

# **THAILAND'S VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW**



**ON THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**2021**



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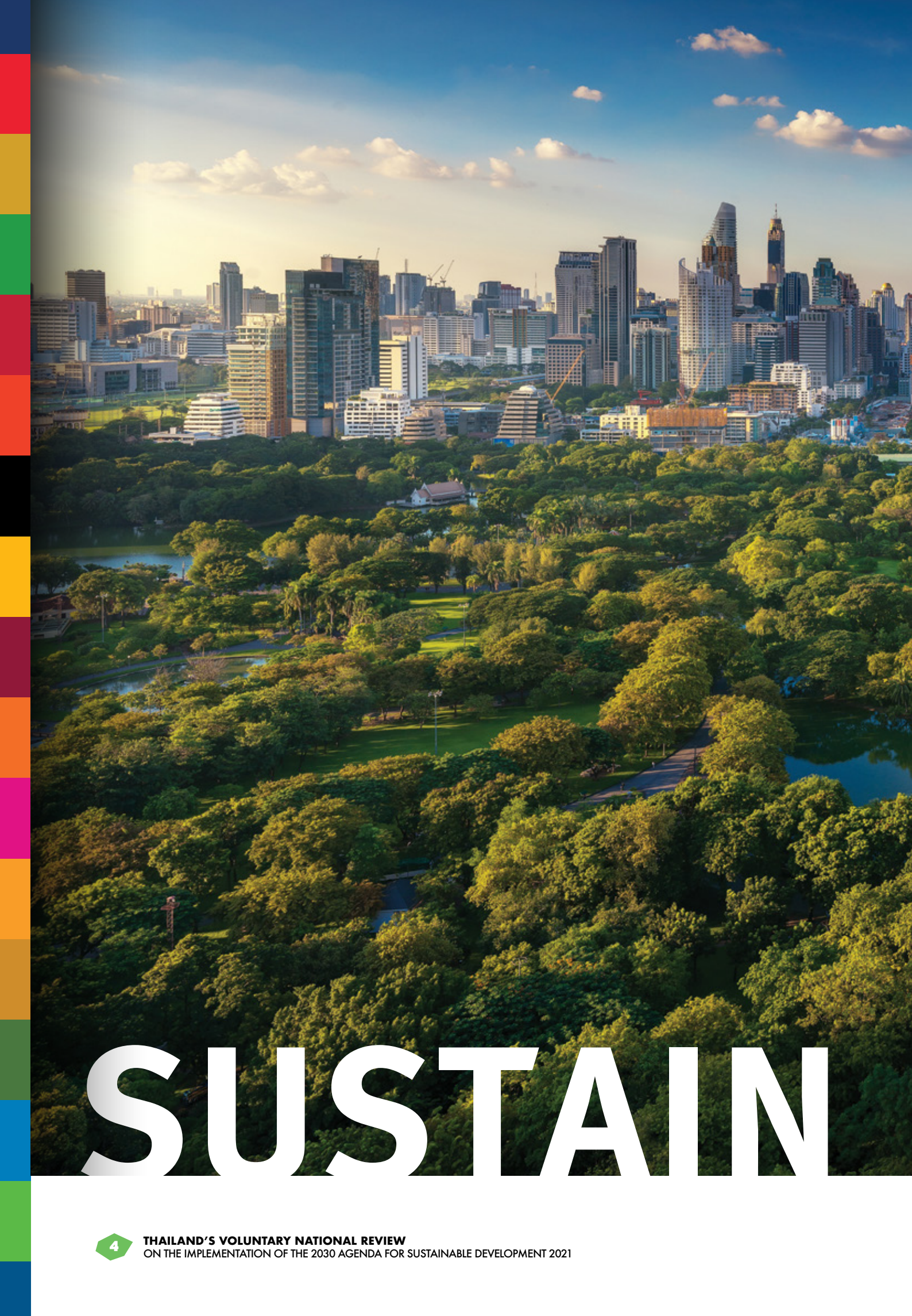
**| 2021**



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# SUSTAIN





# ABILITY





# Executive Summary

Thailand attaches great importance to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly within the context of the Decade of Action for the SDGs. Since the last official submission in 2017, Thailand has made significant strides across all 17 SDGs. However, as with other countries, the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted our economy and society, and hampered our efforts to achieve the SDGs.

The achievement of the SDGs, especially within the context of the Decade of Action and COVID-19, will not come without **drastic transformative change** and **multi-stakeholder partnerships**. This edition of the Voluntary National Review highlights Thailand's application of the **Sufficiency Economy Philosophy** as our **homegrown approach** that focuses on **human empowerment, resilience, and environmental conservation**, along with the **application of technology and local wisdom** in addressing development challenges and promoting recovery efforts. This VNR underlines the importance of a **whole-of-society approach** and the interconnectedness of the SDGs, showcasing key examples of the role of the private sector,





civil society, academia, youth networks, and ordinary citizens in advancing the SDGs at the national level. The VNR itself has provided an opportunity for stakeholders to engage and discuss SDG implementation.

The SDG landscape in Thailand is well established. The SDGs have been integrated into the **20-Year National Strategy**, which is the country's main development framework. The **National Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD)**, chaired by the Prime Minister, represents the central mechanism to advance all 17 Goals. The CSD has designated government focal points for each of the 169 targets, while its four sub-committees provide the driving force for SDG implementation, application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for the SDGs, monitoring and evaluation, and environmental assessments. Thailand's **SDGs Roadmap** provides the blueprint to move forward in six key areas, namely, **policy integration and coherence, enabling mechanisms, partnerships, pilot projects, monitoring and evaluation, and awareness-raising.**

**Key highlights** from this VNR cover examples from all sectors. Thailand has achieved considerable success in eradicating extreme poverty as part of **SDG1**, and is committed to developing a national multi-dimensional poverty index. Projects aimed at improving nutrition for school children and food security boost progress on **SDG2**. With regards to **SDG3**, the country's **Universal Health Coverage** and **Village Health Volunteers** played an integral role in the effective management of the COVID-19 crisis. On **SDG4**, efforts have been expanded to provide financial support for poor students through the use of digital tools and various government funds including the **Education Equality Fund (EEF)**. Gender equality initiatives, including efforts to address domestic violence, are the cornerstone of Thailand's implementation of **SDG5**.

The highlight on **SDG6** is the increased access to clean water sources and sanitation. The development of a SMART Grid is underway to increase energy efficiency in accordance with **SDG7**. Workforce capacities are continuing to be strengthened to correspond to the needs of the global economy as part of **SDG8**. The promotion of a **Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model** through the development of sustainable infrastructure will advance **SDG9**. To support the achievement of **SDG10**, the Government has applied the **Thai People Map and Analytics Platform** to help identify vulnerable groups who require support, while projects such as **Baan Mankong (Stable Home)** support impoverished communities to achieve secure and sustainable housing as part of **SDG11**.

On **SDGs 12, 13, 14, and 15**, Thailand has advanced actions on **climate change and sustainable consumption and production**, strengthened efforts to protect **marine and coastal ecosystems**, and increased stakeholder engagement on forest area management. Thailand's implementation of **SDG16** centres on promoting **fair and equal access to justice for all**, and multi-stakeholder cooperation on **human rights promotion, as well as anti-trafficking and anti-corruption efforts**. Lastly, Thailand has forged effective partnerships among all sectors in line with **SDG17**, including **civil society, private sector networks, and academia**. Beyond our borders, we have expanded our role as a development partner to exchange knowledge, experiences, and best practices with neighbouring countries and countries in other regions.

These are some examples of Thailand's SDG implementation. We aim to build on the momentum of this VNR in ensuring a **whole-of-society approach** as we move forward. Together with the **Sufficiency Economy Philosophy** as our pathway, Thailand is confident that balanced and sustainable development for all is within reach.







# Introduction

Since Thailand's first official submission of its Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) held under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2017, Thailand has developed an effective and comprehensive structural foundation geared towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017) prescribed the development of a National Strategy that also accelerates sustainable development within the country. As such, the Twenty-Year National Strategy (2018-2037) was developed as the country's first under the new constitution and will serve as the policy framework for integrated strategies and plans and to advance the vision of a "developed country that is secure, prosperous, and sustainable in line with the principles of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy". The inclusion of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs within this National Strategy also ensures that the country's efforts to achieve both the National Strategy itself and sustainable development go hand-in-hand. This level of policy coherence underlines Thailand's commitment to achieve the 2030 Agenda. In addition, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have been integrated into subsequent 5-year National Economic and Social Development Plans and various Action Plans developed by relevant state agencies. This ensures that all development efforts are integrated at all levels, and promotes collaboration between the implementation by different agencies.

In 2020, Thailand and the world faced several challenges with regards to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This came as a result of the ongoing Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, which has exerted devastating socio-economic impacts across the globe. To drive forward SDG achievement during the pandemic and in the post-COVID era, efforts must be accelerated to address existing challenges in terms of inequalities, environmental conservation, and sustainable and inclusive development that leaves no one behind. Such endeavours will need to be complemented by efforts to "Build Back Better" by strengthening inclusive and effective healthcare services and in finding new transformative development approaches.

Hence, the Royal Thai Government has developed the "Ad Hoc Masterplan under the National Strategy in Response to the COVID-19 Situation" through the lens of the SDGs and the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. This Masterplan highlighted the development pathway and issues that took precedence during the COVID-19 crisis to ensure that the country is well-placed to respond to the crisis, provide remedies for those affected, and return the Thai economy and society to normalcy. These priority issues will form the turning point in accelerating Thailand's efforts to



advance the country in the future. To promote sustainable and inclusive growth, the Thai Government has introduced the “BCG (Bio-Circular-Green) Economy Model”, which leverages the country’s strengths in biodiversity and cultural richness and employs technology and innovation to transform Thailand into a value based and innovation driven economy.

The country’s steadfast commitment to sustainable development extends to its role on the international stage. As Chair of the Group of 77 and China in 2016, Thailand underlined the importance of home-grown development approaches such as the SEP in the achievement of the SDGs. This vision is consistently highlighted on an annual basis at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), hosted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, and at the HLPF held at the United Nations in New York under the auspices of the ECOSOC and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

Furthermore, Thailand’s Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2019, which was guided by the theme of “Advancing Partnership for Sustainability”, and Thailand’s role as ASEAN Coordinator for Sustainable Development since 2016 reflect the alignment between the country’s priorities at the international and regional levels. Thailand has promoted sustainability in all dimensions, and has sought to promote more balanced economic growth through the Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model. The need for transformative development pathways to achieve the SDGs and to ensure a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, especially through the promotion of the BCG Economy Model, will be further emphasised as part of Thailand’s Chairmanship of APEC in 2022.

Thailand places high importance on the promotion and protection of human rights in accelerating its efforts towards the achievement of the SDGs, including in efforts to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, Thailand supports the “Sustainable Recovery Pledge – Building a better future for all, with human rights at its heart”, which was adopted at the 47th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in June 2021. The 10 pledges include: (1) accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in accordance with international human rights obligations; (2) promoting democratic principles and good governance through the development of institutions and promotion of the participation of all sectors in recovery efforts; (3) ensuring effective pathways for the participation of all sectors in the decision-making and policy process; (4) ensuring the right to health and the implementation of the health-related SDGs including universal health coverage; (5) addressing inequalities and discrimination as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; (6) accelerating the use of digital technologies to foster a sustainable recovery while addressing its impact on human rights; (7) promoting recovery pathways that are climate- and environment-responsive; (8) developing recovery strategies based on risk-informed and sustainable financing policies in accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda; (9) implementing recommendations from international human rights mechanisms and National Human Rights Institutions; and (10) supporting the UN Secretary-General’s Call to Action on Human Rights and building partnerships for sustainable development.

# Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## กระทรวงการต่างประเทศ



On the occasion of the second official submission of Thailand's Voluntary National Review at the HLPF in July 2021, the Royal Thai Government is determined to ensure that this year's VNR serves as a review of the implementation of the SDGs in the past five years, as well as an analysis of the challenges that remain and the country's management of the COVID-19 crisis. Thailand has attached the utmost importance to the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP), as the country's homegrown development approach towards SDG achievement. This approach serves to build the resilience of the country in the current context, including in assisting multi-stakeholder efforts to "Cope, Adapt, and Transform" during the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts are a stark reminder to Thailand and the world of the importance of advancing the SDGs and sustainable development while leaving no one behind. It is the hope of the Royal Thai Government that this edition of the VNR will not only present Thailand's progress on the SDGs to the international community but will be an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences at the very heart of the country's implementation of the SDGs through the application of the SEP. The VNR reflects the commitment of the Government in uniting all efforts from all sectors within the country to make the most effective use of the resources available in promoting sustainable and inclusive development. It is this vision that will drive forward the achievement of the SDGs in the future.

## The VNR Process

The Sub-Committee on the Advancement of the SDGs, under the National Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD), tasked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be the Chair of the Working Group on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development within the United Nations on 24 November 2020. This Working Group was appointed to replace the Voluntary National Review Working Group, which was disbanded as a result of the motion taken at the meeting of the CSD on 10 December 2019. The new Working Group is made up of the National Statistical Office and the government sector focal points for all 17 Goals, including the following:

**SDG1:** Ministry of Interior

**SDG2:** Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

**SDG3:** Ministry of Public Health

**SDG4:** Ministry of Education

**SDG5:** Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

**SDG6:** Office of National Water Resources

**SDG7:** Ministry of Energy

**SDG8:** Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council

**SDG9:** Ministry of Industry

**SDG10:** Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council

**SDG11:** Ministry of Interior

**SDG12:** Office of Natural Resources and Environment Planning and Policy  
(Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment)

**SDG13:** Office of Natural Resources and Environment Planning and Policy  
(Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment)

**SDG14:** Department of Marine and Coastal Resources  
(Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment)

**SDG15:** Department of National Parks, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation  
(Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment)

**SDG16:** Ministry of Justice

**SDG17:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Working Group has the main duty of coordinating Thailand's efforts in the advancement of the SDGs in the United Nations, including in developing the Voluntary National Review to be presented at the HLPF. Therefore, the second official submission at the 2021 HLPF represents a key date for the Working Group. With its first meeting held in December 2020, the Working Group evaluated data and case studies from the focal points to be included in the VNR. In addition, all the focal points were in agreement that the 2021 VNR should be developed on the basis of two key building blocks.

First, the 2021 VNR presents Thailand's progress, success, and challenges in driving forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs in the country. It aims to present developments since the first official submission to the HLPF in 2017, drawing upon information accumulated and developed for the National Economic and Social Development Council's upcoming SDGs+5 Report (2016-2020). The VNR will also reflect the challenges and impacts on SDGs advancement originating from the COVID-19 pandemic, and will highlight efforts to Build Back Better.

Second, the 2021 VNR process not only focuses on the report itself and its presentation at the HLPF, but attaches equal importance to the VNR development process. The VNR process served as a significant opportunity to raise awareness within the state and private sectors on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. This served to strengthen the integration of efforts from all sectors aimed at advancing the SDGs. In the Decade of Action and within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Thailand is determined to **mobilise “everyone, everywhere” and expand the stakeholder base in order to advance the SDGs**. The achievement of the SDGs within 2030 will only come as a result of cooperation from all sectors.

As such, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has promoted the participation of all sectors within the country in the development of Thailand's 2021 VNR, including the National Assembly, academia, youth, and volunteers. Such groups have contributed information to the VNR, including through networks established under the Open-Ended Working Group with civil society (OEWG for SDGs) and through other channels. It is hoped that such engagement with all sectors will ensure that the VNR is well-balanced and reflects the true progress of the country. It will also serve to raise awareness on the integral role of all sectors in driving forward sustainable development as a whole.

The 2021 VNR will also build on Thailand's VNRs from 2018-2020, which were developed on a yearly basis but were not officially submitted to the HLPF. These annual VNRs were developed in order to maintain the momentum within the country with regards to the SDGs, support integrated efforts between government agencies and between sectors, and boost the participation of all sectors within society to raise awareness and interest on sustainable development, especially at the local level. These VNRs have focused on themes such as “**Localising the SDGs**” in 2018, “**Community Empowerment**” in 2019, and “**Volunteerism and Sustainable Development**” in 2020. The VNRs reflect Thailand's process of SDG localisation since 2018, progressing from the national and local levels to the community level, and finally culminating at the individual level.

## Thailand's SDG Roadmap

The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda can only come as a result of an effective institutional foundation and development pathway. With this vision in mind, Thailand established the National Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD) to consider relevant government policies and promote balanced national development (incorporating the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development) in accordance with the 2030



Agenda and all 17 SDGs. The Prime Minister serves as the Chair of the CSD, and the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) has been tasked as the coordinating focal point for the country's efforts to advance the SDGs.

Since the establishment of the CSD, the Royal Thai Government has endeavoured to make changes to its structure in order to promote more effective implementation. Four Sub-Committees were formed to bring SDG achievement from policy to implementation:

- (1) Sub-Committee for the Advancement of the SDGs
- (2) Sub-Committee for the Promotion of the Application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy
- (3) Sub-Committee for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Sustainable Development
- (4) Sub-Committee for Strategic Environmental Assessments

The NESDC, as the coordinating focal point and secretariat of the CSD, has also envisaged the future establishment of two additional sub-committees, namely the Sub-Committee for Youth and the Sub-Committee for the Promotion of Cooperation with the Private Sector, in order to boost the participation of both sectors. Both sectors represent key actors within Thailand's sustainable development landscape.\*

In addition, **the CSD approved the country's SDGs Roadmap in 2019** in order to ensure that national efforts to achieve the SDGs advance in one unified direction. This SDGs Roadmap encompasses six areas, including the following:

**1. Awareness-Raising:** Thailand has endeavoured to ensure that all sectors gain an understanding and knowledge of the SDGs, including at the national and local levels. This will help to ensure that all sectors can contribute to the advancement of sustainable development within the country. Key examples of implementation include the analysis of success and challenges in advancing the SDGs in order to eliminate gaps in implementation, brainstorming events to drive forward the SDGs, knowledge and experience sharing on the application of SEP for the SDGs, and the creation of knowledge products aimed at all sectors within society.

**2. Policy Coherence:** The Government has linked the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs with national strategies and plans at all three policy levels. This includes the 20-Year National Strategy 2018-2037 (Level 1), the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan 2018-2022 and 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan 2023-2027 (Level 2), and the various action plans (Level 3). This ensures that all efforts towards the SDGs are integrated and cohesive, and that the implementation of the National Strategy and various Masterplans by government agencies also contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

**\*Note**

The first session of the 2022 CSD Meeting held on 17 January 2022 endorsed the restructuring of the CSD sub-committees and working group under the CSD, by establishing two sub-committees on the private sector and youth, as well as the Working Group on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development within the United Nations, and abolished the Sub-Committee for the Advancement of the SDGs and the Sub-Committee for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Sustainable Development.

# Thailand's SDG Roadmap

2 Policy Coherence

1 Awareness-Raising

**3. Domestic Mechanisms:** Thailand leverages a robust and cohesive institutional framework for SDG achievement, with the CSD as the main mechanism to advance SDG policies at the national level. The four Sub-Committees support the integration of all government efforts at the central and local levels, and ensure that sufficient funding and resources are available to promote effective implementation and concrete outcomes.

**4. Implementation and Projects:** All plans and projects implemented by relevant agencies must be evidence-based, in order to support the implementation of the National Strategy and its associated Masterplans in tandem with the achievement of all 17 SDGs and 169 Targets. Priority is attached to urgent issues and those of strategic importance within the National Strategy, and implementation must also serve to advance SDG localisation.

**5. Partnerships:** Thailand values partnerships to promote cooperation between all sectors within the country and with development partners abroad in order to advance the SDGs. Cooperation with key sectors including:

**5.1 Private Sector:** Thailand has promoted the role of the private sector in the implementation of sustainable development and in supporting new knowledge on transformative change in the world. This also includes the promotion of new sustainable development approaches by large, medium, and small business networks and actors.

**5.2 Academia:** The country has supported Action-Oriented Learning, Action-Oriented Academic Services, and Action-Oriented Research for the SDGs.

**5.3 Civil Society:** Thailand has sought to build networks and platforms for civil society, as well as promote integrated efforts to advance the SDGs at the local, tambon, municipality, and provincial levels. Other efforts by civil society have encompassed the brainstorming on issues important for sustainable development within the country, as well as the creation of SDG labs to boost learning on the Global Goals.



**5.4 Youth:** The Government has worked together with the private sector and civil society to disseminate knowledge on sustainable development to youth in the country, particularly to build the skills and capacities of youth in order to promote future careers that advance sustainable development. A youth symposium was also organised to discuss and promote sustainable development issues that were important to youth groups, which will ultimately lead to youth-driven public policy.

**5.5 International Development Partners:** Thailand has implemented projects with international development partners in order to advance the SDGs, exchange knowledge in order to build Thailand's capacities in policy innovation, and ensure that the country is able to develop long-term development plans that can adapt to external changes in the future. The country has played a central role in promoting home-grown development approaches on the international stage.

**6. Monitoring and Evaluation:** The Government has monitored and evaluated progress on the SDGs through a central reporting database that analyses data from relevant agencies on a continuous basis. The **Electronic Monitoring and Evaluation of National Strategy and Country Reform (eMENSCR)** functions as the main means of monitoring and evaluation of progress on strategies and plans at all levels. NESDC currently has plans to utilise the information gained through eMENSCR to evaluate progress on the SDGs as well as progress on the National Strategy and various plans, allowing for a systematic analysis of implementation gaps. This will ensure that the Government is able to develop evidence based policies, projects, and implementation in the future.

## SDG Localisation

The Royal Thai Government is cognisant that the successful achievement of all 17 SDGs not only relies on cooperation from all sectors, but will also require effective implementation at the national, community, and local levels. The NESDC, in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and other relevant agencies, has assessed the capacities and readiness of various areas across the country in terms of SDG implementation. As such, 9 provinces and 5 local government authorities from 6 regions and 4 development groups within Thailand were selected as pilot areas. These areas will be supported in their awareness raising efforts on the SDGs, the promotion of the participation of all sectors in SDG advancement, and integration of the SDGs into provincial and local development plans. This implementation will be expanded into other areas in the future. At present, the pilot areas comprise the following:

**Pilot Provinces** Kalasin/ Narathiwat/ Nan/ Yasothon/ Loei/ Lopburi/ Phetchaburi/ Surat Thani/ Chachoengsao

**Pilot Local Government Authorities** Sri Saket Municipality/ Baan Rai Tambon Local Government Authority (Uthai Thani Province)/ Krabi Local Government





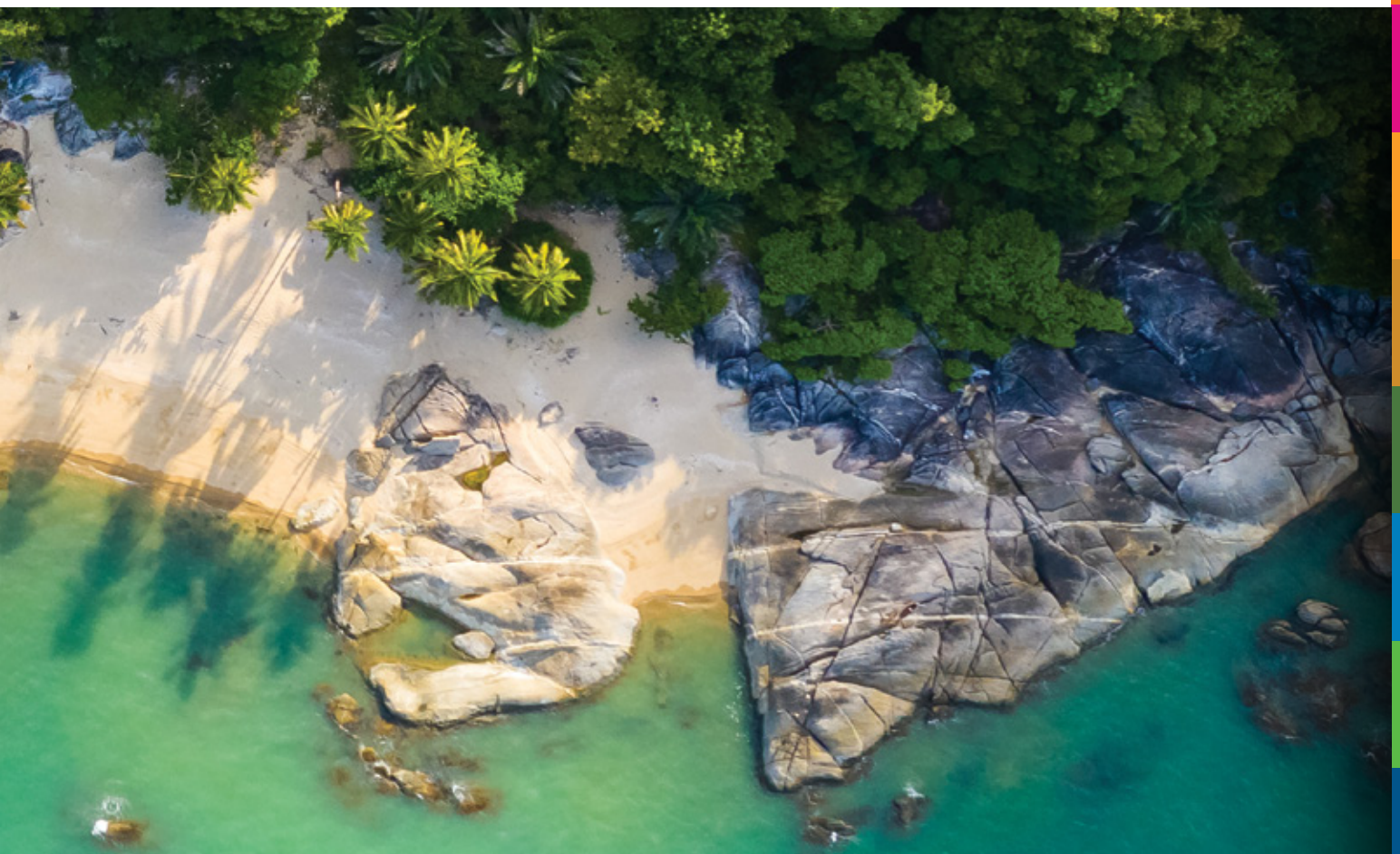
## SDG Localisation: Nakhon Si Thammarat

Several local government authorities in Thailand have increased their awareness and capacities on the SDGs. Since early 2021, the Nakhon Si Thammarat Municipality has implemented a joint project with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to develop a **Voluntary Local Review (VLR)**. The objective of the project is to review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the municipality, develop the capacities of local officials to evaluate and monitor progress, and to foster dialogue on sustainable development with local stakeholders. The project also aims to link the implementation of the SDGs at the local level with the national level.

