REPORT ON THE STATE OF WOMEN

IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

THAILAND

1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY

1.1 Socio-economic profile

Thailand is located in the heart of Southeast Asia and occupies an area of about 513,115 sq. km. The country borders Myanmar and LaoPDR to the north, Malaysia to the south, Cambodia and the Gulf of Thailand to the east and Myanmar and Indian Ocean to the west. The total population of 61,466,178 consists of 30,591,602 males and 30,874,576 females (1998) with an annual growth rate of approximately 1.3 percent.

The population includes ethnic Chinese, Malays, Cambodians, Vietnamese, Indians, and others. Immigration is controlled by a quota system. Buddhism, the national religion, and is the professed faith of 95 percent of the population. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and others are embraced by the rest of the population. There is absolute religious freedom.

Thailand is classified as a developing country. The development plans of the past 40 years by central government resulted in rapid growth of the country's economy. The income per capita was increased to 50,565 Baht (1996). Since 1997 has suffered from a financial crises that uncovered weaknesses in the financial sector and forced the government to float the Baht. Long pegged at 25 to the dollar, the Baht reached its lowest point of 56 to the dollar in January 1998. Thailand entered a recovery stage in 1999. Preliminary estimates are that the economy expanded by about 4 percent in 2000. Beginning in 1999 the Baht stabilized and inflation and interest rates began coming down. The government has cooperated closely with the IMF to assist in the crisis. The regional recovery boosted exports, while fiscal stimulus buoyed domestic demand. While slow progress has been made in recapitalizing the financial sector, tough measures, such as implementing a privatization plan and forcing the private sector to restructure, remain to be done. The inflation rate (consumer prices) is 2.4 percent.

Table 1: Thailand's registered population data

Year	Population		Level of Urbanization (As % total population)	GNP per capita(1996)
	Female	**Male**		
1999	31,011,529	30,650,172	18.11	50,565
1998	30,874,576	30,591,602	-	-

Source: DOLA, National Statistical Office, National Account Division,   NESCB and Bank of Thailand

Table 2: Population in Thailand's five largest cities

Population of Five (5) Largest Cities					
Year	**Bangkok**	**Nakorn Ratchasima**	**Chiang Mai**	**Nakorn Sri Thamarat**	**Udon Thani**

2000	5,662,499	2,540,662	1,587,465	1,525,557	1,520,651

More than 90 percent of the population has primary education, while 74 percent have lower secondary education and only 25 percent have upper secondary education. The compulsory education specified by central government mandates that children have to be educated at minimum until the primary 6 level.

Educational opportunities and access to educational benefits have increased for women. However girls from poor areas often drop out after six years of schooling to help their families earn a living and thereby loose the chance to continue in higher education. Alternative opportunities might be to attend a vocational school, which exist throughout the country and are cheap, or to join the non-formal educational schools.

Table 3: Thai people in education

	Literacy Rates (Percentage of Total population) 1995 %)		Levels of Education Enrollment Levels 1997(%)			
	Female	**Male**	**Non-Formal Education**	**Primary**	**Lower Secondary**	**Upper Secondary**
Kingdom	99.58	99.69	3.6	90.81	74.18	25.85
BKK	100.00	100.00	1.5	84.70	60.70	28.83
NR	99.96	99.89	1.4	79.96	68.15	26.17
CM	96.67	96.26	8.0	111.90	85.44	31.46
NST	99.96	99.97	1.8	79.40	74.25	24.49
UT	99.83	99.91	1.4	85.72	71.87	23.40

Source: Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme 1999
BKK: Bangkok
NR: Nakorn Ratchasima
CM: Chiang Mai
NST: Nakorn Sri Thamarat
UT: Udon Thani

Total labor force in Thailand is 32.6 million (1997 est.). The occupation could be categorized as follows: agriculture 54 percent, industry 15 percent, services 31 percent (1996 est.). The unemployment rate is about 4.5 percent (1998 est.).

Women in the labor force have remained a large and active group. During the past ten years, they have comprised a large percentage of the labor migration to the big cities to work in the service and manufacturing sectors. This has resulted in rapid social change.

Table 4: Women in labor force

1998	Percentage of Women in Labor Force
Kingdom	50.9
BKK	46.6
NR	46.4
CM	53.9
NST	49.2
UT	43.7

Source: Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme 1999

Table 5: Data on mortality and fertility

	Infant Mortality	Under 5 Mortality	Maternal Mortality	Number of Children per Woman (Total Fertility Rate)
Kingdom	7.2	6.2	16.7	2.34
BKK	8.3	6.0	0.4	2.34
NR	6.6	2.1	0.0	3.39
CM	2.4	2.5	49.3	2.43
NST	5.0	8.6	14.1	3.40
UT	9.1	4.9	13.0	3.39

Source: Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme 1999

It is important to take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected (July 2000 est.).

