in the particular locality. In addition, the knowledge acquired is to be a core factor facilitating the preparation of area-based and issue-based assemblies, so that such

assemblies are based on facts and realities of the locality. Also, such assemblies at every area level are to be held at least once a year, with organization to be done systematically and involve the participation of every section in the area especially that of the state sector, academic sector, civil society, and all levels of political actors. Furthermore, there has to be development of local organizations so that they will gain knowledge and understanding about, and gain the capacity to organize area-based assemblies and propose local-oriented health policies that are congruent with the situation in that locality and at the same time linked with national policy.

1.2 Translate healthy public policies and health impact assessment into plans, policies, strategies and projects for the management of health and of local natural resources and environment. Have in place a process of self-assessment done with participation, as well as have in place a system to report progress on such efforts to the local community at least once a year, using such idea of self-assessment.

1.3 To promote the hearing out of opinions of the people and receiving their complaints. Also, to have in place a surveillance system on health and environment that covers the area comprehensively, completely, and sufficiently. In addition, gather data and information on community health; and prepare community health and environment impact assessment at least once a year, this to be done in cooperation with related private organizations or state-agencies.

1.4 Develop health personnel and public health volunteers at the sub-district level; and set up a special educational fund for development of all relevant personnel. For example, the fund can be used to send local people out to be trained further in the skills needed by the locality and hire them in the locality once they finish their studies. Or the fund can be used to develop public health workers in the dimensions of technical knowledge, the spirit of service with morals, with ethics, and with human relations. Opportunity must also be given to those local individuals who studied outside the local community and have graduated, so they can return to work in the community in the occupation they were trained for and also have job security.

1.5 Lay down measures to manage and ensure a balanced and sustainable use of natural resources and environment in which the people in the community participate in the issuance of rules and regulations, and at the same time raise awareness and moral conscience so that the people in the community will love, cherish and look after the natural resources and environment. The aim being for the community to use natural resources in a balanced way and in a sustainable manner.

1.6 Promote the use and adaptation of the Self-Sufficiency economy idea in the management of natural resources and environment.

1.7 Link up and integrate the system of management of health problems with the management of the environment for areas that are contiguous, or for areas which have the same ecological characteristics, in order to increase the efficiency in the management of area specific health and environmental problems.

2. The Ministry of Public Health, Interior, Industry, Agriculture and Cooperatives, Natural Resources and Environment, universities in the central area and in the regions, and all other agencies concerned at every level are urged to:

2.1 For the Ministry of Public health, it is urged to promote, support and follow up on the preparation and improvement of draft laws, provisions, municipal provisions, ministerial regulations, and other regulations in cooperation with the local administrative organizations and civil society. The aim is to facilitate the development of community health and the good management of natural resources and environment.

2.2 Determine policy and budget to provide redress for people adversely effected in terms of their health and environment. The central authorities and the local administrative organizations are to jointly act on this, with a view to having joint aims and operational guidelines, so that the local administrative organizations are able to work in tandem and in an integrated manner on the management of health and environment.

2.3 For the transfer of health centers to be under the management of local administrative organizations, the Ministry of Public Health should have a policy and operational plan to do this, one that is clear in design and that have appropriate processes in place for such transfer, in the matter of personnel, work plan, budget, welfare provisions, budget disbursement procedures, and relevant laws and regulations. The preparation and operation should be done systematically and step by step, based on voluntary principle and readiness of the parties, and congruent with the wants of the local administrative organizations and the health centers themselves. The underlying basis of the effort must be the interests of the people. The Ministry of Public Health and the local administrative organizations should set up a coordinating center for the transfer to health centers so that the transfer is done systematically and with continuity.

2.4 Arrange for organizations or agencies at the community, provincial, and national level to perform health, social, and environmental impact assessment for activities that may affect the community, including in the dimension of environmental quality, natural resources, and community health. Such assessment is to be done with participation of all sections of the society, and there should be an agency in the community to perform the function of forming a data base to help in the assessment and disseminating the results of the assessment through public media every time there is an assessment. Also, the right to know about the information on impacts on people's health and environment must be ensured.

2.5 Encourage the local community to play a role in the management of natural resources and environment by:

- 1) Providing budgetary support for the community to manage natural resources properly, e.g. setting up funds in conjunction with local government organizations for natural resources and environmental management in the community.

2) Developing local community capacity in natural resources and environmental management within the bounds of the law and local by-laws and in accordance with the community context, as well as by creating and upgrading the learning process, developing networks and associate academic organizations in the conservation of natural resources and environment based on local wisdom, lifestyle, culture and beliefs--such as the ceremony of paying respect to the spirit of the water, putting the saffron robe around a sacred tree, celebrating the longevity of the river, and conserving the traditional irrigation system. All such utilization of traditional forms is to enhance the community's ability to manage natural resources and environment by themselves.

3) Having measures and mechanisms to control, check, and renew industrial license for industry that may have impacts on environment and community.

4) Providing course appropriate for local and community on conservation and looking after the natural resources and environment.

3. The National Health Commission is urged to monitor the implementation under this resolution and report the result to the next National Health Assembly.