At present, the following actions have been implemented as part of the project:

1. A project inception meeting was organised on 18 February 2021 in order to build understanding of the SDGs and to identify an approach and priority issues for the VLR.
2. The Municipality organised a training workshop between 2-3 March 2021 to raise the capacities of local officials and personnel with regards to the drafting of the VLR.
3. A SWOT analysis conducted by the municipality showed that Nakhon Si Thammarat has strengths in the capacity of personnel and education infrastructure. However, challenges remain with regards to the management of water resources, traffic management, unemployment, and environmental issues. As such, the municipality aims to prioritise SDGs 4, 6, 8, 9, and 11.

In the next stage of implementation, the Nakhon Si Thammarat Municipality will develop a local development plan to promote social and economic development, environmental conservation, energy infrastructure development, improvement of the quality of life, and good governance. At present, the municipality is in the process of gathering information and data, as well as best practices from stakeholders in local communities, in order to draft the VLR.







## ■ Goal 1

End poverty in all its forms everywhere

## ■ Goal 2

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

## ■ Goal 3

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

## ■ Goal 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

## ■ Goal 5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

## ■ Goal 6

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

## ■ Goal 7

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all

## ■ Goal 8

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

## ■ Goal 9

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

## ■ Goal 10

Reduce inequality within and among countries

## ■ Goal 11

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

## ■ Goal 12

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

## ■ Goal 13

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact

## ■ Goal 14

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

## ■ Goal 15

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

## ■ Goal 16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

## ■ Goal 17

Strengthen the Means of Implementation and Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development





# GOAL 1

| End poverty in all its forms  
everywhere

# Overview

Thailand has achieved extensive and significant progress on poverty reduction, both with regards to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Particular progress has been made in addressing extreme poverty, as illustrated by the absence of persons living with an income lower than 1.90 USD per day, the international extreme poverty line, since 2016. Building on this success, Thailand has sought to elevate its commitment to reducing extreme poverty beyond the level of international indicators. The country has designated an extreme poverty line that goes beyond the international extreme poverty line. In this regard, further implementation has been successful. The number of people living below the poverty line within Thailand has decreased continuously: in 2019, this number stood at 6.25 per cent of the total population (equivalent to 4.3 million people), reduced from 9.85 per cent (6.7 million people) in 2018 as a result of the expansion of the Thai economy as well as government measures to support low income groups. In terms of income, Thais now earn an average income of 9,847 Thai Baht per person per year, which represents an increase from 9,614 Thai Baht per person per year in 2017.

Thailand's measures to advance poverty eradication not only take into account the income dimension, but also seek to address other dimensions, such as social protection, access to essential services, and varying risk factors. Thailand has introduced a **National Multi-Dimension Poverty Index (MPI)**, which covers four dimensions of poverty: education; healthy lifestyles; quality of life; and financial security. This has been developed in order to comprehensively and accurately reflect the current situation in the country. The Government's measures have also led to an improvement in the country's score on this index. Thailand's MPI score stood at 0.051 in 2019, with the proportion of the population living in multi-dimensional poverty at 13.4 per cent (or equivalent to 9.1 million people). The **Intensity of Poverty** score stood at 38 per cent. This highlights the country's improvement from 2017, when the MPI score stood at 0.068, with 17.6 per cent of the population living in poverty and an Intensity of Poverty score of 38.7 per cent.

At the international level, Thailand has consistently contributed to international efforts to eradicate poverty through overseas assistance. This is underlined by the growth in the country's international cooperation budget, which increased from 308 million Thai Baht in 2005 to 892 million Thai Baht in 2019.

However, the COVID-19 crisis has inevitably impacted the implementation of poverty eradication measures in Thailand. The economic impacts of the pandemic have led to reduced incomes for 54 per cent of Thais, with an increase in debt within and out of the loan system. COVID-19 has also disproportionately affected poorer households, particularly the urban poor who have high costs of living. Other groups at risk of moving below the poverty line include those that rely on sources of income from outside the household, those with employment in industries at risk of reducing workforces during the pandemic, and farmers who own little or no land. These groups comprise over 1.14 million households.





# Policies and Implementation

The Thai Government has implemented several measures and projects aimed at poverty eradication prior to, during, and after the COVID-19 outbreak. Such measures reflect the commitment of the country in comprehensively addressing multi-dimensional poverty. Key policies and projects include:

**(1) The Government has advanced poverty eradication efforts through targeted measures for key groups, these measures aim to create and expand opportunities for vulnerable groups,** in order to assist them to gain comprehensive and equal access to state welfare and services. These measures are in line with the Government's **pro-poor policies** and take into account a **gender-sensitive perspective**. Measures have been continuously implemented to find and identify target groups who require assistance in different dimensions of poverty. This has included projects to provide financial assistance for newborn children in impoverished households, state welfare registration, and financial assistance for students from poorer households. Existing projects have also been expanded. Assistance for children in poor households from the age of 0-3 years has been expanded to children aged 0-6 years. The range of criteria for those eligible to receive state welfare has also been widened. This has been expanded to those earning less than 36,000 Thai Baht per year to 100,000 Thai Baht per year. The Government has also designated context-specific poverty indicators to better assist various vulnerable groups. As an example, child poverty analysis in Thailand has been transformed to also incorporate dimensions such as child welfare, quality of life, and good health and wellbeing, in order to reflect the specific problems associated with child poverty.

**(2) To address the vulnerability of workers in the informal sector,** Thailand amended relevant legislation to provide increased benefits and rights to assistance for social protection in accordance with Section 40 of the **Social Security Act B.E 2533 (1990)**. This now covers workers in the informal sector, self-employed persons, agricultural producers, informal sellers,

and freelance workers. These groups have been assisted in increasing their access to the social protection system. Furthermore, the Government has initiated projects to raise the capacities of low-income workers and has created **mobile service delivery units** to provide social welfare services. These units have provided mobile assistance 15,324 times since their introduction in 2020, with assistance given to a total of 1,006,492 people.

**(3) Grassroots economies have been developed to raise the capacities of local communities.** Key projects advancing this vision include a project development model areas which aim to raise the quality of life through the application of **New Theory Agriculture** and advance the “**Khok Nong Na**” Model. This model constitutes one application of the **Sufficiency Economy Philosophy**, and promotes new farming methods by dividing farm land into four parts: 30 per cent of the plot is used for rice cultivation; 30 per cent for other agricultural crops; 30 per cent as a water source for irrigation; and the remaining 10 per cent serves as land for houses and livestock. This concept utilises villages as the model to promote grassroots development and to build resilience to external shocks for all households. Trainings have been organised and model areas created at the local and household levels to improve the capacities of the people in the area on food security. This includes knowledge in areas such as vegetable cultivation, basic water management, and the effective use of existing resources. Such activities have also served to instill the values of environmental conservation, therefore promoting community learning and participation. This vision advances a people-centred approach and the strengthening of household resilience, while developing the people to be knowledgeable and adaptable to new ways of life in order to promote happiness, employment, and stable incomes in a rapidly-changing world. At present, the model has been implemented in 73 provinces, incorporating 571 municipalities, 3,246 tambons, and 25,179 households. A budget of 4.788 billion Thai Baht has been allocated to support 7 key activities across the country, comprising:

1. Training to develop skills in the short-term to promote sustainable agriculture according to the Khok Nong Na model.
2. Creation of areas along the community lab model to improve quality of life at the tambon level, and development of areas along the household lab model to improve household quality of life.
3. Implementation of measures to provide employment and income for agricultural producers, labourers, new graduates, and workers who have recently relocated back to their local areas and communities.
4. Development projects to boost household and private sector consumption and support model household areas for the development of quality of life.
5. Integration of all development efforts at the tambon-level.
6. Creation of product production processes and product standards in line with the Thai Organic Way of Life standard.
7. Application of digital systems to develop programmes and a database aimed at advancing the local economy.



In addition, the Government has implemented the “**Thai Niyom Yung Yuen**”, or “**Sustainable Thai-ness**” project to increase local participation in providing solutions to development challenges and in distributing income throughout local communities. This community-based tourism project builds on the **One Tambon, One Product (OTOP)** project by developing local communities as tourism destinations, leveraging local products and customs as attractions. The projects help communities to adapt to new tourism trends which value variety and local experiences in communities. This will lead to spending on activities, products, and services in communities, therefore allowing for the distribution of income throughout such communities. At present, 7,663 expert groups have been formed to provide advice on income distribution in 81,151 communities. In addition, a project has been initiated to provide practical training for community entrepreneurs to strengthen their grassroots economies, as well as a project to provide training for new supplementary jobs in local communities. The Smart Farmer Project provides information technology skills and knowledge on business and financial planning for farmers. A project to disseminate knowledge on debt management has also been implemented, including on the management of household debt and access to correct forms of financing. Other measures promoted include the provision of small loans for emergency use, the development of the “1 Loan, 1 Tambon, 1 SME” project to promote the application of New Theory Agriculture, the increase of village and community funds, and the establishment of community financing systems for model communities to promote the application of the SEP.

**(4) Expanding ownership of property and development of comprehensive infrastructure**, the Land Policy Committee is in the process of distributing land to promote good livelihoods for low income earners through the provision of collective lots of land. Once fully implemented, 76,000 people will have received land to build their livelihoods. Measures have also been implemented to develop housing for the vulnerable groups and low-income earners, such as the **Baan Thanarak Pracharat project**, the **Baan Khon Thai Pracharat project**, and the 1 Million Homes Project. This also complements the development of capacities in the application of modern technology to increase incomes and promote connectivity to the wider economy for different groups. This includes the **Net Pracharat project**, which has expanded high-speed broadband internet to 24,700 villages across the country. Other key examples include the Fringe Areas Internet project, which covers 3,920 villages, and the Far Off Internet project, which covers 15,732 villages.

**(5)** The Government has developed the **Thai People Map and Analytics Platform (TPMAP)** as the central database used to search for and identify poor and vulnerable groups in an inclusive, correct, and accurate manner. This builds on the previous Thai Poverty Map and Analytics Platform, and helps to identify key poverty-related issues at the individual, household, community, provincial, and national levels. The TPMAP will provide an effective boost to efforts to solve poverty problems according to the needs of various target groups, and will allow for context, area, and group-specific policy making.

1 Training to develop skills in the short-term to promote sustainable agriculture according to the Khok Nong Na model.

2 Creation of areas along the community lab model to improve quality of life at the tambon level, and development of areas along the household lab model to improve household quality of life.

3 Implementation of measures to provide employment and income for agricultural producers, labourers, new graduates, and workers who have recently relocated back to their local areas and communities.

4 Development projects to boost household and private sector consumption and support model household areas for the development of quality of life.

5 Integration of all development efforts at the tambon-level.

# 7 Key Activities

## “Khok Nong Na” Model

7 Application of digital systems to develop programmes and a database aimed at advancing the local economy.

6 Creation of product production processes and product standards in line with the Thai Organic Way of Life standard.

(6) Thailand has also recently implemented several measures to assist those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures give priority to providing financial remedy of 5,000 Thai Baht per month for a period of 3 months for workers in the informal sector and agricultural producers. Remedy of 1,000 Thai Baht per person per month has also been provided for other vulnerable groups. The Government has also initiated the “50:50 Co-Payment Scheme” to assist people with the cost of living in tandem with the reduction of prices for essential goods. To revive the economy and alleviate the socio-economic effects on vulnerable groups, Thailand has passed an emergency decree allowing the Ministry of Finance to take out a loan of 1 trillion Thai Baht to resolve various problems, provide financial remedy for those affected, and boost socio-economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. A strategy has also been developed to support increased employment, boost income generation, and develop training to assist workers who have recently returned to hometowns and communities as a result of the pandemic to improve their livelihoods. Thailand is committed to creating a learning system to “upskill” workers according to the needs of the labour market in the post-COVID era, which will help workers adapt to the New Normal.



# Challenges and Way Forward

Thailand still faces challenges with regards to poverty eradication, despite significant success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These challenges are mainly in terms of the existing infrastructure, different dimensions to poverty that do not include income, and the impacts of COVID-19. These issues will affect poverty eradication in all dimensions in Thailand.

(1) **The Thai social infrastructure highlights several inequalities.** As such, many Thais have been designated as members of vulnerable groups. As of 2019, 5.4 million Thai people are considered part of vulnerable groups, equivalent to 7.79 per cent of the total population. The effects of COVID-19 will only serve to exacerbate this.

(2) **State assistance is yet to comprehensively reach poor and vulnerable groups,** and the total amount of poor people in the country is yet to be accurately ascertained. The Government still faces particular challenges in the coordination and integration of work between all relevant agencies, and in designating comprehensive criteria to identify key groups when implementing poverty eradication measures. The use of the TPMap will serve to develop capacities in this area.

(3) **Domestic economic growth is still not inclusive and creates inequalities,** resulting in wealth concentration in urban areas. Poverty eradication measures are still aimed at specific issues, rather than targeting infrastructure changes in order to respond to the problems, such as increasing industrial areas and providing economic opportunities for far off areas.

(4) **Not enough low-income earners in Thailand have ownership of property or land,** and many lack the necessary knowledge to escape poverty, such as information on household debt management, access to finance, and technology skills to build incomes.









# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## (1) Khon Kaen COVID Fight Project

The Friends of the Homeless is a private sector organisation which has worked with vulnerable groups, including homeless persons, in Khon Kaen in order to contribute towards reduced inequalities and strengthened community resilience. The group has also worked with youth volunteers in developing youth networks in Khon Kaen, focusing on implementation in the Khon Kaen municipality, Sila tambon, Khon Kaen Old City tambon, and Mueang tambon (totaling 3 municipalities and 1 amphoe).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Friends of the Homeless worked in the field to ascertain the full impacts of the pandemic on the community, and gathered information on key problems such as: (1) a lack of information on COVID-19 prevention measures for homeless and vulnerable groups, such as the use of masks, correct hand-washing techniques, and social distancing measures; (2) a lack of income for homeless persons and vulnerable groups stemming from lockdown measures put into place by the Government; and (3) the risk of homeless persons and vulnerable groups in being left behind in State assistance and remediation efforts, due to a lack of literacy and access to technology.

As such, the group implemented the “Khon Kaen COVID Fight” project between 1 June-31 July 2020 in two phases:

**In the short-term**, the project has supported youth and community volunteers to organise COVID-19 protection events, in which assistance was offered to homeless persons and vulnerable groups with regards to access to welfare, food, and employment, in order to reduce the impacts of the pandemic on such groups in Khon Kaen.

In the long-term, the project set up food banks both at the household and group levels, in order to reduce food scarcity during the pandemic and has also organised designated employment areas, where homeless persons and vulnerable groups can be matched with potential employers and entrepreneurs who wish to hire them. Such actions have helped to reduce the economic impacts of the pandemic and the long-term loss of income.

**Concrete outcomes from the project include the following:**

- 1) 30 meals each were provided for over 100 homeless persons and vulnerable groups, helping to improve access to food welfare and food banks.
- 2) 42 homeless persons and vulnerable groups were assisted with regards to ensuring their access to COVID-19 remedies from relevant state agencies.
- 3) Foodbanks were organised for 9 vulnerable communities, totaling over 100 households.
- 4) 48 homeless persons and vulnerable groups were supported with regards to employment during the pandemic.
- 5) Capacity-building support was provided 31 homeless persons and vulnerable groups to prepare them for future employment opportunities.

In total, 220 persons received support from the project, including 91 women, 128 men, and 1 LGBTI person. This also included 3 men with disabilities. The project leveraged the support of 89 volunteers, including 57 women, 31 men, and one LGBTI person.

## **(2) Pracharath Rak Samakkee Social Enterprise (Thailand) Co., Ltd.**

The Pracharath Rak Samakkee Social Enterprise company was born in 2016 from the idea that social enterprises can be a creative driving force for local economic development. This initiative has set up various social enterprises in every province under the “Pracharath Rak Samakkee” banner, with the Pracharath Rak Samakkee company as the central body to coordinate between all sectors. The initiative helps to promote knowledge and improve resources and helps boost communities’ income from agricultural businesses, processing, and local tourism - strengthening Thailand’s grassroots economy and driving sustainable development in the communities. The development and capacity building process for local enterprises can be broken down into the following five aspects:

**1. Supporting community access to means of production** both in terms of resources and capital, such as by helping draft an effective business plan, helping source quality seeds, and matching communities with suitable financial institutions.

**2. Generating income from community knowledge** by developing storytelling for products and local tourism spots to make them stand out, supporting local research, and encouraging product certifications, including patent registrations.

**3. Holistic marketing efforts** starting from market analysis, to product and packaging development, and new sales channels.

**4. Creating sustainable awareness** through support in brand building and public relations campaigns via local and national media affiliates.

**5. Establishing a basic management system** for capital, accounting, and risks.





# GOAL 2

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture



# Overview

Thailand has achieved significant progress in advancing SDG2. With regards to ending hunger and promoting access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food, Thailand has managed to reduce the number of people living in food poverty.<sup>1</sup> This is in line with Thailand's improved standing in the **World Food Security Index**, as well as the overall reduction in the number of people per capita who are unable to access sufficient food in the last 3-5 years. Moreover, Thais have enjoyed greater access to food, in 2019 the number of those under the food poverty line was 0.37 per cent, a reduction from 0.54 per cent in 2016. Furthermore, Thailand's ranking in the Global Food Security Index (GFSI) has improved, with an average score of 65.1 out of a total of 100 in 2019, compared to 58.3 in 2017 and 58.9 in 2018.

Thailand has a clear framework for promoting improved nutrition. The Government has developed the **National Nutrition Action Plan (2019-2023)** which is aligned with the SDGs, and is committed to creating a network in order to advance real implementation on the ground. Plans are also underway to develop a national nutrition database in the future. In 2019, it was found that the proportion of children under the age of 5 who are well-proportioned increased from 57.3 per cent from 48.8 per cent in 2018. However, the percentage of children of the same age who are stunted, suffer from malnutrition, or are obese increased from 24.19 per cent in 2018 to 32.23 per cent in 2019. This emphasizes the need for continued actions to improve access to good food and nutrition in the country.<sup>2</sup>

In terms of increasing agricultural productivity and income for small-scale agricultural producers, Thailand has experienced good progress in increasing the value of productivity per labour unit and the gross income of agricultural producers. In 2019, the gross agricultural product was valued at 673 billion Thai Baht, compared to 609 billion Thai Baht in 2016. Employment in the agricultural sector increased from 12.57 million people in 2016 to 12.69 million people in 2019. Furthermore, the value of products per labour unit in 2019 was at 53,051 Thai Baht, representing an increase of 9.58 per cent from 48,415 Thai Baht in 2016.

With regards to support for the agricultural sector, Thailand has increased the amount of sustainable agricultural land in the past 3-4 years, with increased investment in the sector from the Government. This is aimed at supporting mixed agriculture, **New Theory Agriculture**, organic farming, and natural farming. As such, this enabled Thailand to increase the amount of land used in sustainable farming from 1.08 million rai in 2017 to 1.15 million rai in 2020. The Government has supported large-scale agriculture policies aimed at supporting farming collectives in managing and applying high-investment technologies in order to reduce costs in production and sales. Furthermore, this will support a more reliable market for the agricultural products cultivated. From 2016-2019, 355,122 farmers joined the project and managed to increase their collective productivity by 97.38 per cent as compared to 2017. The total value of products increased from 11.19 billion Thai Baht in 2017 to 22.08 billion Thai Baht in 2018. This has also supported the certification of agricultural products for 142,850 producers.

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<sup>1</sup>Measured by the number of individuals whose average income or expenditure is less than the Food Poverty Line.

<sup>2</sup>According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), malnutrition in Thailand is reported to have increased from 8.6 per cent in 2016 to 8.9 and 9.3 per cent in 2017 and 2018 respectively.



# Policies and Implementation

(1) Support has been provided to increase access to nutritious food, particularly for children and youth. This includes projects to improve nutrition for newborn babies and the **“Miracle of the First 1,000 Days”** project, which aims to improve the wellbeing of newborn children in the most crucial stage of their growth. Other projects include a project to support well-proportioned growth in school children, initiatives to increase knowledge on nutrition for children aged 6-14, and the hosting of a national seminar to promote children’s good health in 2019. In addition, the **“Thai Girls with Rosy Cheeks”** project was implemented to reduce anemia in girls and young women. The project was aimed at young women, pregnant women, and primary and secondary school students. Activities for this project include awareness-raising through all types of media and the provision of iron supplements via an online registration system.

(2) **The “Agriculture for Lunch”** project was aimed at supporting students, especially those in far-off locations, to be given sufficient food with good nutrition and to bolster food security. It supported students in growing food on school land, with 747 schools in 50 provinces joining the scheme.

(3) **The capacity of the agricultural and food production system has been raised** through projects to support sustainable farmers (both arable and mixed), organic farmers, natural farmers, **New Theory Agriculture** farmers, and agro-forestry farmers. This includes efforts to integrate work and improve efficiency and productivity through e-government. Importance is attached to improving connectivity between relevant agencies through the development of a national nutrition database, improvement of the registration system for fruit export permits, and the development of an information system to boost exports. The **Provincial Crop Calendar Project** has also assisted farmers to produce agriculture products according to market needs, adapt to price fluctuations, and strengthen area-based efforts to boost food security.

(4) **Modern technology has been applied to improve the agricultural system.** The Government has initiated a project to advance trade since 2018 by creating an information system and database to allow for the effective input of information and improvement of existing data systems. In 2019, this database was used to improve the reporting system for three agricultural products, namely rice, palm oil, and rubber. In 2020, this was further expanded to cover corn for animal feed, cassava, and durian. Such efforts help to monitor prices in the supply chain process and allow for comprehensive price comparisons. In addition, the Government has implemented the Smart Farmer and Young Smart Farmer projects and improved the agricultural database. This has been complemented by the establishment of the **Agriculture Centre of Excellence** and the **Agricultural Technology and Innovation Centre** in order to assist agricultural producers to access information and apply their technology skills and knowledge to plan for production and marketing in the future.



(5) **The Development of the Online Agri-Map** allows farmers and others to advance more effective and comprehensive agricultural management. The Online Agri-Map assists Thai farms in monitoring information on changes in water resource availability, the appropriateness and effectiveness of each area for certain types of farming, and on information on subsidies. Advice on the application of modern technology in farming is also provided. The information available for farmers through this system is regularly updated and ease of access has been improved.

(6) The establishment of the **National Biobank of Thailand (NBT)** will serve to house biological resources outside of their natural habitats in order to preserve such valuable samples in the long-term. Research and information on specimens have been developed by the NBT in order to more effectively preserve crop and seed diversity to boost economic growth. The NBT has worked together with 24 domestic networks and agencies in this area, and has published 53 pieces of high-quality research in international reviews.





# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Thailand's efforts to promote good nutrition**, and has even disrupted the national school schedule. This therefore means that school children have not been regularly weighed nor had their height measured in schools. The Government has instead promoted other means to achieve this, especially through the involvement of the **Village Health Volunteers (VHV)** system, in order to ensure that every child is weighed and has their height measured every three months. The **Thai Stop COVID** digital platform has been used to raise awareness on good nutrition and disseminate key information on the COVID-19 pandemic. Thailand must further increase cooperation and integrate relevant information between agencies and promote greater coherence between implementation at the national and local levels. The country must also raise the capacities of personnel in local communities.

(2) **To counter malnutrition**, the country must raise awareness and understanding among the population on healthy consumption and nutrition. Efforts must also be made to reduce inequalities, which have led to unequal access to health and nutritious food.

(3) **Thailand must prioritise the building of resilience and strengthening of the agricultural system** to respond to external shocks, such as climate change, agricultural price fluctuations in the global market, and an aging agricultural workforce. Technology must be promoted in order to increase efficiency and productivity for farmers and small scale food producers.

(4) **Thailand still lacks a quality, comprehensive and integrated biodiversity database**. The country must promote increased use of big data, especially in connecting farmers to databases. Further effort should be aimed at raising the capacities of farmers in using information to analyse and plan their farming to be in line with the needs of the market and other changes. Databases will be beneficial in addressing threats to the country's flora and fauna.





# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## (1) Youth Networks for Food Security

During the COVID-19 pandemic, food security for vulnerable groups has become a priority issue for many communities. The Chiang Khong youth group, Khon Kaen youth group, and the Luukrieang group organised events to promote food security for vulnerable groups during the crisis. This also included events to promote good health and nutrition for small children. In total, projects initiated during the pandemic by the three groups benefited 349 persons in local communities, including 173 women, 175 men, and 1 LGBTI person.

## (2) Cooperation with private sectors food producers and retailers

Thailand has fostered cooperation between private sector food producers and large-scale food retailers to boost food security and improved nutrition. Key examples include a project by Lotus (part of the CPAll Group) to elevate the quality of school food for children across the country. CPAll Group has also initiated a project to raise chickens in schools to produce eggs as a key source of nutrition, and has developed the “CPAll Full Bellies, Full Futures” project in order to support schoolchildren in improving their knowledge and producing their own food. At present, the former has 777 participating schools, while the latter is promoted in 79 schools.





# Overview

Thailand's effective management of the COVID-19 crisis since 2020 is a concrete example of the country's success in responding to a new emerging disease. This in turn has highlighted the strength of Thailand's public health system and **universal health coverage (UHC)**. In this regard, Thailand was commended in 2019 for the readiness of its public health system and capacity in handling new emerging diseases, and was **ranked 6th in the world and 1st in Asia** in the same year.

Thailand has achieved several of the targets included under SDG3. In 2019, the mortality rate of new mothers consisted of 22.5 deaths per 100,000 births.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the death rate for newborn babies comprised 5.6 deaths per 1,000 births and the death rate of children under the age of 5 stood at 7.9 deaths per 1,000 children.<sup>4</sup> The proportion of prospective mothers who received antenatal care from qualified medical professionals at least once was 98.6 per cent. Furthermore, the number of AIDS and malaria patients in Thailand has remained stable, standing at 0.08 and 0.01 respectively in 2020. The number of patients suffering from drug addiction who have had to seek treatment in rehabilitation facilities has been reduced from 48.57 per cent of the total patients in 2018 to 43.53 per cent in 2020.

