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Country Report

*Thailand**

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**Thailand's Implementation of the Madrid
International Plan of Action on Ageing**

Ministry of Social Development and Human Security

Preface

Since **the United Nations** convened **the 2nd World Assembly on Ageing** in Madrid, Spain in 2002, where **the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing** was adopted as the international obligations on ageing, which addresses the aims of development of older persons focusing on three major areas of concern: **older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environment**. These are the obligations of the member countries to observe as frameworks of their implementation of commitments on the elderly under their orientation of compatible strategies.

Thailand as one of the UN member countries hereby prepares its report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing by compilation and presentation of its implementation of main and significant commitments on older persons between 2002 and 2007, that are in compliance with and responsive to the targets under **the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing**. In preparation of this Report, many agencies and entities involved in the elderly tasks of both the public and the private sectors, have contributed and have given valuable support, especially the public agencies which serves as mechanisms to take charge of the elderly tasks as prescribed by the Act on Older Persons : 2003, namely the National Commission on the Elderly.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security as the national main agency that is in charge of interaction and support of undertaking of work on older persons both at the policy and the implementation levels, wishes that this Report can summarize the entire information and details of Thailand's implementation of action on ageing under the UN frameworks, through collaborations of all parts and sectors of the Country, along with efforts of the Thai government devoted to driving its policy in development of Thai older populations in compliance and compatibility with the UN frameworks. This is for the purpose of development and ensuring the well-being of Thai older persons.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
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Summary

Size and Proportion of the Thai Elderly

The National Statistical Office has forecast that number of Thai older populations in 2007 will reach 7,038,000 persons or equivalent to 10.9% of the total populations of the Country, and further forecast that in 2020, the number of older populations will increase up to 10.8 million or equivalent to 16.8% of the total populations. Such increase rate makes Thailand turns to be one of the countries in this region that have very rapid increase rate of the elderly.

The challenges posed by population ageing at the rapid rate since the previous decades, are resulted from decrease in population's fertility from high fertility in the past, falling to the level lower than the present and the future replacement rate within a short time. In the meantime, the death level has continually decreased. Based on the data, the total fertility rate decreased from about 6 persons per woman during 1957 to about 4 persons per woman during 1977, and to about 2 persons per woman from the beginning of 1987 and in the present decreasing to the level of less than 2 persons per woman.

On the contrary, it is found that life expectancy at birth keeps on increasing from approximately 59 years during the period before the year 1967 to approximately 70-72 years in the present and forecast to increase to approximately 75 years in the next 20 years. It may say that Thailand has less time than the developed countries to prepare for its ageing which is approaching at the continually rapid rate.

Orientation of Policy

Taking account of the fact that Thailand is ageing in the near future as one of its significant conditions, the Country then studies, reviews and seeks for the practical guidelines to prepare itself to cope with such challenging change in the population structure, where it has to review the previous orientation of policy and implementation either in the economic or the social dimension. This is to prepare itself in the best way at the policy and the implementation levels which will positively result in successful protection and development of older persons in the Thai society in order to achieve their well-being and fully and happily social participation.

The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board has mentioned that Thailand will continually obtain its highest demographic dividend until the year 2009. After 2009, its demographic dividend will respectively decrease. It, therefore, shall accelerate the use of productivity of its working age (15-59 years) populations in the possibly utmost way prior to its populations' dependency ratio going to increase as from 2010 onwards.

Regarding Thailand's implementation of commitments on the elderly under the Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, (MIPAA) can be summarized as follows:

1. Older Persons and Development

1.1 Mainstreaming ageing into development policy and promotion of full integration and participation of older persons

Policy and Plan on Older Persons

- **The 1st National Plan for Older Persons**

The 1st National Plan for Older Persons : 1982 – 2001, is the first long-term Plan of Thailand for 20 years' period issued in order to determine the significant guidance and scope to develop the Thai elderly in the following arenas:

- Health;
- Education;
- Social and income stability;
- Social and cultural integration; and
- Social welfare provision.

The establishment of such long-term 1st National Plan for Older Persons can explicitly reveal Thailand's intention to initiate its precise policies and plans on the elderly, aiming this National Plan to serve as the instrument to promote, support and develop guidelines on the entire implementation of work on the elderly.

- **The Declaration on Thailand's Older Persons**

In 1999, Thailand made its Declaration on Older Persons which is the same year when the United Nations proclaimed as **the International Year of Older Persons**. That Declaration made by the Thai government can be deemed as its intent and recognition of promotion, development and provision of chance to older persons in all contexts through collaboration and interaction of all parts and sectors, either the government, the private or the public including the organizations with objectives of public interests. This to implement more explicit and efficient tasks. Under **the Declaration on Thailand's Older Persons**, it is clearly mentioned, in particular, protection of older persons in health care, living their life with value and dignity, happy family life, receiving of care, protection from abandonment, educational and learning chance, as well as social integration.

- **The 2nd National Plan for Older Persons**

In 2002, the United Nations convened **the 2nd World Assembly on Ageing** in Madrid, Spain, thereby **the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing : 2002** was adopted to serve as international obligations for UN member countries to observe and implement under the 3 significant issues, namely

- **Older Persons and Development**
- **Advancing Health and Well-being into Old Age; and**
- **Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environment**

In the same year, Thailand issued its 2nd National Plan for Older Persons : 2002 – 2021, as the principal or strategic plan for orientation of development and implementation of work concerning older persons in Thailand. Such Plan has contents and scope covering and in compliance with the significant contents of **the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing : 2002**.

Its Strategies comprise :

1. **Strategy on Preparation of the Population for Their Quality Ageing**
2. **Strategy on Promotion of the Elderly**
3. **Strategy on Social Security/Protection System for the Elderly**
4. **Strategy on Administration to Develop the National Work on the Elderly and Personnel Involved in the Elderly Work**
5. **Strategy on Process and Development of Knowledge on the Elderly, and Monitoring and Appraisal of Implementation of the National Plan for Older Persons.**

In every 5 years' period of the Plan, there is setting up of the implementation plan for all agencies as a whole under the National Plan for Older Persons. Presently, the implementation plan is as of the duration of 2007 – 2011.

- **Enactment of the Act on Older Persons : 2003**

This is the effort of Thailand to put the safeguards of elderly right protection into a “legal” instrument. In 1998, Thailand proposed **the Bill on Older Persons** to its Parliament. Such Bill was drafted by pooling integration of all parts and sectors concerned to modify many times until finally it is successfully enacted.

The Act on Older Persons : 2003 has been in force since 1 January 2004, consisting of 24 sections, while the significant issues thereof are as follows:

- 1) The Elderly Right;
- 2) National Mechanism on the Elderly;
- 3) Tax Privilege for Children Who Take Care of Their Parents; and
- 4) The Elderly Fund.

The promulgation of this Act on Older Persons : 2003 ensures the elderly to access chance and security of their benefit and protection, namely

- 1) the immediate/rapid and convenient medical and health services;
- 2) education, religions, news, information that are helpful for their living;
- 3) appropriate occupations and suitable occupational training;
- 4) self-development and integration and participation in social activities and gathering into a group to form a network;
- 5) facilities and safety in buildings, places, vehicles and other public services;
- 6) support and assistance for fares and tickets in transportation;
- 7) exemption from fees to visit a government buildings/ premises;
- 8) rescue of any older persons who are tortured or abused or exploited or abandoned;
- 9) counseling services in legal proceedings or family problem solutions;
- 10) provision of housing, foods, clothing according to their need and necessity;
- 11) provision of monthly allowance assistance according to their need and necessity;
- 12) provision of funeral assistance.

- **The National Commission on the Elderly**

The National Commission on the Elderly is prescribed to be established by the Act on Older Persons : 2003, to serve as the national mechanism on the elderly presided over by the Prime Minister. Its members comprise representatives of the relevant agencies and entities of the public and the private sectors, including specialists, and academics and experts from educational institutes, in a total number of 28 persons; while the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons acts as Secretary of the National Commission on the Elderly.

Obligations of the National Commission on the Elderly are as follows:

- Orientation of policies and issuing the main plan on prevention, protection, promotion and support of the elderly status, role including activities.
- Coordination in dissemination, public relations, and activities concerning the elderly.
- Preparation of annual reports on situations of the elderly in each year to propose to the Cabinet.
- Set up of the protection system for older persons in communities
- Study, research, compilation, analyses, and preparation of data and information that are helpful for protection, promotion and support of the elderly.
- Monitor and appraisal of the implementation of the National Plan for Older Persons.

The National Commission on the Elderly usually holds its monthly meetings, the agendas of which are the significant subjects which may impact on the implementation of the elderly work as a whole.

• **Publication of Documentation on Obligations of Implementation of the Elderly Work under the United Nations' Framework**

All the concerned United Nations' instruments have been translated into Thai language and then distributed to various agencies and entities throughout the Country in order to provide knowledge and understanding and recognition of the Country's obligations.

Those United Nations' instruments which have been translated into the Thai language and distributed to various agencies and entities, namely:

- **The Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific 1999.**
- **The Shanghai Implementation Strategy for the Madrid and Macao Plans of Action on Ageing.**
- **Guideline for the Review and Appraisal of the Shanghai Plan of Action on Ageing.**

- **Establishing the website for publication and dissemination of the elderly news and information**
- **Collation of records of elderly organizations and networks**
- **National Survey on Older Persons**

The National Statistical Office normally collects and updates the elderly data at the national level in each 5 years, and the survey to be carried out in 2007 will be the 3rd time of national survey on older persons (the 1st time in 1997, the 2nd time in 2002.)

1.2 Provision of social protection and security

1) Old Age Protection and Security

- Old Age Insurance

Since 1999, the Office of Social Security, the Ministry of Labor has included old age insurance in the social security system to provide indemnity against an accident or injury from work, a child delivery, disabilities, death, and to give benefit in support and taking care of children, and ageing.

In 2006, there are total 8.86 million persons of the social insured all over the Country and 403,282 million Baht of the Social Security Fund.

- Government Pension Fund

Thailand establishes **the Government Pension Fund** in 1997 with objectives to secure long-term income after retirement of public servants who are members of the Fund which is the contributory type. Presently there are approximately 1.2 million public servants being its members and the amount of the Fund is of 320,763 million Baht.

- Preparation for Establishment of the National Pension Fund

The Fiscal Policy Office, the Ministry of Finance undertakes the study to establish the obligatory **National Pension Fund** aiming to set up the income security after retirement for working age populations either the private employees, the public servants or the state-enterprise employees. The National Pension Fund will serve as a measure to strengthen income stability other than the existing social security system. In addition, obligatory savings are also encouraged and promoted for general people of working ages. It is expected that when the National Pension Fund has been operated, it can provide financial protection to the workforce under its system of not less than 13 million persons.

2) Tax Privilege for Older Persons

The Revenue Department, the Ministry of Finance takes tax measures in order to provide social support to the elderly as follows:

- 1) Tax deduction entitled to any children who earn income and take care of their own older parents and their parents in law.
- 2) Tax deduction entitled to health insurance policies purchased by any children for their older parents and their parents in law.

This tax measure, apart from serving as an incentive for children to look after and pay attention to promote healthiness of their older parents, it also encourages children to realize importance of their duty performance in enhancement and support of healthiness of their older parents at the same time.

• The Elderly Fund

The Elderly Fund is established in 2004, under the prescription set forth in the Act on Older Persons : 2003, as the government fund with objectives to be used as expenses to protect, promote and support older persons.

• Promotion of establishment of the Provident Fund

Presently, the private business entities and the state enterprises have established their provident funds to provide income protection and stability to their own employees after retirement, thereby 1.82 million employees have accessed such provident funds with the fund amount of more than 300,000 million Baht.

1.3 Alleviation of poverty in old age

• Monthly Allowance for Older Persons : Non-contributory Pension

The government has undertaken to provide pecuniary assistance to poor older persons under the monthly allowance program since 1993. At the beginning the monthly allowance of 200 Baht (**6 US\$**) is granted to each of older persons who are entitled to such assistance, namely those who have no income and poor. In 2007, the State increases the monthly allowance up to 500 Baht (**14 US\$**)/person. This monthly

allowance is accessible to approximately 2 million older persons in all 75 provinces of the Country or equivalent to approximately 23% of the entire older population.

1.4 Older persons and emergencies

- **Providing assistance to older persons who face social problems**

The government provides assistance in various forms to older persons who encounter social difficulties, either temporary assistance or long-term assistance, such as pecuniary assistance to support temporary or emergency housing, foods, clothing, medical treatments and care and rehabilitation to the ill, consultancy and help in legal proceedings, counseling services, as well as admission to staying in an elderly home for those who have no relatives or caregivers.

- **Provision of assistance to older persons and families which faced the Tsunami**

Thailand by its public agencies and private entities, including the private entities with public and non-profit interests both in the Capital and in the 6 southern provinces which faced the Tsunami, namely Krabi, Ranong, Phuket, Phang-nga, Trang and Satun; all closely join to provide necessary assistance to those people including older persons who faced the Tsunami.

The preliminary assistance provided immediately after the Tsunami at the end of 2003, is emergency assistance in the form of medical treatments, arranging temporary housings, giving money, foods, clothing, medicine, and necessary consumer goods, medical examinations to advise and rehabilitate physical and mental health and raise the morale, as well as searching and finding their lost family members in the Tsunami. This assistance is performed through integration and pooling of resources from all parts and sectors of the society to work in the areas and immediately solve the problems to reduce the impact from the Tsunami as much as possible.

Regarding the subsequent assistance, it is to rehabilitate the Tsunami victims to be able to sustain themselves in long term by providing permanent housings to them.

1.5 Promotion positive attitude towards ageing and older persons

- **Older Persons' Brain Bank**

Her Majesty the Queen gives royal words that Thailand should promote and support the skillful older persons after their retirement from workforces in the public sector, state enterprises and the private entities to have chance to bring their knowledge, expertise and experience to contribute to development of the Country. Some part of these older persons are still healthy and wish to use their wisdom and experience to contribute to development of the society and the Country. Subject to such concept conferred by Her Majesty, it has led to establishment of **the Brain Bank** as coordination and information center of the retired skillful older persons by means of collecting and developing data, and setting up the relevant database, in order to disseminate and distribute such records to agencies and entities involved; so that they may contact or request counseling assistance from those skillful older persons according to their expert fields.

At the end of 2004, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security simultaneously initiates **the Project of Community's Elderly Brain Bank**, thereby there is searching for and identifying skillful older persons who serve as their local intellect, in all communities to register and set up databases. It is to encourage older

persons to transmit their knowledge, intellect and experience to younger generations, as well as to contribute such knowledge and intellect to development of communities and societies. The operation of **community's elderly brain banks** is cooperated by many parts and sectors and now is in the process of expansion into each community throughout the Country.

1.6 Employment of older persons

- **Promotion of Work in Old Age**
- **Occupational training for the elderly**
- **Providing occupational advice to the elderly**
- **Extension of the Retirement Age**

There is extension of retirement age for personnel of justice proceedings and personnel of universities from 60 years of age to 65 years of age.

