

Civic Participation in Sub-National Governments in Thailand

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I. National Framework of Sub-National Government

The Royal Thai Government's administration incorporates three tiers, central, regional, and local. There are altogether 7,951 units of local authorities, which are classified into five forms, including three general and two specific. Among three general forms, located in every province but Bangkok, are provincial administrative organization (PAO; 75 units), municipality (1,125 unit), and sub-district (Tambon) administrative organization (TAO; 6,744 units). The three forms of local authorities are also classified into two tiers, provincial (PAO) and communal levels (municipalities and TAOs). The other two special forms of local authorities are self-governing bodies of special areas, including Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and Pattaya City.

Politics and administration of local authorities in Thailand are generally comparable to the principle of local-self government. Each local entity is governed by local council and local chief executive, both of which are directly elected from local residents and have four-year term. Local authorities of different forms, however, are somewhat different in their own political and administrative structures.

Local service responsibilities

Definitions of local service responsibilities were formerly stated by local government's codes but have been continuing revised. The last overall revision was done in 1999, by the annexation of the Decentralization Act of 1999. Municipalities, Pattaya City, and TAOs are dedicated to carry out following functions;

1. Local development and city planning.
2. Providing local public services, including local roads, walkways, water transportation, public transportation and traffic engineering, public market, ports and docks, drainage system, public utilities, public park and recreation facilities, waste treatment, pet control, slaughtering, public safety, law and order, natural resource and environmental preservation and management.
3. Providing social services, including education, social welfares for children, women, elderly and disadvantages, housing and restoration, family health care and medical services, and cremation service.
4. Promotion of athletics, incomes and employment, trades, investment, and tourism, arts and cultures, sanitation and environment.
5. Promotion of democratic values, civil rights, public participation in local affairs.

PAOs' functions were revised in August 2003, by a mandate of the National Decentralization Committee (NCD). PAOs may carry out the following functions;

1. Providing large-scale public services that cannot be done by other local entities. The benefit recipients of the services should be located in a provincial-wide area, or at least more than one local territory. PAO may not carry out activities that can be done by lower tier entities.
2. Developing an integrated provincial development plan with respect to the principle of economic efficiency and balancing needs of localities within the province.
3. Constructing and maintaining large-scale infrastructure that serve as networks or linkages among activities in the province and among provinces.
4. Providing public education, health, and social welfare at the provincial level that do not overlapping with lower tier localities.
5. Promoting local culture, tourism, investment and trading in the province.
6. Managing and preserving natural resource and environment, especially inter-local water treatment and solid waste disposal.
7. Providing technical supports to lower tier localities.

For Bangkok Metropolitan administration (BMA), its functions are to provide local public services that are assigned for both municipalities, PAO, with additional urban services in Bangkok metropolitan area.

Local revenues

Local revenues come from four major sources, (1) locally collected revenues (taxes, fees, charges, permits, fines, etc.), (2) local revenues collected by central government agencies (VAT, excises, vehicle, land registration, and etc.), (3) revenue sharing, and (4) grants. Of these, grants and local taxes collected by central agencies constitute more than 70%, while locally collected portion is 11-12%.

Local taxes are consisted of locally collected taxes and some of those collected by national government agencies. Municipalities, TAOs, BMA, and Pattaya City have four major locally collected taxes, including house and land taxes, land development tax, signboard taxes, and slaughter tax. PAOs also have four locally collected taxes, including petroleum selling tax, tobacco selling tax, hotel tax.

There are a number of local taxes and fees that are collected by national agencies, including, value added tax, special business tax, alcohol tax, excise tax, vehicle tax, land registration fees, gambling tax, mineral tax, petroleum tax, among others. It should be noted that these local taxes and fees share tax bases with that of national government. The definition of tax bases as well as local tax rates are assigned by national government.

Apart from taxes, local authorities are allowed to have revenues from other sources, including returns on local properties and investments, fees, charges, profits, fines, licenses, grants, aids, bond issuing, debt financing, charitable incomes, and special assessment fees, among others.

Table1: Local revenues Fiscal year 2001-04

Unit: Million Baht

Sources	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Amounts (Baht)	%	Amounts (Baht)	%	Amounts (Baht)	%	Amounts (Baht)	%
Total Revenues	159,725.58	100	175,850.29	100	184,066.03	100	208,851.37	100
1.1 Locally collected revenues	17,701.86	11	21,084.47	12	22,258.28	12	22,519.43	11
1.2 Local revenues collected by central agencies	55,651.90	35	58,143.52	33	60,217.74	33	69,073.94	33
1.3 Revenue sharing	12,669.00	8	19,349.00	11	35,504.44	19	38,120.00	18
1.4 Grants and others	73,728.80	46	77,273.30	44	66,085.60	36	79,138.00	38
1.5 % share of local rev. to governments		21		22		22		23

Local budgeting

Annual budgeting has been well established in local administration. As prescribed by local administrative codes and central mandates on local budgeting, annual budget documents are usually prepared by the executive bodies during June-July, then submitted to local council in August, and finally endorsed by the provincial governors, or the district heads. Like that of the national government, local budget calendar starts on October 1 and ends on September 30 in the following year. Local budget documents usually present revenues by sources, expenditures by programs and items, debt financing, and a summary of previous year's financial status.

Principally, local authorities have their own discretion over local planning and budgeting. However, the Department of Local Administration Promotion (DLAP) has also issued a number of generally standardized guidelines and advises for local planning, budgeting, accounting, and financial management. In addition, provincial governors, chiefs of districts often influence on local budget planning through either legal control or civic participation processes.

Local governments are required to report the progress and detail documents of local procurement, as well as financial disclosures to DLAP, the Bureau of Budget, and the Office of Auditor General on monthly and yearly bases. In addition, local authorities are mandated to disclose their annual budget plan, procurement process, and financial reports to the local public. A number of localities initiate local news letter, publications, and web-sites to have local affairs information, including annual budget plan, public procurements, and financial reports disseminated to local and general public.

II. A Summary of Case Studies

Four local jurisdictions are selected as case studies in this paper, including Suan Mon TAO, Huai Kapi TAO, Khon Kan city, and Rayong City. The four localities had

developed different approaches of civic participation in local budgeting, as summarized below.¹

Case Study 1: Suan Mon TAO

Suan Mon TAO, established in 1997, is located in Manjakeeree District, Khon Kan Province. With its limited locally collected revenues, 0.24 million Bath a year, Suan Mon TAO is classified as a “small” TAO. However, its population and area width, 7,881 residents, 1,621 household, 52 square kilometers, and 14 villages, are comparatively large in numbers.

Table 2: Fiscal figures of Suan Mon TAO: 2000-2002

Unit: Million Baht

	Locally collected	Centrally collected	Grants	Total revenues	Total Expenditures
2000	0.23	2.26	1.53	4.02	3.57
2001	0.15	2.62	1.52	4.28	3.061
2002	0.24	2.77	1.65	4.65	5.107

As majority of local taxpayers are poor farmers, the TAO could hardly collect local property taxes (only 65,000 Baht a year or 40 Bath (one U.S. Dollar) per household a year), while there was absolutely no tax delinquent. The TAO thus depended mostly on centrally collected taxes and grants, as illustrated above.

Problems

Prior to its initiative on civic participation, Suan Mon TAO had been facing with irresolvable conflicts of pork-barrel budget allocation. With small amounts of budget, a rather weak leadership of TAO chairman, and strong civic culture at the village level, representatives of villages wanted to have local budget allocated to their areas. Local planning and budgeting were apart.

