



In the era of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), some observers have mentioned the term national strategy numerous times. Many are curious as to what this national strategy, that has been stated on numerous occasions, mean and how has this national strategy been determined. When the public have come to learn that the country is developing a 20-year national strategy on development many have questioned whether this determination to have a strategy so far into the future is appropriate or not. Will the next government that comes to power have enough independence to govern and determine its own policies? In addition, what will be the role of the national economic and social development plan that already has a 5-year plan and what relationship will it have with the 20-year strategic plan. This chapter will discuss the 20-year national strategic plan and the impact on future health mechanisms of the people.

The national strategic plan is a national development goal

The draft constitution that passed the national referendum on 7 August 2016 designated that there will be a national strategic plan to lay the long term goals and process in the development of the country for the next 20 years. This began in earnest on 30 June 2015 with a cabinet resolution approving the recommendation of its Secretariat to develop a 20 year national strategic plan for 2017-2036. Approval was given for the establishment of a committee to develop this national plan with the Secretariat as the Chair to move the country towards a **Secure, Prosperous and Sustainable** future¹.

The draft constitution of Thailand has highlighted the national strategy in numerous sections such as in Section 65: The state must develop a national strategy as a goal for sustainable national development according to good governance principles. This can then be used as a framework for various plans that are to be coordinated and integrated and act as a powerful force towards the ultimate goal. This will involve setting goals and a timeframe to achieve the goals to be implemented under procedures that will be set by laws.

Section 142: In the presentation of the draft Act on the annual budget it should state the amount of the budget as well as the expected income, estimated results or benefits from the

expense and its interrelationship with the national strategy and various development plans using legal guidelines and financial discipline.

Section 162: The Cabinet that comes into power must announce its policy to parliament and this policy must be related to its duty as the government, the policy direction of the government and its overall strategy...

As detailed above, after the new constitution comes into use, the national strategy will come into effect as a framework for the management and planning of the government and its various departments including budget planning. Such that, the contents and issues that will be contained in the national strategic plan must be under the laws that govern it.

Why must there be a National Strategy?

In the past, the country has set a goal and strategy for development under the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB). Each plan covers only 5 years but in practice each government that comes into power places higher importance on its party's policies and campaign promises. When there is a change in government, there often is a change in many economic and social policies, resulting in a break in the continuity of work. Thus, in order to reform national development strategy, and to ensure that all governments that come into power are committed to the larger goal that have already been set, the country should have a long term national goal or National Strategy.

Diagram 1: The Vision of the 20-year National Strategy

“Security, Prosperity, Sustainability” in accordance with the principles of Sufficiency-Economy Philosophy.		
Security	Prosperity	Sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure and Safe from natural disasters and changes from within the country and outside the country at all levels including at the national, social, community, family and individual level and to be secure and safe in all dimensions of both economic, social, environmental and political. • Nation to be secure in its independent sovereignty, to have a national institution, religion, monarchy that is strong and at the center that is depended upon and trusted by the people. A political structure that is secure and leads to continuous management of the country with transparency according to the principles of good governance. • Society to have reconciliation and unity, able to unite and strengthen national, community and family development. • People to have a secure life. To have a secure work and income adequate to maintain one's life. To have a place to live and to have safety in one's life and assets. • Natural resources and the environment to have security in food, energy and water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The country continues to have economic expansion and raise its level to a high income country. To reduce unequal development. The population to receive the benefits of development in more equal proportions. • The economy is more competitive and able to create income from both within and outside the country. To create an economic and social base for the future that is an important link within the region in both communication, transport, production, trade, investment and business. To have an important role in the region and globally arising from its economic relationship and trade with others. • Financial completeness enabling creation and continuation of development that includes human capital, knowledge, financial, industrial machinery, social and natural resources and the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development that leads to progress in income and quality of life of the people continue to increase, which is due to the progress and development of the economy that does not overuse its natural resource, not overly create pollution to the environment and promote environmental preservation. • Production and consumption that is friendly to the environment and is linked to the regulations accepted by the world community of the abundance of natural resources and the improvement of the environment. For people to have responsibility to the environment, have compassion to one another and show sacrifice for the greater benefit. • Move towards sustainability for the greater benefit that places importance in participation of the people from all sectors for development in all facets equally in a stable and sustained manner. • People in all sectors of society adhere to the philosophy of sufficiency economy.

Diagram 2:
20-year National Strategic Framework



This view has been well supported by numerous groups such as the National Reform Council and academics. A government that comes into power will then determine policies leading to the major goal and can then set a framework for determining its policies along the longer term direction with greater integrity. This will lead to the effective allocation of resources and result in a more coordinated move towards the shared goal.

