

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 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 policy-making process and the way some funding sources work do not facilitate and support the idea of local communities managing themselves. What happens is an imbalance of power between funding sources and the 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 accord with what is happening in the localities and if it does not build 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 communities to manage themselves within their local context can not 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, funding organizations and communities;

Draft resolution: Policies to Support Self-Management Areas for Social Wellbeing

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 Department of Local Administration as 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 such as governing agencies, research bodies, knowledge management agencies, funding sources and tax and budget agencies, together with representatives from local communities and other sectors in an appropriate proportion. The committee's task is to develop self-management mechanisms and enable local community to self-manage. Preliminary action guidelines are:
 - 1.1 Developing 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.
 - 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 or regional governmental administrative bodies, with supporting budget from such bodies in an appropriate proportion.
 - 1.3 Developing mechanisms that allow local communities to monitor, supervise and evaluate performance of the strategy of area development, at all levels.
 - 1.4 Creating mechanisms to enhance self-management capacity of local communities.
 - 1.5 Creating a joint agreement with independent agencies or organizations whose work is related to building the policy in question, this to include also the relevant funding organizations, so that they would have a policy on area based self management and they allocate a portion of their budget to local communities for self management based tasks and functions as determined by the local communities themselves.

Draft resolution: Policies to Support Self-Management Areas for Social Wellbeing

- 1.6 Joining with academic institutions to study administrative forms that facilitate community self-management that correspond to local context at the tambon, district and provincial levels, the study to be done within two years, so that the model can be tested in an area.
2. Members of the National Health Assembly will cooperate by inserting this topic of self-management areas for social wellbeing as one agenda item of their local health assemblies, in order to monitor results of area development strategies of all levels within a province.
 3. The Provincial Administration Organization is requested to 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 organizations 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 requested to ask the Reform Commission and the National Reform Assembly to study comprehensively the policy of supporting self-management areas in order to come up with concrete proposals and also push for concrete implementation.
 5. The Secretary-General of the National Health Commission is requested to report progress to the 5th National Health Assembly.