1.7 Recognizing gender – specific issues in ageing

- **Provision of training to workforces of both men and women in business entities to prepare their readiness for quality ageing**
- **Promotion and development of female workers to get readiness for their quality ageing**

II Advancing health and well-being into old age

2.1 Ensuring the quality of life at all ages, including independent living, health and well-being

- **Proclamation of “Healthy Thailand” as a national issue**

With respect to older persons, under the Healthy Thailand, it fixes the aim at implementation of commitments to enable the elderly to achieve their peacefully happy life with their family members, access due care, healthiness strengthening activities, i.e. exercise, participate in community's activities and join in elderly representative clubs in their communities. In this connection, the Cabinet adopts its resolutions to approve and assign all parts and sectors of the government, and request cooperation and collaboration from the private sector to launch plans and projects to jointly facilitate well-being into all Thais of all ages, including the elderly.

- **Promotion and support of the elderly integration and participation in their representative clubs**

The Ministry of Public Health plans to enhance and support establishment of elderly clubs in every subdistrict, aiming at minimum 50% of older persons in each subdistrict becoming members of elderly clubs of their communities; thereby the clubs shall arrange monthly exercise activities for the elderly to promote their healthiness. Presently, elderly clubs have been established in nearly all subdistricts of all provinces of the Country, or equivalent to 97% (12,000 clubs) having nearly 4,000,000 older persons as members or equivalent to 64% of the total older population.

- **The Project of Health Promotion Temples**

The Ministry of Public Health, by the Department of Health carries out the Project of **Health Promotion Temples**, fixing target areas in all 875 districts of all 75 provinces of the Country, where each district will designate 1 of its temples to support healthiness of older persons who live in that district. The Project has objectives to combine knowledge of health-care with religious activities performed by people who live in each community.

- **The Project of Dentures Conferred in the Services of His Majesty the King**

The Ministry of Public Health joins to exalt the reputations of His Majesty the King on the occasion of His Majesty's 60 years Accession to the Throne, by launching the Project of Dentures Conferred in the Services of His Majesty the King, "Return of Smiles to the Elderly". This is aimed to insert and fix dentures and give oral health care accessories free of charge to 80,000 older persons all over the Country within the year 2007.

- **Sports, recreations and health promotion in the elderly**
- **Seminars on Orientation for Retirement**
- **Set up of Standards of Welfare Promotion and Protection for Older Persons**

The research of **the Standards of Welfare Promotion and Protection for Older Persons** is the initiation of the support of older persons to adequately access chance and varieties of the social services. The contents of the research, therefore, comprise standards of health, housings, families and integration into communities, safety of life and property, education, economy, participation, recreation, religious activities and assistance and contribution to the society. All of these standards are so expected to serve as the aims of the relevant agencies and networks in operation of their tasks to achieve well-being of older persons.

Currently, such standards are in the process of experimental implementation in the pilot areas to find out any demerits in order to review and improve to suit and be practical in the real circumstance.

- **Annual National Conferences on Ageing**
- **Promotion and support of health-care operated by the elderly organizations and networks**

The Thai Health Promotion Foundation, and **the National Health Foundation** along with **the Thailand Research Fund**, serve as the 3 major financial sources playing the significant role in providing budgetary support for promotion of health of the elderly.

2.2 Providing quality health and long term care

- **Providing quality health care service for older persons**

Presently, Thailand takes steps to ensure its older populations to access health-care services to meet the need and necessity of their physical condition more than previously under the Health Security Project of the Ministry of Public Health. Such health-care services are provided free of charge to all Thais of all ages, including the elderly, under the following arenas:-

- Prevention
- Promotion
- Treatment
- Rehabilitation

In this connection, the following actions are taken:

- (1) **Arrangement of the Green Channel/ fast lane for older persons in using the medical services of the out-patients section of hospitals.**
- (2) **Fixing of announcements and notifications that clearly explaining the service using process and the time taken therein to enable the elderly to understand and proceed accordingly.**

(3) Establishment of elderly clinics in hospitals to particularly service the elderly.

- **Home Health Care**

The Ministry of Public Health arranges the provision of health-care services to older persons by focusing on the convenient home health care to be performed through all levels of health networks with multidisciplinary teams from community and provincial hospitals, in order to give care to older persons by visiting them at home and giving **home health care**. The home health care will facilitate older persons to conveniently access health-care services within their own communities, and will be very helpful for older persons who are nearly in bed all the time, unable to help themselves due to their disabilities or chronic disease but without any caregivers.

In addition, there is promotion of elderly mental health **by the Department of Mental Health, the Ministry of Public Health**; thereby the relevant documents and manuals to disseminate knowledge on elderly mental health promotion and their mental health care are produced and distributed to elderly representative clubs and organizations.

- **The Project for Development of a Community Based Integrated Health Care and Social Welfare Services Model for the Elderly**

This Project is the initiation of the integration of elderly health care services with their social welfare services under the cooperation between **the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security**. The Project is jointly planned to be carried out as the pilot project in 4 provinces, which will commence to be operated in 2007. The main objectives of this Project are to establish and develop the health-care system and the social welfare service for older persons in communities under the principles of “**strengthening knowledge and understanding**” and “**building the participatory approach**” of the stakeholders at the policy and the implementation levels, as well as to build the capacity of local administration organizations, so that they will gain knowledge and skills in administration and implementation of health care and social welfare services for older persons in their communities.

III Ensuring enabling and supportive environment

3.1 Older persons and the family

- **Conducting the National Campaign for promotion of family relationships**

The national campaign is launched for strengthening love, relations and care among family members of all ages, which will be the mechanism to strengthen families. Such campaign is called “**Sunday’ the Family Day**”.

3.2 Social service and community support

- **Initiation of Caring System for the elderly at community level**

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons initiates the **Pilot Project : Community Volunteer Caregivers for the Elderly**, in collaboration with the public agencies involved and local administration organizations, including stakeholders in the target areas, in order to propose the proper alternative of giving care to older persons in communities especially those who have no caregiver but need assistance to perform their daily activities.

The Project of Community Volunteer Caregivers for the Elderly begins in 2003 in 8 provinces in the 4 regions of Thailand, 2 provinces per each region. The

Project has objectives to give care and support older persons in communities, by training people in communities to act as volunteer caregivers.

Through the monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of this Project by academics from Kasetsart University by Bottom-Up Participatory Approach, it is found that the Project positively results in most of older persons in communities, especially those who are trouble and need assistance. In the meantime, the result of appraisal also shows that the elderly who access such care-giving are satisfied with such services provided by the volunteer caregivers.

In April 2007, the Project of Community Volunteer Caregivers for the Elderly is approved by the Cabinet to be expanded into all the 75 provinces of the Country.

- **Initiation of the Pilot Project of the Multipurpose Senior Citizen Center**

The Multipurpose Senior Citizen Center is expected to serve as a community center for varieties of activities in full sphere, focusing on strengthening well-being of either physical or mental or social condition of all ages in communities. Presently, this Project is in the process of meeting and providing knowledge and understanding to people in the pilot areas to prepare for their readiness to establish such Multipurpose Senior Citizen Center.

- **Social Assistance for Older Persons**
 - **Home for the Elderly**

Homes for the Elderly shall be the last choice in case of no other better choices. Presently, there are 20 homes for the elderly throughout the Country, 8 of which are under the charge of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, while the other 12 are under the charge of the Department of Local Administration Promotion.

In addition, there are other services rendered to older persons, i.e. housing in emergency to help and admit those who are in the emergency to stay and mobile services which are the proactive services arranged by paying a visit to older persons at their home in various communities.

- **Pecuniary support for funerals for destitute older persons.**
- **Community Learning Center to promote learning by preference of the elderly in communities.**

3.3 Housing and enabling environment

- **Enactment of the Ministerial Rules of the Ministry of Interior concerning the Facilities within Buildings Which Are Accessible and Usable to Disabled Persons and Older Persons : 2005.**
- **Study and development of Minimum Standard of Housing and Environment for Older Persons.**
- **Study and development of the prototype public toilet accessible and usable to older persons and disabled persons.**
- **Study and development of the prototype physical environment and facilities for the elderly in primary care units.**
- **The study of Housing Development for the Elderly.**
- **The Pilot Project of Friendly Housing for the Elderly.**
- **Establishment of An Appropriate Environment for Elderly Research Unit in the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University.**
- **Houses Repair for the Elderly in Communities.**
- **Privilege and Convenient Services for the Elderly.**

Many of the public agencies entitle older persons aged 60 years and more to some privilege, such as exemption from fees for visiting tourist attractions i.e. zoos, national parks, wildlife preservation parks, national museums, historical sites, etc. This is to extend chance to the elderly to take their leisure to do anything useful and have recreation by visiting many interesting places.

- **Study and Development of “Standards of Practice for Institutional Care for the Elderly”**

3.4 Care and support for caregivers

- **Training of elderly care-giving**
- **Training of Health Personnel**
- **Training of Elderly Caregivers**

3.5 Protection of the rights of older persons

- **Dissemination and Distribution of Documentation on the Act on Older Persons : 2003**
- **Set up of the Committee to monitor and appraise the implementation of the Act on Older Persons : 2003**

IV Implementation and Follow Up

4.1 The National Mechanism on Ageing

The significant duties of the National Commission on the Elderly are :-

- **Promote and support collaborations among all parts and sectors in preparation of the populations for their quality ageing**
- **Monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons in order to build the monitoring and appraisal system for the implementation of commitments on the elderly**

The monitoring and appraisal of implementation shall be carried out in every 5 years of the Plan. For the monitoring and appraisal of the first 5 years, it will be the monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the elderly work undertaken between 2002 – 2007. The appraisal team consists of academics and specialists from the College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University.

The indicators of success to be used in monitoring and appraisal of implementation of the elderly tasks both qualitatively and quantitatively will be top-down review and assessment and bottom-up participatory approach. It will indicate progress, success and impediments of work. It is notable that many indicators set forth in the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons are quite similar or consistent with the indicators stipulated in the **Macao Guideline for the Review and Appraisal of Shanghai Plan of Action on Ageing**, under the **Shanghai Implementation Strategy for Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002**.

- **A public opinion poll about their knowledge and attitude toward the elderly**
- **Preparation of annual reports on the “Situation of the Thai Elderly”**

4.2 Regional and international cooperation

- **ASEAN Plus Three Symposium on Older Persons : 2005**

Thailand is honorably designated as the Host to hold the **ASEAN Plus Three Symposium on Older Persons**, in Bangkok between 7 – 9 September 2005. The

Agendas of the Symposium are focused on the “**Caring Society for Older Persons**”. This Symposium has objectives to serve as a forum to exchange and study the implementation of commitments on the elderly in the Member States of ASEAN+3, along with to set up the cooperation network on the elderly at the regional level.

- **Cooperation and Support of Knowledge and Information to International Organizations**, such as UNFPA, UNESCAP, World Bank, Help Age International, JICA, etc.

Conclusion

Thailand’s implementation of **the Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)**, is consecutively advancing in the following work:-

- **Older Persons and Development**
- **Advancing Health and Well-being into Old Age**
- **Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environment**
- **Implementation and Follow Up**

Consequently, it may say that during the recent years, the implementation of commitments on the elderly of Thailand becomes clearly advanced, whereby varieties of operation are set up through the integration and participation of all parts and sectors of the society, either promotion, protection or development of the elderly which are in compliance and compatibility with the frameworks of action on ageing under the United Nations’ both **the Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)**.

Part I

Part 1

Population Science of the Thai Elderly

Size and Proportions of the Thai Elderly:

Data on the size and proportions of older persons are the significant basic information for setting up the policies and plans concerning older persons. In general identification made by our Country, the elderly means people aged 60 years and more.

The updated data of number of the older persons in Thailand can be found from many sources, namely the population register, the National Statistical Office, the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Ministry of Public Health, various educational institutes, and the United Nations.

The National Statistical Office forecasts that number of Thai older persons in 2007 will reach 7,038,000 persons or equivalent to 10.9% of the total population of the Country, and further forecasts that in 2020, the number of older persons will increase up to 10.8 million or equivalent to 16.8% of the total population. Such increase rate makes Thailand become one of the countries in this region that have very rapid increase rate of the elderly.

Other than increase in the size of older persons according to the time, the proportions of older persons and the median age of populations also increase rapidly: Proportions of older persons increase from 4.8% during the period before 1970, to 10.5% in 2005, and likely to doubly increase to 21.4% in the next 25 years, while the median age of the Thai populations increases from approximately 18 years to 30.5 years and up to 38.8 years in each same period as above. Based on the international standards, any country having 10% of its populations being 60 years or more aged or having the median age of populations from 30 years onwards, shall be deemed as the ageing society. Therefore, Thailand has become the ageing society. Furthermore, among older persons, they also have longer life than previously, as proportions of the very old age group (aged 80 years or more) increase according to the passing time from approximately five hundred thousand persons (1%) in 2005, up to approximately 1.5 million persons (2%) in 2025 and forecast to increase up to approximately 4.3 million persons (6%) in 2050.

Table 1
Number of Total Populations, Number and Percentages of Persons Aged 60 years and more, Number and Percentages of Persons Aged 80 years and more, and the Median Age, 1950-2050

Years	Total Populations (per 1,000)	The Populations aged 60 years and more		The Populations aged 80 years and more		Median Age
		Number (per 1,000)	Percent	Number (per 1,000)	Percent	
1950	19,626	991	5.0	81	0.4	18.6
1955	22,759	1,087	4.8	81	0.4	18.4
1960	26,603	1,272	4.8	81	0.3	18.0
1965	31,209	1,498	4.8	93	0.3	17.3
1970	36,257	1,772	4.9	104	0.3	17.4
1975	41,292	2,072	5.0	118	0.3	18.2
1980	46,334	2,406	5.2	147	0.3	19.5
1985	50,612	2,821	5.6	179	0.4	21.3
1990	54,639	3,432	6.3	217	0.4	23.4
1995	58,336	4,441	7.6	274	0.5	26.1
2000	61,438	5,704	9.3	400	0.7	28.9
2005	64,233	6,718	10.5	543	0.8	30.5
2010	66,785	8,032	12.0	751	1.1	32.3
2015	69,064	9,841	14.2	1,000	1.4	34.1
2020	71,044	11,855	16.7	1,287	1.8	35.8
2025	72,635	13,958	19.2	1,537	2.1	37.4
2030	73,827	15,817	21.4	1,939	2.6	38.8
2035	74,611	17,270	23.1	2,567	3.4	40.1
2040	74,965	18,675	24.9	3,222	4.3	41.0
2045	74,935	19,850	26.5	3,867	5.2	41.8
2050	74,544	20,702	27.8	4,354	5.8	42.5

Source : United Nations (2006) World Population Prospects, The 2004 Revision.

Remarks : The median age of 30 years means 50% of the populations aged less than 30 years and the other 50% aged more than 30 years.

