

Inventory Mapping of Institutions Engaged in Best Practices in Thailand

Introduction

More than ten years of decentralization have brought forth several contentious issues concerning the state of local governance in Thailand. The main questions are these: has Thailand's decentralization really promoted local democracy, and has it responded to the increasing demands from local residents? Assuming that local democracy has been promoted during the past decade, which factors have been responsible for achieving the desired results?

There are also technical questions: how can we quantitatively measure the degree of improvement of local governance in an objective and impartial manner? The capability of a local authority organization (LAOs) and the capability of its head can be two different matters. Moreover the capability of an LAO cannot be measured simply by its financial capacity. What is more, so far as LAOs are concerned, independence in decision-making and in policy implementation does not automatically guarantee good results: in assessing effectiveness, some people place the emphasis on 'independence' from external groups, while others stress the importance of the 'result-base'. In short, there is no easy way to measure a LAO's capability.

Therefore, in analyzing 'local capability' in Thailand, we have used several sets of indicators to measure the degree of local good governance, such as the number of prizes LAOs have been awarded and the number of local ordinances passed by local councils over a certain period of time. In Thailand, it is quite common for LAOs to be given prizes for their best practices, such as tax collection, the promotion of cooperatives, environmental protection, community development and so forth. These prizes are given by various governmental agencies and institutions, such as Ministry of the Interior, Department of Local Administration, Community Development Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, the Prime Minister's Office, Provincial Governors, King Prachatipok's Institute, and various Rajabhat Institutes. Local ordinances are considered to be a direct means whereby the LAO tackles local problems such as garbage collection, sanitary matters, other environmental issues, local tax collection, and so forth.

Therefore, we can assume that the more prizes (subjected to 4 themes) an LAO is awarded, the higher the quality of the local governance that the LAO provides which should be selected to be our 'best practices'.

Awards/Recognitions and Monitoring of Best Practices

Preliminary research to find local administration organizations (LAOs) which carry on the best practices in the project's 4 themes was commenced by document reviews in search of any awards given to LAOs in different themes in harmony with the project's 4 themes. It was found that several institutions including governmental, educational, and non-governmental have been giving awards in order to encourage LAOs in Thailand to proceed towards "Good governance" concept and to become a sustainable city. An additional aim is to promote a LAO with outstanding development to be a model or good practice for others to follow; as shown in table 1.

Table 1 List of the Local Governance Related Awards in Thailand

Title or Name of Awards	Award Given by	Purpose and Criteria
KPI Award	King Prachatipok's Institute	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To encourage LAOs to realize the good governance concept and bring into practice</p> <p>Elements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Transparency and public participation 2) Promotion of peace and conciliation 3) Networking with private and civil society sectors
Good Governance Award	Office of Decentralization to Local Government and Department of Local Administration, MOI	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To adjust the framework and vision of mayor and local government officers on the importance of good governance and to encourage the LAOs to improve their administrative work to become a model for other LAOs</p> <p>Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Honesty and transparency 2) Public service providing to make citizen's maximum satisfaction 3) People participation 4) Three-year development plans that respond to people's needs 5) Integration with other relevant organizations and other LAOs 6) Efficiency in income generation & taxation
Sustainable City Award	MONRE MLT TEI	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To promote the concept of "Sustainable development" into practice at local level and to evaluate the development's achievement among LAOs particularly municipalities in term of sustainability</p> <p>Elements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Human well-being 2) Social well-being 3) Environmental well-being 4) Good Governance 5) Learning and Development Organization

Title or Name of Awards	Award Given by	Purpose and Criteria
LDI Award	Local Development Institute	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To evaluate and rank the municipalities in Thailand in term of livability</p> <p>Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Safety 2) Cleanliness 3) Quality of life 4) Good governance 5) Culture richness
Award for Effective Tax Collection	Office of Decentralization to Local Government	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To increase the efficiency in taxation of LAOs</p> <p>Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Administration of taxation 2) Information system development for taxation and asset inventory 3) Outcome of taxation in each category
Local Innovation Award	Office of Decentralization to Local Government	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To identify an outstanding outcome initiated by LAO or by a collaboration between LAO and the local people in order to promote them to be the best practice and to change the policy</p> <p>Elements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Infrastructure development 2) Quality of life improvement 3) Community management and orderliness 4) Planning and promotion on investment in commerce and tourism 5) Natural resource management and conservation 6) Local culture, tradition, and wisdom conservation and restoration

According to the awarding above, 6 municipalities in Thailand as following can be nominated for Best Practice in 4 themes;

Table 2 List of 6 BPs in Thailand

Thematic fields	List of 6 BPs in Thailand	Outstanding projects
1. People participation in planning and decision making on local level	Khonkaen Municipality Khonkaen Province (450 km.) 46 sq.km. 116,752 population 88 communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Council • Municipality decentralization to community (Little municipality within big city)
2. Institutional governance; transparency, efficiency, accountability, administrative procedures	Sriracha Municipality Chonburi province (120 km.) 4.058 sq.km. 18,846 population 12 communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One stop services center • Networking among LGs on integrated coastal management
	Trang Municipality Trang Province (828 km.) 14.77 sq.km. 58,631 population 27 communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency on procurement • Information accessibility • Complaint system
3. Inclusive urban public services with focus on urban environment issues	Pitsanulok Municipality Pitsanulok Province (450 km.) 18.26 sq.km. 90,386 population 54 communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitsanulok Model on Integrated Solid Waste Management
	Muangkleang Municipality Rayong Province (180 km.) 14.5 sq.km. 17,254 population 13 communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Env. Planning for Green Space/Urban Agriculture • Solid Waste Management • PPP on wastewater mgt. • Low Carbon City
4. Fiscal management and investment promotion strategies	Phuket Municipality Phuket Province (840 km.) 12 sq.km. 75,298 population 16 communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old city conservation for urban ecotourism • Fiscal investment for education

THAILAND

Political Map