Thai population growth rate is about 0.93%, birth rate 16.86 births/1,000 population, death rate 7.53 deaths/1,000 population (2000 est.). A sex ratio is 1.05 male(s)/female at birth, 1.04 male(s)/female under 15 years, 15-64 years 0.97 male(s)/female and 65 years and over 0.79 male(s)/female while the total population is 0.97 male(s)/female (2000 est.).

1.2 Politics and governance

Thailand is governed as a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentarian form of government. The new constitution was signed by King Bhumipol on 11 October 1997.

Executive branch

The present King Bhumipol Adulyadej The Great (Rama IX) is the constitutional monarch and is the chief of state. The monarchy is inherited. The Prime Minister is the head of government. The Prime Minister is designated from among the members of the House of Representatives following a national election for the House of Representatives. The leader of the party that can organize a majority coalition usually becomes Prime Minister.

Legislative branch

Thailand's bicameral parliamentary system of government consists of the Senate, a 200-member elected body with members serving six-year terms and the House of Representatives, a 500-member body with members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms. An independent election commission inspects election system. The commission has considerable powers to disqualify candidates who have been found to have broken election laws. The last election of House of Representatives was held in January 2001. The suffrage is specified at 18 years of age; universal and compulsory. There are 11 political parties at present.

At the local government level, mayors are elected directly. The first mayor election was held in Patumthani in 2000 and the first elected mayor was a woman.

Judicial branch

The Highest court in Thailand is the Supreme Court (Sandika). Its judges are appointed by the monarch. Under the Supreme court are appeals courts and other trial courts. There is also a constitutional court to decide matters related to the constitution.

Administrative Structure

The Public Administration Act laid down the foundation of the country's administrative structure in 3 levels:

- Central administration, comprising the office of the Prime Minister, 13 Ministries constituting a Cabinet.

- Provincial administration, the country is administratively divided into 75 provinces. Provinces are divided into a number of districts. A district is divided into subdistricts. A subdistrict consists of several villages.

- Local administration or local government consists of urban – based and

- The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration is administered by an elected governor and is divided into 38 districts

- The cities of Pataya and Samui

- The municipality, governing urban centres in the provinces

1.3   Participation and representation of women in politics

Women and men were granted the vote with the introduction of a constitutional monarchy in 1932. In 1954, The Convention on the Political Rights of Women was ratified by the government. In 1991, the government ordered all government agencies to review their discriminatory regulations to allow female civil servants to hold any position except those related to national security. This removed all formal barriers to the advancement of women in the civil service.

Table 6: Number of voters

Number of votes National Parliament		Number of votes State/Provincial Parliament (PHS)		Votes Cast for Urban Local Government Councils (PHS)	
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
19,625,181	18,939,412	-	-	-	-

Source : Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior (DOLA) 1996

As illustrated in Tables 6 and 7, it is apparent that women participate in politics more than men, but do not appear in executive levels. Perhaps this is a result of Thai culture, tradition and the living conditions of women. Nevertheless the trend shows that there will be an increasing number of women who will become executives. Table 8 shows that approximately 13,236 women are currently in local government seats (6.7 percent) while 44 women are in the National Parliament (14.1 percent).

Table 7: Voters in the National Election of Thailand (November 17, 1996)

Region	Female			Male		
	Eligible	Voted	%	Eligible	Voted	%
Whole Kingdom	19,625,181	12,538,665	63.89	18,939,412	11,532,085	60.89
Central	6,679,821	4,109,381	61.52	6,265,668	3,697,753	59.02
North	3,836,636	2,565,150	66.86	3,757,089	2,421,513	64.45
South	2,416,169	1,466,643	60.70	2,356,257	1,439,427	61.09
Northeast	6,692,555	4,397,491	65.71	6,560,398	3,973,392	60.57

Source : Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior (DOLA) 1996

Table 8: Women elected representatives in government in Thailand

	National Parliament				State/Provincial Parliament		Urban Local Government Councils	
	Upper House Representatives		Lower House Representatives		Representatives		Representatives	
Year	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
2000	22	179	22	334	-	-	13,236	194,868

Source: Library Parliament

Table 9: Women in executive positions in government in Thailand

Year	Number and Percentage of women in Federal Cabinet/ Executive Branch		Number and Percentage of women in State/Provincial Cabinet/Executive Branch		Number and Percentage of wome n Mayors	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1980	-	0	0	0	3	0.024
1990	1	0.04	0	0	5	0.38
2000	1	0.04	3	0.04	8 (151 municipalities)	0.53

Source: DOLA Calendar Book 2000

Table 10: Number of government officials by rank, fiscal year 1996

Rank	Female	%	Male	Percent	Total
11	2	6.45	29	93.55	31
10	49	10.56	415	89.44	464
9	341	20.77	1,301	79.23	1,642
8	2,676	29.16	6,501	70.84	9,177
7	15,458	47.33	17,204	52.67	32,662
6	28,776	49.53	29,325	50.47	58,101
5	58,291	58.15	41,943	41.85	100,2 34
4	41,463	59.37	28,370	40.63	69,833
3	36,123	55.68	28,749	44.32	64,872
2	21,070	69.25	9,357	30.75	30,427
1	4,066	66.45	2,053	33.55	6,119
Total	208,315	55.76	165,247	44.24	373,562