Table 2
Number of Total Populations, Number and Percentages of Persons Aged 60 years and more, Number and Percentages of Persons Aged 80 years and more

Years	Total Population (per 1,000)	The Population aged 60 years and more		The Population aged 80 years and more	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2000	62,236	5,877	9.4	593	1.0
2005	64,763	6,693	10.3	617	1.0
2010	67,041	8,142	12.5	763	1.1
2015	69,060	9,559	13.8	973	1.4
2020	70,456	11,888	16.8	1,249	1.8
2025	72,286	14,452	20.0	1,552	2.1

Source : The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (2006). Thai Population Prospects : 2000 – 2025.

The challenges posed by population ageing at the rapid rate since the previous decades, are resulted from declining population's fertility from high fertility in the past, falling to the level lower than the present and the future replacement rate within a short time. In the meantime, the death level also continually decreases. Based on the data, the total fertility rate decreases from about 6 persons per woman during 1957 to about 4 persons per woman during 1977, and to about 2 persons per woman from the beginning of 1987 and in the present decreasing to the level of less than 2 persons per woman.

On the contrary, it is found that life expectancy at birth keeps on increasing from approximately 59 years during the period before the year 1967 to approximately 70-72 years in the present and forecast to increase to approximately 75 years in the next 20 years. We may say that Thailand has less time than the developed countries to prepare for its ageing which is approaching at the continually rapid rate.

Table 3
Trends of Fertility & Death : 1950 – 2050

Years	United Nations ¹				Total Fertility Rate	The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board ²		
	Total Fertility Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth Total	Male	Female		Life Expectancy at Birth Total	Male	Female
1950-1955	6.40	52.0	49.8	54.3				
1955-1960	6.40	54.5	52.3	56.8				
1960-1965	6.40	57.1	55.0	59.4				
1965-1970	6.00	59.1	56.9	61.5				
1970-1975	4.97	61.0	58.7	63.5				
1975-1980	3.96	63.1	60.6	65.8				
1980-1985	3.05	64.9	62.7	67.4				
1985-1990	2.41	67.2	64.8	69.9				
1990-1995	2.10	68.7	65.9	71.8				
1995-2000	1.95	69.0	65.3	73.0				
2000-2005	1.93	69.7	66.0	73.7	1.81	67.93	74.90	
2005-2010	1.87	71.7	68.5	75.0	1.79	69.64	76.24	
2010-2015	1.85	73.1	70.2	76.1	1.76	71.35	77.58	
2015-2020	1.85	74.5	71.6	77.3	1.74	73.06	78.92	
2020-2025	1.85	75.5	72.7	78.2	1.71	74.76	80.26	
2025-2030	1.85	76.4	73.6	79.1				
2030-2035	1.85	77.2	74.5	79.7				
2035-2040	1.85	77.8	75.2	80.3				
2040-2045	1.85	78.5	75.9	80.9				
2045-2050	1.85	79.1	76.6	81.6				

Sources : 1. United Nations (2006) World Population Prospects, the 2004 Revision.
2. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (2006). Thai Population Prospects, 2000-2025.

Dependency Ratio or Support Ratio

Such change in the population structure makes our Country need to establish some novelties in our administration and economy. That change in the age structure

where there are more older persons than previously also causes certain changes in number of persons who act as supporters of the dependent older persons in many ways. One measure to indicate the potentiality of social support need is called **the elderly support ratio or elderly dependency ratio, measured by the ratio of the 60 years and more age group per the working age (15-59 years) group.**

The data in **Table 4** shows that the dependency ratio of Thailand seems to reduce from 99 per 100 in 1970, to 50-52 per 100 in 2005, but likely to increase to approximately 61-63 per 100 in 2025. The reduction of the entire dependency ratio during 1970-2005 is due to the reduction in the juvenile dependency ratio arising from decrease in the total fertility rate. Regarding the increase in the entire dependency ratio in the future, it is forecast based on the increase in the elderly dependency ratio caused by the reduction in the total fertility rate and longer life of the populations. It is notable that in 2005, every 100 persons of working ages have to support or take care of approximately 16 older persons. This ratio is likely to increase to approximately 31-32 persons in 2025 and to approximately 50 persons in 2050.

Table 4
Ratio of Entire Dependency, Ratio of Juvenile Dependency, and Ratio of Elderly Dependency, 1950 – 2050

Years	United Nations ¹			The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board ²		
	Total	Juvenile	Elderly	Total	Juvenile	Elderly
1950	89.3	79.8	9.6			
1955	90.3	81.2	9.1			
1960	96.7	87.3	9.4			
1965	101.3	91.7	9.7			
1970	99.2	89.4	9.7			
1975	91.5	81.9	9.6			
1980	80.6	71.2	9.4			
1985	70.0	60.5	9.5			
1990	61.7	51.6	10.2			
1995	56.2	44.3	11.9			
2000	53.6	39.3	14.3	51.7	37.4	14.3
2005	52.1	36.2	15.9	49.9	34.4	15.5
2010	52.2	33.9	18.3	50.1	31.9	18.2
2015	54.9	32.8	22.1	51.2	30.3	20.9
2020	58.3	31.9	26.4	55.7	29.6	26.1
2025	62.6	31.4	31.2	61.2	28.9	32.2
2030	66.6	30.9	35.7			
2035	69.7	30.4	39.3			
2040	73.4	30.2	43.2			
2045	77.2	30.2	46.9			
2050	80.4	30.3	50.1			

Sources : 1. United Nations (2006) World Population Prospects, The 2004 Revision.
2. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (2006). Thai Population Prospects, 2000 – 2025.

Orientation of Policy

Taking account of the fact that Thailand is going to face the **ageing society** in the near future as one of its significant conditions, the Country then studies, reviews and seeks for the practical guidelines to prepare itself to cope with such challenging change in the population structure, where it has to review the previous orientation of its policy and implementation either in the economic or the social dimension. This is to prepare itself in the best way at the policy and the implementation levels which will positively result in successful protection and development of older persons in the Thai society in order to achieve their well-being and fully and happily social participation.

The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board has mentioned that Thailand will continually obtain its highest demographic dividend until the year 2009. After 2009, its demographic dividend will respectively decrease. It, therefore, shall accelerate the use of productivity of its working age (15-59 years) populations in the possibly utmost way prior to its populations' dependency ratio going to increase as from 2010 onwards.

Such fact is the significant factor making the Thai government pool collaborations and efforts from all parts and sectors of the society to set up the elderly policy guidelines including implementation strategies in full sphere, to become more precise than previously.

In realizing of such numeric information about the continual increase in the older populations as well as the impact of such increase, the government has included the **“Ageing Society”** as one of the strategies in development of the Country under the **10th National Plan on Economic and Social Development : 2007 – 2011**, prepared by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board. That National Plan on Economic and Social Development plays the significant role as the macro matic/principal plan in orientation of development of the Country in all dimensions as a whole. In addition, the aims of development for each 5 years' period are also laid out for the public and the private sectors to maintain as guidance in practice and implementation. Under the 10th National Plan on Economic and Social Development, it also presents the changing situation of the Thai society to become the ageing society and thus requesting to pool collaborations from all parts and sectors of the society either the public or the private sector, in order to prepare all ages for their quality and stability of living during old age.

Part II

Thailand's Implementation of
The Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS)
and
The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing
(MIPAA)

Older Persons and Development

1. Older Persons and Development

1.1 Mainstreaming ageing into development policy and promotion of full integration and participation of older persons

* Policy and Plan on Older Persons

1) The Constitution of Thailand : 1997

Thailand realizes the value and importance of older persons : it is explicitly stipulated in the former Constitution of Thailand of 1997, in Section 54 prescribing that persons aged 60 years and more who do not gain sufficient income for their sustaining shall be entitled to the assistance provided by the State, and Section 80 prescribes that the State shall provide protection and development of children and juveniles, promote equality between women and men, promote and develop family unity and community's stability; thereby **the State shall support the elderly**, the destitute, the disabled, and the deprived persons to achieve their well-being and autonomy.

2) The 1st National Plan for Older Persons

The 1st National Plan for Older Persons : 1982 – 2001, is the first long-term Plan of Thailand for 20 years' period issued in order to determine the significant guidance and scope to develop the Thai elderly in the following arenas:

- Health;
- Education;
- Social and income stability;
- Social and cultural integration; and
- Social welfare provision.

The establishment of such long-term 1st National Plan for Older Persons can explicitly reveal Thailand's intention to initiate its precise policies and plans on the elderly, aiming this National Plan to serve as the instrument to promote, support and develop guidelines on the entire implementation of work on the elderly.

3) The Declaration on Thailand's Older Persons

In 1999, Thailand made its Declaration on Older Persons which is the same year when the United Nations proclaimed as **the International Year of Older Persons**. That Declaration made by the Thai government can be deemed as its intent and recognition of promotion, development and provision of chance to older persons in all contexts through collaboration and interaction of all parts and sectors, either the government, the private or the public including the organizations with objectives of public interests. This is to implement more explicit and efficient tasks. Under the **Declaration on Thailand's Older Persons**, it is clearly mentioned, in particular, protection of older persons in health care, living their life with value and dignity, happy family life, receiving of care, protection from abandonment, educational and learning chance, as well as social integration.

4) The 2nd National Plan for Older Persons

In 2002, the United Nations held the 2nd World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid, Spain, thereby the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing : 2002 was resolved to serve as international obligations for UN member states to observe and implement under the 3 significant issues, namely

- **Older Persons and Development;**
- **Advancing Health and Well-being into Old Age; and**
- **Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environment**

In the same year, Thailand issued its 2nd National Plan for Older Persons : 2002 – 2021, as the matic or strategic plan for orientation of development and implementation of work concerning older persons in Thailand. Such Plan has contents and scope covering and in compliance with the significant contents of **the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing : 2002.**

The substantial scope of the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons consists of :-

Its Objectives

- 1) To implant conscience in members of the society to recognize older persons as a valuable group of the society.
- 2) To make all people realize the significance of preparation for ageing and thus prepare themselves for their quality ageing.
- 3) To encourage people, families, communities, the public and the private entities to participate in tasks concerning the elderly.
- 4) To establish practical criteria and guidelines and documentation for all social sectors, either the public, the community's or the government entities to observe for practice in the collaborative and compatible manner.

Its Strategies

- 1) Strategy on Preparation of the Population for Their Quality Ageing,** comprising 3 major measures, i.e.
 - (1) Measures on income security for ageing.
 - (2) Measures to provide lifelong education and learning.
 - (3) Measures to encourage social awareness of the elderly value and dignity.
- 2) Strategy on Promotion of the Elderly,** comprising 6 major measures, i.e.
 - (1) Measures to promote fundamental knowledge of healthiness, self-protection and self-care.
 - (2) Measures to promote older persons to gather into a group and strengthen their representative organizations.
 - (3) Measures to promote their occupational integration and enhance their income.
 - (4) Measures to promote the qualified older persons.
 - (5) Measures to encourage and promote all types of medias to produce and broadcast their programs or arrange the particular column for the elderly, as well as to support knowledge, news and medias to become accessible to the elderly.
 - (6) Measures to promote and support the elderly to access friendly and safe housing and environment.

- 3) Strategy on Social Security/Protection System for the Elderly,** comprising 4 major measures, i.e.
 - (1) Measures on their income security.
 - (2) Measures on quality security.
 - (3) Measures on families, caregivers and protection.
 - (4) Measures on service systems and supportive networks

- 4) Strategy on Administration to Develop the National Work on the Elderly and Personnel Involved in the Elderly Work,** comprising 2 major measures, i.e.
 - (1) Measures on administration to develop the national work on the elderly.
 - (2) Measures to promote and support development of personnel involved in the elderly work.

- 5) Strategy on Process and Development of Knowledge on the Elderly, and Monitoring and Appraisal of Implementation of the National Plan for Older Persons,** comprising 4 major measures, i.e.
 - (1) Measures to support and promote research agencies to process and develop knowledge on the elderly.
 - (2) Measures to support and promote studies and researches on the elderly.
 - (3) Measures to monitor and appraise implementation of the National Plan for Older Persons.
 - (4) Measures to develop the elderly database system.

The aims of each strategy are determined for the agencies involved to pursue and implement, while the progress indicators determined for each strategy are to be used as the significant tool to monitor and appraise the implementation of work in each 5 years subsequent.

Setting up the Plan of Action on Ageing for 5 years' term : 2007 - 2011

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons, as main agency in charge of interaction concerning the policy and the National Plans for Older Persons, has approached, coordinated and cooperated with various agencies and entities involved in the elderly work of both the public and the private sectors, in order to set up the Plan of Action on Ageing for 5 years' term (2007 – 2011) under the strategies and measures set forth in the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons : 2002 – 2021.

In setting up the Plan of Action on Ageing for 5 years' term : 2007 – 2011, it is found that most of the entities and agencies whether directly or indirectly involved in the elderly work, are of the public sector, such as the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environments, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, etc.; while the private entities involved, namely the Thai Red Cross Society, the Senior Citizen Council of Thailand (SCCT), the Senior Brain Bank Association, as well as various foundations and associations.

With respect to the significant contents of the Plan of Action on Ageing for 5 years' term : 2007 – 2011, it is found that the schemes, programs, projects and activities under **the Strategy on Promotion of the Elderly**, have agencies and entities taking part in the largest number.

Next are **the Strategy on Preparation of the Population for Their Quality Ageing, and the Strategy on Social Security/Protection System for the Elderly**, which have many programs and projects, but are the second top.

The Strategy on Administration to Develop the National Work on the Elderly and Personnel Involved in the Elderly Work, and the Strategy on Process and Development of Knowledge on the Elderly, and Monitoring and Appraisal of Implementation of the National Plan for Older Persons, are the two macro strategies that serve as the significant obligations to be observed by the agencies, institutions and entities directly taking charge of elderly management, administration and knowledge (studies and researches).

5) Enactment of the Act on Older Persons : 2003

This is the effort of Thailand to put the safeguards of elderly right protection into a "legal" instrument. In 1998, Thailand proposed the Bill on Older Persons to its Parliament. Such Bill was drafted by pooling integration of all parts and sectors concerned to modify many times until finally it is successfully enacted.

The Act on Older Persons : 2003 has been in force since 1 January 2004, consisting of 24 sections, while the significant issues thereof are as follows:-

- 1) The Elderly Right;
- 2) National Mechanism on the Elderly;
- 3) Tax Privilege for Children Who Take Care of Their Parents; and
- 4) The Elderly Fund.

The promulgation of this Act on Older Persons : 2003 ensures the elderly to access chance and security of their benefit and protection, namely

- 1) the immediate/rapid and convenient medical and health services;
- 2) education, religions, news, information that are helpful for their living;
- 3) appropriate occupations and suitable occupational training;
- 4) self-development and integration and participation in social activities and gathering into a group to form a network;
- 5) facilities and safety in buildings, places, vehicles and other public services;
- 6) support and assistance for fares and tickets in transportation;
- 7) exemption from fees to visit a government buildings/ premises;
- 8) rescue of any older persons who are tortured or abused or exploited or abandoned;
- 9) counseling services in legal proceedings or family problem solutions;
- 10) provision of housing, foods, clothing according to their need and necessity;
- 11) provision of monthly allowance assistance according to their need; *and*
- 12) provision of funeral assistance.