The country issued the **National Health Security Act** in 2002, and has committed itself to improving the effectiveness of its universal health coverage in terms of health services provided, protection against various diseases, quality patient care, and comprehensive patient recovery. This has elevated the country's UHC service coverage index score from 75 per cent in 2015 to 80 per cent in 2018. As such, Thailand currently has the **highest coverage in Southeast Asia**. In addition, only 2.2 per cent of all households pay medical costs that are more than 10 per cent of all household costs. This is a result of comprehensive universal health coverage and a low rate of unmet healthcare needs within the country. The percentage of patients who have not had their medical needs met in the country stand at 1.4 per cent for outpatients and 0.4 per cent for inpatients.

However, Thailand still faces particular challenges in terms of premature loss of life, including increasing death rates from **tuberculosis, road accidents, 4 non-communicable diseases (heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and respiratory diseases)**, and **suicide**. With regards to tuberculosis, the infection rate remains at 150 cases per 100,000 people, with a fatality rate of 11,000 in 2019. This is a rate that must be reduced by 90 per cent within 2030. In terms of road accidents, the fatality rate remains at 30.36 deaths per 100,000 people.<sup>5</sup> Both issues represent a key challenge for Thailand. In 2019, the fatality rate from cardiovascular diseases stood at 43.7 per cent, 25.3 per cent from diabetes, and 14.0 per cent for respiratory diseases per 100,000 people.<sup>6</sup> The suicide rate was at 6.64 per 100,000 people.<sup>7</sup> The main cause of death for Thais, however, has been cancer. Statistics from the **World Health Organisation** show 114,199 deaths from cancer in Thailand in 2018.

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<sup>3</sup>Target 3.1 prescribed the reduction of global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030.

<sup>4</sup>Target 3.2 prescribed the reduction of neonatal mortality rate to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births by 2030.

<sup>5</sup>In 2018, the fatality rate stood at 25.2 deaths per 100,000 people.

<sup>6</sup>In 2018, the fatality rate from cardiovascular diseases stood at 39.4 per cent, 120.3 per cent from cancer, 21.9 per cent from diabetes, and 13.9 per cent for respiratory diseases per 100,000 people.

<sup>7</sup>In 2018, the suicide death was at 6.31 per 100,000 people.



Regarding drug and alcohol addiction, the number of drug addiction patients who entered rehabilitation facilities dropped from 48.57 per cent in 2018 to 43.53 per cent in 2020. Alcohol consumption per adult population comprised 8.3 litres per person per year, representing higher consumption than the target of 6.40 litres per person per year set in 2015.

In addition, Thailand still experiences health risks from pollution. The main pollution risks stem from PM2.5 particles, PM10 particles, and ozone gases, which continue to increase beyond the standard amount. This is also exacerbated by water pollution risks in the main rivers and still water sources. 18 per cent of such water sources are considered polluted. Imports of various chemicals have also increased.

## Policies and Implementation

Thailand has managed to effectively protect against and control transmissions of COVID-19 with special measures put into place during the pandemic. This has been achieved through strict protection measures against cases from abroad, in tandem with awareness-raising measures aimed at the general public. The Ministry of Public Health prepared the country's readiness with regards to adequate medical care, healthcare facilities, protective equipment, medical supplies, and other medical resources. The country also leveraged a whole-of-society approach from all sectors in order to protect against transmission and to monitor developments, in accordance with the following approach:

(1) **Monitoring and evaluation of the COVID-19 situation and risk of infection:** This was conducted to aid decision-making processes, and included monitoring and evaluation at the international and national levels, monitoring of the public health situation and public behaviour through questionnaires and surveys, the identification of phases of infection and at-risk groups, the use of mathematical models to predict infection scenarios.

(2) **Public standards have been developed in a timely and effective manner** as a pathway at the national level. This included international measures such as prevention of international travel, measures for certain risk groups, and effective management of the situation at the provincial-level while taking into account the local context and situation.

(3) **Public health measures have been implemented in order to provide early warning,** protect against infection, and control transmissions through diagnoses in labs, warning and investigation systems to track infections, a quarantine and observation system for cases, a knowledge-raising system for the public on health issues, and a system to support the application of technology and innovation to improve early warning, protection, and control measures.

(4) **The readiness of the capacity and resources of the health services system was improved.** Measures include effective case management, the monitoring of the readiness



of public health system in accordance with the severity of cases, and the preparation of sufficient health resources. Thailand also prepared adequate medical supplies and resources and successfully distributed such supplies to medical facilities without compromising the overall provision of health services across the country.

(5) **The country's readiness to produce COVID-19 vaccines was also prepared.** This was implemented in order to ensure equal access to safe, quality, and effective vaccines that are able to effectively protect against infection in the long-term and create confidence in the country. This, in turn, will lead to economic recovery in the post-COVID era. Efforts have been made to plan and prepare for the provision and distribution of vaccines in an ordered and phased manner, with regular progress reports. Such efforts reflect an approach that is based on equality, scientific evidence, the number of vaccines procured, and the country's capacity to manage the vaccination programme.

(6) **Thailand has promoted knowledge, research, and development,** and has developed a plan and organised relevant funding in order to boost research and development and innovation related to new emerging diseases. This includes transforming this knowledge into industrial production in the future.

(7) **The Government has communicated with the public at both the central and local levels to boost effective management,** therefore managing issues such as the transmission of information, integrated focal points at the provincial level, and the creation of a communication network at the local level. This has particularly relied on public health volunteers.

(8) **An integrated approach to situation management has been applied.** Thailand has set up a central mechanism to ensure an integrated approach to the management of the emergency situation, with a team in charge of each aspect of situation management at the national and ministry levels.





In addition, other concrete examples of SDG3 implementation include:

(1) **The implementation of a project aimed at protecting newborn babies and mothers:** this project has designated work plans at the regional and national levels, as well as reporting at the local level and the creation of the Department of Health Dashboard as a means of situation reporting of the mortality rate of mothers. The project has also promoted the sharing of knowledge, work plans, public awareness approaches, monitoring and evaluation approaches, and personnel development methods. Thailand has developed **the 5-year Quality Births project (2017-2021)** and developed maternal mortality rate reduction plans for local areas and provinces. Research on the causes of maternal mortalities is conducted on a continuous basis.

(2) Thailand has advanced the implementation of the **2nd National Reproductive Health Development Policy Strategy (2017-2026)** especially promoting quality birth and growth: this is aimed at developing several health and social services that aid in quality births, such as services and rights with regards to pregnancy testing and antenatal care, birth costs, financial aid for newborn babies, maternity leave and compensation, provision of tax reductions for costs related to the care of babies, tax reductions for childcare facilities. In addition, the Government has sought to adequately share information on childbirth and reproductive rights through online media.

(3) **Support for AIDS patients:** Thai citizens have the right to get tested for AIDS twice a year. In cases with positive results, patients are taken into care and provided with anti-viral medication at no cost under the country's universal health coverage since 2015.



The Government's **"95-95-95" AIDs Eradication Strategy** aims at: (1) supporting 95 per cent of suspected patients to get tested (as of 2019, 94 per cent of suspected patients have been diagnosed); (2) supporting at least 95 per cent of patients to be treated with anti-viral medication (as of 2019, 79 per cent of patients have been treated); and (3) supporting at least 95 per cent of patients being treated with anti-viral medication to continue to receive medication on a regular basis in order to successfully contain the virus in their blood (in 2019, this ratio was at 86 per cent).

(4) **Reduction of risk of death from various diseases**, through monitoring, protection and control of communicable diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis: Thailand has implemented the **National Tuberculosis Plan of Action (2017-2021)**, which leverages the cooperation of all sectors to reduce tuberculosis cases. In particular, the strategy relies on joint implementation with the private sector and civil society. Measures have included providing knowledge on tuberculosis to students, testing in penal facilities and youth and children training centres within youth detention centres, the identification of tuberculosis cases, and support for telemedicine services. Importance has also been attached to the application of technology in the treatment of non-communicable diseases, such as organising trainings on cardiovascular diseases, improving the cardiovascular disease registration system through the Thai Acute Coronary Syndrome (ACS) Register, and the development of a national cardiovascular diseases database. With regards to cancer treatment, trainings have been organised to improve the use of HPV DNA Testing, improve cancer-related surgery methods and treatment, and to improve treatment for complications for diabetes and hypertension patients.



(5) **Treatment for drug addiction:** this is specifically aimed at improving treatment approaches and knowledge for medical personnel involved, as well as the improvement of rehabilitation centres in line with international standards. Implementation in this regard has also included the effective application of community-based treatment and rehabilitation. These approaches, particularly in developing the capacities of personnel, improving approaches, and applying community-based treatment and rehabilitation, have also been applied to treat alcohol addiction.

(6) **Reduction of deaths and injuries from road accidents** by half in line with Target 3.6: improving road safety has been designated as a National Agenda by Thailand, and the country has developed a National Road Safety Strategy (2018-2021) in order to improve the management of private and public transport vehicles on the road, land transport routes, and the overall environment. Measures have been implemented to reduce roadside injuries, closed-circuit television (CCTV) has been introduced to enforce road traffic regulations, and Traffic Safety Zones which control vehicle speed have been created. In terms of mechanisms to implement the strategy, Quality of Life Improvement Committees at the municipality level and local road safety centres have been set up to coordinate measures. At the international level, Thailand became a party to the **Vienna Convention on Road Traffic (1968)** in 2020, which has been key in elevating road safety standards in the country and ensuring that driving licence standards conform to international standards. In addition, this has strengthened the possibility that Thai driving licence holders will be able to use their licences in countries that are also a party to the Convention.

(7) **Designation of the PM2.5 pollution problem as a National Agenda:** Thailand has accelerated the integration of cooperation between all sectors on 3 key measures. Firstly, efforts have been made to increase the efficiency of area-based crisis management from December through to April each year. Secondly, pollution is being addressed at the source, including from crop burning, construction and city planning, factories, and household pollution. Thailand has sought to improve the tools, approaches, and mechanisms available to address pollution issues, including through improved research for policy-making and problem-solving. Furthermore, on 1 June 2020, Thailand banned the production, use, and export of two pesticides/herbicides, namely paraquat and chlorpyrifos, in order to reduce their impact on public health.

(8) **Implementation of the Operational Plan to End Tuberculosis:** this includes revising the rights and management of tuberculosis patients under the National Health Coverage Fund in accordance with the **National Tuberculosis Control Programme Guideline (2018)**. Efforts have been made to reduce transmissions and increase testing for at-risk groups (particularly those in contact with diagnosed patients and prisoners), which will improve comprehensive and inclusive care for all at-risk groups and will lead to the reduction in cases.

# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **Loss of life from tuberculosis, road accidents, and non-communicable diseases remains a challenge for Thailand.** This is also exacerbated by new emerging diseases or drug-resistant diseases linked to demographic changes, human activity, the development of technology and innovation, and climate change. As such, this has impacted international public health security. This has necessitated the continuous development and improvement of Thailand's public health systems in all dimensions, including in monitoring cases, diagnoses in labs, patient care and treatment, and funding in order to achieve a more effective system.

(2) **Improvements must be made to the capacity of technology used to produce medical supplies and equipment,** such as medication, vaccines, and medical tools. This also encompasses the development of quality personnel involved in research and production and the procurement and transfer of technology from other countries. Such efforts will help to develop Thailand into a production hub for vaccines, medication, and medical tools at the upstream, midstream, and end-stream levels. This will foster security and self-reliance, with particular progress now made in developing labs for medication and medical supplies during the COVID-19 crisis.

(3) **There is a risk of increased mental stress from the COVID-19 pandemic.** In March 2020, the number of people who sought help through the Department of Mental Health's hotline increased fifteen-fold, with over 600 telephone consultations. In addition, mental stress has increased due to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, including unemployment and debt in vulnerable groups. As such, this has been a factor in the suicide rate in 2020. Measures should be introduced to evaluate mental health, such as support for mental health self-assessment tools aided by technology and support for hospitals to implement a monitoring and protection system against suicide for vulnerable groups.

(4) **The COVID-19 pandemic has exerted wide-ranging impacts,** including in the public health, economic, and social dimensions, and has impacted the lives of the people. As such, the pandemic has also impeded the implementation of the SDGs. Integration of work should be increased across implementation efforts from all sectors.





# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## (1) San Sai Nam Nueng Group: Youth volunteers for child and youth mental health in San Sai tambon, Fang amphoe, Chiang Mai Province

The San Sai Nam Nueng Group was founded on 4 October 2008 from children and youth from 18 villages in San Sai tambon, Fang amphoe, Chiang Mai. The group first began with projects aimed at AIDS prevention in local communities in 2011, before diversifying its projects in other areas such as community volunteerism, promoting local customs and traditions, and combating drugs. Youth empowerment activities and advocacy for youth empowerment policies at all levels within the province also comprise a priority for the group.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the group, in partnership with the San Sai Public Health Working Group and Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO) Thailand, found evidence that the situation had brought an increase in cases of depression within youth and children in the area. Such cases stemmed from increased stress, psychological issues, relationship and family issues, and financial stress. The study found that 1,850 persons under the age of 25 in the area, amounting to 17 per cent of the total population of San Sai, had significant mental stress. As such, the group established the “Leave Sadness, More Happiness” project. The project was supported by 25 volunteer leaders (including 16 women, 8 men, and 1 LGBTI person).

The group initiated a field study on the mental health and stress levels of children and youth in San Sai, with 289 children and youth (aged between 11-25 years) participating. The study used the ST5 stress examination process promoted by the Department of Mental Health. 129 were diagnosed with low levels of stress, 97 with medium levels of stress, and 30 with high levels of stress. A consultation was subsequently organised with relevant agencies to allow for integrated planning on work plans to address this issue, in order to develop the plans into a mechanism for mental health support in the future. The consultation provided the following recommendations:

1) Mental health support must be provided in an integrated and comprehensive approach, involving mental health professionals, public health personnel, education institutions, businesses, state agencies, private sector actors, foundations, and religious institutions, in order to correspond to the needs of those given support.

2) An integrated mechanism, involving all partners, should be established to further advance mental health support in the area

3) Hospitals should provide training and capacity-building for medical personnel on mental health support through partnerships with networks and various local groups, such as local community leaders and village health volunteers, in order to raise the capacities of personnel in identifying cases which require support

4) Additional early warning measures should be implemented, including the identification of cases and screening measures in schools and temples in an integrated and continuous manner. This applies to online and offline measures.

5) Mental health advice should be provided for families, teachers, community leaders, and relevant stakeholders within the community. This can be provided both at the group and individual level through creative formats such as board games, print media, and other means in order to appeal to all ages.

6) Schools should provide training and advice for teachers to screen for and identify students who require mental health support.

## **(2) Village Health Volunteers (VHV)**

Amidst the COVID-19 challenges, a group of people known as the “Village Health Volunteers” have played a critical role. They are part of a network that has been operating since 1978, following Thailand’s policy to improve the health system for the health and well-being of all Thais, for which the Ministry of Public Health would select a handful of villagers with volunteer spirits to train and educate them on health promotion efforts. After the training, the village health volunteers would play an important role in converting central policies into local implementation by disseminating accurate and simplified public health information and giving advice on diseases and proper health guidelines for other villagers. Over the past 40 years, the Ministry of Public Health has been determined to improve the work of the village health volunteers.

In 2019, the Government launched a plan to develop the programme and elevate the volunteers to be “household doctors”. Network presidents from each village were selected to attend a special training session to learn about endemic diseases and epidemics, prevention methods, physical and mental health issues, and using Thai folk wisdom and traditional herbs for medicinal purposes. The Government also supported the village health volunteers to use modern technology for more efficient health promotion efforts in the communities.

At present, there are approximately 1,040,000 village health volunteers in Thailand and 15,000 public health volunteers in Bangkok. During a period when people travelled back to their hometowns, many were afraid of a greater wave of COVID-19 transmission in Thailand. District Health Promoting Hospitals in each area then tasked the village health volunteers and health authorities with proactive campaigns to raise awareness, urge newly-arrived travellers to stay at home and refrain from social gatherings, and give self-care advice. They also formed the first line of defence in their efforts to collect travel information of households under their responsibility, collect health records of people in the communities for relevant agencies, give knowledge about COVID-19, and screen high-risk groups for public health authorities to monitor. The village-level screening effort has proven efficient and produced concrete results.





# Overview

The provision of inclusive and equitable quality education is an urgent issue for Thailand, especially in implementation of the **20-year National Strategy (2018-2037)**. Education remains a key factor in the development and advancement of the country in a sustainable manner. Inclusive access to education will reduce gaps within society, foster equality and justice, and address inequalities in the long-term. Thailand's implementation of SDG4 has experienced good success, especially with regards to the provision of inclusive and equitably quality education, the improvement of the capacities of the education system and teachers, and application of technology in the education system.

Thailand has experienced increasing success in ensuring that students complete their education, as illustrated by the increasing admission and education completion rates at primary and secondary level. At the primary school level, the admission rate increased from 84.7 per cent in 2016 to 86.3 per cent in 2019. At the primary and early secondary school levels (which are considered compulsory school levels in Thailand), the education completion rates increased from 91.8 per cent and 90.1 per cent in 2016 to 98.2 per cent and 96.9 per cent in 2019 respectively. However, at secondary school level, the completion rate has dropped from 81.7 per cent to 78.6 per cent within the same period. Furthermore, gender equality within the Thai education system has improved, as indicated by the **Gender Parity Index (GPI)** score at all education levels, which increased from 2016-2019.

However, challenges remain in terms of the results gained from the Thai education system. Analysis of the **Ordinary National Education Test (ONET)** results at each level in 2019 showed that the average scores of sixth year primary school students and third year secondary school students were lower than 50 per cent in each of the key education areas. In addition, for sixth year primary school students, average scores have reduced every year since 2016, while for third year secondary school students average scores increased for Thai and English-language proficiency but went down for mathematics and science in the same period. These scores are a result of inequalities in terms of teaching personnel and resources, equipment, and quality teaching.

In the past five years, admissions to technical education and vocational training (TVET) increased. The percentage of TVET students aged between 15-17 years of age per total population increased from 24 per cent in 2016 to 26 per cent in 2019. At the same time, admission rates into higher education for those aged 18-21 dropped from 60 per cent in 2016 to 54 per cent in 2019.

In terms of **Official Development Assistance (ODA)**, Thailand is a development partner for several countries and its ODA increased continuously, totalling 1.654 billion Thai Baht in 2019 (compared to 1.603 billion Thai Baht in 2016). From this total, approximately 161.56 million Thai Baht was allocated for academic scholarships for students from abroad (compared to 134.32 million Thai Baht in 2016).





# Policies and Implementation

(1) Financial support has been provided for students in need, such as through the creation of the **Education Equality Fund (EEF)** and the **Student Loans Fund**. By April 2020, 5,771,585 students have been given financial support. Other initiatives include financial support to TVET students in order to support poverty eradication in rural areas and Royal Scholarships in honour of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn aimed at supporting students in far-off areas or areas with a low education admission rate. The Government has also provided education and literacy opportunities for approximately 78,000 stateless and migrant children, and provided education at various levels for 230,000 children of various nationalities in 2018.

(2) Modern technology has been applied to ensure equality in education, such as through the implementation of the **Net Pracharat project** aimed at increasing access to high-speed internet for schools in far-off areas. In 2019, 1,187 schools were connected to such networks through the project. In addition, joint efforts between the Government and the 3BB internet company allowed for a further 2,271 schools to be fitted with high-speed internet. Thailand has also used the **Information System for Equitable Education, or iSEE**, in order to target and monitor groups of students eligible for financial support. **Proxy Means Tests**, an innovative education tool, have been applied in order to find 2 million vulnerable students at pre-primary and early secondary school level.

(3) **Education for disabled children has been improved** in order to foster inclusive learning. This has included projects that develop inclusive learning for all disabled students in schools, projects that foster non-traditional learning for students with hearing disabilities, a project to provide sign-language interpreters in schools, and a project to improve the skills of blind students in taking the national GAT/PAT exams. In 2018, Thailand also developed a

curriculum to train teachers to improve their teaching skills for students with disabilities or students with special needs.

(4) **Thailand has accelerated the improvement of the quality of education**, focusing on learning systems, teaching, and quality curricula. This has also involved revisions of the basic education curriculum in 2018 in line with international standards in order to raise the capacities of students according to their competencies and capacities. The systems for teaching in science labs and computing science were also revised, in order to boost STEM education in the country.

(5) **Development of education to promote careers and vocations has been accelerated**, including supporting schools in creating informational products advertising various careers and vocations, as well as the development of education plans in line with labour needs in each province. Students have been provided with the knowledge and skills that promote sustainable development and social resilience, such as anti-corruption education. New innovative types of schools have been introduced. The new Ministry of Justice Network Schools promote justice and anti-crime education, knowledge on drugs, social threats, and the creation of self-discipline. The 23,796 Sufficiency Education Schools across the country teach the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP), while 205 such centres have been developed further into Sufficiency Learning Centres.

(6) **The improvement of teaching personnel is a priority.** Thailand has established the Teacher Professional Development Institute (TPDI) in order to develop teacher improvement curricula. The Institute has also organised professional training under the Teacher Coupons Initiative of the National Board of Basic Education. 1,207 courses have been certified and offered by the Institute for teachers of students of all levels of schooling. In 2018, 274,264 teachers were enrolled in courses, an increase from 175,987 in 2017. This represented 77 per cent of the total number that had initially signed up. The most popular courses included courses on English-language teaching for the 21st Century and STEM Education through Active Learning methods.

(7) **The Government has promoted lifelong learning** in order to raise the capacities of the population as a whole and to develop human resources that respond to the needs of the 21st Century as a means to advance the economy. This has included learning from real life experiences through the Thai Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), which covers 477 subjects and is free of cost for all. The Smart University@EEC project is designed to improve digital skills in order to advance the Thailand 4.0 policy. Lastly, Labour Training Centres and Labour Skills Standards Centres have been created in order to raise the vocational capacities of the Thai labour force and ensure that they receive adequate pay for their level of skill.

(8) **Thailand plays a role in technical support for other developing countries**, including through increased funding every year. Support encompasses the transfer of knowledge and technology, support in terms of equipment and tools, the provision of experts and volunteers, development of basic infrastructure, and the development of human resources through trainings and scholarships.



# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted education in Thailand both with regards to its provision and its quality.** Poorer students and those in far-off areas have been particularly challenged due to the lack of resources in accessing alternative education methods, such as online learning and long-distance learning through satellite television. This has exerted significant impacts on many households that have been affected in economic terms by the pandemic; some students may be forced to leave formal education.

(2) **Thailand still faces inequalities with regards to access to higher education.** Only 5 per cent of students from impoverished households have the opportunity to enter higher education. However, households in the top 10 per cent of the country in terms of income have greater opportunities, with no less than 63 per cent of students entering higher education. Thailand should continuously develop its database on vulnerable students, in order to be able to offer support, as well as develop the basic education infrastructure required to support such students.

(3) **Labour skills development projects are yet to be extended to informal workers in all sectors.** Such projects are usually only implemented in the agricultural sector, and thus do not produce the required level of workers. As such, Thailand should develop workers in other sectors, focusing on applying technology to trainings. This will raise the income and value of workers even further and equip them with the tools required to succeed in the future.

(4) While Thailand has enjoyed success in ensuring equal access to education for both boys and girls, **there is still gender inequality in the education system.** For example, the attitudes and understanding of teachers are still a challenge and teaching personnel still lack knowledge on gender equality, including on teenage pregnancies. This might result in some female students dropping out of formal education.

(5) **There is still an insufficient number of teacher development courses,** with some teachers not given opportunities to develop themselves or have had to pick courses that do not correspond to their needs. There should be an integrated approach to teacher development that provides sufficient courses according to needs and demands. The results of such courses should be monitored in a systematic approach.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Youth-Led Networks Lead the Charge for Quality Education

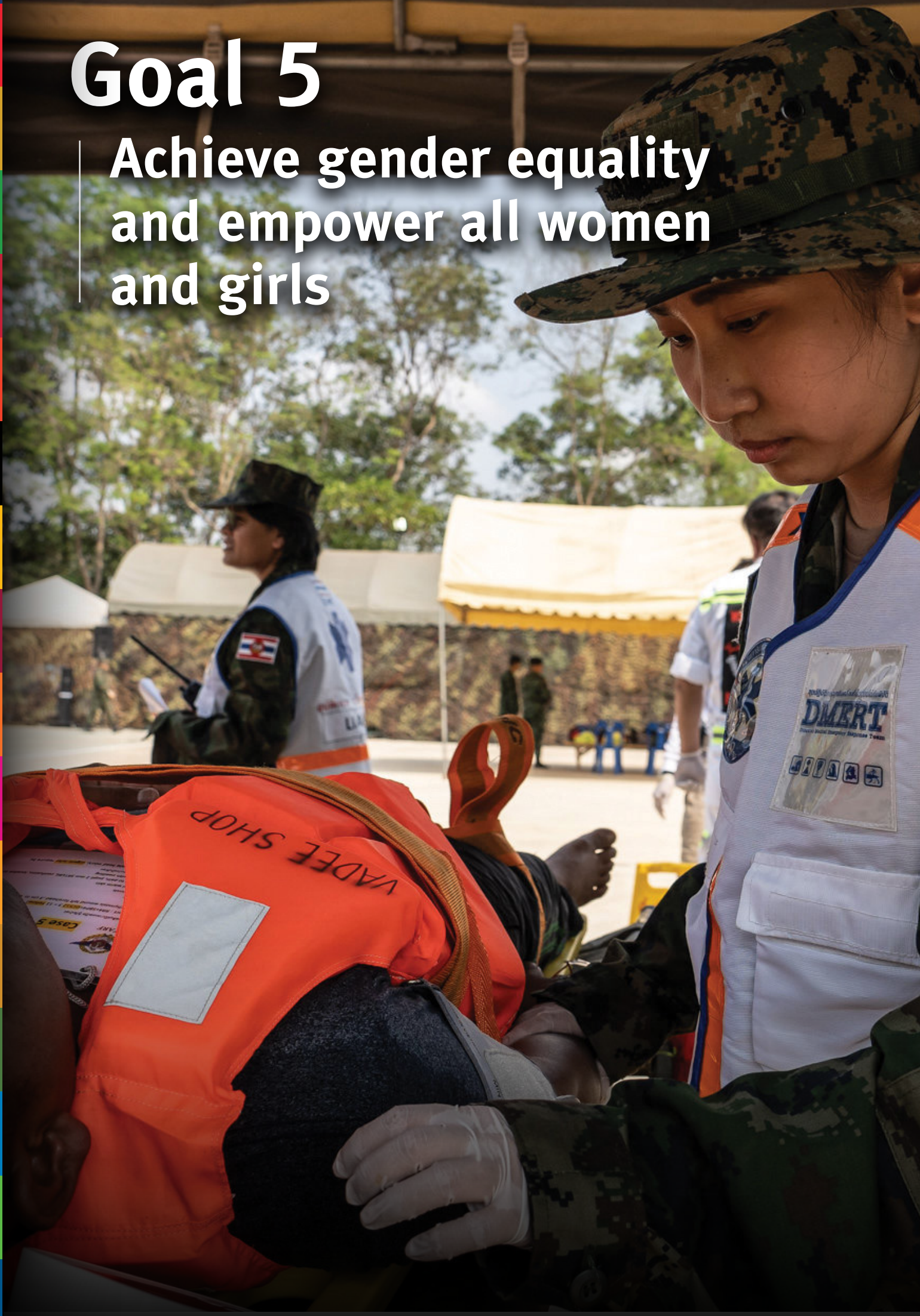
Youth volunteers have paid much interest to events promoting education and life-long learning. Youth networks have particularly been interested in education programmes that correspond to the capacities or interests of the learner or the local context. The events organised serve to assist youth in learning more about themselves, therefore increasing their adaptability to situations and their changing surroundings. They support local youth to build their capacities to be ready for future employment. One key example is the **WE-Life group**, which organised an event to develop the skills of those who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The **Loog Riang** group has organised events to boost short-term employment, while the **Phalang Jo** and **Oorn Hone** groups organised events to raise awareness and understanding on the importance of education that responds to the needs of the learner, including alternative education. 540 persons benefited from the project, including 317 women and 223 men.