Source : Office of the Civil Service Commission

Table 11: Women in executive positions in public service in Thailand

Title of Post(Top Four [3] Levels)	Number and Percentage of women Appointed to Decision-Making Level Positions of the Civil Service (Federal)		Number and Percentage of women Appointed to Decision-Making Level Positions of the Civil Service (State/Provincial)		Number and Percentage of women Appointed to Decision-Making Level Positions of the Civil Service (Local)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Minister	1	2.08				
Governor			2	2.67		
Mayor					81	0.066

Source: DOLA 2000

2. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

2.1 Women's participation in urban local government

The current Thai constitution specifies new concepts on local decentralization in terms of administration, personnel, finance and political participation (direct election of the municipality mayor). While there are neither regulations that specify more roles of women in governance nor measures to attract women towards elected office at the local level, the increasing number of women mayors points to women making strides towards equality at this level of government. In fact the first Mayor to win the recently introduced direct elections was the Woman Mayor of Prathumthani. The social transformation of the Thai society is also reflected at the local level with more than 30 percent of city clerks and more than 40 percent of executives being women.

The restrictions preventing women from political participation are family and traditions. Women were never recognized as leaders in the past. This attitude still prevails in society and is a reason why only a small number of women contribute in politics.

At present many local administration organizations have started programmes on community strengthening and participation. This provides a chance for a woman to be elected as a community leader. The promotion of supplementary income by setting up women's development groups is used as a mean to strengthen communities and also to increase women's status and role in their communities.

2.2 Gender sensitizing of urban local government

The National Women Coordination Board was set up by the government in order to strengthen women's potential and to increase gender sensitization in the government. Unfortunately, its work is still largely limited in scope and conducted only within Bangkok and its vicinities and urban areas of each province. It has yet to penetrate rural areas or at the district or subdistrict levels.

There are various government organizations whose work specifically concerns women. The Community Development Department is an important organization that promotes women's roles and works to set up women's groups in villages. As most vulnerable members of the community are poor women, the Department's extension work focuses on economic aspects rather than politics or local administration. Many women would like first to secure their financial status and later take part in public

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activities. However, experience has shown that even when they are financially secure very few rural women participate politically.

Participation of women in urban areas is greater. The number of young and teenaged women involved in political parties, especially volunteers that assist in election campaigns, has increased considerably. Political parties have noted this fact and are increasing focusing their campaigns to attract young adults, particularly women.

Non-government organizations (NGOs) contribute a lot towards women's development and women in community administration. However, working with poor women in cities is difficult because their living conditions do not allow a lot of time for community activities.

Local administration organizations used to emphasize infrastructure development. However, with the changes in Thailand's development policy and its emphasis on Human Development, many urban local governments are attempting to set up community-based organizations to provide women with the opportunity to participate in local administration at least at the grass-roots level.

3. WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

3.1 Legal and political initiatives

Some legal aspects have been issued by central government such as laws concerning women's labor, type of women's works, working hours for women and their payment.

3.2 Training and support mechanisms for women in urban local government

There are measures specified by government, political parties, women groups, NGOs and civil society organizations which promote participation of women in public or local activities in order that women will understand politics and can apply it as a solution for their lives and communities. Women are encouraged to sit together and find solutions collectively through such techniques and brainstorming. They are also encouraged to identify and support women candidates from their communities to take part in political activities at the district, province, region and country levels. Following are some examples of organizations that promote women's representation in local governance.

Department of Community Development provides grassroots development through its provincial offices and has set up women's groups and promotes women leaders at the community level. The women leaders are strengthened and some have become leaders at higher executive levels. It regularly organizes meetings of women leaders at different levels to provide them with an opportunity to exchange their experiences.

From 1997 to 2000 the National Council of Women of Thailand (NCWT) organized meetings, seminars, conferences, and workshops to motivate and enable member organizations to upgrade their activities in improving the quality of lives of women through the promotion of education, occupation, family lives, health, Thai culture and

to render wider social services to disadvantaged. NCWT also coordinates the work of its member organizations to implement the National Women's Policy through the National Commission on Women's Affair. It also collects information for study and research on various issues of concern to women.

The Municipal League of Thailand also undertakes activities to promote women's role on local administration. Much of its activities are advocacy related. It has actively sought to promote women to positions of decision-making such as mayor, deputy mayor and councillors. In fact its immediate past president was the Woman Mayor of Phitsanulok. It also promotes its members to join members of Parliament in seminars and workshops as well as through various committees of the Parliament, specially the Decentralization Committee and Women Affairs Committee.

Phitsanulok Municipality, as one of local administration authority has supported women to join administration at the municipal level. At present, In addition to the Mayor there is one deputy mayor and two councilors who are women.

4. QUALITIATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Breaking the Barriers

Although women are becoming increasingly accepted, it is important to keep on encouraging women and providing more of a chance for women to be selected to work as local politicians. Women are more gentle and ready to provide consultancy services better than men. A woman has her strong point in the way she is soft, sincere, and patient. Women have the ability in their decision making with good reason, and could stand working even under pressure better than men both in politics and private aspects. Women face economic, social, and cultural obstacles. As a group they are forced into a passive role in society, rather than being active agents in their own destiny, yet they bear the main impact of society's problems. Ironically, problems that did arise occurred when working together with women at the same level. There was a feeling that they were not appreciated if one would be better than the other one. On the other hand while working together with women in a lower level, good feedback and support was received. Personal conflicts between women and being unable to communicate directly with others is another barrier. Although women have the potential to work at the highest levels of society, they lack the opportunity to demonstrate the fact that they are capable of doing so due to social barriers. Many barriers need to be broken in order to obtain equality for women within Thai society, specifically within the political arena.

Some barriers that might prevent or restrict women from entering the urban local government stem from the belief that a woman is not strong enough to stand by herself. According to the old Thai tradition, women had to stay at home and participate only in household activities. Political involvement was strictly for men only. The opportunity for women's development is still limited as is access to political roles. Men do not realize the value of women's social role. A respondent points out that men always concentrate on administration and development work while women usually consider the impact on society. Unfortunately, some people get used to the low expectation of women and therefore do only what is expected of them. It is felt that women nowadays have a high capability equal to that of men, but

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only a small number of women actually do get chances like men normally do. It is important for a woman involved in politics to see herself as a leader and supporter of women and their activities. Politicians in the past were always men who might not sincerely give women a chance, as they are not in possession of complete knowledge concerning women's problems. Most of them still maintain the old attitude that it is already good and appropriate for women to stay at home. Therefore few agree to support women to play an increasing role within the political arena. Women's participation should not be restricted by the old attitude that a woman's place is only within the home. Instead it should be replaced by the full support of women in the urban local government as women are human and are just as capable as men are in getting the job done well.

Some main factors which might prevent or restrict women from entering the political arena or local government service include issues such as family financial status, family agreement, as well as maternal status. A major barrier for women to take positions within the local government is their responsibility towards their family. Thai women are under great tension from the responsibility to their families. Their burden is not only the household work and taking care of members of the family, but also its financial problems. The external factors to prevent women from contributing in politics consist of the fact that some women do not get support from their family. A husband could not stand it if his wife were to play a leadership role since he deeply believes that she will never be strong enough. Family financial status, self-readiness and family acceptance might be barriers for women to enter to urban local politics. All women need is an opportunity.

Apart from the previously mentioned barriers, women themselves need to be willing to be a part of the change. Most of the women in the local area lack the confidence to become involved in politics. They should become more confident in order to become local politicians. This should also be a result of their own willingness and need to contribute to the improvement of society and not because of any pressure or social attitude that forces them into the political arena. There has been an increasing opportunity given in many organizations for women to take part in management positions.

Thai women lack assertiveness training. There are actually many capable women but they don't dare to enter into politics because they are afraid it may not be worthwhile. Women in politics are also not accepted well by the men.

Nevertheless, all of the respondents except one indicated that the fact that they were women did not create any obstacles in their appointment process, nor have they faced any difficulties or discrimination from colleagues, superiors, family, or community members during their period of work. One woman reported that she faced some obstacles in the electoral and appointment process due to the fact that she was a woman. It challenged her a lot. This was because according to the long culture and tradition of the Thai people, it was not normal when a woman as a wife or a housewife worked outside of the home. She overcame such problems as she was relied upon by people. Once in office she did not face any difficulties or discrimination due to the fact that she was a woman from her colleagues, subordinates, or superiors. She has been working with her team composed of both women and men.

In conclusion, these barriers need to be broken in order to provide equality for women. In particular, changes need to be made concerning their involvement in the decision-making process of the country.

Entering and Working in Urban Local Government

With regard to the influence of relatives in the respondent's decision to enter and work within the urban local government it is indicated that some women have relatives involved in politics and/or government and others do not. Some changes after participating in political services include more work and more time spent away from home.

Some women have been interested in politics for a long time and believe that they can help to further develop their local area. Many would like to see that the members of their community maintain good living conditions and participate in community development. For example, upon entering local government, one woman participated in budget requesting and was represented in many community activities. She finally got votes from people in her town and has reached her current position.

It is necessary to recognize the important role played by the support from family and colleagues. As they receive full support from family and also from the people in the community, it is their intention to devote time to politics. Due to such support some were elected to be involved in local politics.

Some received support from local political leaders and country level politicians to reach their current position. Upon entering and working within the urban local government it is important to use their ability for development and be good example for society. These are some of the reasons why these women have decided to join local work. Some have received a lot of support from their community as well as colleagues on a higher level of competition. Decisions were made to enter into the local government because of the desire to see local political changes within their community.

