

Policies to Support Self-Management Areas for Social Wellbeing

The Third National Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on Policies to Support Self-Management Areas for Social Wellbeing,

Acknowledging that centralized management of power and budget has created social inequality and injustice. People have been unable to determine their development directions and allocate resources that answer their problems. What has been happening is an imbalance of power between the state and local communities;

Acknowledging the fact that local administration is governed and controlled by policies, measures, regulations and mechanisms of the central and regional governments especially with regard to local budget allocation and management which are restricting the local communities' ability to effectively manage themselves. This also reflects imbalances of power between the central and regional administration vs. local communities;

Acknowledging that the way agencies and independent organizations relating to the policy-making process and the way some budget-supporting organizations' work do not facilitate and support the idea of local communities managing themselves. What occurs is an imbalance of power between budget-supporting organizations and the local communities;

Concerned that what is happening is an indication of social injustice and a sign of impending violence in the society. If the government cannot resolve problems that are in accordance with what is happening in the localities and if it does not build local community participation in the self-management scheme, then, the problem could escalate beyond control and this may lead to unhealable social divisiveness;

Aware that Thailand reform through the principle of enabling local communities to manage themselves within their local context cannot be realized without adjusting the imbalance of power and improving the balance of control in terms of budget management between the central government, local governments, policy-based organizations, budget-supporting organizations and communities;

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Aware that what is urgently needed is to create a proper balance of power. This can be done by reducing management power of the central government to performing only the basic and necessary functions, by decentralizing power to the local communities and by establishing a participatory area-based development process as intended by the Constitution. What is important is people in the community must be enabled to decide and determine their development directions as well as manage their communities in collaboration with other agencies and networks in the political, economic, social, cultural, natural resources and environmental dimensions,

Hereby issues the following resolutions:

1. The National Health Commission is requested to ask the cabinet to support self-management areas for social wellbeing as an important policy. And to assign the Community Organization Development Institute in collaboration with the Association of Provincial Administration Organizations of Thailand, the National Municipal League of Thailand, the Association of Tambon Administration Organization of Thailand shall be core agencies to create a committee that will become a mechanism for action. The committee will consist of representatives from agencies relating to local community management from the public, private sectors, the academic and people sector where no less than 60 per cent of its members shall be community representatives. The committee's task is to develop self-management mechanisms and enable local community to self-manage. Preliminary action guidelines are:
 - 1.1 Developing common mechanisms that allow local communities to have a pivotal role in formulating area development strategies in all levels including community plan, local plan, district plan and provincial plan. The mechanism must consist of no less than 60 per cent of combined representatives from the people sector and the civil society sector.
 - 1.2 Creating measures so that area development strategies of all levels include work plans and projects in which the local community takes responsibility for in cooperation with local and/or regional governmental administrative bodies, with supporting budget from such bodies at a ratio of no less than 30 per cent of the budget allocated for wellbeing tasks in each area.
 - 1.3 Creating mechanisms to enhance self-management capacity of local communities.

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Developing mechanisms that allow local communities to supervise and evaluate performance of the strategy of area development, at all levels.

Creating a joint agreement with independent agencies and organizations whose work is related to building the policy in question including with relevant budget-supporting organizations so that they would formulate a policy would allocate their budget to local communities for self management based tasks and functions as determined by the local communities themselves.

. Joining with academic institutions to study administrative forms, structure of power and relations among the power wielders that facilitate community self-management and correspond to the local context of the village, tambon, district, rovincial and special area levels. The study will be completed within two years for reporting to the 5th National Health Assembly and the cabinet so that the model can be tested in a pilot area.

2. Members of the National Health Assembly will insert this topic of self-management areas for social wellbeing as one agenda item of their area-based health assemblies in order to monitor results of area development strategies of all levels within a province.
3. Local administration organizations especially the Provincial Administration Organization will be the main agency providing budget support and coordinating with the Council of Community Organizations, community organization networks, civil society networks, the provincial health assembly network, local administration organization networks and relevant agencies in the province to use provisions stated in Section 66, Section 78 (3), Section 87 (1), Section 87 (4) and Section 163 of the Constitution, to design and push local communities to manage themselves using the appropriate model.
4. The National Health Commission is to propose to the Reform Commission and the National Reform Assembly that this resolution shall be used as a guideline to come up with concrete proposals, which will be pushed forward for concrete implementation.
5. The Secretary-General of the National Health Commission will report progress to the 5th National Health Assembly.

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