6) The National Commission on the Elderly

The National Commission on the Elderly is prescribed to be established by the Act on Older Persons : 2003, to serve as the national mechanism on the elderly presided over by the Prime Minister. Its members comprise representatives of the

relevant agencies and entities of the public and the private sectors, including specialists, and academics and experts from educational institutes, in a total number of 28 persons; while the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons acts as Secretary of the National Commission on the Elderly.

Obligations of the National Commission on the Elderly are as follows:

- Orientation of policies and issuing the main plan on prevention, protection, promotion and support of the elderly status, role including activities.
- Coordination in dissemination, public relations, and activities concerning the elderly.
- Preparation of annual reports on situations of the elderly in each year to propose to the Cabinet.
- Set up of the protection system for older persons in communities.
- Study, research, compilation, analyses, and preparation of data and information that are helpful for protection, promotion and support of the elderly.
- Monitor and appraisal of the implementation of the National Plan for Older Persons.

The National Commission on the Elderly usually holds its monthly meetings, the agendas of which are the significant subjects which may impact on the implementation of the elderly work as a whole.

7) Publication of Documentation on Obligations of Implementation of the Elderly Work under the United Nations' Framework

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons has distributed the documentation on the Country's obligations of implementation of the elderly work under the United Nations' framework, to all relevant agencies and entities of both the public and the private sectors, and any entities with public interests including educational institutes and research institutions. In this connection, all those United Nations' instruments have been translated into Thai language and then distributed to various agencies and entities throughout the Country in order to provide knowledge and understanding and recognition of such obligations as the collective framework and collective aim of implementation of the elderly work at the international level. All those agencies and entities have been requested to implement their work in compliance with such obligations of the Country as Thailand is a Member State of the United Nations.

Those United Nations' instruments which have been translated into the Thai language and distributed to various agencies and entities, namely:

- **The Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific 1999.**
- **The Shanghai Implementation Strategy for the Madrid and Macao Plans of Action on Ageing.**
- **Guideline for the Review and Appraisal of the Shanghai Plan of Action on Ageing.**

8) Establishing the website for publication and dissemination of the elderly news and information

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons has established its website at www.opp.go.th to make known and disseminate the updated elderly news, data and information, which mostly about knowledge, policies and programs and the periodic

elderly situation as well as activities and implementation of work concerning the elderly. On such website, the communication is in a reciprocal way, whereby the website visitors can ask questions and receive the replies to their questions and can get lots of information about older persons.

9) Collation of records of elderly organizations and networks

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons has listed agencies and entities of both the public and the private sectors, organizations, institutions, associations, foundations, and clubs located in the Capital and the provinces (the total 75 provinces), that are directly and indirectly involved in or in charge of work on older persons and kept as records of elderly organizations and networks to distribute to the public; so that people can contact, access services, information provided by those agencies or entities or otherwise coordinate and request cooperation and help from such agencies or entities. In such records, addresses and telephone numbers of those agencies and entities are mentioned. The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons has published and distributed approximately 1,000 books of such records to the relevant agencies and entities throughout the Country.

10) Survey of vulnerability of Thai older persons

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, by the Social Hazards Observation and Warning Center in collaboration with academics of the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) carried out the survey at the end of the year 2006 on **vulnerability of the Thai elderly**. The data are obtained from the sampled groups which are older persons aged 60 years and more who live in the central part and the provincial parts both the urban and the rural areas. Such survey has objectives to assess factors affecting older persons' vulnerability to the following 5 arenas : their physical and mental health, basic requisites for living, violation of right and how to access right entitled by the law, their impediments and difficulties, and the preparation for their ageing.

The outcome of the study shows that most of Thai older persons still have high vulnerability of health, although almost 100% of them can access the health-care services provided by the public sector free of charge under the health security of the Ministry of Public Health. Their failure in saving during earlier time of working years reflects in their financial problems in their old age. Details of such information and data are available through an online system at www.m-society.go.th and www.socialwarning.net. This is to share the usage of data and information among the government agencies and all other relevant entities which will lead to the review and development of elderly work at the policy and the implementation levels.

11) National Survey on Older Persons

The National Statistical Office normally collects and updates the elderly data at the national level in each 5 years, and the survey to be carried out in 2007 will be the 3rd time of the national survey on older persons (the 1st time in 1997, the 2nd time in 2002.) The National Statistical Office in collaboration with the relevant government agencies and the educational institutes involved, such as the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Education, the College of Population Studies, the Institute of Population and Social Research, etc. will jointly consider the requirement of data users (the agencies and the entities involved in tasks on the elderly) by giving priorities to the data in need and the key

data to the users' work at the time of the survey; so that it will be useful for the users to make decision about their policies.

*** Full Integration and Participation of Older Persons**

1) Participation of Older Persons in Their Representative Clubs/Associations

In recognition of the importance of the elderly gathering together into groups to enhance them to do activities together, the government by **the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, the Senior Citizen Council of Thailand**, including agencies and entities of both the public and the private sectors in the Capital and the local administration areas, at provincial and municipal levels, cooperate in promotion and support of such forming of elderly groups or clubs/associations with the objectives to encourage older persons to participate in activities arranged by their groups, as older persons will have more leisure in the daytime or spend more time to stay at home than previously when they were of working age, that will lead to their self-development either physically, mentally or socially. Among those activities, there are also activities to develop their own communities, whereby the elderly valuable contribution to their communities can be revealed to others.

There are many modalities of joining together by the elderly either formal as an association, organization, or informal as a club.

The significant point to be considered in such regard is the readiness of the elderly together with knowledge and concepts of forming such clubs/associations, where the activities which encourage the elderly participation should be emphasized. In operation of such clubs/associations, it should have the systematized administration system, rules or regulations, offices and budgets of the clubs/associations. Activities to be arranged by the clubs/associations should meet the need and be in compliance with the interest of the elderly, thereby the elderly will subscribe for membership on a voluntary basis. In the meantime, the supervising agencies and entities shall provide technical and resource support including counseling services to those clubs/associations, so that they can successfully arrange activities responsive to the best benefit of older persons.

Currently, there are elderly clubs/associations under the networks of the Senior Citizen Council of Thailand, and independent elderly clubs/associations which are founded under the support or supervision of the government agencies, the private entities, state enterprises, educational institutes, municipalities and local administration agencies, in a total number of 12,000 clubs/associations located in each subdistrict all over the Country.

2) Participation of Older Persons in Culture

The Thai government realizes the significance of older persons as persons worthy of respect, who serve as the prototype in continuing and conserving the Thai culture. **The Ministry of Culture, by the Office of the National Cultural Commission**, in each year searches, selects and announces to praise and exalt reputations of the National Artists in each field, and also give rewards to persons who create or perform valuable work to the culture which is nationally or internationally accepted. The awarded persons are persons who have long time experience, most of them, consequently, are older persons. Presently, the elderly who are exalted as the National Artists are in the number of 114 persons, while those who are awarded the cultural prize are in the number of 130 persons; all these people shall receive monthly

allowance and other welfare from the Cultural Work Promotion Fund of the Office of the National Cultural Commission.

In addition, local cultural agencies such as provincial cultural centers, provincial cultural councils, district cultural councils, subdistrict cultural councils, also designate any older persons well known for their knowledge, intellect and skills of such communities/ areas to join to act as members or councilors of local cultural administration committees. That is to provide chance to those older persons to use their knowledge to play the appropriate role or make useful contribution to their community's culture. In addition, the elderly cultural intellect of each community can also add economic value to their communities such as artistic work, herbs, the Thai traditional medicine, etc. Presently there are approximately 5,000 older persons joining in community's cultural activities throughout the Country.

3) Participation of the Elderly in Education

Based on the survey undertaken by **the National Statistical Office** in 2005, it appears that most of older persons at 62.9% graduated from Prathom (the elementary class) 4. There are only 12.6% of them graduated higher than that level and 16.9% of them never study in school.

Although the number of older persons who graduated higher the elementary class is still small, the number of older persons (aged 60 years and over) who enroll their study at higher education (universities) does increase because the elderly are now provided more chance than previously, to access higher education of both the non-open and the open universities.

Table 5
Number of Older Persons Who Graduated Bachelor, Master and Doctor Degrees

Educational Levels	Year 2004	Year 2005
Bachelor	186	135
Master	59	112
Doctorate	11	26
Total	256	273

Source : The Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2005.

5) Participation of the Elderly in the Politics

The data collected show that in the past there were quite many older persons participating in the political activities. The number of the Parliament members in 1992, 1995 and 1996 have older members up to 13.1%, 14.9% and 12.5% respectively. In 2005 there are quite high percent (23%) of older persons acting as the Parliament members and the Senators (the Register and Data of the Parliament, 2005.) Such fact reflects some groups of older persons still being capable and able to play their political role quite well.

Table 6

Number and Percentages of Parliament Members and Senators who aged 60 years and over

Description	Total	Aged 60 years and over	Percent	Genders			
				Male		Female	
				Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	700	162	23.1	149	91.9	13	8.1
Parliament Members	500	46	9.2	42	91.3	4	8.7
Senators	200	116	58.0	107	92.2	9	7.8

Source: The Division of the Parliament Registers and Information, 2005.

Remarks: A Senator shall be in his/her term for 6 years each.

A member of the Parliament shall be in his/her term for 4 years each.

Moreover, among the present Prime Minister and his Cabinet of 34 persons, nearly all of them have the age over 60 years. They have good knowledge and expertise and long experience in working in the public services, they, therefore, are trusted and reliable to act as executives who direct and supervise the policy of Thailand now.

1.2 Provision of social protection and security

1) Old Age Protection and Security

- Old Age Insurance

Since 1999, **the Office of Social Security, the Ministry of Labor** has included old age insurance in the social security system (to provide indemnity against an accident or injury from work, a child delivery, disabilities, death, and to give benefit in support and taking care of children, and ageing.) It is to give protection to employees under the employment made by any entity which has 1 employee or more. This serves as security and protection of old age pension for employees after their retirement at the age of 55 years. Such old age pension shall be paid to employees who insure themselves and make contributions to the Social Security Fund when completing the age of 55 years and with no longer work.

Since 1999 when the security has been extended to cover the old age, the Office of Social Security has paid the benefit in the form of old age allowance to the insured who reach the age of 55; while the old age pension shall begin to be paid monthly after the insured have made contributions for at least 180 months (15 years) and to be payable for the insured's lifelong. The year 2014 will be the first year when employees begin to receive the old age pension.

In 2006, there are total 8.86 million persons of the social insured all over the Country and 403,282 million Baht of the Social Security Fund. Among these insured persons, 64,053 persons will receive the old age allowance from the Social Security Fund in the year 2006 in the sum of 1077.37 million Baht.

However, payment of the old age allowance to the insured trends to increase in each year.

Table 7

Number of the Insured and Amounts of Old Age Allowance Paid

Years	Number of the Insured Who Are Entitled to Old Age Allowance	Amounts of Old Age Allowance Paid (Million Baht)
2001	16,963	78.19
2002	22,063	152.34
2003	41,662	339.04
2004	46,782	567.64
2005	60,874	864.77
2006	64,053	1,077.37

Presently, the Office of Social Security is in the process of studying the suitable criteria to permit more benefit to the insured, aiming that the insured will receive the higher rate of pension than previously to enable them to sustain their living after retirement. Moreover, it is also seeking for provision of social protection to general people and informal labor as well.

- Government Pension Fund

Thailand establishes the “**Government Pension Fund**” in 1997 with objectives to secure long-term income after retirement of public servants who are members of the Fund which is the contributory type. When reaching the retirement age of 60 years, the Fund will pay them back pensions according to the period and in the sum as contributed including other benefit set forth under the terms and conditions thereof. Presently there are approximately 1.2 million public servants being its members and the amount of the Fund is of 320,763 million Baht. In 2005 and 2006 the public servants who access benefit of the Fund are in the number of 8,655 persons and 14,065 persons respectively.

- Preparation for Establishment of the National Pension Fund

The Fiscal Policy Office, the Ministry of Finance undertakes the study to establish the obligatory **National Pension Fund** aiming to set up the income security after retirement for working age populations either the private employees, the public servants, or the state-enterprise employees. The National Pension Fund will serve as a measure to strengthen income stability other than the existing social security system. It is simultaneously to encourage and promote obligatory saving in working age populations. The next step of the plan is to promulgate legislations prescribing contributions to be made by employers, employees and the government. The National Pension Fund then shall be deemed as one alternative to strengthen the income stability of employees after retirement and to prepare their financial readiness and ensure their continually sufficient sustaining at old age. It is expected that when the National Pension Fund has been operated, it can provide financial protection to the workforce under its system of not less than 13 million persons.

2) Tax Privilege for Older Persons

The Revenue Department, the Ministry of Finance takes tax measures in order to provide social support to the elderly as follows:

1) Tax deduction entitled to any children who earn income and take care of their older parents of not exceeding 30,000 Baht/person for their own father or mother, as well as the tax deduction of not exceeding 30,000 Baht/person for their father or mother in law.

This tax measure is to promote and support children to take care of their parents especially those who earn income to look after their own father or mother or their father or mother in law, who are older persons and gain insufficient income for their living. Those children shall be, therefore, entitled to deduct such expenses incurred in taking care of parents from their personal income tax in each year.

In 2004 and 2005, the Revenue Department states that there are 595,000 persons getting advantages from tax deduction entitled for their taking care of older parents or parents in law from the total number of 7.3 million persons who pay the income tax; and 650,000 persons from the total 8 million persons who pay the income tax, respectively.

2) Tax deduction entitled to health insurance policies purchased by any children for their older parents of not exceeding 15,000 Baht/person for their own parents, as well as the tax deduction of not exceeding 15,000 Baht/person for their parents in law. This measure is in force since 2006 onwards.

This tax measure, apart from serving as an incentive for children to look after and pay attention to promote healthiness of their older parents, it also encourages children to realize importance of their duty performance in taking care, enhance and support healthiness of their older parents at the same time.

3) Tax deduction entitled to persons aged 65 years and more

Any person aged 65 years and more and earning income, is entitled to exemption from his/her personal income tax for the income of not exceeding 190,000 Baht per annum.

That is to relieve tax burdens from older persons aged 65 years and more who serve as the valuable resource of the economic and social system of Thailand as these persons have paid taxes to the Country for a long time. They should obtain more savings to live happily.

- The tax measures to encourage personal savings

The Revenue Department has set up the tax measures to promote personal savings focusing on those who reach their retirement age and have income by permitting exemption from personal income tax for the income in the form of bank interest receivable by persons aged 55 years and over; provided such personal savings shall be deposited in any banks situated within Thailand and be the time deposit of 1 year term onward and the total interest shall not be exceeding 30,000 Baht throughout the relevant year of tax.