Local support accompanied by the belief in the capability of women as good coordinators in local development contributed to the process of these women entering into the urban local government for the benefit of society.

Their positions within the local urban government provides them with a very good chance for local development. Upon entering urban local government much time was dedicated to social problem solving.

A Woman's perspective on Urban Local Government Issues

For a long time women have been recognized as only housewives. It is time that women should cooperate together to present their abilities on local development for further acceptance by society. Women have the ability to work both inside a house and contribute to public work as well. Women can work and get along well with men by sharing individual strong points as well as contributing ideas from a different point of view in order to better facilitate and improve cooperation within the working environment. Women could work for the benefit of society and would do better in some aspects than men.

According to women's natures there might be some small differences between men and women. One example given was that women usually concentrate in details, and

take things step by step in problem solving. The nature of women as a mother gives them the ability to solve problems. In dealing with women's concerns and priorities and how they differ from those of men in terms of urban issues it was suggested that women are more careful in city development planning. Women not only take into account physical consideration but will also scope to city attraction, harmony in art and culture, life quality, a healthy city, career development and environmental development. An opinion was given that women actually contribute in all level of politics more than men. This statement came from the observation that there are more women than men involved in social work.

Over the past 10 years people's perceptions of women in urban local government has changed for the better. This change can be seen from the increasing number of women represented at all levels of administration. For example, the number of municipality woman mayors has increased from 1percent to 7 percent. There are more female mayors in local society now than ever before. The Mayors of Uttraradit, Ayudhaya, Takli, Ratchaburi, and Supanburi municipalities are all women.   This representation of increasing numbers of women has not yet even taken into account members of municipality council and the counselors. It is interesting to point out that there are women leaders available almost in every province in the north of Thailand.

In the near future it is expected that there will continue to be an increasing number of women joining in politics and more will have the chance to hold higher positions in the country. The increased number of women leaders will lead to a higher level of acceptance of women's status by society as well as provide a direct effect on women's status, as other women will be more motivated and learn to be leaders.

It is necessary for a leader to promote female potential by giving them the chances they need. There needs to be role models that try to set a good example not only through their completed work but also through their attitude. For example, one respondent, while a representative from an NGO, developed project proposals asking for funds to conduct programs on energy and environmental concerns of women. It is quite a new issue for local women to talk about the energy and environment. As a result a recycled paper project has been conducted in order to solve waste problems and at the same time to increase the income in the community.

It is important for a female politician to do her best to work and attempt to promote and persuade potential women to join in local development work and be accepted by society. For example one of the respondents has initiated some programs such as Aerobics for Health, a Campaign on Thai Attitude Appreciation in Schools, vocational programs in schools as well as awareness campaigns concerning the sense of city ownership.   Another woman is the Deputy Chairman of a Women's Development Association. Her aims are to promote women on important aspects. For instance, to encourage them to become counselors, members of municipality council, leaders of waste reduction, community environment monitors, women of vocational development and promotion, and to support women to set up committees in their community. Therefore it is apparent that the increasing amount of women in local government will also motivate other women to become more confident to propose ideas. As a result women could work well in this field just as well as men.

It is also necessary to continue to promote women's roles and activities. It is noted that women's concerns and priorities about urban local government and urban issues generally do differ from those of men. Women leaders in the urban local

government have a responsibility towards female participation and promotion in politics at all levels in order to improve the status of women in society in general as much as they have a chance to do so, but it should not be the main task as other executive work on country development is much more important.

A desire has been expressed to see women sit in high positions in the country administration such as a female Prime Minister, Minister of Interior or Finance etc. Both men and women nowadays need to develop themselves according to technological changes.

Recommendation from questionnaires

It is important for women to be local leaders with aims to support women's roles in politics and democracy. According to some of the previously mentioned barriers, it is clear that recommendations need to be made in order to take a course of action resulting from the changes in society. It seems society now is widely accepting of and getting used to women's contribution. It is still important to keep in mind that it is difficult to say that a woman in a high level position is well accepted by her colleagues or subordinates because most of them simply do whatever is asked without complaint in order to keep their boss satisfied and not make any added problems. Therefore it is also necessary to be a representative and raise suggestions as well as comments, which might be of benefit for women. With that thought in mind, the following recommendations are provided.

To begin with, women should express their confidence and be proud of their abilities. It is important for women to develop themselves in terms of knowledge as well. A female leader could provide women with information on their rights and responsibilities in order to improve the performance of these women. Therefore a woman leader should study all government regulations concerning women and propose possible adjustments to them in order to create more of a chance for women. Women themselves should follow up more on local politics. If women are interested in politics, social problems could also be solved at a certain level. For example, many have seen the importance of educational institutions and note that they should play a greater role with other local organizations in coordinating a social analysis which would result in an effective town development plan. A woman herself has to make adjustments in her life and change to be more confident in order to be able to jump to this area of work. After that transition a woman leader should attempt to express her work potential in order to prove the ability of a woman. This can be demonstrated through the ability of that leader to be brave and to make fast and careful decisions. A woman leader should also be able to manage local resources effectively for her people. Last but not least, it is important for a woman leader to try to be accepted by colleagues and subordinates as well as be patient and in a better working mood as work must be carried out with reason.