An initiative of the civic forums in Local budget planning

An issuance of the Ministry of Interior’ regulation on participatory approach of local planning and budgeting in 1998 stimulated Suan Mon TAO to adopt the civic forum approach for local planning and budgeting in 1999. Suan Mon’s civic forums were composed of two levels, village and sub-district (Tambon), each has its committee members, a chairperson, a secretariat.

There are 14 village civic forum committees, formally adopted by Suan Mon TAO. Each village civic forum committee is composed of the village head, community leaders, occupational groups, teachers, monks, and government bureaucrats who work in the village, all together around 10 persons. Most of them are the old-day civic leaders and some new players, such as women and occupational groups. The village civic forums has been dedicated to call on the civic forum meetings, identify, prioritize, and submit their community problems, needs, development projects to the sub-district (Tambon) civic forum committee.

¹ This paper obtains case studies from an on-going research project, “Local Government Initiatives in Thailand”. The research project is headed by Charas Suwanmala, Chulalongkorn University and supported by the Thai Research Fund.

The sub-district (Tambon) civic forum committee, formally adopted by Suan Mon TAO, is composed of approximately 100 members, including representatives of village civic forums. Its task is to call on the meeting, have the meeting prioritize village problems and proposed development activities (projects and activities), and submit a set of recommendations on local budget planning to the chairman of Suan Mon TAO.

The TAO budget planning procedure

Suan Mon TAO's budget calendar starts on October 1, similar to other local authorities in Thailand. With an adoption of civic participatory process of budgeting, Suan Mon TAO starts its annual budget preparation in March, about three months earlier than its normal practice. The chairman and the CEO (the so-called "Paland TAO") of Suan Mon TAO visited all village civic committees, explained the annual budget calendar and formats, and asked the chairpersons (the village heads) to call on the village civic forum meetings. In addition, they were asked to submit meeting reports to the sub-district (Tambon) civic forum by two simple and friendly forms, P-1 and P-2.

Form P-1 is a summary of community problems, needs, alternative solutions, together with supplementary explanations such as space, time, size, and causes of the problems, as well as details of activities/ projects that will help resolve the problems.

Form P-2 is a prioritization of the problems and their solutions concerned by the village civic forum.

The sub-district civic (Tambon) forum usually conducted its forum meeting during the mid of April and May. Then, the sub-district civic forum submitted its prioritized problems, needs, and projects to the Chairman of the Suan Mon TAO in the early June by Form 3 and 4. The TAO chairman then started up a regular budget preparation process by putting the civic forum's proposals as into local annual budget plan.

Civic forum meeting at the village level

As contended, Suan Mon has long rooted in its village civic culture back to many decades. Every village had its own informal civic activities. When DOLA recommended all TAOs to adopt a civic forum in local development planning in 1998, Suan Mon TAO thus could easily put it into practices.²

² DOLA, refers to the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, in charged of supervising local authorities. A new department subsequently emerged from DOLA in 2002, the Department of Local Administration Promotion, which is in charged of supervising local authorities.

The civic forum meeting at the village level was usually held in the evening, when everyone could attend. The chairperson, who called on the meeting, asked participants to address their concerned collective problems, needs, and alternative solutions to the problems (projects or intervention activities) first. Then, they would discuss, and ranked the priority of each and every problem, need, project and activities. The meeting may call for voting if they encounter controversial cases. Finally the chairperson and the secretariat completed form P-1 and P-2 and submit to the sub-district forum afterward.

It should be noted that, as the village civic forums usually had long historical development, the forums could easily reach their common agreement on the community problems, as well as solutions and priorities.

The sub-district civic forum

Unlike the village level, the sub-district forum was an “artificial” civic forum. The first year of sub-district forum in 1998 was a rather difficult and confronting experience, as all village representatives wanted to get their projects the as most highest priority as possible. The CEO (Palad) of Suan Mon TAO played a key bargainer-trader of projects’ priorities of different villages so that they could reach common priorities. As Suan Mon TAO had kept the promise of projects’ priorities over budget years, villagers thus gradually learned that they could trust each other. The conflicting situation was significantly alleviated in the latter years, while the spirit of civic forum at the sub-district (Tambon) level had gradually developed.

The TAO Budgeting

In June-July, Suan Mon TAO prepared its annual development plan and budget appropriation. The TAO planning section put the proposals of the sub-district civic forum into the drafted annual development plan, then submitted to the TAO council to be adopted and launched subsequently. It was noticeable that TAO executives and the council were so truly respect on the civic forums that they did not change the proposals. The annual budget and development plan then were sent back to all members of sub-district and village civic forum committee, so that they could use as a reference for monitoring TAO’s budget execution, as well as for next round meetings. In July and August, the TAO prepared its annual budget appropriation. The TAO budget office then selected the development projects for the annual development plan and put into the budget appropriation on the priority base, under the close oversight of sub-district and village civic forum.

“The village people will monitor if their TAO budget appropriation truly correspond with the civic proposals. They will promptly make complain or notify TAO if the appropriation on development projects are not the same as what they have expected.”
“Changing priorities of development activities is possible but with close consultation with village civic leaders.”

CEO (Paland) of Suan Mon TAO

The civic monitoring and assessment

The village civic leaders actively oversaw the quality of service delivered to their communities. There were often cases that the civic leaders directly notified contractual service providers about mal-practices and had them corrected. In addition, TAO also had village civic leaders joint in the procurement committees.

Outcomes of civic participation

The TAO successfully resolved the conflicting pork-barrel budget and connect local planning and budgeting. Local civic culture has been fully utilized. And help strengthening sub-district level community.

However, the power of civic forum is still limited, as TAO has limited revenues and budget size. This is due to poor economic conditions of its locality.

Positive impact on tax collection

Village civic leaders in Suan Mon supported TAO tax collection, by filling in tax information, finding tax payers who fail to pay tax on time, and sometimes bargaining and convincing tax payers. These greatly contributed to a great successful of TAO tax collection, a 100% of taxes collection during the fiscal years 2001-2003.

Case Study 2: Huai-Kapi TAO

Huai-Kapi is a “large” sub-district (Tambon) administrative organization (TAO) with over 11,000 residents, half-urban/rural community, located in Moug District, Chonburee province. Huai Kapi received seven awards in the past 6 years, remarks tis exceptional reputation in outstanding performance in budgeting and financial management.

Huai-Kapi has annual revenues as of 15.3 million Baht, in which 14.1 million Baht (92% of the total) generated from local sources, another 1.2 million Baht, (12%) from central grants. The TAO provides variety of local services, including, community law and orders, disaster prevention, primary education, social welfare, community economic development, community health and environment, garbage disposal, road, city planning, waste water treatment, public park and recreation, and community forestry.

Huai-Kapi had gradually adopted participatory approaches for the whole local finance management system, budget planning and execution, assessment, and taxation in the past four years. A participatory planning and budgeting was initiated first in 1999. Stimulated by a mandate for participatory local planning approach of the Ministry of Interior in 1998, Huai-Kapi took the mandate into action and developed its own version.³ Two years later (2001), the TAO started its revenue development program. This was due to the fact that there were so highly delinquent taxes, and result in considerably low tax revenues (less than 10 million Baht a year, and unfair tax burden distribution. The initiative was aimed at increasing local tax yields as well as fairness distribution of tax burden.

³ Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, **Ministry of Interior’s regulation on local development planning 1998.**

Huai-Kapi adopted two principle measures; civic forum and household survey, in its participatory planning and budgeting.