**Youth in Charge** provides one platform to develop the capacities, leadership qualities, and opportunities for Thai youth. This includes: 1) opening up non-school learning opportunities and moving learning beyond education institutions; 2) creating opportunities for youth from different areas and backgrounds to work together, exchange views and skills, and learn from one another; 3) promoting collaboration between youth and other sectors; and 4) creating opportunities for youth to play a role in advancing issues of national importance and developing youth as “future changers”.



# Goal 5

Achieve gender equality  
and empower all women  
and girls





# Overview

Thailand is a party to several Human Rights Conventions and joined several international agreements and declarations promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, including the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** and the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDfA)**. The Government has also included gender equality as a component in the Constitution and all relevant laws, with the **Women's Development Strategy (2017-2021)** serving to promote women's role in the national development process. The Strategy also ensures that all government agencies and local governments allocate funds and develop policies that respond to the needs of women. This strategy has been extended in order to align it with the **20-Year National Strategy (2018-2037)**.

As such, Thailand has continuously experienced progress with regards to promoting gender equality. The country's **Gender Inequality Index score in 2019** stood at 0.359, a reduction from 0.410 in 2016. In terms of education, Thai women have been afforded equal opportunities to access education at all levels. Girls have also been shown to have greater admission rates at secondary school level and for higher education.

**Thai women have begun to play a greater role in the economy.** This is illustrated by the ratio of women to men in terms of ownership of land for agricultural purposes. In 2018, this ratio was at 44.1 per cent to 55.9 per cent, an increase from 36.3 per cent to 63.7 per cent in 2013. The proportion of companies which had at least one female executive stood at 86 per cent in 2020, which represents an increase from 74 per cent in 2017. The proportion of women above the age of 6 who had access to the internet rose from 50.7 per cent in 2017 to 65.6 per cent in 2019. This illustrates that there are **no barriers for women to access technology** in Thailand, and that women have begun to more extensively access digital information.

In terms of work, women made up 58.7 per cent of all labourers in 2020. In addition, there were more female civil servants than male. This trend is increasing, in 2020, women made up 67.74 per cent of all civil servants, which comprises an increase from 67.32 per cent in 2018. In the private sector, women make up 36 per cent of all executives. This is higher than the global and regional averages, at 27 and 26 per cent respectively. Regarding women's participation in politics, the percentage of women in parliament increased from 6.1 per cent of all representatives in 2017 to 15.8 per cent in 2020. However, this ratio can be improved.

**Women are still disproportionately affected by domestic violence** in Thailand, women comprise 87.4 per cent of the victims. In addition, women spend more time working without compensation for house work, caring for their families, and household work. On average, women spent 2 hours and 50 minutes on such tasks, while men spent only 1 hour and 48 minutes per day.



# Policies and Implementation

(1) In terms of policies and legislation to eliminate discrimination, the Government set up the **Committee to Promote Gender Equality** as a mechanism to promote policies, regulations, and action plans to promote gender equality in all state and private sector agencies at the central, regional, and local levels. The Committee to Identify Gender Discrimination acts on all accusations of gender discrimination, while the Gender Equality Fund was also set up. Such measures ensure effective implementation according to changing contexts and are complemented by long-distance learning modules to change social attitudes. Examples include modules on the role of men and women at work, sexual harassment in the workplace. Information on the state sector workforce, disaggregated by gender, is published every year.

(2) In terms of **reduction of violence against women**, the Social Assistance Centre increased urgent assistance phone lines from 15 lines to 60 phone lines during the COVID-19 crisis in order to respond to the needs of women and girls from increasing rates of domestic violence. The Government also set up Coordination Centres for Women and Girls in the Southern Border Provinces in order to promote gender equality and protect women against violence at the local level. Cooperation with development partners include the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on ending domestic violence between 10 state agencies and 43 private sector actors. This MoU will serve to enable cooperation in terms of funding, the sharing of knowledge, and implementation. The Government also joined with civil society to expand safe zones for women in 11 communities in 8 municipalities within Bangkok.

(3) On the **eradication of dangerous practices**, Thailand has organised events to raise awareness and understanding on measures aimed at solving problems related to child marriages. This was complemented by measures to share knowledge on human rights in the southern border provinces. The Sheikhu Islam Office of Thailand issued the Regulation of the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand on Marriage (Nikah) with Persons under 17 years of age (2018) in order to ensure that all those getting married submit an authorising note from a Court or letter of consent from their parents. In addition, a sub-committee on Rights According to Islamic Law, which must include at least one female member, has been established in order to consider, investigate, and approve marriages. A complaints system was also set up to handle cases where the victim is female.

(4) **To boost women's empowerment**, Thailand has implemented measures to promote women as a key economic driver, including the creation of early childcare centres for children under the age of 3, promotion of paternity leave for men, and the expansion of maternity leave with pay for women. As part of Thailand's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2019, the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network (AWEN) of Thailand hosted the first AWEN Women CEO Summit in order to advance the AWEN Declaration Bangkok 2019, which aims to strengthen the capacities of women in advancing ASEAN economies.

(5) Thailand has developed the **National Strategic Work Plan on Protection Against and Reduction of Teenage Pregnancies (2017-2026)** in order to promote an integrated approach to the problem. This has worked in tandem with the organisation of activities to raise awareness on sex education and reproductive rights in order to ensure that women are able to make their own choices on the basis of adequate information on sexual relations, contraception, and reproductive care. Moreover, government regulations have been issued to increase the role of entertainment venues in preventing teenage pregnancies (2019).







# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **Data storage systems disaggregated by gender are incomplete and still lack connectivity** between all relevant agencies. Some key databases are yet to be disaggregated by gender including data on landowners and data on ICT use in the household. Other key pieces of data, such as on economic inclusion, remain with several relevant agencies and are not integrated. As such, the full picture on women in the country cannot be obtained and the data is not fully utilised in policymaking processes.

However, with regards to data on domestic violence and assistance to victims of domestic violence, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security will develop a database on violence against children, women, and families under the Family Big Data project, in order to act as a central database for family services linking all relevant agencies. This will allow for such data to be used to support implementation of measures to promote the institution of families and for policies on domestic violence. The majority of victims in such cases are usually women.

(2) **Women's participation in politics remains low in Thailand**, and there is a need to raise the capacities and skills of women in this area, especially at the local level. This includes creating incentives for women to increase their participation in politics or the public space even further.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Youth and LGBTQI Rights

The Youth Council of Thailand has advanced efforts to protect against teenage pregnancies in all provinces in the country by raising awareness at the local level. This has helped to lower the teenage pregnancy rates. The Youth Council has also helped to organise a Youth Assembly to discuss LGBTI rights, allowing LGBTI youth to provide recommendations for policy-making in order to further gender equality in Thailand.

## Community-Led Women's Empowerment

The Department of Community Development has initiated women's development efforts in local communities, in line with the National Economic and Social Development Plan to improve women's quality of life in the context of family and society. Chapters of the Women's Development Committees were set up at various levels—namely, village, subdistrict, district, provincial and regional levels—to encourage women to have creativity, enthusiasm and self-confidence; stand on their own feet and help their families; have occupational knowledge; take responsibility in community development; and take the lead in thinking, decision-making and planning, in order to solve problems and develop women in the communities.

Besides individual-oriented development work, the Women's Development Committees also tackle inequality and violence against women and children in society. While carrying out development work and solving problems, volunteers in the committees promote activities that are beneficial to women, emphasising root cause analysis and data collection to help shed light on the work. This will be followed by management tasks, media production, and public relations campaigns to disseminate knowledge that are in the best interest of women.





# Goal 6

**Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**

# Overview

Ensuring sustainable and inclusive access to clean water and sanitation represents a fundamental issue for Thailand. The country's continued economic and social growth, coupled with the transition towards industrial agriculture, has increased Thailand's water needs. As such, the Thai Government has pursued integrated implementation of SDG6 in four main ways: **(1) the Development of the Masterplan on Water Resources Management (2018-2037)** as the country's roadmap on this issue; **(2) the establishment of the Office of National Water Resources (ONWR)** as the focal point for all relevant agencies; **(3) the passing of the Water Resources Act (2018)** as the main piece of legislation encompassing work in this area; and **(4) the promotion of technology, knowledge, and innovation** with regards to water resources management in the country.

In general, Thai people have been able to sufficiently access drinking water, with the proportion of household members able to access clean drinking water rising from 97 per cent in 2012 to 98 per cent by 2016 and 99.5 per cent in 2019. Government efforts to provide clean water for villages without existing plumbing systems have been successful, with the number of such villages reduced from 7,321 to 169. However, the quality of water available remains a challenge. Data from the **Ministry of Public Health's Report on Drinking Water Quality** from 2009-2019 showed that only 40.8 per cent of water available to households was appropriate for consumption. 43.7 per cent of water in households needed further treatment before consumption, while a further 15.5 per cent comprised water that had been contaminated by chemicals above the recommended limit. Further studies have also shown that 59.2 per cent of water used in households was not of the required standard. Much of these water resources came from sources provided by local government bodies.

In terms of access to clean water and the disposal of human waste according to sanitation standards, data from 2019 shows that 89 per cent of household members in Thailand had access to a designated hand-washing facility and that 97.1 per cent had access to toilets without having to share. However, poorer and less-educated households continue to face challenges in accessing hand-washing facilities and toilets. Furthermore, population growth and an increasing number of tourists, along with inadequate drainage systems, have resulted in surface water sources of poorer quality. In 2018, the percentage of water from such sources at the required quality stood at 91 per cent. By 2019, this had deteriorated to 82 per cent. The percentage of water sources of poor quality doubled from 9 per cent in 2018 to 18 per cent in 2019. Furthermore, Thailand has experienced droughts 3 times in the past 5 years in 2015, 2019, and 2020.





# Policies and Implementation

(1) To address water quantity and quality issues, the Government has set a target to increase the production of water ten-fold compared to the average production in 2018, and to elevate water resources security in order to develop the economy to its highest capacity within 2037. The Government has set targets of increasing efficiency in the use of water in irrigation, production, and consumption, and in reducing the total area and value of loss from floods and droughts. In 2019, the Royal Irrigation Department increased the capacity of water storage by 16.7 million square metres and increased the amount of irrigated land by 188,296 rai. The Department of Water Resources and the Department of Groundwater Resources excavated an additional 2,228 pools and developed a plan to renovate 3,400 kilometres of water pipes in order to reduce the amount of water lost in Bangkok, Nonthaburi, and Samutprakan. A target was set to reduce the amount of water lost from 25 to 20 per cent.

(2) **Measures have been implemented to improve water quality.** In 2018, the Provincial Waterworks Authority implemented a project titled “Water Is Life” to build trust in the quality of water. This was conducted by implementing checks on the quality of water in all service areas. In 2019, the Ministry of Interior, as the responsible agency for the development of the water consumption system, installed water systems in 1,197 villages across the country and expanded water systems in all provinces and the Bangkok Metropolis to over 26,000 additional households. In addition, the Government opened several additional areas for the provision of water for consumption to alleviate the effects from droughts. The Department of Health



also initiated a project to increase the efficiency in managing local water systems for local government bodies, with over 200 pilot projects launched in this area.

(3) **In terms of water waste management development, the Masterplan on Water Resources Management (2018-2037)** mandates the construction of 100 additional water waste management facilities within 2022. From 2018-2019, 6 such facilities were completed. With regards to managing water waste from the industrial sector, the Ministry of Industry issued water waste management standards in order to regulate the management and testing of water waste from factories in line with international standards. In 2018, specific regulations were announced regulating water waste from certain types of factories, such as paper pulp and paper factories and factories involved in the leather industry.

(4) **The provision of equal and standardised access to toilets is an urgent priority.** During the COVID-19 crisis, the Department of Health raised awareness on the importance of correct hand-washing procedures and evaluated the readiness of business owners in providing hand-washing equipment such as soap, alcohol gel, and disinfectant for customers. In the long-term, the Department of Health is currently developing the **Draft Masterplan on Toilet and Waste Management (2018-2029)**, which is comprised of 5 key strategies: increasing the use of sanitary and safe toilets; increasing the quality of public toilets in line with the lifestyles of the Thai people; the comprehensive development and management of toilets and waste; development of the national sanitation system; and the creation of comprehensive sanitation knowledge and habits.



(5) **Thailand has played a role in fostering international cooperation on water resources management**, and is currently implementing the **Thai-German Climate Change Policy Programme (TGCP)** which encompasses comprehensive water management cooperation between Thailand and Germany. **The Office of National Water Resources and the German Corporation for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH)** have developed a draft training programme to raise capacities in integrated water resources management and ecosystem-based adaptation. Thailand is also a member of international frameworks on water resources management, such as the **Mekong River Commission (MRC)**, **Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC)**, and the **Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI)**.

(6) **To promote community participation and the development of water quality for children and youth**, the Government has established 15 local river basin committees as a mechanism for policy formulation with regards to the management and use of resources from each river basin. These committees are supported by water resources committees in all 76 provinces. This ensures that decisions are made at the local level and respond to the context and needs of the local areas. In addition, the Department of Health has initiated a project to support local government authorities in applying public sector management quality assurance methods to develop environment health accreditations and improve their implementation in line with international standards. From 2014-2019, 1,015 local government authorities participated in the project, of which 957 were accredited. This was complemented by a project to improve the quality of water for consumption for schools in rural areas under the **Rural Children and Youth Development Fund** (under the Royal Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn), in order to raise the level of clean water available for children and youth in far off areas.

(7) **The Government has advanced the protection and revival of eco-systems linked to water sources**. From 2018-2019, Thailand implemented measures to revive 110,921 rai of upwater forest areas, which represents 15 per cent of the target set in the **Water Management Masterplan**. In addition, in 2020 two additional wetlands areas in Thailand were registered under the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance**, namely the **Lower Songkram River** area in Nakhon Phanom province and **the Bang Pu area** in Samutprakarn province, which represent Thailand's 15th and 16th areas registered under the Convention. The Cabinet has also agreed to submit an application for two other sites to be registered under the same convention, namely **Bueng Borapet** in Nakhon Sawan province and **Buengrachanok** in Phitsanulok province.









# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **The Royal Thai Government attaches importance to the development of the sanitation system in line with all international standards in all villages**, including improving the quality of water for consumption and in developing an information management system to monitor progress through the application of modern technology in place of randomised sample testing. The criteria for safe drinking water have been clearly defined.

(2) **Local government authorities and development partners have a central role** in connecting policy at the national level to the local level and in addressing data gaps with regards to water management. The Government has thus sought to develop the capacities of local government authorities and increase local participation to help to develop water resource management. The private sector and local stakeholders have been invited to increase their participation in the oversight and evaluation of local water resource management, including in waste water management and quality control of water for consumption.

(3) **Thailand will leverage the momentum provided by cooperation with all sectors** in society to raise awareness on the importance of preserving good health and sanitation standards during the COVID-19 crisis in order to boost public awareness on sanitation, especially for vulnerable groups. The country will also improve the enabling environment to promote good standards and habits on sanitation, which will also help to remove all barriers to access basic services in the country.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Yom River Basin Committee (Phayao Province)

Phayao province is upstream of the Yom River basin, and the local communities are often beset by problems related to droughts and the scarcity of water for consumption every year. As such, water resources are treasured by the local people. These problems have led to disagreements and to competition for water resources for agriculture and livelihoods. As such, the multi-stakeholder Yom River Basin Committee is committed to the planning and management of adequate water resources in accordance with the needs of the people and the availability of such resources. Local water resources have also been assessed to analyse effects from climate change. These are key duties conducted by the Committee every year, in order to develop relevant plans, protect water resources, and resolve problems in the river basin.

The Yom River Basin Committee therefore plays an important role in reflecting the voices of locals with regards to their problems and needs, and is a vital mechanism that links the work of state agencies and local government with the local communities. The Committee has served to enhance the development of projects and problem-solving in the region through the participation of the people. An example of this is the joint study of the construction of check dams built from sand, cement, and bamboo in order to stall the movement of water and support its storage during periods of drought. This has ensured adequate supplies of water for the people and help to alleviate the effects of droughts in the Yom River basin area.



# Goal 7

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all



# Overview

Thailand has made continuous strides towards the advancement of SDG 7, particularly in increasing access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all within 2030. In 2020, the percentage of Thai households with access to electricity stood at 99.21 per cent. This is a result of Government efforts to promote local energy generation in far off areas and to increase the efficiency of energy generation throughout the energy chain. The development of renewable energy has been supported in local areas, with efforts implemented according to the capacity and competency of each area. Key examples include **solar energy generation** on rooftops in urban areas, as well as the **generation of energy from household waste**, waste water, and waste from industrial processes in communities outside of urban areas.

At present, Thailand largely generates electricity from natural gas, amounting to 58.69 per cent of the total energy generation in the country. 23.92 per cent of all energy generation is produced from coal, with 15.65 per cent from renewables, 0.30 percent from fuel oil, 0.10 per cent from diesel oil, and a further 1.35 per cent from other energy sources. Thailand has set a target of reducing its reliance on fossil fuels since 2016, with the Government and state enterprises investing in research and development for clean renewable energy in order to identify sources of clean renewable energy at an affordable price.

In terms of the use of renewable energy in the country, Thailand has set a target of improving the percentage of renewable energy out of total energy use to 24.08 per cent by 2030. At present, this percentage is at 15.99 per cent, increased from 10.9 percent in 2011. 16 per cent of this comprises **energy generated from bio-waste**. In addition, the number of Thai households that use clean energy and technology increased from 82.9 per cent in 2017 to 84.9 per cent in 2019, as a result of incentives provided by the Government.

Thailand has set a **target to reduce energy intensity (EI)** by 30 per cent within 2036, as compared to its energy intensity in 2010, which stood at 8.56. From 2015 – 2019, the country witnessed a constant reduction in its EI, thus illustrating an increased efficiency in energy use in the country. In 2019, the EI stood at 7.85 per cent, which was an 8.08 per cent decrease and equaled the saving of 7,541 thousand tonnes of oil equivalent (KTOE).

However, Thailand still mainly utilises finished oil products in the generation of energy. This has resulted in emissions of greenhouse gases of 250 million tonnes in 2019, equal to 70 per cent of the country's total emissions. Furthermore, the provision of remedy for those affected and the strengthening of the resilience for all stakeholders in the energy sector have been challenges.



# Policies and Implementation

(1) **Thailand has reduced the costs of energy for the population and business sector** during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government has initiated measures to ensure that all sectors are able to access energy at an affordable price, including in reducing household energy costs and costs for the business sector by 34,636 million Thai Baht. This included freezing the fuel adjustment charge (Ft) and expanding the timeframe for the payment of electricity bills for homes and specific businesses. The postponement of payment of the minimum charge rate has provided remedy for over 30 million affected electricity users. Furthermore, the Government deployed a budget of 3.5 billion Thai Baht to freeze the price of gas, and a further 801 million Thai Baht to support the costs of natural gas for public transport vehicles.

(2) **The government has boosted grassroots development through various energy measures,** including by:

- Designating B10 fuel, which comprises 9-10 per cent biodiesel, as a standard diesel fuel for the first time in Thailand. This has aided palm oil producers by increasing the demand of B10. The use of biofuel has also helped to reduce PM2.5 pollution and pollution from the energy sector as a whole.

- Creating the community power station model in order to boost grassroots economies. This helps to promote higher incomes and create employment for communities, with a target of constructing such power stations to increase energy generation by 1,000 megawatts within 2023.

- Creating 6,000 sustainable energy model households who have generated and used energy from solar sources, bio waste, waste, fossil fuels. This will reduce energy costs by 50 million Thai Baht per year and increase incomes for 140 local enterprises, amounting to 8 Million Thai Baht per year.

- Providing 125.47 million Thai Baht from the Energy Conservation Fund to reinvigorate grassroots economies throughout the country.



(3) The Ministry of Energy has begun implementation of the Smart Grid Project for the integration of electricity management and effective use of electricity. As a result, it has developed the National SMART Grid Masterplan (2015-2026) consisting of four key pillars: (a) development of an energy management system in households, commercial buildings, and industrial factories in order to develop businesses that respond to load aggregators in Thailand; (b) construction of an electricity forecast system that uses renewable energy; (c) the development of a micro grid system and system for energy storage that can complement the SMART Grid system effectively and securely; and (d) the development of an implementation plan. At present Thailand is currently implementing the first phase of the SMART Grid plan (2018-2021), which aims to develop pilot projects to test the technology and cost effectiveness in different areas. These pilot projects include the Pattaya Smart Grid Project, the cost effectiveness and load aggregator project in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area, and the Smart Grid Development pilot projects in Betong municipality of Yala Province and Saring Municipal in Mae Hong Son Province. There has also been investment in technology that can complement and connect to the SMART grid, such as virtual power plants, and energy trading platforms. The Government has also accelerated formulation of the required policies to promote technology in the energy sector.

(4) **Renewable Energy Development is a priority.** Implementation has been expanded to local communities, such as through the small hydro plant project, wind turbine projects, and solar energy generation in far off areas projects. Thailand is currently developing the **Hydro Floating Solar Hybrid System** with a generating capacity of 45 megawatts at the **Sirindhorn Dam** in Ubonratchathani Province. Commercial energy output is expected to begin within June 2021 and once completed, the project will comprise the world's largest hydro-floating solar hybrid system in the world. Thailand also has pursued international cooperation on renewable energy, such as through the **ASEAN Power grid** project in order to integrate regional energy use through regional grid connectivity and the **Thai-German Climate Programme** in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.







# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated the Thai Government to apply renewable energy to boost grassroots economies. The Government has promoted the **4D+E1 Energy Policy** vision, comprised of four key areas: (1) **Digitalisation of energy technology**; (2) **Decarbonisation to promote clean energy**; (3) **Decentralisation of energy sources**; (4) **Deregulation to liberalise the energy market and promote competition and innovation**; and (5) **Electrification by driving forward economic growth** through the use of electricity. The Government will need to come up with plans and relevant legislation in order to integrate this area of work.

(2) **Disruptive technologies** have emerged, particularly in renewable energy sources and the storage of energy for future usage. Thailand must further invest in research and development in the country, especially with regards to the promotion of the Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model.

(3) The Government must plan for the provision of sufficient energy and **build security in energy generation** in order to **diversify energy** sources in the country. Importance must be attached to energy **generation** costs and possible environmental impacts. It must also support independent power supplies by consumers. At present, relevant legislation to facilitate this and the renewable energy infrastructure remain key challenges.

# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## (1) Green Energy Powers the Private Sector

Bangchak Corporation is committed to playing a role in reducing energy use and in reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases. The company has implemented several projects to advance this mission. This includes the expansion of investment for green power, both domestically and abroad. The company has also promoted the use of natural gas for energy generation and the use of steam in joint geothermal plants in order to support the use of renewable energy. The “Winnonie” startup applies green energy technology to improve the lives of motorcyclists by promoting the use electric motorcycles. Facilities to swap out electric batteries in motorcycles are provided at Bangchak petrol stations for those who use such electric vehicles.

## (2) Power for Sustainable Future Foundation

The Power for Sustainable Future Foundation is a social enterprise sponsored by PTT Public Company Limited. The Foundation has a mission to act as an intermediary to mobilise aid and promote renewable energy management at the community level through the use of renewable energy technology suitable for that area. Instead of just delivering aid, the mission holds activities including field trips and training sessions to cultivate the concept of volunteerism in the minds of young people and local villagers, which will lead to long-term energy and environmental sustainability in the area.

Between 2014 and 2019, the Foundation aimed to develop clean energy suitable for communities in remote areas with projects to install the solar power generation systems. Thanks to its location near the equator, Thailand receives sunlight with the range of intensity suitable for power generation. To do this, PTT collaborated with various agencies to design and develop power generation systems that were both efficient and safe and could be used in different ways, including as a lighting system in the village, a school electrical system, or a solar water pump for agricultural use.