In conclusion, change is needed to create more favorable circumstances for women to participate in the urban local government. Society needs to open up for women to be able to participate in local development. Women's status should be strongly promoted, as it is now more open for an increasing number of woman leaders and woman's groups. All that is needed is a chance for them to exchange and to express their ideas.

5. ANNOTATED LIST OF ORGANISATION AND INDIVIDUALS

5.1 List of organisations

Name of Organization: Gender Centre
Name of contact person: Asst.Prof.Dr.Maka Khitasangka
Address: Office of President, Naresuan University, Nongor Subdistrict, Muang District, Phitsanulok 65000
Tel: +66 55 261000
Fax: +66 55 261005

URL: www.nu.ac.th/office/gentle

Organizational Profile: The centre was established according to Naresuan University policy in order to support and distribute educational opportunity to people in 8 provinces in lower northern part of Thailand and in Chiangrai, a province in the north of Thailand.

Objectives: 1) To respond to government policy with regards to the National Social and Economic Development Plan to increase life quality of people; 2) To study and analyze roles of women and men in lower northern part of Thailand and Payao province. The study result will be set up in the information system which will be useful for the potential of men and women improvement and for policy determination; 3) To provide services to the community in terms of education, local administration, women development and so on. 4) To locate a network with concerned organizations both in and out of the country which will lead to developmental cooperation toward women and men potential.

Activities: Activities include workshops, consultancy services, training, seminars, meetings, research, information service and knowledge distribution through difference media. There was a training on Administration of Subdistrict Administration Organization(SAO) in Phitsanulok area conducted in Dec 2000 which provided to councilors and SAO committees.

Name of Organization: National Council of Women of Thailand (NCWT)
Name of contact person:

Address: 514 Manangkasila House, Lanluang Road, Dusit, Bangkok 10300
Tel: (66-2) 281-0081, 281-0060, 281-0957

Fax: (66-2) 281-2189

e-mail: ncwt@mozart.inet.co.th

Organizational Profile: The NCWT was established in 1956 and has been under The Royal Patronage of Her Majesty The Queen since May 5, 1961. The NCWT policy is to serve a a centre of coordination among all women organization in upgrading the quality of women and family lives and follow the National Policy concerning Thai women stated in the National Economic and Social Development Plans.

The Board of Directors consists of nineteen representatives of the ordinary members who are elected at the Triennial General Meeting of the **NCWT**. The Board is responsible for the current policy statement and for The administration under the

general objectives and constitution of the **NCWT.** The Executive Committee consists of eleven women appointed by the Board of Directors. The Committee is responsible for executing the administrative work required by the Board of Directors.

The Policy of the National Council of Women of Thailand: 21st Session: The current Board of Directors shall utilize the policy issued by the Board of Directors No.20 as its fundamental basis for determining the improvement of works, so that it can be made in accordance with the women development plan and the working plan of the International Council of Women. What is the most important is that the Board of Directors shall act in accordance with the Royal Address given by Her Majesty the Queen, our Royal Patronage, with greatest reverence. Main policies are as follows.

Improvement of Women's Status

Development of Family Institution

Improvement of Young Women's Education, Good Moral and Ethic

Cooperation with International Organization

Name of Organization: Thailand National Commission on Women's Affairs (TNCWA)
Chairperson: Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister
Address: Office of the Permanent Secretary
The Prime Minister's Office
Government House, Bangkok 10300
Thailand

e-mail: ncwa@netserv.chula.ac.th
tncwa@ksc15.th.com
SRIWATC@mozart.inet.co.th

Organizational Profile: TNCWA , a permanent state organization charged with spearheading the advancement of women, was establishes on 1989. The organizational structure consists of the Minister to the Prime Minister's Office as the Deputy Chairperson. There are 13 Government agencies, 2 Umbrella NGOs and 10 Individual experts as its members. The Executive Secretary is an appointed Deputy Permanent Secretary from the Prime Minister's Office and assisted by the assistant Permanent Secretary of the Office and the Director of the Office of the TNCWA.

Principal policy:

- To promote women's potential in all aspects.

- To ensure that women reach a level of development and posses the appropriate characteristics as well as enjoy a better quality of life.

- To promote women to take part in social and economic development, meaning that they must participate and take responsibility in the decision making process for development of politics, economics, social development, environment, religion, culture, family and mass media.

- To promote positive attitudes and values that accept the worth of women, including their ability to think, work, and their participation in all forms.