The Thai National Strategy

The government of General Prayuth Chan-ocha established a National Strategic Committee with General Wilas Arunsri, Secretariat of the Prime Minister, as Chair² on 30 June to draft the 20-year national strategy 2015 as a first draft according to the Constitution. Up till the beginning of 2017, the National Strategy Committee developed the draft 20-year national strategy by articulating feedback and recommendations from its members that came from various areas including government officials, the private sector, politicians and academics, the National Reform Council, and civil society. The 20 year Strategic Plan consists of:

Goal: So that Thailand can raise its level of development from a middle income country to a high income country by the year 2036.

Vision: For Thailand to be prosperous, secure and sustained. A country that is developed according to the philosophy of sufficiency economy that has been expanded in its meaning to include secure, prosperous and sustained as shown in Diagram 1.

It can be seen that the national strategy has set the goal, vision and path for the development that each successive government should give importance to. Successive governments can then set their policies in a coordinated manner and in the same direction in order to set the budget in an efficient and integrated manner. However, the incoming governments will be able to determine its policies, plans and projects suitable to the situation in the future.

The National Strategy and Thai Health Systems

The 20-year national strategy has some clauses related to the health system in two strategies. The first strategy is on development and supporting capacity of people—the creation of improved capacity for people to have good health. The second strategy is on the creation of equality and equity in society. It will focus on developing mechanisms for service provision and the management of health.

Due to the nature of the 20-year strategic plan that has a long term goal, it is necessary to set various time periods for implementation. Currently there is the use of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) as the mechanism to move the national strategy into short and medium term goals for five years³. The 20-year national strategy (2017-2036) will then be carried out by the 5-year NESDB in its 12th to 15th publications.

For the 12th NESDB (2017-2022), the first NESDB that will come under the 20-year national strategic plan, its goal aims to promote good health for Thai people by setting various indicators such as: population aged 15-79 years that are overweight must be reduced; deaths from road accidents are below 18 persons per 100,000 population, total health expenditure to be not more than 5% of the national GDP; and the elderly living at home with an appropriate environment to increase to 20%.

Moreover, the strategy in the first 5 years emphasizes behavior change in health and reduction of risk factors that may affect health. It includes improving health knowledge on good health, promoting health fitness appropriate for each age, using legal action and taxes in controlling consumption that is negative to health, the creation of an environment that is supportive to good health, and overcoming problems of deaths from road accidents. This 12th 5 year plan also places importance in the promotion of a culture of safety through mass media to change behavior and reduce accidents, and the setting up of mechanisms to manage risk from road accidents.

20-Year National Strategy of the Ministry of Public Health

The Ministry of Public Health has developed the 20-year national strategy by determining 3 goals for good health of the population: The people are in good health, officials are content and the health structure is sustained⁴. The goal has a Strategy of Excellence in 4 areas with 16 plans and 8 projects that include:

1. Promotion and Prevention of health and disease (PP Excellence Strategies) that include 4 plans of: 1.1 Development of the quality of life of Thai people in all age groups. 1.2 Prevention and control of disease and health dangers. 1.3 Food safety. 1.4 management of

the environment and development of service centers.

2. Service Excellence Strategies include 4 plans. 2.1 Development of Royal wishes. 2.2 Development of primary medicine. 2.3 Development of public health systems and 2.4. Thailand 4.0 in the area of public health, medical health and technology, legal aspects of health in special economic zones and access to services in the southern border areas.

3. People Excellence strategy includes 4 plans: 3.1 Planning for manpower in health. 3.2 Developing and producing manpower. 3.3 Development of management mechanisms in manpower and 3.4 Manpower in health and network partners.

4. Governance Excellence Strategy include 4 plans: 4.1 Data management systems/ health laws. 4.2 Universal health care scheme. 4.3 Security in pharmaceuticals and drugs and consumer protection and 4.4 Good governance principles in research.

Summary

Thailand, in the era of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), has launched the 20-year National Strategic Plan that has set the long-term strategy for national development. The Ministry of Public Health has used this national strategy to determine its own 20-year strategy that consists of excellence in health promotion and prevention of disease, service excellence, excellence in personnel and excellence in management with good governance. From this, the 12th NESDB will be the first plan that will implement this overall national strategy by setting targets to promote good health for Thai people. From the present to the next 20 years, it is expected Thailand will develop with the goal of good health with sustainable public health systems.