The Foundation has carried out renewable energy projects in 23 areas, generating 472,342 units of electricity per year, saving 1.89 million Thai Baht in annual electricity costs, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 161.57 tonne CO<sub>2</sub> per year. The projects have benefited around 4,000 people in rural and disadvantaged areas. The Foundation has also organised workshops to educate children and youth, volunteers, community leaders and representatives, about energy. The workshops were attended by a total of 977 participants, divided into 347 volunteers and 630 interested people.







# Overview

The growth of the Thai economy has slowed down in recent years, with a growth of real GDP per capita of 2.1 per cent in 2019, compared to 3.8 per cent in 2018 and 3.7 per cent in 2017. This has come as a result of a reduction in exports due to the contraction of the global economy. Nonetheless, the growth of real GDP per person employed in 2019 stood at 3 per cent, which was equivalent to that of the year before. This growth rate was also higher than targeted in the **National Strategy under the Developing and Strengthening Human Capital** chapter, which states that labour productivity must increase by 2.5 per cent per year from 2018-2022. This demonstrates progress in labour productivity in the country.

With regards to inclusive employment and decent work for all, employment rates for men and women stood at close to equal levels. **Women receive slightly more pay than men**, with their pay higher by around 2.98 per cent in 2019. **Men have a higher unemployment rate** than women by around 0.2 per cent in 2019, which shows that Thailand has a fairly small gender divide in the economy. The child labour employment rate has also dropped from 6 per cent in 2015 to 4 per cent in 2018. However, the percentage of those who receive social protection compared to the actual number of people employed stands at 43.41 per cent, which is lower than planned for within the National Strategy. The National Strategy aims to develop the social protection system to provide coverage for 70 per cent of all those employed from 2018-2022.

The development of Thai Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) remains a challenge for the country. In 2019, the proportion of total products produced by SMEs compared to the country's total products produced stood at only 43.2 per cent, which is lower than targeted in the National Strategy. The Strategy aims to have this figure equal to 45 per cent from 2018-2022.

**The proportion of youth (15-24 years of age) who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) has increased from 21.50 per cent in 2018 to 22.63 per cent in 2019.** One main cause for this has been poverty. Given that Thailand is advancing towards a fully aged society<sup>8</sup>, this causes concerns for the availability of labour in the long term.

Moreover, the overall progress towards SDG 8 in 2020 and 2021 is expected to reflect impacts from the outbreak of COVID-19, which has caused a contraction in the Thai economy and created higher unemployment. This is particularly true for the tourism industry and other specific industries, which have experienced a slowdown in 2020. The continued contraction of the global economy will also continue to affect Thai exports.

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<sup>8</sup>In 2023, Thailand will become a “complete - aged society” with at least 20 per cent of the population aged 60 years and over, and will become a “super - aged society” with at least 28 per cent of the population aged 60 years and over by 2033.



# Policies and Implementation

(1) **Measures to reduce costs and handle COVID-19:** the Government is aware of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on entrepreneurs and the labour force, and thus issued short-term and long-term measures to assist groups that have been affected. In the short term, the Government has implemented initiatives to boost economic growth, such as measures to reduce costs for the people through the state welfare cards and village funds, measures to reduce costs for agricultural producers, credit initiatives aimed at supporting employment, and other measures to promote spending, including the “We Travel Together” initiative.

In the mid-term and long-term, the Government has also implemented policies to elevate the competitiveness of the country, such as through projects to raise the capacities of workers to advance the Thailand 4.0 policy and projects to improve labour skills in the formal and informal sectors. The Government has promoted sustainable and balanced tourism. The Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism (public organisation) has worked with local authorities to promote local goods and services that reflect the unique cultural identities of such areas, and has set up tourism routes to promote area-specific marketing.

(2) **Response to disruptive technologies and promotion of green technology:** the Government has initiated a project to develop the skills of new workers entering the workforce and those lacking skills. This is in tandem with the establishment of a high technology training centre in order to produce workers that respond to the needs of future industries and promote innovation in the production process. This includes providing tax benefits for the industrial sector that allow companies to use their research and innovation costs to lower their juristic persons tax three-fold.

In terms of the promotion of environmentally-friendly technology, the Government issued a guidebook on the procurement of environmentally-friendly technology in 2017 as a pathway for state and private sector actors to build incentives for producers. This has been complemented by efforts to introduce green certifications for the Thai industrial sector. Awards of the new **Green Industry Mark** increased by 458 actors in 2019, and an additional 26 industrial estates were designated as eco-champions. Certified organic farming areas have increased by 290,880 rai. The Government has also promoted environmentally-friendly technology through the issuing of “**Green Labels**” for environmentally-produced products. In 2020, 718 products were given this certification. Carbon Labels have also been issued for products that have been produced through low-carbon processes. In 2019, 251 products were certified with this label.

(3) **Promote equal opportunities and fair employment:** the Government has designated a minimum wage of 313-336 Thai Baht per day, and has designated standardised pay for 83 specific professions. This has allowed those who have passed standardised tests for each profession to receive 345-825 Thai Baht per day. In terms of addressing the issue of the number of youth not in education, employment, or training, Thailand has established the **Education Equality Fund** in order to reduce inequalities in



education and prepare vulnerable students' readiness to enter the workforce. This Fund mainly comprises scholarships to open opportunities for careers, such as a scholarship for high technology professions, community-based profession scholarships, and **Phra Kanitha Profession scholarships**.

For elderly persons and the disabled, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security promotes their employment under the National Plan on the Elderly (2002-2022) and the **5th Quality of Life Development of Persons with Disabilities Plan (2017-2022)**. In 2019, the Government provided appropriate training for 560 disabled persons and 38,000 elderly persons. Technology has also been applied to protect vulnerable groups, such as through the creation of the “**Protect U**” mobile application as a means to protect human trafficking victims and the “**Police i lert you**” mobile application to allow citizens to report crime in a timely manner. In terms of efforts to combat child labour, the Government has conducted periodic checks on at-risk areas and has issued regulations for the protection of labour in the fisheries industry, which stipulates that workers must be over the age of 18.

(4) **Knowledge Promotion on Innovation for SMEs:** The Government attaches importance to raising the competitiveness of the country, especially with regards to assisting new entrepreneurs and startups to apply technology and innovation to increase productivity and the value of goods and services. This has been achieved through provisions of financial assistance and development of the credit system to allow more access to financial sources, the establishment of a one stop service centre, and learning centres in all provinces. From 2017-2019, this resulted in an increase of 217,130 new SMEs, with 861,148 entrepreneurs receiving training.



# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **Thailand has become a complete aging society since 2021.** The year 2018 was the first year in which the number of elderly persons exceeded that of the youth in the country. This will result in a continuous reduction in the labour force. Should the number of young people not in education, employment, or training increase, this will affect the quality of the labour force. The Government must attach importance to addressing this issue, and ensure that the development of Thai workers' skills keeps pace with technological changes.

(2) **The coverage rate of the Thai social protection system is relatively low,** which might result in a lack of awareness on social protection, especially among workers in the informal sector. The Government must build incentives for informal workers to enter the social protection system, including through raising awareness, increasing benefits, and expanding the range of choices.

(3) **The COVID-19 crisis and the effects from Climate Change are key factors** that affect income security for entrepreneurs. This is particularly true for the tourism industry, where incomes have decreased since early 2020. As such, the Government must provide remedy and help to revive SMEs. This includes increasing access to sources of finance, and creating opportunities for SMEs to enter the state procurement process. In addition, knowledge development and creation of resilience from within are key in allowing entrepreneurs to build their incomes in a sustainable and secure manner amidst economic uncertainty and various challenges.





# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Mae Fah Luang University's Area-based-Social Innovation Research Centre (Ab-SIRC): Reaching out to migrant workers

Amidst the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was only a small number of migrant workers who could access government assistance. Therefore, Mae Fah Luang University's Area-based-Social Innovation Research Centre (Ab-SIRC) - which is located in the border area and plays an important role in building knowledge through research and producing academic work that serves society - carried out a survey on the ground and found that most of the migrant workers who remained in Chiang Rai could not meet their basic needs and lacked opportunities to access healthcare information, as well as enjoy social security benefits. This was especially true for workers in small and medium enterprises that did not have standard remedial schemes for employees.

To solve this problem, Ab-SIRC requested assistance from various civil society networks to set up the Aid Coordination Centre for Migrants Workers in Chiang Rai to mobilise and distribute aid to migrant workers who were affected during their stay in Thailand. The aid came in different forms, including disease prevention and control training for representatives of each migrant worker group, delivery of initial care packages, and coordination with relevant agencies for migrant workers to receive financial compensation in accordance with the law.





# Overview

Thailand has achieved good progress on the achievement of SDG9. The country has already achieved the target with regards to assistance in developing infrastructure in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), particularly in the Mekong sub-region, in which Thailand has had a long-standing role from 2005 – 2020. Thailand has provided financial and technical assistance in the sub-region, totaling 83 projects of a value of 19.78 billion Thai Baht. This assistance increased from 14.29 billion Thai Baht in 2014 to 21.07 billion Thai Baht in 2020. Key programmes include the construction of the **R3 railway linking**

**Chiang Rai to Kunming through the Lao PDR**, renovation of roads and water drainage systems in Vientiane, **development of Route 67 linking Anlong Veng and Siamreap** and development of the Thai-Myanmar connectivity from Myawaddy-Tanaosri mountain pass. In addition, Thailand has supported science, technology, and innovation in Thailand and in neighbouring countries **through the establishment of the Industrial Transformation Centres (ITC)** in order to promote assistance to the private sector in adapting to the digital era. 709 entrepreneurs have received training through the centres.

With regards to development of quality infrastructure in the country, Thailand has made significant progress. Particular progress has been made in expanding road coverage throughout the country and connecting travel in the ASEAN sub-region, with Thai roads expanding to 0.89 km per square kilometre, which **ranks 28th out of 63 countries** across the world and third overall in ASEAN. At present, Thailand is developing a rail system as the main mode of travel and for the movement of goods, with investment in 11 projects covering a total of 2,147 kilometres. All of these projects will be completed within 2022. In addition, the proportion of those who can access the internet has increased. The proportion of those above the age of 6 who can access the internet has increased from 38.6 per cent in 2014 to 56.8 per cent at present.

In the promotion of inclusive industry, the Government has set a **target of advancing eco-industrial towns** as a key part of the 20-Year National Strategy. Thailand has over 40 model eco industrial towns in 37 provinces. At present, the Government is developing a further 18 areas in 15 provinces, in order to increase the efficiency in the use of resources and develop environmentally-friendly industry. As such, Thailand has managed to **reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 164,473 tonnes from 2017-2019**. Thailand has consistently increased investment in research and development, increasing from 124 billion Thai Baht in 2017 to 143 billion Thai Baht in 2019. In addition, the correct management of waste in the industrial sector has increased, particularly given that industrial waste has decreased. In 2019, the amount of industrial waste that entered the waste management system stood at 17.25 million tonnes, compared to 34.80 million tonnes in 2017 and 45.78 million tonnes in 2018.

Increasing productivity within the industrial sector remains a challenge. In the past, the rate of expansion in total goods produced in the industrial and service sectors decreased by 0.03 per cent year on year. The manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP was also reduced from 27.14 per cent of GDP in 2016 to 25.3 per cent of GDP in 2019. Furthermore, the proportion of employment in the industrial sector per total employment has also decreased from 16.62 per cent in 2018 to 16.15 per cent in 2019. The Government has accelerated the development of **S-Curve Industries**<sup>9</sup> through the development of traditional industries through new technology and through the creation of a new group of industries that have potential to develop the country's industrial sector in the future. This will serve to advance the Thai economy and ensure that it escapes the Middle Income Trap.

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<sup>9</sup>The 12 targeted S-curve industries are: cars; smart electronics; affluent, medical and wellness tourism; agriculture and biotechnology; food; robotics for industry; logistics and aviation; biofuels and biochemicals; digital; medical services; defence; and education development.



# Policies and Implementation

(1) **Investment to develop the transport infrastructure in the country:** the National Strategy for the development of the Thai transport system (2018-2037) comprises projects including the construction of a dual-track railway on 7 routes covering 993 kilometres, two projects to construct a new railway covering 4773 kilometres, which will help to increase coverage of the country's transport system. In terms of maritime transport, the Government has accelerated the third phase of the Laem Chabang port project, opened the Pattaya-Kao Thakiab route, and plans to open the Sattahip-Bangsaphan route. This also includes plans to begin services on electric ferries in the Padungkrungkasem canal in Bangkok. In terms of air transport, projects include the construction of the Betong International Airport, which will be completed within 2021, and the development of the U-Tapao airport as the country's third commercial international airport. In addition, low earners holding the state welfare card have also been given assistance in travelling on the transport system; assistance has totaled 500 Thai Baht per type (buses and sky train) in order to support the people in accessing basic transport services.

(2) **The Government has designated the Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model as a National Agenda in order to escape middle-income trap and drive forward sustainable and inclusive growth.** The BCG Economy Model Strategic Plan (2021-2026) consists of four strategies. The first strategy aims to create sustainability of resource bases and biodiversity. The second strategy involves community empowerment and development of local economy. The third strategy aims to uplift the target industries under the BCG economy model for sustainable competitiveness. The fourth strategy seeks to enhance resilience in the face of global change. The development of the BCG economy model will focus on four sectors: (1) agriculture and food; (2) medical services and wellness; (3) bioenergy, biomaterials, and biochemical; and (4) tourism and creative economy.

(3) **Promotion of target industries and the creation of an innovation zone in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC):** Focus has been attached to the S-Curve Industries and the development of the Bio-Circular-Green Economy. In 2018, 5,659 factories have been developed (disaggregated into 5,218 factories that build on existing industries and 441 factories geared for future industries). The Government has also established the **Eastern Economic Corridor of Innovation (EECi)** in order to create an ecosystem that serves to promote research between the private, government, academic, and people sectors in the area. The EECi is made up of innovation research (R&I focus), an integration centre for private and state sector research labs, and testing areas. This will be developed into an industrial area with legal benefits for research and innovation development. The Government will also provide support for startups and SMEs, the promotion of a large community of innovators, and the development of quality infrastructure



for innovation. In 2020, the EECi initiated projects to develop research capacities, development, and innovation capacities for the agricultural sector, biotechnology, technology for new types of crops, environmentally-friendly aquaculture systems, testing kits for agriculture, food, and medicines, models for medicine and vaccines. Other projects include research on biomass, research in the industrial sector, investment in technology and innovation for productivity, model products, and technology for labs. The Government has also promulgated the **Promotion of Use of Research and Innovation Act B.E. 2562 (2019)**.

**(4) Reduction of Greenhouse Gases in the Industrial Sector and the Development of Green Industry:** the Department of Industrial Factories issued certifications for green factories at several levels: 21,383 factories at Level 1 (Green Commitment); 10,841 factories at Level 2 (green activity); 8,775 factories at Level 3 (green system); 632 factories at Level 4 (green culture); and 88 factories at Level 5 (green network). This exceeded the target to issue 2,000 certifications per year. The project also resulted in Thailand's achievement in reducing greenhouse gases in the industrial sector by 164,473 tonnes from 2017-2019. The investment in order to increase efficiency and protect against pollution led to a more efficient use of resources in 2020. This included a reduction in the use of electricity by 9,349,998 kWh per year, reduction in the use of water by 2,974,830 cubic metres per year, and a reduction of greenhouse emissions by 17,163 tonnes of Co2eq per year.

**(5) Development of the High-Speed Internet Infrastructure to cover all villages in Thailand:** this was split into 3 projects. The Net Pracharat Project that covered 24,700 villages, the Fringe Areas Internet project that expanded into far off areas and is in the process of installing internet in 3,920 villages, and the Rural Internet project that covers 15,732 villages. In addition, the Government initiated the first phase of training (2020-2022) in order to develop internet skills for all and create opportunities to improve the quality of life particularly for agricultural producers, entrepreneurs, the elderly, vulnerable persons, and disabled persons.





## Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **The elevation of industry in order to play a role in the economy and employment remains a challenge.** In the past, Thailand has not sufficiently invested in the development of basic infrastructure and an enabling environment for the research and development of technology and innovation in the industrial sector.

(2) **Labour costs have increased in Thailand,** leading more investors to plan for the possible relocation of their operations to other countries. As such, Thailand must accelerate the development of basic infrastructure in tandem with an increase in research and development of technology in order to aid the transition of industries that use less resources and are environmentally-friendly. This also includes supporting the financial agility of SMEs and building incentives for research and development, and the promotion of modern technology to elevate the development of large-scale and small-scale industry in line with the Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model.

02

## Circular Economy

Aims at reusing and recycling resources in order to reduce waste and environmental impacts.

03

## Green Economy

Focuses on being environmentally friendly with sustainable development as its end goal.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

### Doi Kham Foods Product Company Limited Promotes the BCG Economy Model

One example of a business that gives importance to research and innovation development, and adopts modern technology to increase productivity and add value to products—in line with the BGC Economy business model—while caring for the environment and promoting community participation, is Doi Kham Food Products Company Limited. The company's Second Factory in Mae Chan, Chiang Rai province, participated in the Corporate Social Responsibility, Department of Industrial Works (CSR-DIW) Project and later received CSR-DIW Continuous Award 2019 from the Department of Industrial Works, Ministry of Industry, for its outstanding performance.

Doi Kham Food Products Co., Ltd. is a social enterprise that seeks to analyse and improve the organisation according to corporate social responsibility standards in a bid to strive for sustainable development. It also values promoting knowledge for farmers on modern agriculture and refined farming to be the source of good and quality products that meet international standards at realistic prices. The company also has an environmentally friendly production process and takes care to develop communities in the vicinity of the factory to enable them to live well under the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.





# Goal 10

| Reduce inequality within  
and among countries

# Overview

The situation on inequalities in Thailand has seen positive developments in many dimensions, particularly with regards to inequalities in income. From 2015-2019, the Bottom 40 in the country had an income that rose constantly from 3,353 Thai Baht per person per month in 2015 to 3,721 Thai Baht per person per month in 2019. This represents an increase of 4.6 per cent per year, which is higher than the average income increase in the country, which stood at 1.21 per cent per person per year. This is one key outcome that advances the overall achievement of SDG10, which aims to ensure that the growth in income for the Bottom 40 is higher than the country's average growth in income.

In ensuring equal opportunities and a reduction of inequalities, the number of vulnerable groups with access to **social welfare** is at a good level. In 2018, 84.5 per cent of children from poor backgrounds received financial assistance. 81.7 per cent of elderly persons received state financial assistance in 2019. In 2018, 75.6 per cent of **disabled persons** also received state financial assistance. However, state protection of **informal workers** is lower than targeted; only 20.7 per cent of workers in the informal sector received assistance. In addition, wealth inequality as a whole remains high in the country.

Taking into account the role of development partners in social development in the country, the number of community organisations has grown by 6.3 per cent since 2017, while municipal assembly mechanisms have reached 7,666 groups. This amounts to 98 per cent of all local government authorities in the country. Development partners play a role in assisting and complementing community efforts, thus leading to resilience from within.

In reducing inequalities between and among countries, Thailand has increased the number of products with **zero-tariff barriers** in all categories, and has consistently provided assistance for developing countries, such as the CLMV (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam) countries. This includes in terms of long-term regional economic and financial system development, and in promoting investment from the Thai private sector in the sub-region. In addition, the Government is determined to reduce remittance costs for migrant workers in Thailand. However, there are still some inequalities between Thai and migrant workers, such as **unfair employment** and **workplace health and safety**. Migrant workers are more often employed in less sanitary, more dangerous, or more difficult settings and jobs compared with Thai workers.





# Policies and Implementation

Article 27, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017) stipulates that **all persons are equal in the eyes of the law and have equal rights**, freedoms, and legal protections. Men and women are equal, and discrimination based on place of birth, race, language, gender, age, disability, physical or mental condition, economic or social status, religion, education, or political belief (that does not violate the Constitution) or any other reasons is for bidden. From 2015-2019, key measures to reduce inequalities included:

**(1) Reduction of inequalities in income and promotion of self-reliant communities:**

This has been implemented through measures such as the State Welfare Card in order to reduce consumption costs for low-income groups, including transport costs, rent, and household internet costs. In 2019, 46.05 per cent of all persons eligible were given a state welfare card. Community and grassroots economies have been promoted under the vision of ensuring secure grassroots economies and self-reliant communities by 2021. Measures under this vision have included linking One Tambon, One Product (OTOP) products with domestic and international markets. Since 2018, OTOP products have grown by an average of 23.98 per cent per year, and community tourism generated a total income of 2.3 billion Thai Baht from 2018-2019.

**(2) Promotion of the Role of the Private Sector in Community Development:** this included a project with the Provincial Chambers of Commerce and the Thailand Chamber of Commerce entitled “one rai, one hundred thousand Thai Baht”. This project is aimed at applying knowledge, technology, and innovation in developing the capacities of agricultural

workers. The “**One Chamber of Commerce, One Cooperative**” project also aims to strengthen agricultural cooperative management to ensure a modern approach, reduce costs, and create stable income. 157 cooperatives from 76 provinces have taken part in the project. A central mechanism has also been created to advance social enterprises in the country. At present, 54 private sector companies have taken part. **The Thailand Responsible Business Network (TRBN)** has been established to support business that generates collective benefits for all.

(3) **Reducing inequalities between and among countries:** since 2015, Thailand has given special tax benefits to 57 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which included **duty free and quota free (DFQF)** status for 73.21 per cent of all products from such countries. Free access was also granted for LDCs in 6 sectors of the service industry, including hospitality services, recreation facilities, language schools (with service providers from Nepal, Cambodia, Uganda, and Mali), rest homes and holiday centres, cruise agents, and shipping services. Assistance was also provided to LDCs through international cooperation. This includes through a project to promote education and trade, investment, and business paths. Furthermore, Lao PDR and Thailand have established the Coordinating Committee on Services (CCS) in order to promote cooperation in the services industry in the region.

In terms of finance, Thailand has set a strategic target for the role of the World Bank Group in working with the country from 2018-2022. Thailand has played an active role in providing policy input and voting in international economic, financial, and development institutions. The Bank of Thailand retains the position of Executive Council Member of the South-East Asia Voting Group within the World Bank and IMF frameworks, made up of Southeast Asian countries, Nepal, Fiji, and Tonga, and was the country’s representative in the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC).

(4) **Improving financial resilience and connectivity in the region:** in early 2019, the Bank of Thailand relaxed regulations on international bank transfers, including the relaxation of the criteria for those seeking to do business in Thailand. This reduced the requirement to have 3 Thai shareholders per 4 shareholders to 1 Thai shareholder per 4 shareholders. Such measures were implemented to increase opportunities for new businesses to invest further in Thailand. Furthermore, the Bank of Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on payment systems and financial innovation with the Central Bank of Indonesia and the Central Bank of the Lao PDR. It also expanded cooperation on payment innovation with countries such as Myanmar and Singapore to support “**ASEAN Payment Connectivity**”. This allowed payments for international goods and services through a QR code, with a choice of currency. It also allowed migrant workers to send remittances home instantly, which reduces costs and risks in currency exchange. The Government has also elevated capacities in cyber security and IT security in order to allow for effective financial services and promote social responsibility.





# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) The COVID-19 crisis has illustrated the importance of community development in order to ensure a resilient grassroots and that no one is left behind. Thailand must develop mechanisms to effectively link central agencies with local authorities, including integrating work between all sectors to promote community resilience. This is especially needed in terms of deriving benefits from the **Thai People Map and Analytics Platform (TPMAP)**, which the Government has established as a database to address poverty, inequalities, and the provision of comprehensive welfare for all.

(2) In crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government must not only ensure comprehensive and inclusive welfare for all, but must also assess the situation and provide **targeted welfare measures** for those affected, including workers at high risk of unemployment (approximately 8.4 million workers). These workers are mainly employed in the services, tourism, and industrial sectors. Focus must be attached to informal workers as well, such as entrepreneurs, street sellers, and workers in the Bottom 40 who mainly work in the agricultural sector or as general labourers.

(3) **The reduction of tariff barriers for LDCs and the facilitation of investment and finance** for foreign entrepreneurs might create competition, and cause Thai entrepreneurs to lose out to foreign businesses. There must be support in terms of knowledge transfer and value creation in the Thai industries in order to elevate the capacities and competitiveness in the global market.

(4) **Financial development and innovation** has resulted in a change towards a more complex financial environment. Many changes have occurred, including the use of digital currency and online banking services. Effective regulations are needed, as this might affect financial stability, especially in times of economic slowdown and contraction. This also represents a risk of cybercrime.



## Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

### Social Development and Human Security Volunteers (SDHSVs)

In addition to government agencies present, Thailand leverages a network of volunteers in preventing and tackling issues of inequality at a community level. **The Social Development and Human Security Volunteers (SDHSVs)** support the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security's operations in local development and providing aid for target groups in communities. Their work ranges from presenting data on social problems in communities, coordinating with networks at all levels to assist those impacted, to developing long-term support schemes. The Government has launched a programme for the volunteers' specialised training according to the target group under their care or those who need support, namely the SDHSV Training Programme for Specialised Disability Support and Elderly Support, which aims to lay a foundation for the responsibilities of the SDHSVs; share techniques in the work, report writing and how to draw lessons from the experience; and deepen understanding about rights, disability support and elderly support. The programme will improve the SDHSVs' skills, build their confidence and allow them to gain various proficiencies in keeping a social watch and caring for people with disabilities and the elderly.









# Overview

Urbanisation continues to increase in Thailand in line with global megatrends. Urban expansion and urban migration rates remain the highest in the world in the Asia-Pacific region. The Government has therefore implemented a number of policies that promote sustainable urban development and safe, comprehensive, resilient, and sustainable urbanization in accordance with **the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda (NUA), and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030).**

In the past few years, Thailand has made good progress on SDG11. The Government has attached importance to solving the problem of home ownership through housing projects supporting low-income earners, slum dwellers, and persons with disabilities. Studies have found that the number of low-income slum dwellers with inadequate housing consistently decreased from 3.2 per cent in 2015 to 2.73 per cent in 2017.

An analysis of the **Land Consumption Rate to Population Growth Rate (LCRPGR)**, the main measure of land use efficiency in urban areas, shows that the ratio of land consumption to population growth rate stood at 0.96 from 2016-2019, an improvement from 0.97 between 2011-2016. The number shows that Thailand has slightly improved on land use efficiency. However, access to the public transportation system is limited only to city centres. Overall, only 24 per cent of the urban population has convenient access to the public transportation system.