Civic forum for local development planning and budgeting

In November 2000, Huai Kapi Tao adopted civic forums at the village and the sub-district (Tambon) levels. Key actors in this stage were the Mayor of Huai-Kapi TAO, the TAO's chief executive officer (Paland TAO), and TAO staffs. Having the civic forums formally established, the TAO mayor and the chief executive officer then organized a one-day training course for civic leaders; introduced them expected roles as well as civic-forum management technique.

The village civic forums were composed of village heads, TAO councilors, leaders of local business, occupational groups, school principals, community health volunteers, and representatives of pertinent central government's field units, among others. It was considerable that village and sub-district heads who were traditional civic leaders in the old days played leading roles in the new civic forum.

The village civic forum leaders were to call on civic forum meetings, mobilize local citizens into the forum, had participants identify and prioritize community problems, needs, and alternative interventions (project/activities) through the forum consultative process. Written down the conclusion in given forms, the village civic forum leaders proposed the forms to the sub-district forum.

Agendas of civic forum meetings at the village level

Agenda 1: Understanding objective and roles of village civic forums for local planning and budgeting.

Agenda 2: Identify problems, needs, and strategies of development

2.1 Building up your positive thinking: Your choices-the future of your community.

2.2 Identifying community problems and needs

2.3 Classifying and prioritizing community problems and needs

2.4 Identifying possible intervention, strategic actions, projects and activities for community problem solving.

Agenda 3: conclusion and completing given forms.

Similar to other TAOs, the sub-district (Tambon) civic forum committee was adopted. The committee was composed of approximately 80 members who were representatives of village civic forums.

Having received the village civic forums' proposals, the chairman of the sub-district civic forum was to call on meetings, had the forum prioritize problems, needs, projects/activities through the forum consultative process. The chairman then proposed the prioritized projects/ activities to the Mayor of TAO, who then put the projects/activities into annual development planning and budget appropriation, accordingly.

Household survey

In parallel, the CEO (Palad) of Huai Kapi TAO also conducted annual household surveys. The survey covered urgent needs and opinions on local services. In 2002, for example, 411 households, (18% of total household, more than 2,200 units) had been covered. Data on households' needs for public services had been analyzed and brought into the civic forums for identifying and prioritizing community development strategies.

Contents of questionnaire for Household Survey

Section 1:

Household's general information, including family bio data, socio-economic data, access to public services, and health and access to health facilities,

Section 2:

Household's urgent needs for local public services, included in the list are solid waste collection and disposal, drinking water, walkways, roads, transportation, electrical power, lighting, agricultural and industrial water supplies, employment and income promotion, human right education and preservation, drainage and sewage system, education, public telephone services, and etc.

Section 3:

Household's prioritization on community problems and needs, including elderly welfare, police box, education, psychological development for the youth, children playground, community library and museum, community broadcasting through wire loud speakers, community conference center, drug and narcotic fighting, employment and income promotion, community co-op saving /shopping center, public health promotion/ mobile clinical service, supporting community health care center, community athletic promotion, public space, park, and recreation centers, solid waste collection and disposal, lighting road construction and maintenance, access to public telephone, drainage construction and maintenance, pipe-line drinking water, agricultural and industrial water, preserve natural water resources, bus terminals, and etc.

Table 3: An example of household survey findings; Village #1:
Fiscal year 2000

The five highest priorities	% of respondents
1. Public telephones	91.1
2. Drug and narcotic fighting	84.5
3. Health promotion/ mobile clinical serices	74.6
4. Solid waste collection and disposal	72.9
5. Elderly welfare	69.5
The five lowest priorities	
1. Bus stop	42.4
2. Agricultural water resources	35.5
3. Community co-op saving/ shopping centers	33.9
4. Natural water resource preservation	25.4
5. Community conference center	22.0

Civic participation in tax collection improvement

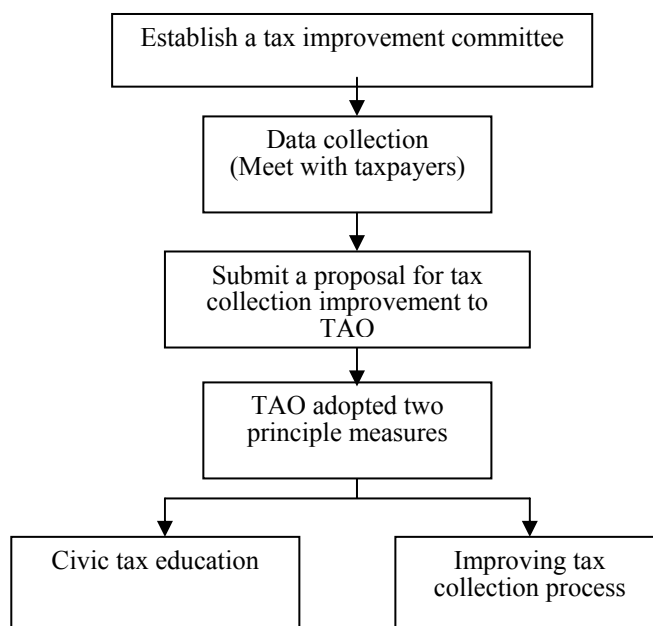
Huai Kapi TAO undertook three civic participatory measures for local tax collection improvement, including (1) Civic tax committee, (2) civic tax education, and (3) improving tax collection process.

Civic tax committee

In October 2002, Huai Kapi TAO adopted a civic tax committee to address problems and policy guidelines for tax collection improvement. The civic tax committee was composed of TAO staffs from financial and civil work departments, village heads, and representatives of local business leaders.

The committee conducted a field survey, met with tax payers (especially delinquent cases), and recommended new measures for improving tax collection process, such as civic education on taxation, citizen budget guide, and a improving tax collection process for a more friendly and more flexible tax payments, among others. Huai Kapi TAO adopted the proposed measures subsequently.

Figure1: Huai Kapi's tax collection improvement process



Civic tax education

The tax committee reported that most local residents did not realize local democracy had costs to be paid by citizens. Huai Kapi TAO thus educated local residents about local taxation through a number of ways, including

1. periodically informed tax information to local residents through signboards, brochures, annual household report, and community wired speakers,
2. added a one-hour tax learning package into a number of community training programs, and
3. delivered a friendly tax-budget guide to local residents in order that they could understand how taxes and local services had been matched each others.

Improving tax collection process

Huai Kapi TAO initiated a number of tax collection process. First, members of Tax committee, including village heads, business leaders, and members of TAO councils, played significant role in finding, bargaining and bringing new taxpayers into local tax system.

Second, TAO officials had been trained for approach to tax administration. Taxpayers were notified dues on tax payment in advance and in more creative and friendly ways. TAO's tax collection office had worm welcome to all taxpayers, and offered them several ways to pay tax at their most convenience.

Lastly, a number of aggressive measures had been taken to get rid of delinquent taxes. Apart from a regular notification on tax dues in advance, the tax committee often dealt with tax delayed cases by different ways, ranging from strong enforcement to more friendly and compromisable solutions.

Outcomes of tax collection improvement prograom

Both initiatives were considerably successful. Huai Kapi TAO then brought the development plan into annual budget appropriation in 2001 and afterwards. It was proved by the subsequent surveys that local residents were more satisfied with new directions of local development plan , annual budget allocation, and local services. On the tax improvement, after the adoption of new measures recommended by the civic tax committee, local tax revenues had increased 48.29% in the past three years, from 8.22 million Baht in 2001 to 12.19 million Baht a year in 2003.