The above tax measures for encouraging personal savings are not only to relieve the tax burdens of persons aged not less than 55 years enabling them to receive more income, but to encourage also personal savings in the form of the time deposit for at least 1 year term, which will increase long-term personal savings of the populations and be advantageous for investments of the Country. In addition, it will enable the working ages population to have more personal savings continually until their retirement age. That will serve as alternatives for the retirement age population who gain their main income from the bank interest.

- The tax measures to develop the financial market

Investment in **the Retirement Mutual Fund (RMF)** in order to serve as an alternative in long-term personal savings for public servants and individuals besides the savings through the existing funds, namely the provident funds or the pension funds for public servants. There is certain relaxation permissible to the criteria and terms of investment in the Retirement Mutual Fund as follows:

a. An individual investor can take any kind of his/her income to buy investment units in the Retirement Mutual Fund by the government's permission of deduction of his/her personal income tax from the amount that he/she will expend to purchase such invest units at the rate of not exceeding 15% of his/her tax payable income but shall not be exceeding 300,000 Baht in the relevant year of the tax when added to his/her investment in the Retirement Mutual Fund. This is the change in the previous provisions which prescribed that he/she was entitled to use only certain kinds of income to buy the investment units.

b. An individual investor shall be permissible to exemption of tax for his/her personal income and any benefit obtained from redemption of his/her investment units in the Retirement Mutual Fund he/she has held for not less than 5 years. This is the change in the previous provisions which prescribed that he/she was entitled to be exempt from tax only when he/she redeemed the investment units when being 55 years old and more or when becoming disabled or dead.

Such relaxation shall enhance more investments in the Retirement Mutual Fund, that will strengthen the income of the investors when they are of retirement age, as well as enable the Fund to bring more money to invest in the financial market in long term condition.

In 2006 there are totally 70 retirement mutual funds with the capital of 25,475 million Baht.

3) The Elderly Fund

The Elderly Fund is established in 2004, under the prescription set forth in the Act on Older Persons : 2003, as the government fund with the objectives to be used as expenses to protect, promote and support older persons. In the initiation, the government approves preliminary budgets of 60 million Baht to operate the Fund between 2005 – 2006, and approves the additional budgets of 60 million Baht in 2007, making the total budgets of 120 million Baht. There is the Fund Administration Committee acting as mechanism to manage and supervise the operation of the Fund.

The Elderly Fund can be deemed as financial supportive sources and resources for assisting and promotion of older persons, especially promotion of activities arranged by elderly clubs, associations or networks, as well as promotion of activities which will enhance and develop the elderly occupations.

Expenditure of the Elderly Fund is for the purpose of supporting activities concerning the elderly in the following arenas:-

1. To support a plan and program which encourages development of older persons in education, health, social integration, religions, information and news, occupations and social activities; to encourage roles of volunteers/field workers; including to organize a group to act as a community network. The support will be provided according to sizes of such plans and programs, i.e. small, medium or large.

2. To provide pecuniary assistance to an older person who is tortured, or illegally abused/exploited, or abandoned, including those who face with difficulties in housing, nutrition or clothing, by granting money of not exceeding 2,000 Baht/ person.

3. To provide loans for occupational operations to either an individual or a group with not less than 5 members under the terms and conditions that the loan borrowers shall make repayment in installments without interest, and shall repay in full within the period of not exceeding 3 years.

4. To support an organization/entity which engages in servicing as a consultancy or performer of legal proceedings, including an adviser to solve the

family problems. The Elderly Fund will assist the Court's fees and any other necessary expenses in such legal proceedings.

4) Promotion of establishment of the Provident Fund

The Ministry of Labor, by the Department of Labor Protection and Welfare arranges seminars to provide knowledge and understanding to employers which are business entities with 100 employees and more both in the Capital and the 75 provinces. It is to encourage business entities of the private sector to recognize the significance of setting up the provident fund in their entities serving as income welfare to strengthen social stability of their employees after retirement.

Presently, the private business entities and the state enterprises have established their provident funds to provide income protection and stability to their own employees after retirement, thereby 1.82 million employees have accessed such provident funds with the fund amount of 386,657 million Baht.

1.3 Alleviation of poverty in old age

*** Monthly Allowance for Older Persons : Non-Contributory Pension**

The government has undertaken to provide pecuniary assistance to poor older persons under the monthly allowance program since 1993. At the beginning the monthly allowance of 200 Baht (6 US\$) is granted to each older person who are entitled to such assistance, namely those who have no income, are poor, have no relatives nor families to give care of them or those who are abandoned. These older persons shall register themselves with leaders of their communities or at their local administration organizations (LAO) first, so that they shall be authenticated by mean test. At the initiation, there are approximately 20,000 older persons throughout the Country accessing the assistance under this program. Subsequently, in 1999 the government increases the monthly allowance to 300 Baht (9 US\$)/person, and the government simultaneously seeks for continually increasing of number of older persons who shall be entitled to such allowance. Latest, in 2007 the State by the Department of Local Administration Promotion increases the monthly allowance up to 500 Baht (14 US\$)/person.

In addition, to enhance the monitoring system and the development of payment mechanisms of the Monthly allowance for Older Persons to become more effective and efficient, in 2003 the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons with cooperation of academics from Thammasat University carries out research to appraise the operation of the Monthly Allowance for Older Persons by using the participatory process of all stakeholders at the community level including the older persons as the target stakeholder (Bottom – Up Participatory Approach). The result of such research with recommendations proposed therein has led to modification and development of mean test process to be carried out by the Department of Local Administration Promotion by adding chance for the civil society within communities to join in monitoring the payment of the monthly allowance under the principle of transparency and fairness, so that such payment process will be truly accessible to the destitute older persons.

The budgets to be paid for the monthly allowance for older persons continually increase in each year so as to cover the number of the destitute older persons entitled to such benefit. In 2007 the budgets have been increased and provided to the elderly of nearly 2 million persons in 75 provinces throughout the Country, or equivalent to 23 percent of the entire ageing population.

Table 8
Number of the Elderly Who Access Monthly Allowance (Non-contributory Pension)

Years	Number of the Elderly Who Access Monthly Allowance	Baht
2003	399,362	1,437,700,000
2004	440,000	1,584,000,000
2005	527,083	1,897,500,000
2006	1,073,190	3,863,500,000
2007	1,763,178	10,579,068,000

Source : Department of Local Administration : 2007

1.4 Older persons and emergencies

1) Providing assistance to older persons who face social problems

The government provides assistance in various forms to older persons who encounter social difficulties, either temporary assistance or long-term assistance, such as pecuniary assistance to support temporary or emergency housing, foods, clothing, medical treatments and care and rehabilitation to the ill, consultancy and help in legal proceedings, counseling services, as well as admission to staying in an elderly home for those who have no relatives or caregivers. The agency which is directly in charge of providing services and assistance to trouble older persons is **the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security** through cooperation and interaction with **the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Justice**, etc.

On the part of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Ministry enacts its Ministerial Rules on **“Criteria, Methodologies and Conditions on Full and Adequate Protection, Promotion and Support of Housing, Nutrition and Clothing to the Elderly Responsive to Their Need”**. In 2005 the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security provides its assistance to older persons who are destitute of housing, foods and clothing to enable them access necessary basic requisites in the number of 7,633 persons and in 2006 in the number of 5,950 persons.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security also enacts its Ministerial Rules on **“Criteria, Methodologies and Conditions on Protection, Promotion, Support and Assistance to the Illegally Tortured or Abused or Exploited or Abandoned Older Persons along with Counseling Services for Solutions to Family Problems”**. In 2005 the Ministry provides counseling assistance in problem solutions to older persons who are abandoned to live alone, in the number of 1,039 persons and in 2006 in the number of 1,100 persons.

For **the Ministry of Justice**, by **the Department of Right and Freedom Protection** has set up services of the **“Justice Clinic”** in every province throughout the Country. In such regard, volunteers/field workers on right and freedom protection are assigned to give legal counseling services, coordinate with the Lawyers Council of Thailand and other relevant agencies and entities to arrange lawyers to legally proceed or defend on behalf of older persons in a case, or to approach the relevant agencies and entities for support of expenses incurred in such legal proceedings, as well as to provide correct knowledge of right and freedom entitled to the elderly by the law.

2) Provision of assistance to older persons and families which faced the Tsunami

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in collaboration with many agencies and entities involved of the public sector, i.e. the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Public Health, and business entities of the private sector including non-profit organizations and entities with public objectives in the Capital and in the 6 southern provinces which faced the Tsunami, namely Krabi, Ranong, Phuket, Phang-nga, Trang and Satun; all closely join to provide necessary assistance to those people including older persons who faced the Tsunami.

The preliminary assistance provided immediately after the Tsunami at the end of 2003, is emergency assistance in the form of medical treatments, arranging temporary housings, giving money, foods, clothing, medicine, and necessary consumer goods, medical examinations to advise and rehabilitate physical and mental health and raise the morale, as well as searching and finding their lost family members in the Tsunami. This assistance is performed through integration and pooling of resources from all parts and sectors of the society to work in the areas and immediately solve the problems to reduce the impact from the Tsunami as much as possible.

Regarding the subsequent assistance, it is to rehabilitate the Tsunami victims to be able to sustain themselves in long term by providing permanent housings to them by many social sectors and parts giving their good support of budgets and materials to rebuild housings for those persons at the previous location of their houses; creating occupations for them to earn income for their households by a means of vocational training or development of occupational skills, such as handicrafts, transformation of agricultural produce, transformation of local foods, such as curry ingredients, sea foods; as well as finding markets for such products.

In addition, the relevant government agencies, i.e. **the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security** allocate their budgets to all the Tsunami victim provinces to launch a project, arrange activities to strengthen well-being of older persons either their health-care, social support or independency in long term. On the part of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, social development field workers are assigned to survey and collect data including coordinate and facilitate the Tsunami victims (among them some are older persons) to fully and adequately access services and assistance provided by the government that will meet their real problems and need.

Regarding activities at the rehabilitation stage for the Tsunami older victims such as encouraging them to gather to form an occupational group, saving group, exercise and recreational group, with objectives to enhance their physical and mental health is well supported by provincial and community's hospitals.

1.5 Promoting positive attitude towards ageing and older persons

1) Older Persons' Brain Bank

On the occasion of Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday in 2000, Her Majesty gave royal words: 'Thailand should promote and support the skillful older persons after their retirement from workforces in the public sector, state enterprises and the private entities to have chance to bring their knowledge, expertise and experience to contribute to development of the Country. Some part of these older persons are still healthy and wish to use their wisdom and experience to contribute to development of the society and the Country.' Subject to such concept conferred by Her Majesty, it has led to establishment of **the Brain Bank** as coordination and information center of

the retired skillful older persons by means of collecting and developing data, and setting up the relevant database, in order to disseminate and distribute such records to agencies and entities involved; so that they may contact or request counseling assistance from those skillful older persons according to their expert fields. Presently, there are members of **the Brain Bank** who are specialized in many fields, such as social development, community-based welfare, agriculture, handicrafts, culture, history, religions, including novelties invented by these older persons. There are approximately 2,000 skillful older persons all over the Country listed in the Brain Bank's record. In this connection, the Cabinet designates the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board to be in charge of **the Brain Bank**, with the duties to collate, set up the database, disseminate and publicize to the public. In the meantime, there is also establishment of provincial brain bank networks in all 75 provinces to act in promoting, supporting and coordinating in recording data of older persons' brain bank under interaction and connection with the Capital of the Country.

At the end of 2004, the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons, simultaneously initiates **the Project of Community's Elderly Brain Bank**, thereby there is searching for and identifying skillful older persons who serve as their local intellect, in all communities to register and set up databases. It is to encourage older persons to transmit their knowledge, intellect and experience to younger generations, as well as to contribute such knowledge and intellect to development of communities and societies. The operation of **community's elderly brain banks** is cooperated by many parts and sectors and now is in the process of expansion into each community throughout the Country. Flashing back at the initiation of the Project, it started in 1 province first, i.e. Utradit in the year 2004 and then expanded between 2005 – 2006 into 12 provinces, namely Chiangrai, Lamphun, Phrae, Mahasarakham, Buriram, Sakolnakhon, Suphanburi, Phetchaburi, Chantaburi, Phthalung, Trang and Songkhla. Currently, there are 2,819 older persons registered as community's brain banks. In 2006 the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons allocates budgets to support projects and activities of elderly intellect transmission, in a total number of 90 projects.

2) Arranging the Annual Fair on the National Day of Older Persons

In 1982 the Cabinet approves the 13th of April in every year to be **the National Day of Older Persons** and such day is also a holiday as it is deemed as the Thai new year day. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security is designated to act as the major agency in charge of interacting with agencies and entities involved of both the public and the private sectors all over the Country to arrange the festival and launch the campaign for recognition of the elderly significance, thereby during the week of the 13th of April many activities are arranged on the occasion of the National Day of Older Persons. Main activities to be arranged consist of activities to strengthen correct knowledge on the elderly, health examinations, sports and recreations for the elderly, exhibitions of the elderly intellect, religious and cultural activities to express exaltation, respect and recalling of the elderly useful contribution to the Thai society. In addition, there is the contest of eloquences about the elderly values and contribution to the society, the exaltation of the Good Older Persons of the Year, the selection and awarding the Good Families where the 3 ages (young, working and old ages) live together in the same family in all 75 provinces. Such family modality is the characteristics of the Thai families which are of the extensive type since previously, but now such characteristics are gradually

disappearing as the Thai society changes to become a modern society affecting the Thai families to turn to be of smaller size.

Arranging of the activities on the National Day of Older Persons has the aim to encourage and campaign for joint participation of older persons and persons of all ages in communities in community's and social activities; whereby those activities will enhance self-pride in older persons, making them realize significance of their self-care for physical and mental healthiness to maintain their capabilities, knowledge, intellect and skills so as to make their valuable contribution to their families and communities.

3) Exaltation of Good Older Persons and Older Persons Aged 100 Years and More

In each year the Senior Citizen Council of Thailand under the royal patronage of HRH the Princess Mother, arranges a Party to exalt and award the prizes to good older persons of the year under cooperation from its branches in various provinces throughout the Country. In this connection, they will search for and select good older persons from all provinces of the Country, and then invite them to attend the ceremony held in Bangkok, to award the trophies to them by a Privy Councilor who presides over such ceremony. In the meantime, in each province, the branches of the Senior Citizen Council of Thailand will explore to find out older persons aged 100 years and more and will award them the trophies to exalt their healthy long life along with baskets of gift sets to give to them at their home. It is to praise their long life and raise morale of those older persons and their family members making members of such communities be proud of those older persons.