Waste management in urban areas has also improved. The ratio of controlled waste to overall waste increased from 17.30 per cent in 2014 to 42.67 per cent in 2017. Air quality remains a challenge, especially the increasing levels of fine particle matters that cause health risks that are 2.5 microns or less (PM2.5) and 10 microns or less (PM10).

In addition, Thailand continues to increase the amount of financial allocation for urban cultural and heritage conservation. In 2020, the allocated amount is valued up to 13.27116 billion Thai Baht. This was an increase from 10 billion Thai Baht in 2017. The sub-projects contribute to an integrated regional area development for cultural and heritage conservation plan, namely: **the World Heritage Tourism Project; the Historical, Cultural, and Religious Tourism Project, the Natural Resources and Environmental Preservation Project; and the Project Preventing Natural Resources and Environmental Degradation.**



# Policies and Implementation

Thailand leverages an effective framework and mechanisms for the implementation of urban development policies. The Government passed the **Town Planning Act B.E. 2562 (2019)**. This legislation comprises the central pillar for urban planning and focuses on increasing the participation from all sectors in order to promote inclusive and transparent urban planning. This process incorporates the following steps: **(1) explore, demarcate, and draft comprehensive town plans; (2) conduct meetings to discuss the drafted plans; (3) conduct public consultations on the drafted plans; (4) submit the drafted plans to the Town Planning Committee for its consideration and approval; (5) publicise the drafted plan for a period of no less than ninety days; (6) collect, investigate, and examine any petitions tabled; (7) prepare a Notification of the Ministry of Interior for the announcement of the town plans; and (8) seek final approval from the Cabinet.**

The Government is working to resolve the **housing shortage in the long-term** through the following mechanisms: the National Housing Policy Committee; and the 20-year National Housing Development Strategy (2017-2039), which was extended from the 10-year National Housing Development Strategy (2016-2025). The Government continues to implement several projects to provide safe and decent housing for all. Key examples include:

**(1) The Baan Mankong Project** focuses on creating cities without slums by helping more people with low income to acquire housing and land ownership. The project also helps improve the overall infrastructure system and the environment in the residential areas with the goal to elevate the quality of life of people with low income and to provide adequate basic infrastructure. So far, this project has provided assistance to over 45,055 households.

**(2) The Baan Toog Tua Thai or “Affordable Homes” project** provides affordable housing to help relieve the financial burden for those in need, with rent assistance starting from 999 Thai Baht per month. The project’s target group consists of low-income households earning less than 40,000 Thai Baht per month and the unemployed who cannot afford to buy a house. Currently, over 35 Baan Aue Arthorn projects (a government-subsidised housing compound for low-income buyers), consisting of 10,000 units, have joined Baan Toog Tua Thai Project. 6,500 units are located in Bangkok and suburb areas; other 3,500 units are located in other regions of Thailand. As of 2020, the project rented out the total of 3,202 units.

**(3) The Baan Por Pieng Chonnabot Project, or “Sufficiency Rural Homes” project** focuses on fixing, modifying, and rebuilding old houses for persons with disabilities, the elderly, people with low-income, the underprivileged and poor families in rural areas who face limitations regarding housing and land. This project allows the people in need to gain secure and hygienic housing, thus achieving better living standards. Over 62,795 households have enjoyed the benefit of this project, the funding for which came from the communities as well as other sectors.







**(4) Mega Public Transportation Development** is one of the Government's top priorities. Four rail transportation lines with a total of 153.8 kilometers have been opened in Bangkok: (1) Green line (2) Blue line (3) Airport rail link (Phayathai-Suvarnabhumi) and (4) Purple line (Bang Yai-Tao Poon). According to the Mass Rapid Transit Master Plan in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region (M-MAP), the Government aims to finish 103 metro stations by 2029. Moreover, the Government implemented a number of **public transportation development projects** in provincial areas to support the need of the people living in the provinces and to promote sustainable tourism such as Phuket Public Transportation System Project, Public Transportation System Master Plan in Chachoengsao, Chonburi and Rayong Provinces for the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), Khon Kaen City Bus Project, Phuket Smart Bus Project, and Udon City Bus Project (Udon Thani).

**(5) The Government aims to reduce disaster risks in urban areas** through an integrated emergency management in which all agencies are encouraged to follow the National Disaster Risk Management Plan. In addition, the Government also consistently strengthens international cooperation and enhances the country's role in disaster risk management. In 2019, Thailand conducted an Asia-Pacific incident action plan drill to promote international cooperation and further enhance Thailand's capacities in Urban Search and Rescue Advisory (USAR) according to the standards of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG).





(6) **The reduction of urban air pollution**, especially fine particulate matter, has been designated as a National Agenda. In this regard, the Government has published the **20-year Air Quality Management Plan (2018-2037)**, including top priorities such as the Smoke Crisis and Wildfire Prevention Project in upper northern Thailand, the Air Pollution Health Risks Surveillance and Prevention Project, and an Environmental Watch Center for Chiang Mai's Industrial Areas.

(7) **Public Spaces**, especially urban green spaces, remain one of the Government's long-term policy priorities. The development of green spaces aims at providing recreation areas and natural trails that will help raise environmental awareness and enhance the quality of life of urban population. Such projects include the Pracharat Forest Park, the Environmental Community Project for Green Spaces, and Thailand RTK GNSS Network. Other projects focus on the use of technology in green space development in collaboration with the private sector such as Thailand Creative & Design Centre (TCDC) that works closely with the government to provide creative spaces, TK Park, and the Bangkok Metropolitan City Library. Furthermore, the private sector also invests in building public spaces such as Central World's Pathumvanaraksa Park and various public co-working spaces.

(8) **Promote fund-raising** from the capital market and the business sector for social development. The Public Debt Management Office (PDMO) has issued green bonds and social bonds to encourage fund-raising for sustainable development from business sector. The PDMO is currently studying the feasibility of issuing blue bonds, with proceeds going to support ocean and marine resources.



# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **The Government needs to accelerate its efforts in helping the people with low income in urban areas.** Challenges include slum shelters, low income and debts, drugs and crimes, degrading environment and infrastructure, insecure housing and expropriation of houses, health risks, and air pollution. Non-hygienic environments in slums can impose health risks and cause rapid spreads of contagious diseases. As a result, the Government has implemented several plans and projects to further address these challenges. The Government promoted comprehensive housing development that also includes community development focusing on improving the quality of life of the community members in four dimensions (physical, social, economic, and environmental). Such development includes the renovation of communal public spaces, the use of alternative energy and renewable energy, garbage dump sites, and other basic infrastructure.

(2) As land prices in Thailand continue to rise, **urban expansion has advanced vertically rather than horizontally.** This increases the population density, residential density, and the risk of contagious diseases. Thailand should improve land use efficiency and land development in line with the overall direction of national development priorities.

(3) **Climate change creates higher risks of natural disasters** that are difficult to predict. Disasters can have socio-economic impacts on society, especially on vulnerable groups with low resilience. Thailand needs to continue capacity building to cope with disasters and increase resilience.

(4) **The number of waste management sites remains inadequate,** with only 2,852 sites nationwide. Basic infrastructure including the infrastructure for waste management needs to be further developed.

(5) To promote concrete actions, more awareness-raising on the importance of maintaining a good ratio of **public spaces to overall space is needed to educate the public and entrepreneurs,** especially on issues related to green spaces such as Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and Open Space Ratio (OSR).





# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Sustainable Urbanisation for All

Aside from the Government, a network of communities or independent organisations are also involved in urban and housing development, including the **Urban Design and Development Center (UddC-CEUS)** which was established in 2012 through collaboration between the Health Promotion Foundation and Chulalongkorn University. It serves as a centre that coordinates knowledge and aid from various organisations related to urban development, in order to restore and develop Bangkok's inner areas which will lead to more sustainable urban development.

Since its founding, UddC-CEUS has worked with the Government, the private, education and civil society sectors in implementing several urban regeneration projects, such as Yannawa Riverfront, GoodWalk, Bangkok 250, Chulalongkorn University's 2nd Centennial Masterplan (CU2040), Chula Smart City, Active River Station, Bangkok Under-utilised Space, and Urban Observatory and Engagement.

Most recently, UddC-CEUS completed the Chao Phraya Sky Park project, a pedestrian bridge across the Chao Phraya River and the first sky park in Thailand. Officially opened on 16 June 2020 by Bangkok's City Planning Department, the project regenerated the old unfinished structure of the Lavalin Skytrain that was left unused for more than 30 years, transforming it into a new public space. The Chao Phraya Sky Park was achieved through multilateral cooperation—between Bangkok's City Planning Department, the Department of Rural Roads, the Marine Department, and the Ministry of Transport, with UddC-CEUS in the center—to become a walkway and bicycle path across the Chao Phraya River, and connect the transportation systems between the Thonburi and Rattanakosin banks.





# Goal 12

Ensure sustainable  
consumption and  
production patterns

# Overview

Thailand has implemented a number of policies that ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. At the policy level, the Government developed the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Roadmap (2017-2037) to reinforce and develop the mechanisms for sustainable consumption and production and to promote cooperation with the private sector. The cooperation between the Government and the private sector is expected to enhance six sectors: industrial manufacturing; food and agriculture; service and tourism; town and local administration; sustainable procurement; and awareness-raising and education. As a result, the number of factories certified with the “**Green Industry**” label increased by 2,353, 2,022, 2,921, and 3,472 factories, respectively, from 2017 to 2020. This number is expected to continue to increase. In terms of private sector sustainability, the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) reported on 31 August 2020 that 146 companies out of 725 registered companies published their Sustainable Development Reports (SD Reports). This is equivalent to 20.14 per cent of all registered companies. In this connection, SET demanded that all registered companies must disclose their sustainable development policies in three areas: **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)**.

Looking ahead, the COVID-19 pandemic and waste management will remain the challenges. Waste, especially used surgical masks and plastic food packages as a result of a surging demand for food delivery, is expected to increase. In 2020, the total amount of waste was 28.71 million tonnes, of which 93 per cent was treated and disposed properly. Regarding waste management, Thailand supports the safe and proper management of biohazardous waste and continues to raise awareness of infectious waste management. By 2020, Thailand was able to safely dispose of 1.23 tonnes of hazardous waste, from an original goal of 1.35 tonnes. In addition, Thailand also further advanced the implementation of four conventions and one protocol regarding hazardous chemicals and other chemicals<sup>10</sup>.

In the energy sector, Thailand promoted renewable energy and waste energy power plants, especially using biomass and garbage as fuel. The Government also supports the purchase of electricity generated from renewable energy small power plants over electricity generated by fossil fuel as a way to reduce impacts to the environment. According to the **10-year Renewable and Alternative Energy Development Plan**, Thailand should be able to maintain the renewable energy share to final energy consumption at 25 per cent by 2021.

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<sup>10</sup>Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal / Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade / Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants / Minamata Convention on Mercury / Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer



# Policies and Implementation

(1) Policies have been implemented by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, other line government agencies, and related private sectors. The Government developed the **Sustainable Consumption and Production Roadmap (2017-2037)** to provide guidelines and policy direction for national frameworks for sustainable consumption and production and to synchronize them with the 20-year National Strategy (2018-2037). This is also in line with the Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model and relevant indicators on sustainable production and consumption provided by the United Nations.

(2) The Government has designated waste management as a National Agenda and has developed the Roadmap for Implementing a **Management of Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste (2016-2021)**, particularly focusing on achieving the goals for waste management at the local government level. The roadmap will serve to promote proper treatment and disposal of the waste and support increased recycling and “upcycling”. In 2019, 44 per cent of waste for a total amount of waste weighted at 12.52 million tonnes was reused, which was an increase from 34 per cent in 2018.

The Government, in collaboration with other sectors, initiated the “**Send Plastic Home**” project. The project recycles plastic waste to solve the problem of increasing plastic waste, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. To advance the project’s motto of “**You sort, We recycle**”, 10 drop points were piloted in order to take clean, sorted plastic waste from people’s homes to the recycling process as a part of the Circular Economy model, which emphasises the reduction, reuse, and recycling of waste.

(3) The Government collects data and takes indicators into account, such as **Material Footprint (MF)**, **Domestic Material Consumption (DMC)**, evaluations on national food and agricultural product waste for food waste dividing baseline throughout the value chain, **Tourism Satellite Account-System of Environmental Economic Accounting (TSA-SEEA)**. The Government has also cut down on the use of fossil fuels, has included sustainability and world citizenship in the national curriculum, and collected enterprises’ sustainability reports to advance the country’s progress based on the measurement of the indicators.









# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **The transition towards a BCG Economy and the development of other environmental initiatives is still limited to the central government and large enterprises.** Local government authorities and small and medium enterprises lack funding and capacity development. The Government should promote sustainable business as a trend and provide support accordingly. It can also provide guidelines and regulations that facilitate reuse and remanufacturing as well as tax incentives and technological knowledge.

(2) **Thailand's recycling system suffers from certain limitations**, such as the lack of waste sorting, which becomes an obstacle for turning waste such as contaminated food packages and electronics waste into reused products. As a result, the Government should enforce strict measures and regulations regarding waste sorting, educate the public about waste sorting, and provide enough sorting bins for each type of waste.

(3) **The Government should work with other sectors to design and implement efficient and sustainable waste management actions**, including food donations, legal protection for food donors and food distributing volunteers, and tax incentives for food waste recycling.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Tesco Lotus: the role of private sector in advancing sustainable consumption

In the agricultural and food sector, Tesco Lotus is an example of the role of the private sector in advancing sustainable consumption and production. The company complies with government policies from the beginning to the end of the supply chain (manufacturing process, packaging, logistics, and distribution). Policies implemented include:

(a) **Direct sourcing** is implemented from 1,000 household agricultural farms across different regions in Thailand. Farm managers work closely to support the farmers in each region from planning and farming to produce-to-demand analysis to prevent food waste and low price due to excess of supply.

(b) **Efficient supply chain management** helps to improve logistics from farm to door and prevent shortage of essential goods, especially during times of crisis. In addition, cold chain logistics helps to preserve ingredients' freshness during transportation resulting in a longer shelf life.

(c) **Surplus food donation** increases management efficiency in each store and reduces food waste. The project in collaboration with Scholars of Sustenance Foundation (SOS) donates left-over products that are safe to eat to the people in need, especially people with low income and vulnerable groups. From March to December 2020, over 1.3 million meals were donated through this project.

(d) **Recycle Drop Points** receive packaging, including boxes and cardboard boxes that increase through online shopping. Reverse vending machines installed by the private sector have also collected over 1.6 million plastic bottles.

(e) **Awareness-raising campaigns** inform the public of the importance of sustainable consumption and their role in promoting sustainability.



An aerial photograph of a mountainous landscape. In the foreground, a large, deep blue lake is visible, surrounded by dense green forests. The mountains in the background are covered in snow and have a mix of green and brown patches. The sky is a clear, bright blue. On the left side of the image, there is a vertical bar with a rainbow color gradient.

# Goal 13

Take urgent action to  
combat climate change  
and its impact



# Overview

Thailand has implemented several policies for the achievement of SDG13 and is committed to advancing efforts to combat climate change and its impacts. Thailand has integrated the climate change agenda into the national framework for climate change, namely the National Strategy's (2018-2037) 3rd Strategic Guideline on **"Promoting Climate-Friendly Based Society Growth"** and Thailand's National Strategy on Climate Change (2017-2037). In addition, Thailand has also developed a policy framework to enhance the concrete and effective implementation of national climate change policy in all sectors, consisting of the Thailand National Adaptation Plan, and the Nationally Determined Contribution Roadmap on Mitigation (2021-2030).

Thailand has effectively illustrated its contribution to climate action. The country exceeded its target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 7-20 per cent in 2020 according to the **Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA)**. On 1 October 2015, Thailand submitted the country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and submitted its updated NDC on 26 October 2020. The First NDC aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20-25% from projected Business As Usual (BAU) levels by 2030, a target which was reaffirmed in the updated NDC. In addition, the Government also published the national reports and bi-annual reports that have been submitted to the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Third National Communication and the Third Biennial Update Report (TBUR) were submitted on 29 August 2017 and 25 December 2017 respectively.

On disaster prevention, Thailand focuses on including all sectors in disaster prevention and disaster risk reduction according to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030). **The National Disaster Risk Management Plan** serves as an integrated and people-centered national framework including: (1) local capacity building, the community-based disaster risk management model, including community training on risk evaluation and basic coping mechanisms; (2) capacity building for the public sector and partners such as drills for disaster risk management and national crisis management; and (3) provincial disaster risk management plans, provincial supporting emergency plans, and local government's disaster risk management plans.

To increase knowledge and awareness on climate change, **Thailand has integrated the knowledge of climate change into the national core curriculum** and into indicators and standards for three subjects: (1) mathematics, science, and geology; (2) social studies, religions, and culture; and (3) physical and health education. In addition, the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion has published the Environmental Studies Activity Manual. The manual contains climate change knowledge for teachers to use as a teacher's manual and for the interested public. These manuals have been distributed to related organisations and schools in the network.





# Policies and Implementation

(1) **Thailand has continuously advanced its climate change policies**, including adapting each different policy area at different levels including at the sub-national level. The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, in collaboration with the German International Cooperation (GIZ), launched the Climate Policy Project to support the subnational implementation of climate policy. The project, which is being implemented during 2018-2021, is in its second phase. The first phase operated from 2014-2017. It helps related central and local organisations located across 60 provinces to build their capacities on integrating climate change issues into their provincial development plans. In 2020, the project launched the “Changwat Gao Glai Su Pai Climate Change”, or “Progressive Provinces Against the Climate Change Threat” campaign to attract applications from pilot provinces that want to receive technical and academic support for integrating climate changes issues in their provincial development plans. The ten pilot provinces for the project comprise (1) Bangkok, (2) Kanchanaburi, (3) Chanthaburi, (4) Chonburi, (5) Chumphon, (6) Tak, (7) Maha Sarakham, (8) Yasothon, (9) Ranong, and (10) Suphan Buri.

(2) **The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning** developed a National Adaptation Plan and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding Thailand’s climate change adaptation efforts with the following agencies in the following areas: (1) on water management with the Office of National Water Resources; (2) on public health with the Department of Health; (3) on human settlements and human security with the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning; and (4) on promoting tourism with the Department of Tourism.



(3) On 29 October 2020, the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning and the Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization reported on Thailand's success in achieving greenhouse gas reduction goals under NAMA and the country's transition towards its NDC goal. In 2018, **Thailand was able to reduce the emission in the energy sector by 57.84 MtCO<sub>2</sub> equal to 15.76 per cent**, which is higher than the original minimum goal of 7 per cent by 2020 under NAMA. The overall target was to reduce such emissions by 7-20 percent.

(4) On 7 January 2020, Thailand showed interest in joining the **NDC Partnership** and became an official member on 22 January in the same year. Joining the NDC Partnership allows Thailand to receive financial and technological support, capacity building for NDC implementation with regard to national interests, and the exchange of knowledge and best practices among member states that share the same goal of reducing the emissions according to the Paris Agreement.

(5) On 31 August 2022, the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and the Planning Council of Engineers Thailand, the Engineering Institute of Thailand, the Thai Cement Manufacturers Association, the Thai Concrete Association, and 16 other related organisations from the public, vocational, industrial, and educational sectors signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Climate Adaptation and Measures for the Replacement of Clinker. Finding alternatives to clinker, an important construction material made from cement, will support the reduction of greenhouse gases in the **Thai industrial sector and will help the country to reduce carbon emissions by 300,000 MtCO<sub>2</sub> by 2022**.







# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **Thailand still lacks a comprehensive set of laws and regulations supporting climate actions**, including on measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and follow-up mechanisms.

(2) **The lack of research and development for modern and efficient technology** to boost climate actions remains a challenge for Thailand. The lack of complete data collected for climate actions is also an obstacle to effective implementation.

(3) Climate change related information needs to be **more inclusive**.

(4) **The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the major obstacles** for Thailand to carry on some continuous projects on climate actions, especially field projects that need physical awareness-raising activities, training, and seminars. Related organisations need to adapt to the changing situations and use technology such as online training or e-learning to adjust the implementation of the projects.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Private Sector Efforts on Climate Change

PTT Exploration and Production Public Limited Company attaches importance to climate change action, and has developed a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to reduce the impact on the environment from its business. The company has set a target of reducing its emissions by at least 25 per cent from the base year of 2012. In 2020, the company managed to reduce its emissions by 13 per cent compared to the base year. This amounted to a reduction of 300,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide. In addition, the company has also studied the possible use of carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS) as an investment in the future.





# Goal 14

**Conserve and sustainably  
use the oceans, seas and  
marine resources for  
sustainable development**

# Overview

According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), Thailand's maritime zone extends across a total of 323,488.32 square kilometres. This accounts for 60 per cent of the country's land area. The total length of the country's coastline includes the Gulf of Thailand, the Andaman Sea coast, and the northern part of the Malacca Strait. This extends across 3,151.13 kilometres in 23 provinces of Thailand. As such, marine resources constitute a key source, provide marine habitats, and offer lucrative economic opportunities for the country. Striking the right balance between marine conservation and sustainable exploitation of marine resources has become the Thai Government's priority.

Currently, Thailand has designated **35 marine protected areas** extending across 15,336 square kilometres, or 4.74 per cent of the country's total maritime zone. Six other areas totaling 11,865.29 square kilometres, or 3.67 per cent of the total maritime zone, are currently being reviewed. By 2030, Thailand aims to declare 10 per cent of its total maritime zone as marine protected areas according to the National Reform Plan.

The Government has continuously highlighted its commitment to reduce plastic waste and marine debris under the **Thailand Roadmap on Plastic Waste Management (2018-2030)**. On 1 January 2020, the country imposed a 100 per cent ban on the use of water bottle cap seals, oxo plastic, and microbead plastic. The Government, in partnership with 90 retailers, ceased giving plastic bags to customers, which reduced the use of plastic bags by 228,820 tonnes. Civil networks in 48 areas conducted waste cleaning campaigns on beaches, with over 114 tonnes collected by participants.

In addition, the Government has controlled and regulated marine pollution from ships. In 2020, the Government was able to limit the vessel wash wastewater to 959.95 tonnes per month and oily wastewater to 3,130.75 tonnes per month, which were 3.63 times and 0.61 times higher than the figures in 2019 respectively. 210 seawater monitoring stations were established on the Gulf of Thailand and on the Andaman coast to collect samples. Samples from 12 stations collected three times a year from both the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea showed pH readings of 7.964 and 7.975 for the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea respectively. This shows that **ocean acidification in Thailand was slightly higher than average** (average readings consist of a pH of 8).

However, the **COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased plastic waste** due to a heightened demand for food delivery and surgical mask waste. In response, related organisations publicised the importance of waste sorting and proper disposal of waste to reduce residual waste in the environment throughout 2020. The private sector also cooperated with the organisations by installing floating litter traps at the mouth of the river, covering 24 areas in 13 provinces. Given the success of such floating traps in collecting over 40 tonnes of litter, the project is planning to install traps in an additional seven areas in seven provinces in 2022.



# Policies and Implementation

**(1) Thailand has pursued an integrated approach to combatting Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (IUU Fishing).** On 8 January 2019, the European Union officially lifted the “yellow card” on Thailand. As a result, the Government was able to discharge the Command Centre for Combating Illegal Fishing (CCCIF) and established the Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Centre (Thai-MECC) in its place. Thai-MECC has been tasked with protecting Thailand’s maritime interests and operates under the direct command of the Office of the Prime Minister. Thailand has also committed to international cooperation to support the implementation of port state measures and is currently in the progress of developing the e-PIPO (electronic Port-in Port-out) facilities, which are expected to be finalised by 2022.

**(2) The government advanced the application of satellite remote sensing for marine pollution and ships investigations** using satellite images from TERRA/AQUA, which allows for seawater quality monitoring, the development of a seawater quality database through the SNAPP and NOAA-20 satellites, and the development of PyGNOME, a system to provide area-specific water direction and speed forecasts. These simulations and forecasts can then be linked into a wider system.

**(3) Thailand has improved catch management and the recovery of aquatic animals for commercial purposes** by limiting catches to 45 per cent of the Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY). Efforts at registering 39,400 local fishing boats to monitor local fishing activities and in supporting 11,797 businesses to meet international aquaculture standards have been implemented. In addition, 129,742,944 aquatic animals were recovered and released back to the sea. The Department of Fisheries also established local Blue Crab Banks in 532 communities, where local communities promote the breeding of blue crabs before making them available for purchase. These banks care for and then release newborn crabs into the sea as a means of ensuring a sustainable food supply for the community.

**(4) Spatial ecosystem management has been promoted** by growing and restoring over 164.38 rai (263,008 square metres) of coral reefs and 60 rai (96,000 square metres) of seagrass, as well as installing 4,710 artificial reefs over 6.62 rai (10,592 square metres) in 8 sites across 7 provinces. At Pha Ngan Island in Surat Thani Province, 7 oil rig legs were turned into artificial reefs in line with the Rig to Reef vision. The impacts of the Rig to Reef project on the marine ecosystem have been assessed by all sectors. In addition, Thailand also developed the Central Spatial Database for Marine and Coastal Integration and the Marine Fisheries Management Plan of Thailand (2020-2022) as a means to consolidate national framework for fisheries management.



(5) The Government allocated over 52.45 million Thai Baht for research and development on marine technology from the total budget for research development of 24.65 billion Thai Baht. This is equivalent to 0.21 per cent of the total funding. This allocation represents a reduction from the previous year by 0.07 per cent. Nevertheless, other environmental organisations also contribute financially to the studies on the community's capacity to preserve and restore coastal natural resources.

(6) Thailand recognizes the significance of international cooperation in addressing issues related to the ocean. The country is a signatory to 18 international conventions related to the issue and continues to implement them at domestic level. Thailand continuously amends its domestic legislation and regulations to ensure that they are in line with the country's international obligations. This includes the amendment of relevant legislation to ensure that they are in line with obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in order to facilitate its implementation in the Thai legal system. Thailand also works with international organisations to provide fisheries aid to neighbouring countries such as providing training, knowledge and news, academic knowledge, and technology for fisheries and marine sciences. This significantly contributes to concrete efforts to achieve marine sustainability.



# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) To achieve SDG14, Thailand has emphasised its commitment to develop the **management, conservation, and restoration of the sea and ocean**, as well as efforts to strengthen partnership from all sectors. Goals set by the country include increasing marine protected areas to 10 per cent of the entire maritime area by 2030, increasing the number of manatees from 250 to 280 by 2022, and increasing the number of volunteering networks for ocean conservation by at least 30 per cent per year. These goals are ambitious and require serious efforts.

(2) **Resolving problems in the country related to the ocean, the sea, and the coastal areas is a complex issue** that is also connected with the reduction of pollution on land. An integrated data set reporting the progress and implementation is required for comprehensive and effective actions against all types of pollution problems.

(3) **Progress on marine and coastal resource management in 2020 showed limitations regarding manpower, tools, and equipment.** The COVID-19 pandemic also halted many activities and has therefore delayed the achievement of some targets. However, the pause in some activities has allowed for the revival of environmental habitats and the return of rare wildlife. More sea turtles were able to lay eggs on the beach and marine resources were able to recover through a natural process. Therefore, one of the real challenges in the post-COVID era comprises conservation of the marine ecosystem and the preservation of unexpected environmental gains when the borders reopen.





# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Community-Led Efforts to advance “Life under Water”

The **Marine Rangers**, currently totalling more than **15,200 volunteers in 24 coastal provinces**, play an important role in carrying out marine and coastal resources conservation efforts with government agencies and monitoring any situations that may affect marine and coastal resources. They also take part in raising awareness for people to understand problems afflicting local marine and coastal resources and can formulate plans to address the problems as suitable for each area.

In addition to the Marine Rangers, other volunteer groups also help drive the implementation of SDG14, such as the **Crab Bank group**, which has members in more than 532 communities and plays an important role in the restoration and conservation of blue crab resources. There are also special volunteer groups which come together to carry out specific activities, such as dives to collect marine debris, beach clean-ups, and waste collection and sorting. All in all, at least 80,000 volunteers play a key role in conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources in Thailand.







# Overview

Thailand contains pristine and fertile terrestrial and marine resources. Even though, these resources are core driving force for country's economy development, but Thailand is confronting various environmental problems such as natural resources degradation, ecosystem threats, biodiversity loss, climate change, and increase natural disaster risks. Therefore, the Royal Thai Government committed to sustainable natural resources management and recovery. Various attempts sustainable resources management have been undertaken. Escalating environmental financing was an attempt. During 2017-2022, more than 13.26 billion baht has been allocated to combating environmental issues. Environmental management has been increasing for 88 per cent between 2019-2021 (8,572 -16,143 million baht respectively).

The first long term 20 years National Strategy (2018-2037) was set up. The strategy targeting 55 per cent eco-friendly green areas of the country of which 32 per cent of forest coverage since 2004. **The Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2022)** reiterated the target on 25 per cent of natural conservation forest (as part of 32 per cent). Affirming plan to expand conservation forest coverage or protected areas to cover 23 per cent in 2020 which engulfed gazetting more 2,672 square kilometre of 22 national parks.

In addition, Thailand has designated wetlands of importance to natural eco-systems. Out of **15 sites** registered under the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance in Thailand**, **7 of them** consist of **inland wetlands** namely Kuan Ki Sian of the Thale Noi Non-Hunting Area Wetlands in Phattalung Province, Bueng Khong Long Non-Hunting Area in Beung Kan Province, Nong Bong Khai Non-Hunting Area in Chiang Rai Province, Princess Sirindhorn Wildlife Sanctuary (Pru To Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary) in Narathiwat Province, Khao Sam Roi Yot Wetlands in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Bueng Kut Ting in Bueng Kan Province, and Lower Songkhram River in Nakhon Phanom Province. Thailand also designated biosphere reserves (limited to terrestrial ecosystems) extending across 1.67 million rai (2,672 square kilometres) in 2020.

**Soil degradation remains the major problem for Thai farmers.** In 2019, Thailand suffers from different types of soil degradation such as acidic soil, highly saline soil, sandy soil, peat soil, and shallow soil. The problems have been encountered over 60.01 million rai (96,048 square kilometres) of land, increasing from 55.92 million rai (89,472 square kilometres) in 2005. Shallow soil remains the most prevalent issue, making up over 30 per cent of degraded soils.

**Biodiversity loss remains one of the most significant challenges for Thailand**, with several animal species now endangered. According to an assessment of threatened vertebrate species in 2016, over 549 species or 12.03 per cent of all species were threatened. In 2020, a study on the improvement in the conservation status of threatened vertebrate species showed that 671 species, or 13.42 per cent of all species, were threatened. Threats from invasive alien species remain one key factor that causes biodiversity loss. In this regard, the Cabinet passed the Cabinet Resolution on 20 February B.E. 2560 (2017) regarding the Prevention and Control Measures for Invasive Alien Species to address this issue.

Nevertheless, Thailand has shown an improvement in the implementation of The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). In 2020, wildlife trafficking cases decreased to only 28 cases. This number represents a significant drop from 600 cases in 2009.







# Policies and Implementation

**(1) Thailand has developed legislation** regarding the protection, recovery, and support for sustainable terrestrial ecosystems. Significant laws include the National Park Act B.E. 2562 (2019), which focuses on the reservation, conservation, protection, and maintenance of natural resources in national parks. The Forest Plantation Act B.E. 2535 (1992) promotes forest plantation on government-owned and private-owned lands. Plant Variety Protection Act B.E. 2542 (1999) provides the protective mechanism for new plant variety, local domestic plant variety, general domestic plant variety, and wild plant variety. National Reserved Forest Act (No.4) B.E. 2559 (2016) focuses on efforts to counter exploitation within the boundaries of reserved forest in accordance with the current situations. The Forest Act B.E. 2484 (1941) (Amendment No.8 B.E. 2562), and the Wildlife Reservation and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) have also been developed to control ownership, trading, importation, exportation, and transitory movement of wildlife, wildlife carcasses, and products made from carcasses, as well as the exploitation of biodiversity. In addition, Thailand is advancing the Biodiversity Act as the central law and the mechanism for integrating biodiversity into other national policies as a means to promote the conservation, sustainable exploitation of biodiversity. The implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation to the Convention on Biological Diversity is also a priority.

The country has also promoted the localisation of such efforts and several local government authorities have established a robust policy platform. This includes examples such as the Phrom Sawat Subdistrict Administrative Organization Regulation on Natural Resources and Environment Management B.E. 2560 (2017), Non Sung Subdistrict Administrative Organization Regulation on Wildlife Reservation and Protected Areas within the Boundaries of Non Sung's Public Forest B.E. 2559 (2016), and Tha Khoei Subdistrict Administrative Organization Regulation on the Protection and Maintenance of Natural Resources and the Environment B.E. 2560 (2017).

**(2) The Government has preserved and promoted a healthy forest ecosystem** by establishing Forest Protecting Operation Centres. The centres provide an integrated platform and serve as the headquarters for anti-deforestation operations, the reclamation of forest areas from illegal ownership, the management of national parks in accordance with IUCN Green List Standards, and efforts to promote patrolling standards reform in reserved forest areas. The centres also collaborate with the private sector on the revival of forests in the reserved areas and mangroves and on projects such as those preventing wildfire and forest management projects for a sustainable economy. Technology also plays a role in forest management. The Forest Monitoring System allows a near real time monitoring system in reserved areas all over the country. Furthermore, forest resource exploration database management systems are utilized to boost efforts, as well as forest resource measuring, following, and reporting systems.



(3) **Regarding efforts to prevent biodiversity loss**, natural habitat loss including forest and coastal ecosystems has decreased. In 2019, forest areas in the country extended over 102.49 million rai (163,984 square kilometres), or 31.68 per cent of the country's total land area. This amount increased slightly from 2017. In 2018, the mangrove area extended 2.86 million rai (4,576 square kilometres), increasing by 86.37 per cent from 2014. Overall grass resource areas remain at the same level and are in better health. Coral reefs now extend across 149,025 rai (238.44 square kilometres), increasing by 0.05 per cent from 2015. Compared to 2015, the growth rate for coral reefs looks set to continue at the same rate. From 2017-2018, wetlands area extended 3,620,206 rai (5,792.3296 square kilometres), increasing from 2015-2016 by 5.06 per cent. As a result, biodiversity has been integrated into national and subnational policies in accordance with the **Master Plan for Integrated Biodiversity Management B.E. 2560-2564 (2017-2021)**. Other prominent projects include research projects on the assessment of plant variety status, and arranging the priorities of threatened plant varieties. The Millennium Seed Bank Project preserves the DNA in local plant seeds, endemic plants seeds, and endangered plant seeds. Other projects involve biodiversity exploration in reserved forest area, the study of the quality of natural habitats of Bengal tigers' prey in Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex, the study on mangrove plant variety on the IUCN Red List of threatened species, wildlife research in conservation areas, and an operational protective plan for 13 reserved wildlife and projected endangered species .

(4) **The National Biobank of Thailand (NBT)** was established as a result of a Cabinet Resolution in 2018 as a key part of the country's infrastructure with regards to ex situ conservation. The Biobank mission is the long-term preservation of biomaterial, including that of plants and microorganisms, and biodata. The preservation process, managed with information technology, is highly efficient and in line with international standards.

(5) **Thailand has joined a project aimed at developing targets and indicators on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)**. This project aids measures designed to combat land degradation. The plan for achieving Land Degradation Neutrality includes main activities such as compiling basic information for evaluating degradation, setting goals and measures for conserving land, reducing the impacts, and recovering lands, sharing results to related agencies, and following up the implementation progress using indicators for land degradation namely indicators on the changing usage of lands and land quality. Soil organic carbon change indicators have continuously been used in the database development process and all follow-up processes from 2015 to 2030.

(6) **The private sector has engaged in fund-raising for activities promoting biodiversity and sustainable ecosystems**. In 2018, TMB Bank issued the 7-year Green Bond valued at 1.85 billion Thai Baht to fund climate-smart projects and activities promoting sustainability run by the private sector. The Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC) also issued their **Green Bond** valued at 20 billion Thai Baht between 2020-2024 to fund privately-run afforestation projects that are environmentally friendly and

generate jobs income for the community. The BAAC's project is expected to increase forest areas by 500,000 rai (800 square kilometres). In 2020, Thailand was successful in crowdfunding during the COVID-19 pandemic. Krungthai Bank (KTB), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), launched the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) through the "Koh Tao, Better Together" campaign to generate temporary incomes for vulnerable groups in Koh Tao areas through a Cash for Work mechanism. The mechanism provides small income in return for cleaning the beach and collecting litter. KTB brought QR-Code technology to Thailand and was able to raise funds from all sectors within three months (November 2020 - January 2021). Total funds raised reached 92,000 USD, which exceeded the original target of 64,800 USD by 143 per cent. The money coming from Thailand and abroad went to over 200 fishermen.

**(7) Different forms of financial mechanisms for the protection, conservation, and recovery of biodiversity implemented** in Thailand help to foster sustainable use of biodiversity resources. The study on Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) showed Tree Bank, Green Bond, and Payment for Ecosystem Service (PES) has been implemented in many areas. In addition, Thailand is one of the founding countries of the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), an international cooperation initiated by UNDP in 2012 in the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The initiative aims to use BIOFIN methodology to solve financial and budget challenges in the promotion of biodiversity. Seventy-seven countries have developed fund-raising plans for the conservation and recovery of biodiversity and project priorities. Funding should come from many sources domestically and internationally, from the public sector, the private sector, and civil societies, and through traditional and innovative means. Through this effort, each country would be able to find different sources for the investment on biodiversity that fit their countries the best.

Thailand developed the fifth phase of its **Biodiversity Financial Plan (BFP) (2018-2022)** to bridge gaps in financial priorities for promoting biodiversity. The priorities include the following dimensions: sustainable tourism, wildlife conservation and protected areas, subnational government budget, and investment from the private sector. BFP provides two strategies, namely: 1) awareness-raising and capacity-building in all sectors related to applying the financial mechanism for promoting biodiversity to the national context; and 2) support for financial plans and financial tools for the management of biodiversity in pilot areas. The strategies also require a report on the study of potential investment in various projects, new policies, capacity-building, and the promotion of policies that enable pilot financial mechanisms.

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<sup>11</sup>Chinese Gorals, Gurney's Pitta, Wild water buffaloes, Tapir, Fea's Muntjac, Dugong, Tiger, Banteng, Siamese crocodile, Hume's pheasant, Indian hog deer, Eld's deer and Green peafowl



# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) Although the Thai Government has shown continuous commitment in developing related laws and budgets for the implementation of SDG15, the goal of **increasing forest areas** in order to expand green spaces to a total of up to 55 per cent of the total land area **remains a challenge**. Other challenges include promoting biodiversity and land resource conservation. There should be awareness-raising for a comprehensive implementation of SDG15, especially promoting the community's role in the conservation, recovery, and management of natural resources. This includes providing appropriate compensation for those affected by natural resource conservation and generating income from growing forest and preserving sustainable biodiversity.

(2) **Thailand must increase fund-raising in the private sector for activities** regarding the conservation and promotion of biodiversity and sustainable ecosystems as a way to bolster the implementation of SDG15. However, government policies toward fund-raising in the private sector remain inadequate. This affects the prioritization, unity, the continuity of the projects. As a result, the Government needs to increase support to the private sector and work as the focal point for all sectors to increase efficiency.

(3) **Serious efforts are needed to address land degradation**, especially through effective management, sustainable recovery of soil, soil and water conservation system, and cooperation on land resource conservation between public sector, private sector, and farmers. The Government needs to develop maps illustrating areas with land degradation and degradation from human activities, as well as identification of drought-prone areas for basic information and follow-up. The Government should also conduct research on drought-affected land to reduce such areas or prevent it from spreading.

(4) **Thailand needs to develop a complete and comprehensive biodiversity** database and link data between organisations. Such an effort would be beneficial to the development of policy and measures for an effective management of biodiversity including building understanding of the importance of ecosystem and biodiversity to daily life and the country's social and economic development, especially within the context of severe impacts from climate change. In addition, the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) should become more comprehensive and should include data on water, energy, and greenhouse gas accounts, in order to provide supporting information for a more integrated, comprehensive, and evidence-based policy and planning process.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

Expanding forest areas through the revival of degraded forest areas must pursue an integrated approach. This includes various forest revival measures, increasing the efficiency in the integrated management of forest areas, the management of natural resources in river basin areas, and research and development in order to increase the effectiveness of such measures. Resolving community problems in forest areas, improving the quality of life, and raising awareness among the local community to boost knowledge on forest conservation and provide incentives and income for local people to increase their participation are also key. As such, Government agencies have been supported by the private sector in reviving forest areas and reducing the financial burden on the Government. The private sector has played a role in the management of natural resources alongside Government agencies as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Key examples include the following:

(1) The **“Giving with Our Heats, Reforestation for the King”** project has been implemented by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) with the Department of National Parks, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment over an area of 760 rai in the Mu Koh Chumphon National Park.

(2) Similarly, the **“CP-Meiji Forest and Water Conservation for the Country”** project has been conducted by the CP-Meiji Co. Ltd. in over 50 rai of the Namtok Sam Lan National Park alongside the Department of National Parks, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation.





# Goal 16

**Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

# Overview

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017) prescribes that all persons are equal before the law, shall enjoy equal protection, equal rights, and equal liberty. The Government has therefore promoted peaceful and inclusive societies, provided access to justice for all, and endeavoured to build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions that align with the Thai Government policies at all levels. These protections and rights are also recognized in the Masterplan on Law and Justice System under the National Strategy, which focuses on limiting the number of laws and regulations, making them relevant to all national development dimensions, embracing human rights in the justice system, and building equality before the law, impartiality, trustworthy, transparency, and accountability.

At the international level, Thailand has contributed to global institutions for good governance. Thailand was elected as a member of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2020-2022 and a member of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) for the term 2018-2021. In addition, Thailand ranked 71st out of 128 countries in the **Rule of Law Index** developed by The World Justice Project (WJP) in 2020, **an increase of 5 places since 2019**. The index is calculated through indicators on the Rule of Law, such as constraints on government powers, absence of corruption, open government principles, fundamental rights, and regulatory enforcement. Compared to other ASEAN countries, Thailand ranked 4th after Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Thailand is a signatory to 8 treaties related to equality and non-discrimination, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Thailand endeavours to develop its domestic institutions, especially in improving the efficiency of government counter services. In 2018, 84.50 per cent of people are satisfied with services received at governmental agencies. The number is close to the goal of achieving an 85 per cent satisfaction rate by 2022, which was included under the issue of Government Counter Service and Efficiency in the Public Sector under the National Strategy.

Continued improvement has been made regarding birth registration as it provides legal identity for the people living in Thailand (99.5 per cent in 2019 increasing from 99.4 per cent in 2017). The number showed that Thailand can effectively provide legal registration even though some groups might be left out from the household registration (approximately 0.5 per cent), mostly those born in extremely remote areas and stateless people. Limited access to government service, the language barrier, and limited means of transportation prevent them from getting the birth registration.





On human trafficking, the **2020 Trafficking in Persons (TIP)** Report, developed by the United States Department of State, placed **Thailand in Tier 2**. Thailand has consistently been placed in Tier 2 since 2018, after being elevated from the Tier 2 Watchlist. The Government has shown a commitment to combatting human trafficking within the country to maintain this status.

The issue of violence remains a challenge in Thailand. Statistics from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security show a **high level of domestic violence**. In 2018, 1,222 children and youth suffered from violence (comprising 22.14 per cent of the total number of victims). This number was only slightly reduced from 2017 when 1,592 children and youth were victims of violence. More than half of the victims (over 55 per cent) suffered from domestic violence. Among all forms of violence, physical violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and abandonment were the most prevalent.



Data from the Royal Thai Police Headquarters shows that, from 2017-2019, there were 18,130 physical and sexual abuse cases in 2019. This is a decrease from 19,170 cases in 2018. Murder and rape cases have continued to decrease since 2017, while the number of attempted murder and physical violence cases have not shown any significant change and could worsen.

**Corruption remains another challenge.** Transparency International (IT), the organisations publishing the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) on 180 countries around the world, gave Thailand a score of 36 in 2020. Thailand received the same score as in 2019, but was ranked the 104th place, three places down from 2019. The Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission reportedly found an increase in the number of corruption cases.



# Policies and Implementation

(1) **The prevention of oppression, exploitation, human-trafficking, and all forms of violence and torture is advanced** through amending and complying with related laws and regulations, such as the **amendment of the Royal Decree and Amendments on Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act B.E. 2551 (2008)** in 2019. The law categorises acts of exploitation and punishment and helps increase the efficiency of law enforcement. The National Human Rights Plan (2019-2022) by the Ministry of Justice and the National Family Planning Strategy (2017-2021) also helps promote human rights and equality nationwide and elevate Thailand's human rights standards to international standards.

In addition, the **Administrative Measures to Prevent Public Officials' Involvement in Human Trafficking Act B.E. 2558 (2015)** works to **reduce the complicity of government officials in human trafficking cases**. Integrated efforts among domestic and international partners in preventing irregular migrations of migrant workers, ethnic groups, and ethnic minorities increase the capacity of law enforcement regarding the protection and prevention of illegal migrant workers. Such collaborative efforts comply with human rights standards and help improve the protection system to meet the international standards. Activities on the protection of rights, preventing and fighting violence against women and children and domestic violence have been held across the country annually.

(2) **The Government continues to promote access to justice through the improvement of local justice offices and community justice networks** in every province. Local efforts can help prevent and resolve community conflicts, strengthen the community capacity to prevent crimes, and prevent disputes before the cases enter the main judicial procedure. Many government services were put in place to increase access to justice, such as the "Justice Fund" providing financial support to the low-income, "Justice Hotline 1111 ext. 77" on Application Justice Care,



and “Government Smart Kiosk.” Digital services are also available, namely online civil registration database, online complaint status tracking, and online identity verification service. In addition, the Thai Administrative Court has developed an online database for cases and statistics for public access and e-Courtrooms to shorten the process.

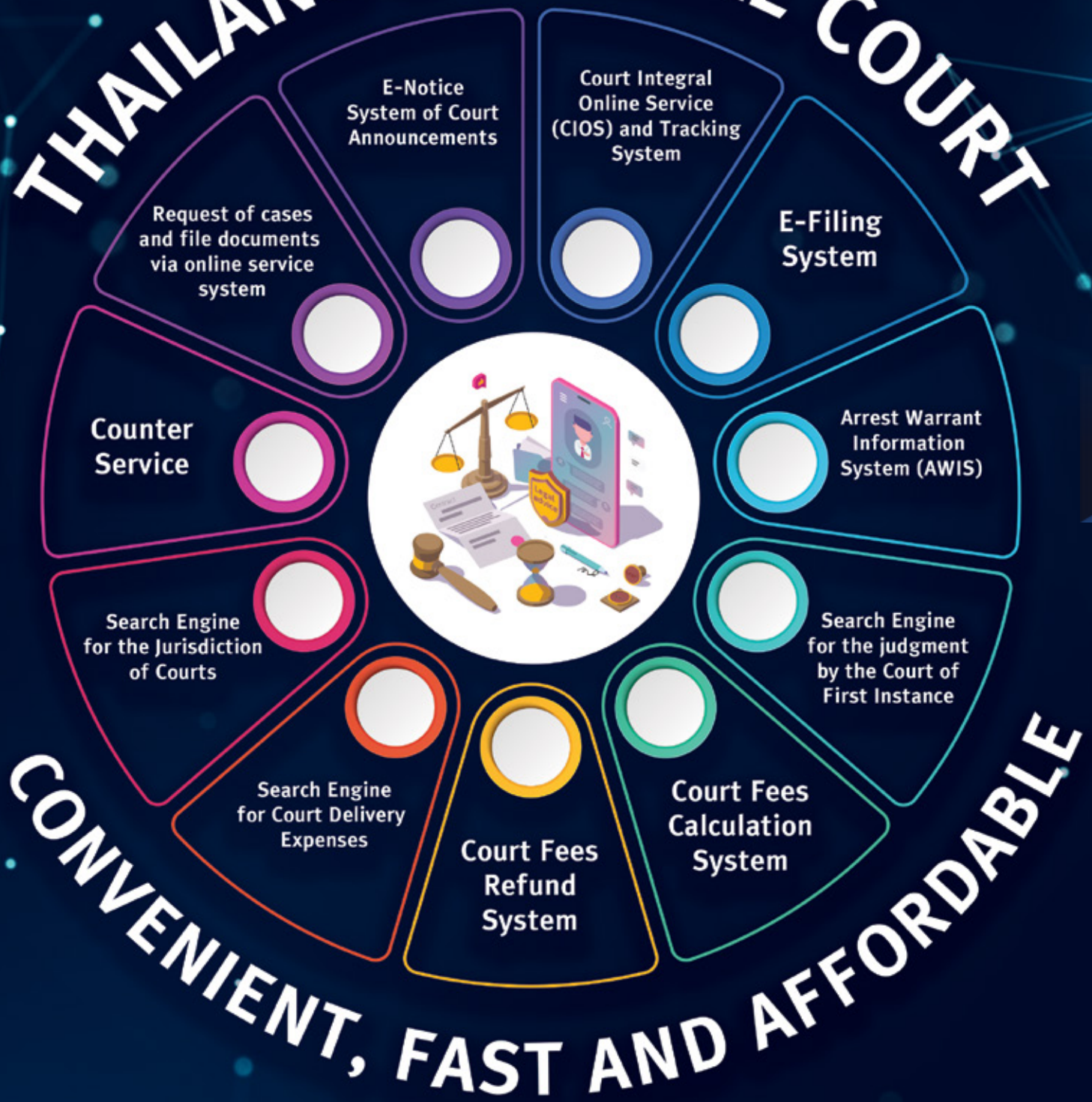
(3) On Anti-Corruption, the **Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission published the National Anti-Corruption Strategy Phase 3 (2017-2021)** and organised several anti-corruption projects and activities. Such activities include the STRONG Project for raising awareness, Watch Dog Project to promote vigilance and report of corruption activities in the community, and proactive anti-corruption project against government officials’ complicity including the good governance clinic and an anti-corruption manual for government officials, no-gift campaigns in governmental agencies, and publicly-accessible guidelines for transparent and accountable law enforcement for government officials.

(4) The promotion of Thailand’s presence on the global stage is a key priority. Thailand was elected to several prominent positions in the international community, including the **chairmanship of G77** in 2016, member of the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2020-2022**, member of the **United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) for the term 2018-2021**, member of the **United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development for the term 2020-2022**, member of the **International Telecommunication Union Council for the term 2020-2021** (9 consecutive terms), member of the **International Maritime Organization Committee for the term 2019-2022** (8 consecutive terms), member of the **International Labour Organisation Governing Body for the term 2017-2020**, and member of the **World Heritage Committee for the term 2019-2023**. This illustrates that Thailand’s contribution and potential is well recognised in the international community. The country’s active role on the international stage also helps to increase the participation of developing countries in international organisations.

(5) The creation of an enabling environment that is conducive to both economic and human development is crucial for the promotion of sustainable and inclusive growth in Thailand. Recognising this, Thailand was the first country in the Asia-Pacific to develop a **National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights in 2019**. The NAP covers implementation from 2019-2022, and focuses on four key aspects: 1) labour; 2) the environment; 3) human rights defenders (HRDs); and 4) transnational corporations and international investment. The development and on-going implementation of the NAP highlights the commitment of the Thai Government in promoting the Three Pillars (Protect, Respect, Remedy) of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.



# THAILAND'S DIGITAL COURT



# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) **More activities are needed to significantly** reduce all forms of violence and deaths from violence including the promotion of a safe environment, awareness-raising, and the respect of law.

(2) **Thailand must increase access to justice and encourage participation from all sectors** including the public sector, the private sector, and civil society. All parties at all levels should have a role in developing policies, laws, and tracking and evaluation systems in the justice system.

## Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

### Community Justice Counsellors

It is critical to promote cooperation with volunteers to create a mechanism for people to have easier access to the justice system and to participate in solving problems within communities. Communities have sought the support of “**Community Justice Counsellors**” to support this vision, and serves as a pro bono legal advisor to the villagers. The Community Justice Counsellors also provide a mechanism to enable villagers and volunteers to take part in community management and lay the foundation for sustainable development by themselves, which is one way to strengthen communities and create a sustainable local justice system.