Table 4: Yields of local revenue improvement during 2002-3

	Million Baht		
Locally collected taxes and non-tax revenues	2001	2002	2003
Land and house taxes	1.38	1.91	2.07
Land development tax	0.06	0.12	0.01
Signboard taxes	0.28	0.49	0.58
Land registration fees	3.79	5.26	4.45
Licenses and permits	2.25	2.78	4.16
Property yields	0.09	0.02	0.05
Fees and charges	0.35	0.79	0.86
Miscellaneous	0.02	0.006	0.01
Totals	8.22	11.376	12.19

Case 3: Khon Kan City

Khon Kan City, found in 1935, is a metropolitan municipality with over 130,000 population, located at amid of northeastern part of Thailand. The city is a fast growing, highly dynamic economy, and a growth pole of the region. Khon Kan Municipality significantly contributes to the robust of Khon Kan City by providing high quality of urban services, including city planning and urban infrastructures, primary education, community health and sanitation, law and orders, fire fighting and disaster prevention, social welfare, employment and income promotion, among others. Khon Kan Municipality is a distinguish city for its outstanding performance with four awards in the past two years.

Participatory planning and budgeting in Khon Kan City emerged from the exceptionally high in political efficacy of local residents. Having been actively participated in the last constitution drafting during 1996-97, local residents in Khon Kan City realized the power of civic participation and had gradually developed new political culture of civic participation at the local level by then.

In 1997, Khon Kan Municipality, in cooperation with DANCED, successfully developed a civic participatory approach, the so-called “focus-group planning and actions” in local environmental preservation program. The City then extended the civic participation approach to other programs, and finally to local development planning.

Focus groups for development planning

In 1997, Khon Kan City contracted University of Khon Kan to conduct a series of focus group meetings at the communal level. Applied AIC technique, focus group meetings was proved to be very fruitful, not only disclosed concerned problems, needs, and priorities of local residents, but also generated visions, policy directions, and strategic actions (projects, and activities) for development planning. At least new 38 new development programs had been developed and put into the city development plan afterward.

The city has extended focus group meetings to other programs, such as civil works (infrastructure development, improvement, and maintenance), community health and sanitation (public market sanitation), education, income promotion and social welfare. In the fiscal year 2003, there were more than 50 focus group meetings had been mutually conducted by Khon Kan City’s staffs and community civic groups. It had been clearly proved that focus group meetings effectively linked community voices to local development plans, budget, and services.

Town hall meeting

Khon Kan City firstly adopted the “town hall meeting” in 1998 as a policy consultative mechanism. The meetings was usually held for every three months. In addition, the city also called on meeting for special issues. There were 140 membership organizations regularly participate in the meeting. A philosophy of the town hall meeting was that any local policy or activity that could have significant impacts on the general public had to be known and consented by the public before having implemented. In particular, those who might bare costs or loses due to the activity must be informed and have reasonable solutions to cope with loses. In the town hall meeting, the mayor of Khon Kan would ask persons in charged or experts presented policy issue first, then policy dialogue between the general public and the mayor, functional staffs, and local experts went along in order to reach a reasonably collective consent.

It should be noted that Khon Kan City had been ruled by one political group. The town hall meeting thus had been used as an alternative check-and-balance mechanism in place of a typical council-mayor counterbalance system.

Participants in the town hall meetings

The number of participants had been gradually increased in the past five year. In 1998 there were only 20 civic organizations and around 80-100 general public participated

in the town hall meetings. In 2003 the number had been increased to more than 140 civic organizations and 30- 150 general publics. Examples of civic organizations were local media, community organizations, local business association, occupational associations, Rotary Associations, Lion Associations, and governmental and state enterprise organizations, among others.

Agenda setting

Agendas for meeting were set and prepared by the mayor and his city officials. Policy Issues normally concerns with development projects that had widely and controversial impacts on local residents. A policy issue may need more than one meeting.

Announcement and invitation to town hall meetings

The city released the meeting information to the general public and especially concerned target groups ahead of time via direct-mail letters, and a number of big and attractive signboards around the city.

Table 5: Examples of issues of Khon Kan town hall meetings 2002-2003

August 31, 2001	The renovation of public spaces at the city gate the city's foundation statute, and Nhong Sra Pang Swamp.
November 27, 2001	Progress reports on the renovation of public spaces. Bung Toong Sang renovation project A proposal on the new public park at the city gate area. An assessment of the city's 2001 mission accomplishment. The city missions in 2002.
March 22, 2002	Progress reports on the renovation of public spaces. The Namsang- Airport drainage system A construction model of public park at the city gate. A proposal for the readjustment of the city's foundation statute area. A draft proposition on the signboard-free in eight areas.
June 15, 2002	Progress reports on the renovation of public spaces (continued). Bung Toong Sang renovation project. Bung Khan Nakorn renovation project. Bung Toong Yai renovation project. Bung Wantachoo renovation project. Nong Sra Pang renovation project.
September 20, 2002	Progress reports on the renovation projects. The city's flood prevention and disaster alleviation plan. A matching fund project on the renovation of city gate area. A public market renovation project. A slaughter house renovation project (construction plan).
November 14, 2003	A technical study on the new traffic management system at the city's triangle area. Progress reports on the continuing projects, including Khon Kan City's museum, slaughter house renovation, public space renovations, Models of low-income housing.

Conduct the town hall meetings

The meetings, held at Khon Kan Hotel, usually started at 17.00 p.m., so that all participants could attend. The Governor of Khon Kan Province was invited to chair

the meeting. The meeting dialogue started with the city's presentation on concerning issues. The city often had experts and researchers present research and study findings to the public. Then, all participants were welcomed to debate. The meetings last in 4-5 hours.

It should be noted that the charismatic leadership of the Mayor of Khon Kan City contributed to the success of the meeting. With a good teamwork, he carefully arranged the meeting agenda and logistic so well that could maintain high level of participants' satisfaction in past two years. Furthermore, the mayor encouraged participants to share different ideas, generated common solutions from conflicting attitudes of stakeholders, and kept the meeting dialogues went along very well throughout the meeting.⁴

Survey participants' opinion

In addition, the city also conducted a number of survey participants' opinions toward the meeting agenda, resolutions, logistic, and city's performance and achievement. The survey findings, as illustrated below, confirm the high success of the town hall meeting. However, the city did not report the survey findings to the general public.

Table6: Findings of participants' survey; 2001-03

November 27, 2001; 46 respondents	80% Satisfy with the city's mission achievement 91% satisfy with the progress reports on the public space renovations. 100% agree with the principle of the Bung Toong Srang renovation project. 95% agree with the construction model of the new public park at the city's gate area.
March 22, 2002; 80 respondents	95% satisfy with progress reports. 96% agree with the renovation of the city' spiritual statute. 93% agree with the renovation of the city's gate. 96% satisfy with the city hall meeting.
September 20, 2002; 104 respondents	97% satisfy with the progress reports, except for swamp renovation projects, such as Bung Nong Yai, Bung Nong Wang, Nam Sang-Airport, and Nong Sapang, which the levels of satisfaction are less than 90%. 96% agree with the city's flood prevention plan. 97% agree with detail construction model of the city gate renovation project. 90% agree with the city's spiritual statute renovation project. 95% agree with the public market #1 renovation project. 95% agree with the slaughter house renovation project.
November 14, 2003; 107 respondents	100% satisfy with the city museum progress report. 97% satisfy with the slaughter house and other renovation projects' progress reports.