Programme on Women's Development: Women's Participation in Societal Development which target to various groups of women. One target is women in politics and all political groups cover 3 sub-programmes as follows:

- Economic participation

- Social participation

- Political and administrative participation

- Improvement of Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women covers 4 sub-programme as follows.

- Organizational and personal development

- Formulation of plans, programmes and projects, implementation plans, monitoring and evaluation plans.

- Coordination

- Resource mobilization

- Promotion of Women's Legal Equality, Safety, Protection, and Welfare

- Improvement of laws, rules and regulations to validate women's rights and equality e.g.

- Laws that recognize rights and equality in education, employment, job advancement, politics, and administration

- Urge lawyers, members of parliament, pressure groups, and women's group to participate in the improvement of laws, rules, and regulations concerning women and children.

- Legal Literacy

- Provide information and materials to male and female Members of Parliament to assist them in understanding the gender imbalance situation and supporting the women's movement etc.

- Advocacy and Dissemination of Information on Women

- Research and Data on Women

Name of Organization: Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute (CUSRI)
Name of contact person: Vachira Penroaj, Institute Secretary
Address: 5th floor, Wisit Prachuabmoh Building, Phyathai Road, Bangkok 10330
Tel: ++66 2 218 7395-8
Fax: ++66 2 215 5523, 255 2353
e-mail: cusri@chula.ac.th
Amara Pongsapich, Director parama@chula.ac.ch
Charas Suwanmala, Deputy Director cusri@chula.ac.th
Narong Phetprasert, Deputy Director cusri@chula.ac.th
Suwattana THadaniti, Deputy Director suwattana@chula.ac.th
Ubonrat Siriyuvasak, Deputy Director subonrat@chula.ac.th
Vachira Penroaj, Institute Secretary vachira@chula.ac.th
Nitaya Silsrikal, Head of Administrative Work snitaya@chula.ac.th

Organizational Profile: The Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute (CUSRI) was initiated in the Faculty of Political Science as a social research center in 1967. It became an independent institute administered directly by the university by Royal Decree in 1974.

The main objective of the Institute is to undertake research on Thailand of both academic and broader national relevance from its own social science base and also in cooperation with colleagues in other fields in an interdisciplinary perspective.

Along the same line, CUSRI has been forced by circumstances to shift from carrying out research on the evolution of the Thai polity during 1970s and 1980s to study of Thai social, economic, and political process of 1990s leading to the adoption of the 1997 Constitution. CUSRI also shifts from the study on structure and operation of government administration and management to the study on the role of the private sector and nonprofit sector, and the evolvement of civil society and good governance in the context of the new Constitution.

The Women's Studies Program was started as a special CUSRI program in 1981 as an academic program designed to carry out research about women in Thailand. It focuses on the impact of socio-economic changes on their status and on women's responses. The research has been both policy and action oriented and designed to contribute to base-line data creation. Women are the target group but are not considered in isolation. The position of women within Thai society has been viewed in terms of gender relations. A data base on women's issues including gender statistics and annotated bibliographies was prepared jointly with the Thailand National Commission on Women's Affairs.

The Division provides information dissemination services to support the research work of the Institute and respond to the needs of the society in terms of promoting information dissemination and exchanges of different format. The main categories are:

Policy Advocacy and Information Dissemination Seminars and Workshops

Baseline data and surveys

Training and workshops

Local and International Cooperation: CUSRI has a long history of cooperation with NGOs to carry out and monitor social and economic development activities, as well as to study the impact of rural and urban development activities and natural resource management.

Name of Organization: The Office of National Women Coordination and Promotion Board of Committee
Address: Government House, Phitsanulok Road., Dusit, Bangkok 10300
Tel: 66-2-282-2690, 282-5322
Fax: 66-2-282-5131
Major activities: To propose to the cabinet the policies and major plan of women promotion on activities, roles, and women status.

Name of Organization: Technical and Planning Department

Address: Department of Local Administartion, Asadang Road, Bnagkok 10200
Tel: 66-2-2231914, 222-5873

Fax: 66-2-222-0368
Major activity: To develop effectiveness of local women leaders

Name of Organization: Thai Women Development Coordination Project
Address: Thamasat University
Tel: 02 221-6111 ext.4240
Fax: 02 224-8099
Major activities: To conduct participatory training to women on the aspect of family development, leadership development and management skill for rural women.

Name of Organization: Gender Research and Development Institute
Address: 501/1 Moo 3, Dechatungka Road, Tungseegun, Donmuang, Bangkok 10210
Tel: 02 566-2288, 566-1774
Fax: 02 566-3481

Major activities: To conduct research on implementing policy impact to women roles and their status.