4) Promotion of the elderly good image done by the private business entities and medias

Previously, older persons may not be a specific target group of business marketing or attractive for the medias to publicize except for a special occasion such as the National Day of Older Persons, the National Father Day, the National Mother Day or other religious or traditional days. However, subsequently especially nowadays the self-health care trend is in fashion, where people also try to maintain their healthiness during their working age as longest as possible to serve as a stable base to prepare for their quality ageing. Whereas proportions of the working age population who are going to ageing continually increase, the private business entities see their prospective marketing channel to deal with this group as these working age populations have occupational and financial security. They have high purchase power and demand for goods and services. For these reasons, the current marketing turns to use many medias to advertise and publicize products and services including telecommunication services concerning older persons more than previously. For example, many television advertising spots have older persons acting as presenters using the good image of the elderly to attract people to products and services, etc. In the meantime, the front line businesses which have high market shares such as accommodations and real estates, initiate to design and construct housings with friendly facilities and environments for the elderly; other businesses also turn to supply products and services for the elderly use, such as sanitary ware, foods and nutritional therapy, herbs, furniture, fittings and fixtures, exercise devices, savings and financial programs after retirement, health-care services including eye, dental and skin health care, the Thai traditional medicine i.e. Thai massage and applying a herbal compress, etc. Thus, there are collaborations between many business entities under

the name of World Expo Service Co., Ltd. under the support and cooperation of the public sector, namely the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security as well as some medical schools and colleges. At the middle of 2006, **the Smart and Healthy 50 up Fair** is arranged, where products for persons going to be old age (aged 50 years and more), which are the main target group are displayed and sold. Besides, at the Fair many activities are arranged to strengthen knowledge of health and self-care for quality ageing. There are also exhibitions, entertainment and recreational activities on stage, discussions on the subject title concerning appropriate lifestyles at ageing by famous experts in various fields on the elderly, such as physicians, the National Artists, stars and artists, etc. In addition, there are demonstrations of elderly exercise, dancing, intellect, as well as counseling services concerning occupations, work, physical and mental health-care, legal consultancy, demonstration of housing with interior design and sanitary ware that suit older persons.

The arranging of **Smart and Healthy 50 up Fair** even being undertaken for the first time, has quite well feedback from people especially target groups either of working age, going to be ageing or already ageing. These private entities plan to hold the next **Smart and Healthy 50 up Fair** in June 2007 and hold continually in each year subsequent. Details of the arrangement of the Fair are available at www.smartandhappy50up.com.

5. Establishment of the Committee on Public Relations under supervision of the National Commission on the Elderly

The National Commission on the Elderly recognizes and gives priorities to promote value and create positive attitude of the elderly toward the society, as well as desires to disseminate news and information about older persons to the public especially the elderly right under the Act on Older Persons : 2003, how to access various services and how to prepare for quality ageing. The National Commission on the Elderly, consequently, appoints a Committee comprising representatives of the medias involved to be in charge of public relations on the elderly. In this connection, the public relation strategies are set up, focusing on using television, radio, newspaper medias wherein the central medias will act as the principal and request collaborations from local networks of the public and the private sectors to jointly conduct public relation tasks.

1.6 Employment of older persons

1) Promotion of Work in Old Age

The Department of Job Placement, the Ministry of Labor, both in the Capital and provinces undertake registration of older persons who still desire to work and seek for jobs so as to find and put them on the proper vacant positions according to their skills and the requirements of the relevant employers (who provide employment for persons aged over 60 years.) There are some employers and entities giving employment chance to older persons either full time or part time jobs.

2) Occupational training for the elderly

The Department of Skill Development, the Ministry of Labor undertakes to promote and train occupational skills to older persons in communities by providing occupational training in local skill development institutions and provincial skill

development centers in each province. The professions that are trained to the elderly are cooking and preserving of Thai foods and desserts, Thai massage, sole and foot massage, handicrafts made from domestic materials. There are not less than 1,000 older persons participate in such training in each year.

In addition, the Ministry of Labor launches programs to strengthen income of the skillful, or talent or expert older persons by employing them to be a specialist to transmit their knowledge to younger persons, to act as a director or consultant in training or occupational training of their specialized fields of knowledge. For example, employing an older person expert in Thai massage to be a lecturer of Thai massage training, or employing an older person expert in any handicrafts, i.e. weaving cloth, artificial flowers producing and other artistic work to act as a lecturer of such training course.

3) Providing occupational advice to the elderly

The Department of Job Placement with its branches i.e. the provincial job placement offices in all 75 provinces of the Country provide services to older persons on occupational data, news on labor markets, and vocational guidelines. In each year, there are approximately 10,000 older persons accessing these occupational counseling services.

4) Extension of the Retirement Age

Based on the fact that Thailand encounters the insufficiency of specialists of various fields such as educational, and judicial fields; thus, there is extension of the retirement age for judges, public prosecutors, university's lecturers from 60 years of age to 65 years of age, but on a voluntary basis.

It is widely accepted that personnel of justice proceedings, i.e. judges and public prosecutors are people who must be educated and particularly expert as well as skillful in performance of their duties; thereby they have to increase their work skills and experience in adjudging and making judgment. For these reasons, many senior judges and public prosecutors even after their retirement age (60 years) are still high capable, expert and able to act as judge or public prosecutor very well.

Consequently, the Office of the Judiciary and the Office of the Attorney-General promulgate the Act on Criteria of Appointment and Acting as Senior Judges : 1999; and the Act on Criteria of Appointment and Acting as Senior Public Prosecutors : 2000. That is for extending working age of ones who are of retired age and act as the senior judge or the senior public prosecutor, from 60 years to be 65 years (it is based on their voluntary decision.) In the meantime, if those judges and public prosecutors have performed their duties until completion of 65 years age, but still are able to perform their duties for further years (and they are willing to extend their duties performance); it will then be put in the assessment process prescribed by each agency/department in charge of such person. If they can pass such assessment, they shall be entitled to act as senior judge or public prosecutor until completion of 70 years age.

Among older persons who are of retirement age and act as lecturers in the higher education institutes of the public sector, many of them have good knowledge and still are healthy to perform their duties for further years in order to transmit their knowledge and experience to students. Simultaneously, due to limitation and shortage of personnel in the lecturer/instructor position in several fields of science, the Office of the Higher Education Commission under the Ministry of Education promulgates the Rules on Civil Servants in Higher Education Institutes : 2004,

prescribing that a civil servant in a university who act as lecturer at the rank from deputy professor onwards when being of the retirement age of 60 years shall be entitled to perform their duties as lecturer (based on a voluntary basis) until completion of 65 years age. In addition, the Civil Service Board in each university has appraisal process to consider extension of the working ages of lecturers who are of the retirement age, where the Board shall focus on the previous work of each older lecturer.

Moreover, medical schools and institutes usually invite the older physicians who are expert in each particular field especially in the shorted field to continue their work even as a part-time job in each week in such institutes. That will enable those older physician lecturers to continue to make their knowledge as the valuable contribution to the society. It will preserve the knowledge, skills and technical and occupational capacities of those older physician lecturers, and simultaneously solve the shortage of medical personnel especially in the shorted fields.

1.7 Recognizing gender – specific issues in ageing

1) Provision of training to workforces of both men and women in business entities to prepare their readiness for quality ageing

The Department of Labor Protection and Welfare, the Ministry of Labor undertakes to provide training to workforces of both men and women of business entities both in the Capital and provinces, aiming at their recognition of importance in preparation for quality ageing. The courses of such training consist of the following contents:-

- Health-care/ healthiness strengthening
- Exercise taking
- Nutrition
- Income security & savings
- Plan of life after retirement

There are not less than 4,000 older workers of business entities in the Capital and in the provinces being trained in each year.

2) Promotion and development of female workers to get readiness for their quality ageing

The Department of Labor Protection and Welfare, the Ministry of Labor has continually provided training to the female workforce in business entities since 1995 aiming that the female workers who have passed the training will act as counselor of their friends who work at the same workplace in order to assist in solving any problems that may arise from working, especially the particular ones which shall specifically arise only to female labor.

The training procedure to produce female labor counselors in business entities is undertaken both in the central part and the provincial parts. Under such program, the business entities shall select representatives of female workers who have proper abilities to act as the female labor counselor, one person per each entity. Those female labor representatives shall then be trained for 3 days' course training in the following knowledge:

- Labor Protection Act
- Counseling psychology

- Social security
- Gynecological health-care
- Fertility and family control
- AIDS and narcotics
- Resources and service sources for solutions to problems of female workers
- Preparation for their quality ageing

After training, a network of female labor counselors will be established to promote these female labor counselors to have chance to meet, exchange news, data, information and experience, which will enable them to effectively act as consultancy to their friends in the same workplace, as well as even refer certain problems to the relevant agencies to assist in due course.

In addition, there is establishment of the female labor counselor club, and establishment of their website at <http://welovewomenclub.pantown.com>, to disseminate knowledge, information and activities arranged by their group.

In each year, there are approximately 4,000 female workers of business entities throughout the Country attending such training.

Advancing Health and Well-being into Old Age

2.1 Ensuring the quality of life at all ages, including independent living, health and well-being

1) Announcement of “Healthy Thailand” as a national issue

Thailand announces “**Healthy Thailand**” as a national issue in 2005, whereby it prescribes all Thais of all ages to access more chance to fully develop their potentialities either physical, mental, social or spiritual one, to achieve their **well-being** and integrate them into development work of the Country. All Thais of all ages shall be entitled to equality of right and chance to access quality health-care and other social facilities for their well-being.

With respect to older persons, under **the Healthy Thailand**, it fixes the aim at implementation of commitments to enable the elderly to achieve their peacefully happy life with their family members, access due care, healthiness strengthening activities i.e. exercise, participate in community’s activities and join in elderly representative clubs in their communities. In this connection, the Cabinet adopts its resolutions to approve and assign all parts and sectors of the government, and request cooperation and collaboration from the private sector to launch plans and projects to jointly facilitate well-being into all Thais of all ages, including the elderly.

2) Promotion and support of the elderly integration and participation in their representative clubs

Subject to the announcement of **Healthy Thailand** as a national issue in 2005, where the Ministry of Public Health is designated as the main agency in charge of interact with all agencies and entities involved of both the public and the private sectors to implement **well-being** in all Thais of all ages. Regarding the elderly, the Ministry of Public Health plans to enhance and support establishment of elderly clubs in every subdistrict, aiming at minimum 50% of older persons in each subdistrict becoming members of elderly clubs of their communities; thereby the clubs shall arrange monthly exercise activities for the elderly to promote their healthiness.

The National Issue of Healthy Thailand has good feedback from the agencies involved especially the local agencies under supervision of the Ministry of Public Health, and local administration agencies under supervision of the Ministry of Interior. It may say that presently elderly clubs have been established in nearly all subdistricts of all provinces of the Country, or equivalent to 97% (12,000 clubs) having nearly 4,000,000 older persons as members or equivalent to 64% of the total older population, whereby those older members can access the activities monthly arranged by the clubs to strengthen their healthiness, either exercise such as Tai Kek, applied aerobics that suit the elderly, Thai intellect baton aerobics, or educational tours, lectures on nutrition and physical and mental health-care for the elderly, or religious, traditional and cultural activities. These activities are well fed back by older persons in communities.

In the meantime, in each year **the Ministry of Public Health by the Department of Health** arranges activities to promote and support capacities of elderly clubs and networks. In such regard, there is arranging of conferences to promote elderly healthiness, thereby representatives of those elderly clubs and networks throughout the Country are invited to attend such conferences. At such conferences, the good elderly club will be awarded the prize in order to raise morale to elderly clubs. In addition, documentation and manuals on health-care and healthiness and exercise demonstration VCDs, posters campaigning for healthy conducts, leaflets, brochures, songs cassette-tapes and T-shirts and polo shirts printed with healthiness campaign words, etc. are distributed to elderly clubs to use as

instruments/tools to operate their activities to promote healthiness of the elderly in their communities.

3) The Project of Health Promotion Temples

The Ministry of Public Health, by the Department of Health carries out the Project of **Health Promotion Temples**, fixing target areas in all 875 districts of all 75 provinces of the Country, where each district will designate 1 of its temples to support healthiness of older persons who live in that district. The Project has objectives to combine knowledge of health-care with religious activities performed by people who live in each community, as temples are community's places where people especially the elderly usually gather in a large number to join in the religious activities. The support and provision of health knowledge to the temple's personnel will be the health strengthening method suiting and complying with lifestyles of the folks. Abbots and monks will act as instructors or preachers to suggest Buddhist practical guidelines together with healthy behaviors to the people. It is advantages for both religions and elderly health-care. In the meantime, as temples in communities mostly have large areas, those temples then cooperate and permit the usage of their areas such as a temple lawn to serve as the place for a group of older persons to join in taking exercise in the morning or in the evening, etc.

In order to create incentives for and pride of temples, the Department of Health arranges activities to assess the nominated temples in order to award the prize of the **"Good Health Promotion Temple"** to the abbot of the winner temple at the annual elderly conference in each year. Moreover, there is also proposing the Best Practice Model of the Health Promotion Temple to disseminate to all interested parties.

4) The Project of Dentures Conferred in the Services of His Majesty the King

The Department of Health, the Ministry of Public Health joins to exalt the reputations of His Majesty the King on the occasion of His Majesty's 60 years Accession to the Throne, by launching the campaign for "Well-being by the Grace of His Majesty" through the Project of the Denture Conferred in the Services of His Majesty, **"Return Smiles to the Elderly"**. This is aimed to give dentures and oral health care accessories to 80,000 older persons all over the Country within the year 2007.

In operation of such Project, the Department of Health, the Ministry of Public Health fixes the target to campaign for promotion and rehabilitation of oral health of not less than 50% for older persons, so as to help older persons to have teeth to chew foods. It is aimed to insert and fix dentures for toothless older persons in the number of 80,000 persons throughout the Project beginning from 2005 till 2007. This is also exaltation of His Majesty the King's reputations on the occasion of His Majesty's 80th Birthday in the year 2007, as well.

Based on the survey of the National Dental Health, it appears that 92% of older persons have lost their teeth. Among these older persons, 8% of them or approximately 470,000 persons are toothless, and those who are in need of inserting or fixing dentures are in the number of 300,000 persons. In solution to the elderly oral health problem, the Ministry of Public Health joins with the Dental-care Unit in the Royal Services, the Faculty of Dentistry of all universities, along with service agencies and entities both of the public and the private sectors, conducting the campaign for inserting or fixing dentures for toothless older persons to help them to

ably chew foods and to promote prevention from dental and oral disease in the elderly in order to reduce the further number of toothless older persons. In this connection, the Ministry of Public Health joins with the Office of the National Health Security setting the aim to insert or fix dentures in older persons of approximately 30,000 persons in each year, with the yearly budgets of approximately 120 million Baht. Presently, there are not less than 50,000 older persons throughout the Country, being serviced with dentures. It is continually being operated until achieving the target number of 80,000 persons at the end of 2007.