⁴ The Mayor of Khon Kan City had a good relationship with local NGOs leaders. (Mr. Deja Premerudeerlk, Commission on NGO in Northeastern region). He had been trained from "Maha Jamlong's leader school.

Outcomes of civic participations

Focus group and town hall meetings in Khon Kan City had proved to be highly successful in relating local citizens' preferences with city planning and budgeting. It should be noted that the meetings may not always have solutions to the concerned problems. Town hall observers contended that majority of participants expressed opinions and suggestions without enough information about the concerned issues. Local citizens, however, still wanted to push the town hall meeting forward to a more meaningful than just a consultative meeting.

Case Study 4: Rayong City

Rayong is a metropolitan municipality located in Rayong Province, eastern part of Thailand. As one of the most rigorously growing commercial and industrial city in Thailand, the city's residents of over 60,000 are instantly added up by new immigrants. Rayong is also surrounded with a number of new fast growing towns.

In 2003, Rayong City had 165.2 million Baht of local revenues, including 112.7 million Baht from local tax and non-tax revenues, and 37.5 million Baht of central grants. The city provide variety of urban services, ranging from city planning, primary education, community health care, sanitation, and medical services, law and order, religious, cultural, athletic, and recreation, to community and residential area development, roads and walkways, drainage, lighting, environmental preservation, solid waste collection and disposal, and etc.

Rayong City launched a rigorous revenue development in 1995. The initiative was proved to be extremely successful, with more than 400% revenues increased in the past seven years, 1996-2002. The Mayor of Rayong City (Surapong Poothapibool), however, seek out the ways to prevent political distaste from the revenue improvement program by stimulating local residents to actively involve in local planning and budgeting.

In 2000, the Mayor of Rayong City collaborated with the City of Portland Oregon, USA, the International City and County Manager Association (ICMA), in developing a participatory approach for local planning and financial management.⁵ The Major of Rayong City as well as a number of local officials and community leaders visited the City of Portland to observe the real practices and attended workshops on local participatory planning and financial management. With technical assistance of the ICMA experts, Rayong City had developed manuals for participatory planning and budgeting, introduced the new approach to local officials as well as to local civic groups, and experimented some the ideas during the past three years.

Rayong city adopted at least three measures for local participatory planning and budgeting, civic town hall development commission, civic fiscal policy commission, and focus groups for development visioning and budgeting.

Civic commissions

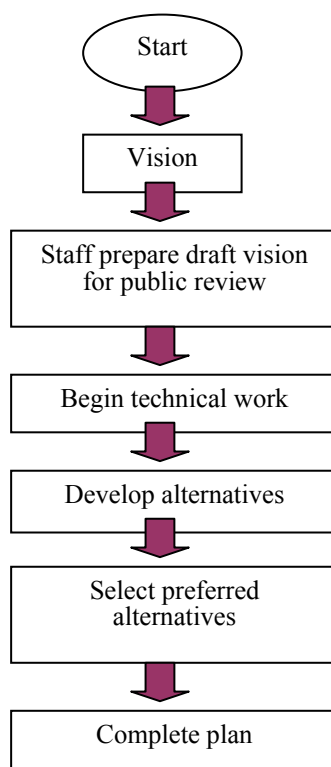
In 2002, Rayong city initiated two civic commissions for planning and financial management. The first one was the town hall civic commission for development

⁵ The collaborative effort had been financially supported by the USAID and US-AEP

planning, the second was the civic fiscal policy commission. The town hall civic commission for development planning was composed of 100 members, including representatives of local civic organizations, local business leaders, and occupational leaders. Presumably the commission will call on meetings, set off visions of community development, and submit the visions to the Mayor, who then put it into the process of local development planning. The commission was formally adopted and had been introduced basic information and necessary technical knowledge. However, no development visions have ever been generated by the commission during the past two years, as the commission has not called for the meeting.

The civic fiscal policy commission was also adopted in 2002. The commission of six members were composed of leaders of local business and civic organizations. Its function was to give advises to the Mayor and the city hall concerning fiscal and budgetary policies. A number of meetings had been conducted and a few policy proposals on local taxation and budget allocations had been proposed by the commission during 2001-2002. No meeting has been conducted in this 2003 fiscal year, remarks a rather passive roll of the commission in its third years.

Figure 2: Rayong's Citizen Participation Process for Planning



Focus group consultation

As the civic commission for development planning did not work out, Rayong City then adopted the focus group consultation for local development planning and project implementation during the past two years. The city is now on the process of preparing a draft five-year development plan. A local NGO organization had been contracted to manage the focus group consultation process. The first-round twenty focus group meetings had been conducted in the communities in the past eight months. Each focus group meeting generated different visions and strategies for community

development. The focus group manager then submitted a synthesized visions and strategies to the Mayor and the civic commissions for development planning. The second round focus group meetings for project development in details were on the way.

Focus groups technique was applied at the project implementation as well. For example, in the fiscal year 2002, the Mayor and functional departments brought a public park and space renovation into civic focus group consultation, had targeted citizens shared ideas of how the park and public spaces in their community should look like. Having put the ideas into physical construction plan, the city officials then brought the plan back and consulted with the civic groups in the next round meeting and have them discussed of details construction and budget before launching a contract with the construction agency. The civic groups were also invited to join in the construction oversight process. The city had received a very good feedback from the civic groups that they were happy with the park and space renovation projects.

Outcome of civic participation

It was obvious that the civic focus group consultation in Rayong City was highly workable and productive, while the civic commission approach was not. The Mayor of Rayong City contended that the consultative focus group meetings need full-time and professional manager and sufficient staffs. The city thus arranged an NGO contract to accomplish the process.

III. Building Knowledge

Approaches of civic participation

As its early period, civic participations in Thai sub-national governments generally started with simple, passive, and rather limited approaches. At the mean time, the national government and the general public strongly calls for intensive public participation at the local level. There are at least six approaches of civic participation in local planning and budgeting in Thailand, including focus group consultation, civic forums, town hall meeting, civic committees, citizen survey, and citizen budget guide.

Focus group consultation

Focus group consultation is perhaps the simplest form of civic participation. The Mayor and the city officials play leading roles in this approach. When local governments have policy issues that need to consult with local residents, the city then arrange a series of focus group meeting with the concerned target groups. The purpose of the focus group meeting is to have the concerned target groups know about the plan, have them voice and verify the plan according to their needs. It is also expected that the consultative approach can spawn the citizens' sense of ownership in the city's activities.

Local authorities developed their own different ways of focus group consultation. Khon Kan City, for example, adopted a rather formal focus group system. The city's community cadres established a certain number of civic groups in small communities first. Included in each civic group were community leaders, occupational groups, women and youth leaders, and community religious leaders, among others. Khon Kan

city officials usually organized focus group meetings and brought issues concerning action plans for public services and budget into focus group consultation for every two-three months. Local officials, as well as the mayor, usually led the focus group meetings and apply AIC technique, which had been proved to effectively stimulate local resident participations.

Rayong City, another example, applied an informal focus group approach. Rayong City did not establish formal community civic groups and did not organize focus group meeting on regular basis. Rather, the city selectively organized focus group meeting whenever there were policy issues that needed particular focus group consultation. For example, the city organized a focus group consultation for a public park renovation project in 2002. The focus group in this case was comprised of local residents, occupational groups, youth leaders, among others, who lived near by and were effected by the park. The city brought the renovation plan into to the consultation process, where local residents could have voices and suggestions. The city then adapted the plan to suit local needs and brought the new version into the next round consultation meeting. In addition, local residents actively participated throughout the renovation process and had strong sense of collective ownership onto the public park.