# GOAL 17

**Strengthen the Means  
of Implementation and  
Revitalize the Global  
Partnership for Sustainable  
Development**



Global

# Overview

SDG17 focuses on the role of developed countries in providing development aid to developing countries and countries under special situations such as the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing states (SIDS). Thailand is ready to support the implementation of SDG17 and become a development partner, including through strengthening the implementation mechanism and expanding SDGs implementation to all sectors. Thailand's SDGs Roadmap prioritises the strengthening of domestic implementation mechanisms for SDGs, awareness-raising on the Goals, and building partnerships with all sectors, the public sector, the private sector, academia, international organisations, and the general public including women, youth, and volunteers.

Regarding fund-raising, government revenue has been reduced due to tax reductions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic slowdown resulting from trade protectionism in the previous year. The government revenue to GDP ratio dropped from 21.22 per cent in 2018 to 20.91 per cent in 2019 and 20.87 per cent in 2020.

Thailand has transitioned from a recipient country to an emerging development donor. The country has provided developing assistance to other developing countries on the basis of the **SEP for SDGs partnership** through **South-South and Triangular Cooperation** to 26 countries in Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America. Cooperation includes the following areas: health, agriculture, development on the quality of life and society, natural resources management, and the environment.

The country continues to promote sustainable development through multilateral frameworks, especially through ASEAN. Thailand was appointed the **ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation** at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Vientiane in 2016. As such, Thailand has sustainable development as a central strategy for ASEAN and has supported the Complementarities Initiative between the **ASEAN Community Vision 2025** and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Complementarities Initiative focus on 5+1 areas of cooperation: (1) Poverty Eradication; (2) Infrastructure and Connectivity; (3) Sustainable Management of Natural Resources; (4) Sustainable Consumption and Production; and (5) Resilience and Capacity-building.





# Global Compact Network Thailand



Thailand established the **ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDD)** as an institutional mechanism for ASEAN's advancement of sustainable development. The Centre was one of the concrete outcomes from Thailand's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2019. The Centre is located at the College of Management, Mahidol University, Bangkok and works on (1) conducting studies and research on sustainable development and (2) providing a platform for discussions on sustainable development among ASEAN members and between ASEAN members and non-member states. In 2020, the Centre adjusted its action plan based on current situations and ASEAN priorities, especially in the COVID-19 context. To boost awareness-raising, the Centre created a podcast series on economic and social recovery in ASEAN in the post-COVID era. Thailand has also engaged in discussions with ASEAN dialogue partners, such as with the EU on sustainable production and consumption and the circular economy. Discussions have also been held with Norway on renewable energy, and with Italy on sustainable tourism.

In the business sector, large private sector enterprises in Thailand promote business and sustainable development through the **Global Compact Network Thailand (GCNT)** and have integrated responsible business principles and the SDGs into their domestic and international business plans. Leaders in the private sector reaffirm this vision and declared their collective intention to conduct business in line with the SDGs at the **"Thailand Business Leadership for the SDGs 2020"** seminar, held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok on 31 August 2020. GCNT members also declared a collective goal to raise 1.33 trillion Thai Baht in funding for sustainable development by 2030. Thailand has strictly worked in compliance with its international tax agreements and obligations, such as in providing duty-free, quota-free (DF/QF) treatment for goods from some LDCs. Data in 2020 showed that such obligations covered 75.2 per cent of all goods and 71.4 per cent for non-agricultural goods.

With regards to the role of academia, the Thailand Chapter of the **Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)**, an international academic network for sustainable development, was established in 2020. SDSN Thailand is driven by SDG Move, Thammasat University, the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Chulalongkorn University, the Technology and Informatics Institute for Sustainability, the Office of the National Science, the Office of the National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council (NXPO) and the International Health Policy Programme Foundation (IHPP). At present, 12 universities and research centres form part of the network, a number that will continue to grow.

At the people level, the Cabinet recognized “**Giving and Volunteerism**” as a National Agenda in 2011 to promote volunteerism among the people as a key mechanism for SDG advancement. Currently, Thailand has 13.15 million formal and informal volunteers all over the country. This shows that ordinary Thai people are interested in helping to advance sustainable development in Thailand. In addition, civil society, academics, and private sector actors have also played an important part in supporting the volunteerism in Thailand.







# Policies and Implementation

(1) **Thailand has incorporated the SDGs into the National Strategy (2017-2037) and the 12th Social and Economic Development Plan (2017-2021)** to better synchronise national policies with the sustainable development agenda. Thailand has established the National Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD), chaired by the Prime Minister, to pursue the concrete implementation of SDGs. The Committee for Sustainable Development consists of four sub-committees: the Sub-committee for the Advancement of SDGs Implementation, SEP for SDGs Sub-committee, Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-committee, and the Strategic Environmental Evaluations Sub-committee. Moreover, in 2021, plans are underway within the National Committee for Sustainable Development to form two additional sub-committees on youth and the role of the private sector to encourage more contribution from the two sectors.

(2) **Thailand has promoted international cooperation with several countries from 2016-2020.** Key highlights from this cooperation, spearheaded by the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), include the following:

(a) **Provision of technical assistance** in collaboration with related organisations in related sectors under bilateral, regional, and multilateral development cooperation frameworks, including through the **SEP for SDGs** partnership. During the COVID-19 pandemic, TICA carried out “Strengthening Preparedness and Response to the Pandemic of COVID-19” as an immediate medical response through activities such as distributing medical equipment, hosting academic conferences on COVID-19, and creating **TICA’s Knowledge bank** on COVID-19. There are also



human development programmes such as scholarship programmes and short-term training programmes. The Friends from Thailand (FFT) initiative sends volunteers to CLMV countries and countries that have academic and economic cooperation with Thailand such as Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, and certain African countries (Mozambique, Benin, and Lesotho). FFT helps these countries fight the COVID-19 pandemic through providing public awareness materials, support for medical frontline personnel, conducting lab research in Bhutan, and providing Thai experts in various sectors.

(b) **Exchange of knowledge and best practices from Thailand’s development experience** in other countries, including academic knowledge, grants, and loans. Financial contributions have also been provided for international organisations of which Thailand is the member. These efforts allow for the integration of information and boost Thailand’s overall image as a donor country in development cooperation.

(c) **The Committee for International Economic and Technical Cooperation**, chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, promotes an integrated approach to international cooperation from Thailand. TICA has represented Thailand in conferences on technical cooperation and sustainable development, and has developed cooperation plans with other countries and international organisations in partnership with other state agencies, private sector actors, and Thai experts. TICA acts as the main agency for coordinating policies and advancing development cooperation with development partners including developed countries, other developing countries, and international organisations.



(3) **The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET)** launched the Thailand Responsible Business Network (TRBN) to promote business operations that are in line with sustainable development. SET requires all registered companies to declare their implementation of business for sustainable development including the Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) dimensions by 2022. In addition, the Thai private sector has also promoted and developed technology for sustainable development. In 2019, PTT Exploration and Production Public Co.,Ltd. presented 12 articles on technology and innovation related to sustainable development in academic journals and at international conferences. Siam Cement Group (SCG) Public Co.,Ltd. invested in the Logivan start-up that supports environmentally-friendly logistics in Viet Nam and in Adatos, the sustainable agriculture start-up from Singapore.

(4) **On statistical data, Thailand developed local and international indicators for the advancement of SDGs.** The National Statistical Office of Thailand and the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council developed National SDGs indicators that link with the National Strategy, the National Reformation Plan, and other related policies to achieve the most accurate measurement of SDGs advancement in Thailand. In addition, Thailand is committed to elevating the country's statistical standards through domestic and international cooperation such as collaboration through the ASEAN Community Statistical System Committee.

(5) **The Government has advanced the mobilisation of financial capital for developing countries through different sources.** Thailand allows more Thai investors to invest abroad and attract foreign resources to further advance Thailand's potential. The Government allows Thai investors to invest abroad at a budget of less than 200,000 USD per year without using domestic intermediary, allows low-interest loans through the Export-Import Bank of Thailand (EXIM Bank) including hedging strategies for Thai investors abroad, especially in CLMV countries, and tax exemptions to avoid double taxation of Thai investors who have investments abroad.





# Challenges and Way Forward

(1) Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the **public sector should increase the budget for the alleviation of the impacts from the crisis.** The Government should increase its tax collection capacity, especially through amendments of the Revenue Code based on the tax system and electronic transactions, tax collection for e-business abroad, tax structure in the digital era, and tax policies that strengthen SMEs and micro enterprises. The Government should also create tax incentives to promote the implementation of SDGs in areas such as reducing economic and social inequality and promoting sustainable consumption and production.

(2) Regarding international cooperation on development, the changing socioeconomic context as a result of **COVID-19 has resulted in a scarcity of resources.** Therefore, all sectors in Thailand and internationally will need to call for effective implementation, such as through promoting cooperation between the public and the private sectors. In doing so, the private sector, the civil society, and the people can join an integrated collaborative effort to build partnerships at all levels and better utilize existing data and academic research provided by high-quality expertise.

(3) SDGs implementation in Thailand should leverage **increased participation at the local level.** Policies from the central government might not be able to respond to specific local needs. The Government should start from raising awareness, promote understanding, and promote more contribution from the people and local organisations. The Government should provide both national and local indicators to track progress as well as promote systematic advancement of SDGs implementation at the local level.

(4) **Private sector investment in government public transportation, infrastructure, and telecommunication projects remains lower than Government expectations.** From 2018-2022, the Government sets a goal of drawing private sector investment for no less than 20 per cent of all public infrastructure projects undertaken. However, private sector investment only reached an average of 12.5 per cent of all projects each year from 2017-2019. The Government should raise additional awareness on cooperation between the public and the private sectors and promote concrete contribution in public management and public services, such as promoting the contribution of local organisations in education and public health. This might attract higher participation from the local private sector.

(5) **The Government recognises the importance of having a central statistics system.** The National Statistical Office of Thailand is developing a domestic statistical data system including indicators for all 17 SDGs. A Statistical Gateway for the efficient management of data and promotion of the use of statistical data in policymaking process has been developed to boost concrete implementation of SDGs.

(6) **The Government should establish a formal mechanism to engage volunteers in the country's SDGs implementation process,** including problem solving, monitoring and evaluation, financial mobilization for sustainable development, as well as raising public awareness on the SDGs.



# Multi-Stakeholder Case Studies

## Making high-quality and equity-focused data available through international collaboration

Access to quality, regular, and internationally-comparable data is a key foundation for the monitoring of progress on the SDGs. In Thailand, the National Statistical Office (NSO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) have been collaborating since 2005 to collect comprehensive data on children and women. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is the largest source of accurate and internationally-comparable data on women and children worldwide, producing more than 30 indicators for SDG monitoring, including in areas such as nutrition, education, early childhood development, and child protection. International collaboration plays an important role to ensure that the survey tools, trainings, data collection, data processing, and reporting for MICS meets international standards.

The latest survey (MICS 2019) interviewed over 40,000 households across the country and found progress on some indicators such as reduction in teen pregnancy, while nutrition and foundational learning skills remain challenges. Survey results at the provincial level have also been published for seventeen provinces that were deemed at-risk, providing critical information to guide policies and programmes to address geographical inequities.

The collaboration between the NSO and UNICEF has also been extended to the National Disability Survey. In the latest round in 2017, Thailand became one of the first countries in the region to include a child functioning module, developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics and UNICEF globally, to better identify children with disabilities. The data will continue to be used to guide the country’s efforts to achieve the SDGs and to leave no one behind.



The Working Group on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development within the United Nations, tasked with formulating Thailand's position on the SDGs and developing the VNR, attached importance to both the presentation of Thailand's progress on the SDGs within the context of COVID-19 as well as the development process for the VNR itself. The Working Group sought to ensure that the process accurately reflected realities on the ground and was balanced, seeking to boost awareness-raising on the role of various sectors within society in advancing the SDGs and sustainable development as a whole.

After developing a draft that reflected the data and views of government ministries and agencies, the Working Group presented the draft to various sectors to garner additional information, case studies, and views. This was implemented to ensure that the viewpoints of all stakeholders with regards to the advancement of the SDGs in the country are taken into account. The Working Group ensured the participation of all sectors by leveraging the coordination of network representatives from each sector, in order to disseminate the draft VNR to all relevant stakeholders. In addition, online tools and methods were also utilised in lieu of physical consultations, given the limitations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Sectors who participated in the VNR process included the following:**

1. **Civil society organisations and volunteer networks** were consulted through networks previously-established under the **Open-Ended Working Group for the SDGs, hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**. The VNR process was informed by data and case studies contributed by: (1) the Volunteer Spirit Network; (2) the Graduate Volunteer Project under Songklanakharin University; (3) Handup Volunteer organisations; and (4) the Volunteers for Society Foundation, among many others.

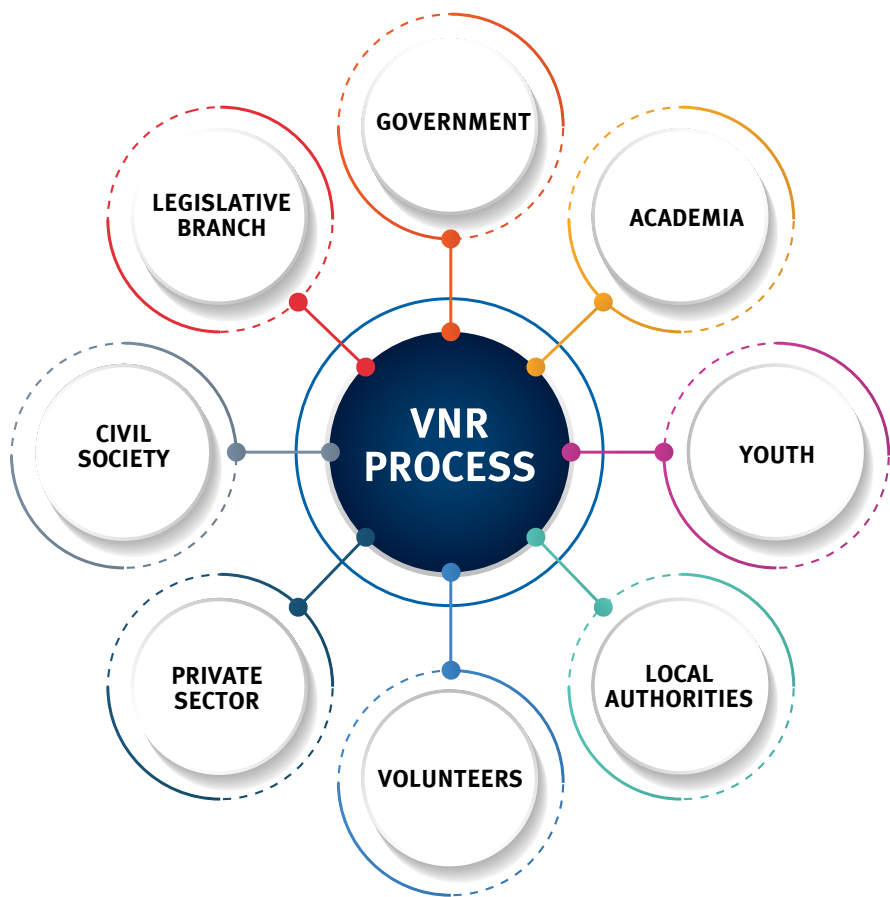
2. **Youth networks** also contributed to the VNR, with views gathered from (1) the Youth Council of Thailand; (2) Youth in Charge; and (3) the Voice of Youth (VOY) project.

3. Contributions from **academia** included: (1) the Sustainable Development and Sufficiency Economy Studies Centre (SuDESC) under the National Institute for Development Administration (NIDA); (2) the University of Chiangmai; and (3) independent academics. Coordination for academic institutions was provided by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Thailand (SDSN Thailand) and the Sustainable Universities Network.

4. The **private sector** has played an important role within the process. Guided by the United Nations Global Compact Network, the VNR benefited from information from the likes of (1) Bangchak Corporation Public Company Limited; (2) PTT Exploration and Production Public Company Limited and; (3) PTT Global Chemical Public Company Limited.

5. **Local Government Authorities** have played a key role in SDG localisation, deepening the engagement of local communities in advancing sustainable development.

6. Engagement with the **legislative branch** of the Government has also been facilitated. The VNR draft has been presented to the Senate’s Sub-Committee on the Consideration and Monitoring of Progress on the Implementation of the SDGs of the United Nations and the Implementation of Thailand’s International Obligations, under the National Assembly.



## Multi-stakeholders Engagement in the 2021 VNR Process





# 1. Civil Society and Volunteer Networks

## 1.1. Overall Views on Sustainable Development

Volunteers are a **vital human resource** in advancing sustainable development within the country. The promotion of the role of volunteerism serves to create committed and responsible citizens to further the country's development, while volunteers comprise active citizens that can lay a role in resolving problems. The development of volunteers at all ages is both a target and a means to create a society with **social responsibility**. Volunteer work should be supported by the government and private sectors in order to institutionalise volunteerism as a tradition in Thailand.

## 1.2 Challenges

(1) While Thailand has many policies that help to support enabling **mechanisms for volunteerism**, the Government can play a larger role in supporting volunteers. This includes in coordinating the role of state agencies and local government authorities in coordinating the work of volunteers across the country in a systematic manner. Volunteerism should be promoted in line with the priorities of local communities and areas. Volunteers should also be further empowered to support Thailand's advancement of the SDGs.

(2) **The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a reduction in the total number of volunteers**, given the limitations for joint activities and economic impacts from the crisis. This has led to a shift to online volunteering. However, the existing mechanisms for online volunteering in Thailand are insufficient.

(3) The structure, working processes, and regulations of government agencies can sometimes cause **delays to projects or lack clarity in implementation**.



### 1.3 Recommendations

(1) **The Government should accelerate the establishment of the National Volunteer Centre** in order to set up a dedicated organisation for volunteering. This will allow the effective management of volunteering within the country, leading to improved implementation and raising the capacities of volunteers in a systematic manner in line with international standards. This organisation **should be independent and flexible**.

(2) **Thailand should introduce legislation that can support volunteer work**, in order to support standardized volunteering and improve on welfare for volunteers.

(3) **The Government should support the establishment of volunteer centres at the tambon level** to act as the central actor in coordinating volunteerism in normal times and in times of crisis. This will also support the participation of the population in resolving local problems sustainably.

(4) **Thailand should develop a masterplan** on promoting the participation of the people and volunteers in advancing sustainable development. This should be developed in tandem with the system and tools to manage volunteerism including through the application of modern technology.

(5) **The Government should work together with the private sector** in creating new forms of volunteering work, in order to respond to the needs of society, the business sector, and the people as a whole.

(6) **The country should promote research** on raising the capacities and number of volunteers, and support the development of curricula and other means of creating more volunteers in education institutions across the country. This will lead to a more professional approach to learning on volunteerism.



## 2. Youth

### 2.1 Overall View on Sustainable Development

Youth in Thailand (including those aged between 30-40 years) are well-aware of, interested in, and attach importance to sustainability issues in the country. This is evident from their preference for products or services that are **environmentally-friendly, transparent** in terms of the origins of materials used or the production process, and respond to the needs of society to create meaningful change. Youth also attach importance to **human rights principles**. In addition, the new generation pays attention to challenging issues in the social, economic, and environmental dimensions, and is interested in creating change and advancing issues.

### 2.2. Challenges

The general public is yet to be fully aware of the SDGs, instead only being aware of the environmental dimension to sustainable development. The SDGs are also not sufficiently taught in school curricula. Furthermore, the participation of the private sector in sustainability issues has been mainly for marketing purposes or to reduce impacts on unsustainable businesses, such as in providing care for villagers and scholarships for youth who reside in areas with industrial factories in order to reduce criticism from those affected by business operations.

### 2.3 Recommendations

(1) Education on the SDGs should be a **mandatory component of the education** curricula, and efforts should be made to increase the space for participation of all sectors and people of all ages in the advancement of sustainable development in the country, including support and the creation of incentives for certain groups or organisations to build change. This will help ensure that people and organisations avoid a choice between creating benefits for society and creating profit.

(2) There is a need to **reduce regulations in schools** and limitations outside of schools to encourage students to work together across education institutions and to learn from the outside world. This includes the expansion of the role of social enterprises. In addition, the Government should support social enterprises in a more concrete manner by providing tax benefits.

(3) The Government should **increase the channels through which the people can participate in the VNR process**, in order to gather further comments and to help to raise awareness on the importance of the VNR.





## 3. Academia

### 3.1 Overall View on Sustainable Development

The 2021 VNR is comprehensive in the issues analysed, but could increase the analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 on the country with regards to the economic structure, including the migration of labour back to home provinces, changes in consumption patterns, and the increase in health consciousness in society.

### 3.2 Challenges

The 2020 Sustainable Development Report, developed by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, shows that Thailand has regressed on implementation of SDG4 and SDG17. The Government should prioritise the advancement of both of these Goals and also provide additional data on migrant workers in the VNR.

### 3.3 Recommendations

(1) The VNR should **feature more data and best practices from the private sector**, civil society, and academic, given that the majority of the data presented comes from the Government.

(2) The presentation of the progress and challenges on the SDGs, especially for the Goals to be reviewed in depth at the 2021 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), should be conducted in **an integrated and indivisible manner**, and should illustrate the interlinkages between each SDG in advancing the Government's overall policies.





## 4. Private Sector

### 4.1 Overall View on Sustainable Development

It is evident that larger enterprises within the private sector are aware of the importance of sustainable development, and have promoted sustainability in a concrete way. Such enterprises have applied sustainability principles to their value chains, from picking more sustainable materials and suppliers to developing sustainable transport and waste management systems. In addition, it can be seen that new players have begun to play a role in advancing sustainable development in the form of projects, startups, and social enterprises. This is especially true for new generation entrepreneurs or self-made entrepreneurs.

### 4.2 Challenges

(1) **Small enterprises still lack the finance, supporting mechanisms, and understanding of the SDGs** to be able to implement sustainability projects.

(2) **The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unexpected environmental gains from the reduction in pollution from economic activities.** However, should the private sector lack the policies and implementation to protect these gains and promote the SDGs related to the environment, it is likely that the pollution will return once the economy recovers and economic activities restart.

### 4.3 Recommendations

(1) The Government should **increase measures to provide incentives to various private sector actors** in order to increase their participation in sustainability in the country. This includes tax reductions, support for implementation and research, and streamlining approval procedures for environmental projects. This will serve to assist smaller enterprises and organisations who lack the finance and other supporting mechanisms to implement such projects.

(2) The Government should **identify new approaches and mechanisms to set sustainability targets** and expand this to the private sector in an inclusive and clear way. Monitoring and evaluation should be continuously conducted.

(3) Once the Government has set targets on sustainability and expanded them to the private sector, there should be measures to **monitor and evaluate the implementation**, such as on a quarterly or half-yearly basis. This will help ensure effective implementation and participation from all sectors.

## 5. Engagement with the National Assembly

On 21 May 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the VNR draft to the Senate's Sub-Committee on the Consideration and Monitoring of the Progress of the Implementation of the SDGs and the Implementation in Accordance with Thailand's International Obligations under the National Assembly. Recommendations on the VNR as well as on future implementation of the SDGs included the following:

(1) The second VNR presentation should **more directly highlight the country's effective and comprehensive structural foundation** geared towards the achievement of SDGs, which is considered a key development since the first official VNR submission in 2017.

This particular emphasis should also note that the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017) prescribed the development of the 20-Year National Strategy (2018-2037) with the aim to accelerate Sustainable Development within the country. As such, the Government has ensured policy coherence by linking the SDGs with national strategies and plans at all policy levels.

(2) The 2021 VNR development process achieved its purpose in promoting participation from various sectors within the country. The report is well-balanced by including information, case studies, comments and recommendation contributed by stakeholders across all sectors, besides the views of the Government. However, future VNRs should be even **more inclusive** in order to reflect the views of all sectors. In addition, the VNR presentation should not be highlighted only at the international level. Rather, it has to be widely publicised domestically in order to raise awareness and further strengthen the efforts of all sectors on SDG implementation.

(3) Thailand should **build on the VNR process for the country's benefit**, such as by using the VNR to inform National Committees tasked with advancing related issues covered in the Report, especially with regards to the challenges that remain. This will allow for policy implementation aimed at resolving such challenges in the future.







# Conclusion

Thailand has recorded significant progress in its advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, building on its extensive success in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This has been achieved through the combined efforts and collaboration of the Government and all sectors within Thai society, including the private sector, civil society and volunteers, academia, and ordinary citizens. This edition of the VNR has highlighted the country's progress and remaining challenges on each of the Global Goals, focusing on both quantitative data on the implementation of the SDGs and qualitative case studies from all stakeholders.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated impacts have severely hindered further progress on the SDGs. In the Decade of Action for the SDGs and within the context of the COVID crisis, existing problems have been exacerbated and new challenges to sustainable development have emerged. The next phase of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will not only require countries to adapt to the New Normal in order to Build Back Better and achieve the SDGs, but will need newer, transformative pathways for sustainable development. Thailand is committed to promoting the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a development approach that advances a human-centred approach, preserves the human-nature balance, and is conducive to inclusive economic growth. SEP also supports local wisdom and solutions, while highlighting the values of moderation, resilience, and knowledge. These principles will help to protect against future external shocks to countries, economies,





societies, and communities. The Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model is but one effective application of SEP principles that will drive sustainable economic growth in the future, while preserving the unexpected environmental gains during the pandemic.

Drastic transformative change must also be complemented by accelerators for sustainable development. Science, Technology, and Innovation, especially with regards to digitalisation, must be applied to assist in our collective efforts, while mitigating the new inequalities that technology can create. The stakeholder base for the SDGs must also be expanded, including the mobilisation of all sectors as part of a whole-of-society approach. Government alone cannot achieve the SDGs within 2030.

As we look towards the next phase of implementation, Thailand remains committed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and to the VNR process. VNRs will remain a vital tool for countries to monitor, evaluate, and analyse their progress on the SDGs, while also serving as a powerful tool for awareness-raising on sustainable development among all sectors. The process will continue to be an integral part of the global endeavour to achieve the SDGs and to foster a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient recovery from COVID-19. The results and findings from the VNR will also be utilised to tackle the remaining challenges in order to achieve the SDGs and sustainable development as a whole.





Together for the  
SDGs









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