5) Sports – Recreations and Health Promotion in the Elderly

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports arranges sports activities to specifically promote health and recreations for the elderly by requesting collaborations from the Offices of Sports and the institutes of physical education all over the Country to join in arranging activities to promote and encourage exercise in the elderly; thereby the relevant facilities are placed and set up, such as health parks, exercise devices, exercise places or lawns, fitness centers, Petong courts, teaching of aerobics, Taikek, Chigung aerobics, baton aerobics, sole/foot massage. In such regard, older persons are encouraged to gather and form their group to take exercise. In addition, medical care centers in communities and elderly clubs are coordinated to arrange their mobile units to provide knowledge of taking exercise, check physical fitness, preliminarily appraise the health of older persons in communities, etc. There are also elderly sports tournaments, such as Petong, on certain occasions and traditional holidays to enhance unity and recreations in the elderly.

Regarding tourism, apart from the privileges entitled to older persons for fees exemption in visiting tourist attractions of the public sector, i.e. zoos, botanic gardens, National Parks, museums; the Tourist Authority of Thailand requests cooperation from the private travel and service entities to grant special discounts for older persons to use their services, such as discounts for accommodations or hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions of the private sector, amusement parks, etc.

6) Seminars on Orientation for Retirement

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons in collaboration with the Senior Citizen Council of Thailand, the Office of Geriatrics, the Ministry of Public Health and the Office of the Civil Service Commission, some private entities and some state enterprises; arrange seminars on Orientation for Retirement to public servants, officers and employees who are going to reach retirement age (ages between 55 – 60 years) in every year. Its objectives are to provide correct knowledge, understanding on readiness preparation and proper lifestyles after retirement, such as knowledge on ageing, social change, physical and mental health-care, nutrition, exercise, friendly housings and environments for the elderly, preparation for financial security, right of older persons under the Act on Older Persons : 2003, and integration and participation in social and recreational activities. Each of such seminars takes about 3-4 days. The seminars are arranged in a form encouraging relationships and serving as the friendship stage for those who are going to reach the retirement age, to meet and communicate among themselves and then able to join to do activities together subsequently. In each year, there are approximately 2,000 persons attending such seminars.

7) Set up of Standards of Welfare Promotion and Protection for Older Persons

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons carries out the Project to study and set up the “**Standards of Welfare Promotion and Protection for Older Persons**” in collaboration with a group of counselors which comprise academics from Thammasat University, with objectives to undertake researches to set up standards of the elderly life quality for encouraging the networks involved in the elderly tasks to maintain such standards as their aims to promote and upgrade the life quality of older persons.

Such research of **the Standards of Welfare Promotion and Protection for Older Persons** is the initiation of the support of older persons to adequately access chance and varieties of the social services. The contents of the research, therefore, comprise standards of health, housings, families and integration into communities, safety of life and property, education, economy, participation, recreation, religious activities and assistance and contribution to the society. All of these standards are so expected to serve as the aims of the relevant agencies and networks in operation of their tasks to achieve well-being of older persons. In the meantime, it can be deemed as the framework in making policies and plans to develop tasks on older persons.

Currently, such standards are in the process of experimental implementation in the pilot areas to find out any demerits in order to review and improve to suit and be practical in the real circumstance.

8) Annual National Conferences on Ageing

The Thai Society of Gerontology and Geriatric, in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University, King Chulalongkorn’s Memorial Hospital, the Thai Red Cross Society, and the faculties of medicines and the faculties of nursing of various universities, arrange an annual national conference on ageing in each year, for the purpose of presentation of medical, public health’s data and information, including social knowledge on the elderly, concluded through studies, researches, discoveries and experiments. It is also to provide knowledge and skills and new experience, in each year, to medical personnel of the Ministry of Public Health and other social personnel involved in elderly tasks. That will be directly useful to develop and upgrade knowledge and skills of such personnel to enable them effectively and efficiently perform their duties to service older persons subsequently.

For the National Conference on Ageing to be held in 2007, it can be deemed as the significant one as to join in the exaltation of His Majesty the King on the auspicious occasion of His Majesty’s 80th Birthday. In this connection, several famous foreign specialists and physicians concerning the elderly are invited to attend the Conference to act as guest speakers in the Conference. There are approximately 500-600 attendances participating the annual national conference on aging in each year.

9) Establishment of the Healthy Ageing Research Program (HARP)

The Faculty of Medicine, Chulalongkorn University, sets up the Healthy Ageing Research Program (HARP) in 2003 aiming to reduce and prevent the elderly from their health problem and to reduce family, social and economic burdens in giving care and rehabilitation of the elderly to enable them achieve independent living, well-being, and sustaining of valuable contribution to the society and the Country.

Activities of HARP concern pooling of opinions and ideas, studies and researches to find out health measures or guidelines and technologies that can be domestically produced from the local intellect and the resources of Thailand. It

focuses on prevention from health risks and promotion of health, medical inventions concerning technologies and novelties to decrease importation and reliance on foreign technologies to avoid infringement of any patents. In addition, it is expected to get collaborations from the private sector to produce such invented materials for local usage and exportation.

At its initiation, the Project is run in the form of the Hermitage of Knowledge, where there are meetings among many academics, knowledge discussions, pooling of opinions and ideas to lead to interactions between multiple fields of science, and novelties from ideas causing research and development of knowledge, then such new knowledge to be taught and transmitted in order to improve services provided to the elderly subsequently.

Until now, the HARP Steering Group has continually undertaken researches on the elderly. The Group has proposed 28 elderly projects to the University, where the total budgets applied for in 2006 are in the amount of 82,989,100 Baht.

10) Promotion and support of health-care operated by the elderly organizations and networks

The Thai Health Promotion Foundation and the National Health Foundation serve as the 2 major private entities to play the significant role in searching for financial sources to support operation of the elderly health-care. The Thai Health Promotion Foundation normally receives budgetary support from taxes collected by the government from manufacturers and importers of liquor and tobacco or the “Sin Tax”, at the rate of 2% or equal to yearly income of approximately 2.5 billion Baht. Such budgets are expended to promote and support various projects of study, research and implementation of work in many communities and areas, which will positively result in health of all ages in communities. Every year, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation allocates budgets to support projects and activities concerning strengthening of knowledge and health-care of the elderly at the community/area level, responsive to requests for support in the form of projects launched by institutions, groups, clubs, organizations and networks of older persons all over the Country. Therefore, it may say that the Thai Health Promotion Foundation is the main private entity that plays significant role in supporting the budgets to promote and develop the capacity of elderly institutions, organizations and networks throughout the Country in their implementation of tasks.

Regarding the National Health Foundation, it is the entity to support and facilitate in connecting the resource and financial supportive sources to elderly research projects. For example, **the Thailand Research Fund** is the large source of resources of the public sector to support researches carried out by various parties throughout the Country as a whole. In the meantime, the National Health Foundation plays the significant role of the knowledge mechanism at the national level to drive policy making on newly challenging issues concerning the elderly, such as arranging a meeting in the form of a **public forum**, where it can pool participation of the people, the government, relevant organizations and networks, leaders of towns at the national and the local levels, etc. to transmit knowledge and make correct understanding and conclusion concerning the elderly issue; aiming such public forum to drive policy making to cover and be feasible in the real circumstances.

11) The Project of study of the appropriate community-based long term care models for well-being of the elderly

The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board is the agency at the policy making level that sets up national economic and social development plans with 5 years' term. Presently Thailand is under the 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan : 2007-2011, therein it prescribes Thailand to prepare for the population's readiness to ensure its quality **ageing society**. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, meanwhile, designates the International Health Policy Development Foundation with its team comprising physicians, academics and specialists to carry out research on the "appropriate community-based long term care models for well-being of the elderly", with objectives to study facts and information about the current situation of the elderly care-giving so as to propose the appropriate community-based long term care models for well-being of the elderly. The result of such research discloses that the community-based long term care models for the elderly well-being should be the fully covering services which link both health and social services together. That will enable the elderly to achieve their well-being within their families and communities under the support of community's networks either the elderly themselves, their families or communities; as well as under appropriate assistance from the public agencies involved. It should focus on improving and developing the capacity of local health centers in subdistricts to serve as the elderly care-giving base of communities, whereby the social services should be provided together with the health-care services.

2.2 Providing quality health and long term care

1) Providing quality health care service for older persons

Presently, Thailand takes steps to ensure its older populations to access health-care services to meet the need and necessity of their physical condition more than previously under the Health Security Project of the Ministry of Public Health. Such health-care services are provided free of charge to all Thais of all ages, including the elderly, under the following arenas:-

- Prevention
- Promotion
- Treatment
- Rehabilitation

There are nearly 6 million older persons accessing the health security services or equivalent to approximately 84% of the total older populations of the Country.

In addition, the Act on Older Persons : 2003 entitles older persons to the right to access convenient and rapid medical and health-care services. The Ministry of Public Health, consequently, issues **its Ministerial Notification** of April 27, 2005, on **Medical and Public Health Services Conveniently and Rapidly Accessible to Older Persons as Their Privilege**. In this connection, hospitals under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Health, i.e. central hospitals, provincial hospitals, community hospitals, and health centers throughout the Country are notified to accelerate to undertake the following:

1.1) Arrangement of the Green Channel/ fast lane for older persons in using the medical services of the out-patients section of hospitals

All hospitals are requested to arrange the Green Channel/fast lane particularly for older persons apart from ordinary channels for general service users to facilitate the elderly to receive services more conveniently and rapidly not wasting time for waiting so long.

Based on the report of the Ministry of Public Health, it is found that presently there are approximately 90% of hospitals all over the Country, either central or provincial or community hospitals providing the particular channel/ fast lane for the elderly.

1.2) Fixing of announcements and notifications that clearly explaining the service using process and the time taken therein to enable the elderly to understand and proceed accordingly.

All the hospitals under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Health (central, provincial and community hospitals) undertake the public relations to publicize to older persons to know and understand procedures and steps of using services in the hospitals during their going to see the doctors, such as fixing an announcement or sign at clearly visible place, aural announcement, broadcast on television, poster or digital running words board, etc.

1.3) Establishment of elderly clinics in hospitals to particularly service the elderly

Based on the relevant report, it shows that approximately 80% of hospitals under the Ministry of Public Health throughout the Country, either central, provincial or community hospitals arrange elderly clinics under their out-patients services to particularly provide medical services to older persons.

2) Home Health Care

The Department of Health, the Ministry of Public Health arranges the provision of health-care services to older persons by focusing on the convenient home health care to be performed through all levels of health networks with multidisciplinary teams from community and provincial hospitals, in order to give care to older persons by visiting them at home and giving **home health care**. The home health care will facilitate older persons to conveniently access health-care services within their own communities, and will be very helpful for older persons who are nearly in bed all the time, unable to help themselves due to their disabilities or chronic disease but without any caregivers.

The home health care (HHC) is initiated and supported by the Ministry of Public Health, which is a proactive health care service for the elderly at the community level within the concept of the health care accessible to the elderly within their communities and under their community's system. Besides, **the home health care** is aimed to upgrade the elderly physical and mental health together with social condition either prevention from risky factors, promotion of healthiness, treatments or rehabilitation. It is, in addition, the health services that directly provide convenience and advantages to the elderly in compliance with the health benefit entitled to the elderly pursuant to the Act on Older Persons : 2003. Older persons who are discharged from hospitals and need to be continually given care at home or those who are ill of chronic diseases, or have disabilities and needing close care and special observation; all are the target groups of the home health care services.

The multidisciplinary team which is personnel to service the home health care will be set up in central, provincial and community hospitals in all parts of the Country. Each of the teams comprises physicians, nurses, physical therapists, psychologists, social development officers and health officers. The teams will perform their field work by often visiting the elderly at their home and providing health services to the elderly as follows:

- 1) give continuous care and treatments to those who are ill of chronic diseases or refer them to the medical or health service networks to obtain due treatments or care.
- 2) provide health suggestion services to those who are risky to become ill.
- 3) give advice and knowledge about healthiness, nutrition, exercise taking and adaptation of housings to suit their physical condition.
- 4) provide counseling services on the elderly care to their family members or caregivers.
- 5) provide morale and social support to older persons and their caregivers.
- 6) provide training to strengthen skills to elderly caregivers and support manuals on elderly care-giving.

In addition, manuals and practical guidelines on **Home Health Care** are prepared and produced to serve as criteria to implementation of work for the multidisciplinary team in charge of **the Home Health Care**.

The Home Health Care Project is undertaken in the pilot areas at 26 local hospitals in every part/region of the Country in 2005, and is expanded into central and provincial hospitals in all provinces in 2006, while 65% of the community hospitals also provide home health care services.

The Department of Health arranges a forum to exchange and transmit knowledge and experience in implementation of home health care services to the hospitals that have not yet carried out the home health care; so that these hospitals may prepare and develop skills of their personnel in order to service home health care to older persons in communities, by means of providing training, supporting and publishing manuals on implementation of home health care services.

In addition, the Department of Health arranges annual conferences on Home Health Care to provide chance to medical and public health personnel from central, provincial and community hospitals to obtain knowledge and develop their practice including exchange their opinions and experience in providing home health care. In 2006 there are 564 central, provincial and community hospitals attending the Conference. Moreover, for the purpose of having the elderly health services implemented with quality, convenience and rapidness, the Ministry of Public Health sets up plans and projects to encourage such concept as follows:

- Promote and extend and expand the elderly home health care into communities in all areas/provinces.
- Establish elderly clinics in provincial hospitals in all provinces.
- Produce standard manuals on operation of elderly clinics.
- Develop the health and social observation system to safeguard older persons in communities.
- Develop the health service system to be convenient and the network system where it can efficiently proceed the referring of trouble older persons to medical service centers and hospitals.
- For mouth and dental health, support artificial teeth to older persons.
- For ocular health, support operations of cataract and replacement of eye lens for older persons.
- Promote the Thai traditional medicine or other alternative medicine, such as a pin-stimulating treatment for muscular, tendon and osteo-diseases.

In addition, there is promotion of elderly mental health by **the Department of Mental Health, the Ministry of Public Health**; thereby the following documents and manuals to disseminate knowledge on elderly mental health promotion and their

mental health care are produced and distributed to elderly representative clubs and associations:-

- Manual for elderly mental health care
- Manual for physical exercise to promote mental health
- Manual for a seminar on enhancing involvement of the elderly
- Booklet on Alzheimer Disease
- Booklet on Chi Gung : mental health and physical exercise
- Booklet on how to be happy when you are getting old
- VCD presentation on Chi Gung
- VCD presentation on how to help the elderly in the community

Meanwhile, there are also mental health services provided to older persons who are ill of mental disease at psychiatric hospitals/institutes and home mental health care provided by mental health staff to give care and rehabilitation of mental health of older persons in various communities.

3) The Project of the “Community Health Service System : Bangkok 7 Model

The Project of the Community Health Service System : Bangkok 7 Model is a participatory workshop study called “Bangkok 7 Model” which is carried out in communities in Bangkok Metropolis in 2002. This Project is run under cooperation between Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (its Office of Health) and Chulalongkorn University (the Faculty of Medicine, King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital and the Thai Red Cross Society), with support from the Institute of Public Health System Research, King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital and the Thai Red Cross Society.