In addition to issue-based consultation, Rayong City also has been applying the focus group consultation for local development planning during the past two years. Twenty focus group meetings had been conducted, each generated different visions and strategies for community development planning.

Civic forum

Local authorities in rural areas, TAOs, had widely adopted civic forum in their planning and budgetary process. The approach has been introduced by the Ministry of interior, with an issuance of the ministerial regulation on participatory planning and budgeting for TAOs in 1998.

TAOs' Civic forum is a rather formal approach. According to the ministerial regulation, TAOs are advised to establish civic forums at the village and the sub-district (Tambon) levels. Every village has a village civic forum committee, including the village head, community leaders, occupational groups, women and youth leaders, religious leaders, school teachers, and other public organizations' officials, all together around 8-15 persons. At the sub-district (Tambon) level, the sub-district civic forum committees are also adopted by TAOs. The committee members, around 50-100 persons, are composed of representatives of village civic forums.

Local annual planning and budgeting process usually start in March, about six months ahead of the fiscal year (the first of October). The bottom-up process starts at the village level, when the chairperson of the village civic forum committee calls on the meetings. The meetings' agendas are to identify and prioritize community problems, needs, as well as appropriate development activities. The committee then submits the information to the sub-district (Tambon) civic forum committee.

The sub-district (Tambon) civic forum committee usually organizes its forum meetings during April and May. A main agenda of the meeting is to prioritize the villages' problems, needs, and development proposals. The chairperson of the sub-

district (Tambon) civic forum committee is requested to submit the forum proposals to the mayor of TAO within the first week of June, so that TAO have enough time to prepare its annual budget appropriation proposal.

As the budget requests obtained from civic forums are usually far more than TAO annual budget ceiling, the mayor thus has to cut off the requests to meet the budget line, but with strictly respect to civic forums' priorities. It is noticeable that budget appropriation process in the TAO council also highly respects to the civic forums' priorities as well.

TAOs however adopt the ministerial regulation on participatory planning and budgeting differently. Though almost every TAO formally set up village and sub-district civic forum committees, but not all can really function. Two successful cases are illustrated in this paper, Huai Kapi and Suan Mon TAOs.

Town hall meeting

Khon Kan city is perhaps the only one case that has successfully adopted the town hall meeting in Thailand. The city adopted the town hall meeting as a policy consultative mechanism in 1998. Its rationale is to bring local public policies and activities that are naturally controversial and could have significant impacts on local residents into public consultative forum. The forum is regularly organized for every three months, with occasional meetings for special issues.

The Mayor of Khon Kan City is the center of the town hall meeting. He and his staffs set up the meeting agendas, call on the meetings, prepare expert views on concerned issues, conduct the forum dialogue, and bring public voices into actions. A meeting agenda is composed of new policy issues and the progress reports of continuing ones. The city releases the meeting information to the general public and especially concerned target groups via a number of local media, direct mail, signboards, and local newspapers, among others.

Knowing that information is extremely important for participants, the mayor often asks persons in charged or external experts to conduct research and studies, prepare physical plans on concerned issues, and present before the meeting. Participants also receive handouts of research and studied findings, as well as project details in front of the meeting room.

Participants of the town hall meeting, ranging from 120-350, are composed of more than 140 civic organizations, approximately 50 provincial government officials, and 100 general publics. Examples of civic organizations were local media, community organizations, local business association, occupational associations, Rotary Associations, Lion Associations, and governmental and state enterprise organizations, among others.

The Provincial Governor of Khon Kan is invited to chair the town hall meetings. The Mayor of Khon Kan City plays key roles in making policy dialogue between the general public, the mayor, local experts, and functional staffs goes along and reaches reasonably collective consents. The mayor then brings participants' opinions and suggestions into actions and reports the progress and problems to the public in the next meetings.

Civic committees,

Rayong City is an example case for civic commission. The Mayor of Rayong City formally adopted two civic commissions in 2002, including the town hall civic committee for development planning, and the civic fiscal policy committee. The first one was composed of representatives of local civic organizations, local business leaders, and occupational leaders, approximately 100 persons. However, the approach was not successful. The Mayor of Rayong City thus employed the focus group consultation instead. Details of focus group consultation in local development planning has been described above.

The civic fiscal policy commission, composed of six members who are leaders of local business and civic organizations, is a policy advisory board to the Mayor and the city hall concerning taxation and budgeting. Few policy suggestions had been proposed by the commission during 2001-2002, but none were made in its third and fourth years, 2003-2004.

Citizen survey

Citizen survey is widely used by many local jurisdictions. Three cases have been illustrated in this study, Khon Kan City, Huai Kapi TAO, and Suan Mon TAO. Khon Kan city regularly conducted surveys on the city hall participants' opinions regarding their satisfactions and suggestions towards the city hall meeting arrangement, the meeting outcomes, and the city's performance in accordance with the general public wills. Carefully analyzed the survey findings, the Mayor of Khon Kan City and his staffs improved the meeting arrangement and performance. It is noticeable that despite the level of participants' satisfactions has gradually improved, the city never had the survey findings systematically fully disclosed to the general public.

Suan Mon and Huai Kapi TAOs occasionally conducted household surveys for the purpose of data collection in their planning and evaluation process. In 2002, Suan Mon TAO conducted a household survey to assess local residents' satisfactions on TAO's performance and their opinions on local development priorities. The survey findings had been brought into TAO planning process in 2003. Huai Kapi employed a household survey in 2002 as a parallel measure of the civic forum process. There were 411 households, approximately 18% of local residents, had been covered by the survey. Information on public problems and urgent needs for local services obtained from the household survey had been brought into the TAO's civic forum discussion and planning process afterward.

Citizen budget guide

Huai Kapi is one among many local authorities that has employed the citizen budget guide to inform local citizens about what local authorities do for their residents. Aiming at improving local tax collection, Huai Kapi TAO educated local residents about the rationale of local taxation and spending by have a friendly and understandably budget guide produced and distributed to local taxpayers.

Table 7: A Summary of civic participatory approaches in case studies

Approaches of civic participation	Rayong	Khon Kan	Huai Kapi	Suan Mon
Focus group consultation	☺	☺		
Civic forum			☺	☺

Approaches of civic participation	Rayong	Khon Kan	Huai Kapi	Suan Mon
Town hall meeting		☺		
Civic committees	☺			
Citizen/Household surveys		☺	☺	☺
Citizen budget guide			☺	

Diagnosis 1: Factors affect participation

The Mayoral Leadership

Local leadership is a significant factor for civic participation, especially in cases of Khon Kan City and Rayong City. The mayor of Khon Kan City has been trained from a leadership school, the so-called “Maha Jamlong Leadership School.” With a new vision to promote civic participation in local management, the mayor built up a good teamwork around his local staffs, established a good relationship with local NGOs and community leaders, adopted new civic participatory process, and played key roles in the town hall meetings in his first two years 2001-2002.

Similarly, the Mayor of Rayong, who graduated from a leading school of political science of Chulalongkorn University, has his vision to run his office on the true principle of local-self government and civic participation. His first four-year regime was dedicated for improving local revenue improvement in order to sustain high level of self-fiscal autonomy, which turned out to be highly successful. His second term was dedicated for the promotion of civic participation. He had Rayong City collaborated with the City of Portland, Oregon, U.S.A, in developing a participatory approach for local planning and financial management.

Local political and cultural factors

Local politics and culture are the most important factors affect civic participation, as revealed by all four case studies, Khon Kan City, Rayong City, Huai Kapi TAO, and Suan Mon TAO.