Name of Organization: Sawita Foundation
Address: 22/11 Kaset Villa Building, Soi Tanpooying pahol, Ngamwongwan Road, Bangkok 10900
Tel: 02 579-2481
Fax: 02-579-8944

Name of Organization: Women Lawyers' Association of Thailand
(Under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen)
Name of contact person: Assoc.Prof.Wimolsiri Jamnarnwej, President

Name of Organization: Association for the Promotion of the Status of Women
Name of contact person: Maechee (Nun) Khunying Kanitha Wichienchareon

Name of Organization: Association to Improve the Condition of Women

Name of Organization: The Association of Women Legal Scholars

Name of Organization: Empower Foundation

5.2 List of individuals

Table 12: Elected and appointed women at decision-making levels of urban local government

	Position	Name	Office	Province	Phone
1.	Municipal Clerk 9	Praneed Thavorn	Sungaikolok Subdistrict Municipality,	Narativas	073 513130
2.	Municipal Clerk 9	Pannee Kiatikul	Pakprae Subdistrict Municipality	Tungsong District, Nakornsrithamarat	075 411449
3.	Municipal Clerk 9	Wanna Saengthong	Aduthaya City Municipality	Aduthaya	035 252235
4.	Municipal Clerk 9	Usana Pansung	Udornthani City Municipality	Udornthani	077 222998
5.	Municipal Clerk 9	Darawan Asapaviriya	Chon Buri Town Municipality	Chon Buri	038 275439
6.	Municipal Clerk 9	Moeying Methachanan	Nakornratsrima City Municipality	Nakornratsrima	044 245464
7.	Municipal Clerk 9	Thitiporn Bunruengkao	Nakornsrithamarat City Municipality	Nakornsrithamarat	075 342880 -3
8.	Municipal Clerk 9	Ladawan Bamphen	Nonburi City Municipality	Nonburi	02 5890515
9.	Municipal Clerk 9	Wilai Saisunthorn	Songkla City Municipality	Songkla	074 311833
10.	Municipal Clerk 9	Baramee Lertpaisarn	Samutprakarn City Municipality	Samutprakarn	02 389 1008
11.	Municipal Clerk 9	Apiradee Kerdsiri	Samutsakorn Town Municipality	Samutsakorn	034 411744
12.	Municipal Clerk 9	Ratana Thongwichit	Saraburi Town Municipality	Saraburi	036 211448
13.	Municipal Clerk 9	Benjawan Thongluen	Chiangmai City Municipality	Chiangmai	054 232179
14.	Municipal Clerk 9	Areejit Khamthong	Chanburi Town Municipality	Chanburi	039 311979
15.	Director	Uraiwan Tianthong	Local Education Administration Bureau, Wang Sunantha, Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior	Bangkok	02 668 9349, 02 243 2273
16.	Governor	Sirilert Mekpaibun	City Hall	Mahasarakam	043 722626
17.	Lord Mayor	Samanan Laowanitwisit	Ratchaburi Town Municipality	Ratchaburi	032 337076
18.	Lord Mayor	Penpak Srithong	Ubonratchathani City Municipality	Ubonratchathani	045 246060
19.	Lord Mayor	Jaranai Inchaiuae	Supanburi Town Municipality	Supanburi	035 511021, 035 522973
20.	Lord Mayor	Adisorn Earsakul	Nongkai Town Municipality	Nongkai	042 411350
21.	Lord Mayor	Premruadee Charmpoonod	Phitsanulok City Municipality	Phitsanulok	055 232302
22.	Lord Mayor	Prakaikaew Ratananaka	Utaradit Municipality	Utaradit	-
23.	Lord Mayor	Sirinthorn Ramasut	Nan Municipality	Nan	-
24.	Councilor	Orapin Polwai	Phitsanulok	Phitsanulok	055 231400

25.	Councilor	Jorawan Sireerat	Phitsanulok Municipality	Phitsanulok	055 231400
26.	Deputy Mayor	Supa Uboncharoen	Phitsanulok Municipality	Phitsanulok	055 231400
27.	Deputy Mayor	Somying Limpraphan	Sawankalok Municipality	Sukhothai	-
28.	Chairperson	Wichien Noinamsai	Wat Prik Subdistrict Administration Organisation, Muang District	Phitsanulok	-

6.RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ACTIONS

6.1 Women's status should be strongly promoted in the way that enables women to express their confidence and be proud of their abilities.

6.2 Conduct training for women both at the local and national levels to provide administrative knowledge and skills to them in order to create their self confidence and enable them to participate effectively in the local administration. The training should be done by any national women organizations, education institutes, political institutes or political parties.

6.3 Women should be appointed to high position at the national level. If it is not possible for women to be appointed at this level without restriction, reasons concerning the denial should be provided. This should be done in order to address future problems. Each organization should take responsibility to work together to improve the opportunities for women to advance within the national civil service.

6.4 Each position, whether a political committee, cabinet member, or member of parliament, should give equal opportunity to both men and women to receive appointment. Application for the election of any political position should be equally represented among women and men. Every political agency or organization should take part in making sure that equal representation is carried out at every level.

6.5 Promotion measures should be taken in order to educate people concerning women's rights and the importance of equality between men and women specifically within the working arena. This will help women to advance themselves within their work.

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