Local residents of Khon Kan City had been exceptionally high in political efficacy, since they were actively participated in the last constitutional drafting process. New local civic organizations gradually increased in numbers and seek to have significant roles in local politics. The Mayor of Khon Kan City then successfully built up a new political culture of civic democracy on the rich ground by adopting such a large-scale participatory approach as the city hall meeting within a rather short time.

Local politic in Rayong City is unique in its highly competitive and uncertainty. As a highly robust industrial and commercial center of the eastern seaboard region, the city had accumulated more than 30% of newly immigrated residents in the past ten years, and resulted in highly fragmented but rather low political efficacy communities. When the Mayor Surapong Poothanapibool wanted to promote civic participation in local planning and budgeting, he thus decided to adopted an informal and small-scale participatory approaches, such as the project-based civic forum consultation, and the advisory civic committee for fiscal and budgetary policies.

The two TAO cases, Huai Kapi and Suan Mon, are similar in their strong rural-community collective culture at the village level, which had constituted civic

participation in local affairs for long time before the emergence of TAO. But the strong civic culture at the village level often generates political conflicts at the sub-district (Tambon) level. Suan Mon TAO, for example, had been facing with the problems of having too limited resources and too many competing needs of all villages, which often led to the political conflicts of “pork-barrel budget allocation” among villages prior to the adoption of civic-forum budgetary approach. The adoption of civic forum committees at the village and especially at the sub-district (Tambon) levels thus is generally appropriate for inter-village conflict resolution in the TAO budget allocation process.

Diagnosis 2: Origins of participatory mechanisms

The adoption of civic participatory approach in local planning and budgeting came from many sources, central mandates and incentives, local initiatives, and international supports. The TAOs’ civic forum for planning and budgeting had been driven by the Ministerial Regulation on Local Authorities’ Participatory Planning Approach of 1998, issued by the Ministry of Interior. The regulation was initially applied only for TAOs but extended to other local authorities afterwards. To promote and help enabling TAOs in the adoption of new participatory planning approach, the Department of Local Administration (DOLA, and afterward DLAP) had provided guidelines, worksheet formats, and short course trainings for TAOs during 1998-99. However, the departmental efforts were still far less than local needs. The key success factor thus mainly depended upon local initiatives.

The cases of Khon Kan and Rayong cities principally emerged from local initiatives, with partially supported by international organizations. Khon Kan City’s city hall meeting, for example, came from the mayoral initiative. But the invention of city hall meeting was actually transcended by the civic forum consultations, which was formerly developed by a collaborative effort of Khon Kan City and DANCED in 1997.

Similarly, the case of Rayong City’s civic forum consultation for local planning and project management, as well as the civic committee on fiscal and budgetary policies, emerged from the mayoral initiatives, with strong technical supports by the City of Portland, Oregon, U.S.A., the International City and County Manager Association (ICMA), USAID, and US-AEP. In 2000, the mayor of Rayong City, key local staffs, and local community leaders visited the City of Portland and had the first hand experiences on the city’s civic participatory planning and financial management. The ICMA technical experts also helped Rayong City developed a practice guideline for participatory planning and budgeting in 2001-02.

National initiatives for promoting local authorities’ good governance also contributed to local civic participation in last three years. A number of national institutions had initiated national awards for promoting local good governance and civic participation. King Prajadhipok’s Institute, for example, has given the King Prajadhipok Award for local authorities with outstanding performance in the promotion of civic participation and transparency. The Puay Ungpakorn Foundation also had given award for outstanding TAOs. The National Decentralization Committee, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, has also launched the local authorities’ good governance award granting program in past three years. The last award is attached with grant

system, where by local authorities are granted for their outstanding performance. It is confirmed by the research findings that the award mechanism did stimulated local initiatives for civic participation.⁶

Diagnosis 3: Intensity of participation

The notion of “civic participation” in each participatory approach is different in both quantity and quality. Among the six approaches, TAO’s civic forum planning and budgeting is the most widely and intensive civic participation.

The consultative approaches are the second level intensity of participation. Ranked by the level of participatory intensity from high to low are Khon Kan City’s city hall meeting, the civic forum consultation in Khon Kan and Rayong cities, and the civic committees for fiscal and budgeting in Rayong city. The city hall meeting is the large-scale consultative approach driven by local authority. Local residents do not initiate consultative agendas but can access to information on local policies, and can voice or suggest the city to change local policies according to their concerns.

Civic forum consultation is a small-scale consultative approach. Khon Kan City adopted a rather formal and regular civic consultation approach and cover variety of local programs, such as community health, social welfare and income promotion, and public works. The city had all communities adopted their own civic forum. Local staffs, with cooperation of community civic forum committees, regularly set up consultative meetings.

Rayong City applies a less formal, ad-hoc, and limited policy areas than Khon Kan City. As noted above, the city neither adopted community civic forum, nor had regular consultative meetings. Rather, Rayong city occasionally set up consultative meeting with small targeted groups on the policy-issue basis.

Rayong City’s civic committee on fiscal and budgetary committee engages a rather limited number of participants. In addition, it is considerably weak in its low productive, lack of ownership, not sustain in the long run, and depended mostly on the mayoral commitment.

Huai Kapi and Suan Mon TAOs’ household survey is a one-way data collection, driven by local authorities. The number of households covered by the survey could be large or small, depend on local discretion. The measure allows local residents to express their opinions, problems and needs to local authorities. This mechanism is often applied together with other means, such as civic forum and civic consultation.

Huai Kapi’s budget guide is the most limited measure of civic participation. Its primary purpose is to inform local citizens about local affair priorities, budgetary policies, progress and problems of policy implementation.

⁶ The research is entitled “Local Government Initiatives in Thailand”. Conducted by Charas Suwanmala, supported by the Thai Research Fund (TRF), it is now on-going and expected to last in December 2004.

Disadvantaged groups in civic participation

Disadvantaged groups have their representatives in civic forums and city hall meetings. Civic committees for fiscal and budgetary policy, on the other hand, particularly concentrates on the participation of local elite groups, leave no room for disadvantages. Budget guides normally targets the general public rather than such specific groups as the disadvantages.

Table 8: A Summary diagnosis of civic participation

Diagnosis	Rayong	Khon Kan	Huai Kapi	Suan Mon
Diagnosis 1: Significant factors affect civic participation				
1. The mayoral leadership	☺	☺		
2. Local politics and cultural factors		☺	☺	☺
Diagnosis 2: Origins of participatory mechanisms				
1. Central mandates and incentives			☺	☺
2. Local innovations	☺	☺		
3. International supports/ collaboration	☺	☺		
Diagnosis 3: Intensity of civic participation (Rank from 1-5)				
1. TAO civic forum for planning and budgeting (3-5)			5	5
2. City's civic forum consultation (2-4)	3	4		
3. Civic Committee (2-3)	2			
4. Citizen/household survey (1-3)		1	3	
5. Budget guides (1-2)			1	

Evaluation 1: Impacts on the quality of local public service.

Civic participations did contribute to the improvement of local public service quality. TOAs' civic forums for planning and budgeting had the most obvious impacts on local public services. Civic forums not only set up priorities of local budget allocation, but also effectively monitored local budget execution and continuing provided feedback information into budget planning process. Participatory consultative approaches, including civic forum consultation, city hall meeting, civic committees, among others, helped shaping local service policies and monitored public service performance to suite preferences of local residents.

Other forms of civic participation, such as citizen/ household survey and budget guide, however, had less obvious impacts on local policy and public services. It may contribute to a better information flow between local authorities and their constituencies.

Evaluation2: Impacts on the quality of local politics

Civic forums effectively built consensus and trust among citizens and communities with fragmented and conflicting preferences. Suan Mon TAO, for example, had been facing with conflicting the pork-barrel budget allocation prior to 2001, due to small amounts of budget, weak local leadership, and strong civic culture at the village level. The sub-district (Tambon) civic forum could not only effectively converted fragmented and conflicting village preferences into collective preferences at the sub-district level, but also gradually built up the spirit of trust among villagers. The cases of Khon Kan City's city hall meeting and Rayong City's civic forum consultative planning also disclosed changes in local politics from inside-out, authoritative bureaucratic, and elite-driven to outside-in and citizen mode of decision-making.

Evaluation 3: The improvement of civic sensibility of taxation.

The cases of Huai Kapi TAO, Suan Mon TAO, and Rayong City, clearly illustrate the improvement of civic sensibility of taxation due to civic participation in local planning and budgeting. Huai Kapi and Suan Mon TAOs both launched tax collection improvement project along with civic-forum planning and budgeting, which were proved to be successful.

Rayong City, on the other hand, had been exceptionally successful in its tax collection improvement prior to the adoption of civic-forum consultative planning. Actually the civic-forum consultation was partly aimed at preventing political distaste due to tax collection improvement program. The case of Rayong City also proved that civic participation did helped local citizens better match between local tax burden and community benefits they received from local expenditures.

It should be noted, however, that structure of local finance in Thailand embedded a great deal of fiscal illusion. As contended in Part 1, more than 70% of local expenditures come from central transfers, while locally collected revenues contribute only 11-12% of the totals, the relationship between locally collected revenues and expenditures or service quality is generally weak and thus hardly traceable. The notion of civic participation in local finance thus often concentrated on local spending and usually disregarded the revenue side.

Table 9 :A summary impacts of civic participation

Impacts of civic participations	Rayong	Khon Kan	Huai Kapi	Suan Mon
1. Improvement of local public services	Yes, medium	Yes, high	Yes, high	Yes, high
2. Improvement of local politics		Yes, medium	Yes, medium	Yes, high
3. Improvement of civic sensibility of taxation	Yes, high	Yes, high	Yes, high	Yes, high

IV. Recommendations

Capacity building

As contended above, critical factors help shaping civic participatory innovation of local authorities are comprised of local elites' envision, central government's policy and promotion mechanism, technical supports of such "outside" organizations as academic agencies and international organizations, and above all, civic culture embedded in local communities. To build up local capacity for civic participation in local planning and budgeting, primary interventions should concentrate on the institutionalization of efforts dedicated to the innovation and dissemination of knowledge on local participatory budgeting, as well as on building up training and learning facilities at the regional and local levels.

Establish a new institution/ a net work of knowledge management

The Royal Thai government has adopted a national policy for the promotion of good governance. As contended, the number of good governance awards given to local authorities by public and private organizations did induced local leaders to install civic participatory approach into local management. However, no particular institutions are in charged of creating new knowledge and providing technical assistances to local authorities regarding the installation of participatory approaches. Local leaders thus usually learn on their own ways, as well as from each others, which are confined within their early period experiences.

Accordingly, there should have a national institution, or a network of knowledge management, dedicated to the innovation and dissemination of new knowledge concerning local authorities' democracy, management, and civic participation. The institution should be attached to academic institutions, and shared partnerships with pertaining government departments, local authorities' associations, professional associations of local staffs, business sector, and international organizations. Its primary missions are;

1. to conduct research for the development of new civic participatory approaches of local democracy, budgeting, and taxation,
2. to develop new supporting software, operational guides, tools, and training kits needed for the installation and implementation of new civic participatory approaches, and
3. to provide first hand training for trainers (staffs of regional academic institutions, professional associations, and business sector) and for local professional staffs.

There are on-going research and activities running to this direction. The Thai Research Fund (TRF), has granted Chulalongkorn University to conduct a study on local government initiatives, and also granted a private foundation to experiment an action research for the development of local budgeting and financial management.

In addition, local authorities, in collaboration with academic institutions and private foundations, are setting up an informal forum of interlocal coordination. The similar movements have been developed at the provincial level as well. Tak and Nan

provinces, among others, are working to develop their provincial network for promoting civic participation.

It is noticeable that the endeavors to establish knowledge management networks at both national and regional (provincial) levels are weak for folds, the lack of substantive knowledge, and the lack of management techniques. These are due to the fact that professionalism in Thai local government management has not yet been developed.

Training needs of different actors

Two groups of key players need training, local elected leaders and officials, and leaders of local citizen and business organizations.

Training local elected leaders and local staffs

Elected leaders and local officials should be trained on the rationale and technical sides of civic participation in local budgeting. Followings are key topics of training course.

1. Why civic participation is needed for local authorities.
2. How to construct the communal collective choices from citizens' fragmented preferences.
3. How to market local budget and revenue improvement programs.
4. How to build trust in local public affair management.

It should be noted that the Department of local Authority Promotion (DLAP), Ministry of Interior, had launched a training project during 2000-01, the so-called "A Participatory Planning Approach for TAOs". The training, however, was aimed at introducing a general concept of participatory budget to local elected and staffs of TAO. However, no technical operating procedures and substantive knowledge of participatory budget had been included in the training package.

Training local residents

Leaders of local citizen organizations play key roles in the participation process. They should have appropriate skills and attitudes on collective decision making. The following topics should be included in a one-or-two-day training course for this target group.

1. Your budget, your choices.
2. Taxes are costs of local democracy.
3. Building trust in your community.

Apart from DLAP training provided to TAOs in 2000-01, there were many governmental and non-governmental organizations, the Department of Community Development, DANCED, JICA, GTZ, ICMA among others, had experimented training packages for leaders of citizen organizations, together with local leaders and officials in this regard. A number of technical knowledge and training guides are available in so far.

Training Materials available

Followings are lists of training material available.

1. Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, A manual for TAO's civic participatory approach for planning, 2000.
2. Rayong city, the City of Portland, and the ICMA, A Manual for Citizen Participation in Rayong City Budgetary Process, 2001.
3. Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Technical Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) mbH, and Ministry of Interior, Handbook Strengthening Local Urban Planning and Management, 2002.

A Suggestion on WBI collaborative partners

WBI can cooperate with national government agencies, academic institutions, and local authority associations. Here are leading agencies that WBI can work with.

National government departments.

1. Department of Local Authority Promotion (DLAP). The department, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Interior, is directly in charged of promoting and strengthening local authorities.
2. Office of National Decentralization Committee, Office of the Prime Minister. The agency functions as the secretariat office of the National Decentralization Committee, in charged of setting policy agendas on the promotion of local government and decentralization.

Academic institutions

1. Institute of Local Government Initiatives, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University. The institution is dedicated to conduct research on local government initiatives in Thailand, produce learning cases and training packages, and provide technical supports to local governments' learning network.
2. Center of Local Government Studies, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University. The agency helps facilitate the meeting of local authorities' coordinating forum.

It should be noted also that other regional universities also have centers and programs on local government studies and training activities. Parts of these activities are linked or collaborated with each others.

Local authorities and local staff associations

1. Municipal League Association.
2. Provincial Administrative Organization Association.
3. Tambon (Sub-District) Administrative Organization Association.
4. Municipal Civil Work Official Club.
5. Municipal Financial Official Club.