Its main objective is to set up the model of health-care services and social welfare to ensure the compliance of duty performance among health care personnel, community public health centers and the informal health caregivers such as family members, neighbors, friends and volunteers.

The models of this Project consist of the care at the door steps and the community service which comprises varieties of activities as follows:

- Regular home visit
- Home-based assessment
- Home nursing
- Home education and counseling
- Home rehabilitation
- Services for chronic disease adherence (Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, Tuberculosis)
- Social services
- Palliative and end of life care

The integration of communities is a very important factor for both the home service system and the community service system. Therefore, the public health volunteers and the communities’ leaders are invited to participate in every step of planning and implementation.

After one year of development of the Bangkok 7 Model, it shows that the development is successful whereby the implementation of work is reported and proposed to the Executives of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and its Office of Health. The administration and operation of the Bangkok 7 Model System is subsequently transferred to the Office of Health, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration on October 1, 2003. The success of the Project is also publicized

through mass medias, i.e. newspaper and television, and the Bangkok 7 Model along with the result of its implementation is also presented in the relevant annual elderly conference. The Office of Health subsequently applies the Bangkok 7 Model from the pilot Project to extend and expand into other areas of Bangkok.

4) The Project for Development of a Community Based Integrated Health Care and Social Welfare Services Model for the Elderly

This Project is the initiation of the integration of elderly health care services with their social welfare services under the cooperation between **the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security**. The Project is jointly planned to be carried out as the pilot project in 4 provinces, namely Nonthaburi Province in the middle part, Chiangrai Province in the northern part, Khonkaen Province in the north-eastern part and Suratthani Province in the southern part. The Project will commence to be operated in the year 2007. The objectives of this Project are to establish and develop the health-care system and the social welfare service for older persons in communities under the principles of **“strengthening knowledge and understanding”** and **“building the participatory approach”** of the stakeholders at the policy and the implementation levels, as well as to build the capacity of local administration organizations, so that they will gain knowledge and skills in administration and implementation of health care and social welfare services for older persons in their communities. Its process is focused on exchange and transmission of knowledge on administration, personnel training, coordination and interaction, collaborations, allocation and sharing resources, development of knowledge and skills in performing duties of the stakeholders at the policy and the implementation levels to effectively achieve the well-being of the elderly in communities.

The Project is now in the process of study, analysis of data to prepare the pilot areas in order to jointly lay out the implementation plan at the ministerial level between the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, along with the implementation plan at the agency level for the pilot provinces, i.e. the provincial public health offices and the provincial social development and human security offices.

Ensuring enabling and supportive environment

III. Ensuring enabling and supportive environment

3.1 Older persons and the family

- **Conducting the National Campaign for promotion of family relationships**

From the past until the present, the Thai traditional social practice maintains the priority, respect and honoring of older persons in the family and in the community. Older persons are respected as the top priority person worthy of esteem within the Thai families. Older persons are taken care of, paid attention to, respected and provided chance to participate in the family activities, including to jointly express their opinions and make decision of the family affairs. However, when there is change in Thai families under the current economic and social circumstance causing smaller size of Thai families, where certain older persons may be left to live alone or may not live together with their children or grandchildren.

The Office of Family Institution Promotion, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, takes the steps to promote and support integration of all parts and sectors of the society into the Campaign for strengthening **“Families and Communities to take care and support all ages including the elderly”**, as well as enabling family members to live together in their families with happiness.

Consequently, the national campaign is launched for strengthening love, relations and care among family members of all ages, which will be the mechanism to strengthen families. Such campaign is called **“Sunday, the Family Day”**, while its activities are focused on wide scope public relations, dissemination and campaign for providing knowledge, news and information via various medias, such as television and radio spots, stickers, documentation, leaflets, printed matter, manuals and large posters to be fixed at public places. The contents are to persuade family members to spend their time in performing family activities together on Sunday, which is the weekend. Those family activities shall enhance participation of all family members of all ages, such as regular visits to parents, children or grandparents (in case of not living together in the same family); or spending their time together in relaxation or recreation. This is to strengthen love, relationships, care, understanding and learning among themselves leading to the warm relationships among family members of all ages, where they will take care among themselves. The elderly will then obtain the care from children, grandchildren and other family members. It will be one best way to respond to the mental stability and raise morale in the elderly.

The Campaign for Sunday, the Family Day is the campaign continually conducted since 2006, throughout the Country, by the Office of Family Institution Promotion supporting budgets to all 75 provinces to launch such campaign.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, by the Department of Social Development and Welfare, also join in arranging varieties of activities to strengthen family relationships, such as camps to strengthen relationship of family members of all ages, knowledge activities to enhance love and unity of families, giving care of older persons in families.

3.2 Social service and community support

1) **Initiation of Caring System for the elderly at community level**

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons initiates the Pilot Project : Community Volunteer Caregivers for the Elderly, in collaboration with the public agencies involved and local administration organizations, including stakeholders in the target areas, in order to propose the proper alternative of giving care to older persons in communities especially those who have no caregiver but need assistance to perform their daily activities.

The Project of Community Volunteer Caregivers for the Elderly begins in 2003 in 8 provinces in the 4 parts/regions of Thailand, 2 provinces per each part. The Project has objectives to give care and support older persons in communities, by training people in communities to act as volunteer caregivers. Training of the volunteer caregivers takes 3 days and being arranged within the relevant communities. The courses trained are the fundamental knowledge both the theory and the practice of elderly care-giving. After passing the training, any trainees who desire to join in the Project to act as volunteer caregivers shall submit their applications respectively.

These volunteer caregivers will be assigned to pay a regular visit to older persons in their communities and offer companionship along with provide other services, i.e.

- talk with older persons
- look after their taking of foods and medicines
- assist in their bathing and dressing
- clean the house
- arrange and adjust the house's surroundings to fit older persons
- look after and assist in their health care and exercise
- take them to see the doctor
- coordinate with health staff to give health care at their home
- visit an older person who is ill and admitted to the hospital
- take them to participate in any community and religious activities
- coordinate with the government agencies involved to provide assistance if necessary

After the Project of Community Volunteer Caregivers has been implemented by the volunteer caregivers in close collaboration with the stakeholders and the local agencies as well as the community members/ people, the result shows that the implementation of the Project in the 8 pilot provinces is systematized. Subsequently, in 2005 and 2006, the Project is then extended and expanded into additional 15 and 48 provinces respectively aiming to enable older persons in communities to adequately access such care-giving. Presently, there are approximately 5,000 volunteer caregivers who service their care-giving to approximately 50,000 older persons.

Through the monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of this Project by academics from Kasetsart University by Bottom-Up Participatory Approach, it is found that the Project positively results in most of older persons in communities, especially those who are trouble and need assistance. In the meantime, the result of appraisal also shows that the elderly who access such care-giving are satisfied with the volunteer caregivers as they pay a regular visit, give care and assist in daily activities of those older persons. It is further found that older persons feel they are more physically and mentally healthy, having social stability and being confident that they will access the care services from the State without being abandoned at the end of their life.

The Project of Community Volunteer Caregivers for the Elderly does not only positively result in the elderly life quality directly, but also significantly encourages

family members and community members who previously might neglect or not pay attention to the elderly, to review their conduct and realize importance of taking proper care of the elderly including their necessary treatment toward or dealing with the elderly in their own family and community.

In addition, this Project also plays the significant role in making the culture, tradition, and practice of the society to enhance the unity of the society, because it promotes respect, gratitude, help, assistance and care toward the elderly.

Until present, the Project of Community Volunteer Caregivers for the Elderly is approved by the Cabinet to be expanded into all the 75 provinces of the Country.

2) Initiation of the Pilot Project of the Multipurpose Senior Citizen Center

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons has initiated the Pilot Project of the **“Multipurpose Senior Citizen Center”**, which is got from the result of study done by academics who are expert in ageing, of educational institutes. The Multipurpose Senior Citizen Center is expected to serve as a community center for varieties of activities in full sphere whether care-giving, support or development of the elderly, focusing on strengthening well-being of either physical or mental or social condition of all ages in communities. The pilot areas of the Project are fixed in 4 parts of the Country, 1-2 provinces each part, i.e., Chiangmai and Phitsanulok Provinces in the northern part, Sakolnakhon and Khonkaen in the north-eastern part, Phthalung in the southern part, and Choburi and Phetchaburi in the middle part. The significant criteria in selection of the pilot areas are to take account of the high capacity of agencies involved and elderly representative organization networks as well as collaborations of people in such communities.

Regarding the concept and model of the Multipurpose Senior Citizen Center, it is designed and developed consistent with the real facts, environments and contexts in the Thai society. Such multipurpose center will serve as the center where activities for all ages including the elderly are organized. Those activities will concern health, social, art, culture, education and learning, occupational training and income strengthening, as well as recreational arenas, etc.

The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons and the educational institutes' academics will be responsible for supporting knowledge to agencies and networks involved, by organizing meetings in communities to provide knowledge, understanding, concept and models of operation of the Multipurpose Center. Subsequently, the agencies involved at the local level (local administration organizations, health centers, community hospitals, elderly clubs) will implement the Project in compliance with the set up procedure. They will arrange meetings to jointly lay out their implementation plan under support, assistance and cooperation of the relevant agencies including the elderly. In such regard, officers of the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons and liaison officers or coordinators at the local level will closely provide their advice, suggestion and guidelines in due course.

The significant point about the Model of such Multipurpose Center is that the Center shall be flexible and adjustable depending on the economic, environment and culture context of each community.

This pilot project is in the process of implementation; however, it is found that in each pilot area, there is good feedback and cooperation from the agencies involved, especially the role to be played by local administration organizations, municipalities, community hospitals and health centers, including the elderly networks, in

encouraging such Multipurpose Center to be implemented within their own communities.

Presently, the implementation is in the process of meetings and discussions with stakeholders in the pilot areas to provide correct understanding in order to jointly set up the implementation plan, allocation of resources, personnel management, further control and supervision of the administration of the Center in the future.

3) Social Assistance for Older Persons

• Home for the Elderly

Homes for the Elderly shall be the last choice in case of no other better choices. Previously there were 20 homes for the elderly throughout the Country, which were under the supervision of **the Department of Social Development and Welfare, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security**. Subsequently, the Central Government has policy to decentralize the authority to local government, 12 homes for the elderly are, therefore, transferred to local administration organizations to operate and supervise. Presently, there remain only 8 homes for the elderly all over the Country under the charge of the Department of Social Development and Welfare. These 8 elderly homes have the capacity to provide assistance and care to approximately 3,000 older persons throughout the Country. The services rendered in the elderly homes comprise medical services, physical therapy, physical and mental health care, social welfare, recreation, occupational rehabilitation, religious activities and arrangement of funerals when having died.

In 2006 homes for the elderly have been improved and extended their role in implementation of work, thereby it is changed to be called **the “Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly”** instead of the “Home for the Elderly” as previously called. Forms of implementation of tasks are extended to cover the following major activities:

- 1) Collection and compilation of data and information about the elderly social welfare.
- 2) Training for the elderly caregivers.
- 3) Promotion of social welfare for the elderly.
- 4) Providing institutional care for the elderly.
- 5) Providing social services for the elderly in communities.
- 6) Counseling service for the elderly.

In addition, there are additional 4 social welfare development centers for the elderly being founded, making a total number of 12 social welfare development centers in the present.

The list of Social Welfare Development Centers for the Elderly:

- 1) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Bangkokae, Bangkok;
- 2) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Vasanaves, Phranakhon Sri Ayudhya Province;
- 3) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Ban Bang Lamung, Cholburi Province;
- 4) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Thampakorn, Chiangmai Province;
- 5) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Ban Buriram, Buriram Province;
- 6) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Ban Thaksin, Yala Province;

- 7) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Ban Phuket, Phuket Province;
- 8) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Khonkaen, Khonkaen Province;
- 9) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Nakhonphanom, Nakhonphanom Province;
- 10) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Lampang, Lampang Province;
- 11) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Songkhla, Songkhla Province; and
- 12) The Social Welfare Development Center for the Elderly Pathumthani, Pathumthani Province.

Moreover, these centers also provide services to older persons who stay with their families and desire to use the day care service. That is to promote older persons to live happily with family at the end of their life. The day care centers normally render services, i.e. health care, physical therapy, social welfare, income strengthening activities, recreation, educational tours, providing knowledge, including religious activities. In each year there are approximately 36,000 older persons accessing these services.

Apart from the services mentioned above, there are other services rendered to the elderly, i.e. i) housing in emergency to help and admit those who are in the emergency to stay; ii) mobile services which are the proactive services arranged by paying a visit to older persons at their home in various communities, thereby the older persons will be given news, information, suggestions and preliminary medical treatments, and the older persons who face difficulties will properly be assisted. In every year, the mobile services are accessible to approximately 157,000 older persons.

- **Pecuniary support for funerals for the destitute**

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security issues its Ministerial Notification on **Criteria, Methodologies and Conditions of Protection, Promotion, Support and Assistance in Traditional Funerals**, with the objectives to permit financial assistance in funerals for destitute older persons in the amount of 2,000 Baht/ person.

Such pecuniary support for funerals for destitute older persons has been performed since its beginning in 2005. There are 11,690 older persons being supported in 2005, and 17,680 persons being supported in 2006, respectively.

4) Community Learning Center

The Act on Older Persons : 2003 prescribes to promote chance for education and learning to older persons. **The Ministry of Education, by the Office of Non-formal Education Administration**, consequently, extends activities under the concept of the Community Learning Center, which have already been implemented to all ages in communities into all areas at the subdistrict level in all provinces. Additional activities are arranged to enhance learning by preference of the elderly through various medias, such as newspaper, books, journals, including television, radio and the Internet, etc. In the meantime, such Community Learning Centers will promote transmission of the elderly intellect in various fields of knowledge to younger generation in the communities. This is to encourage interest and integration of older generation with younger generation in the communities through varieties of

activities held by those Centers, such as books and books & other medias borrowing from libraries of the Centers, computer technologies training, transmission of the elderly occupational intellect to other community members to access income and employment, etc. The Centers permit annual membership fee exemption to older persons in their communities in using the services thereof.

In addition, each province also arranges a contest to award the Good Community Learning Center. Presently, there are 8,691 community learning centers in communities all over the 75 provinces.

3.3 Housing and enabling environment

1) The seminar on Friendly Housing and Environment for the Elderly

In recognition of its obligations within the United Nations' Issue of ensuring enabling and supportive environment under the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, in 2003 Thailand by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security organizes the seminar on "**Friendly Housing and Environment for the Elderly**", with objectives to create the knowledge trend, understanding and realization of people of all ages in friendly housing and environment for the elderly and to launch public relations to publicize models of friendly housing and environment for the elderly. There are 300 persons attending the seminar consisting of agencies and entities involved in elderly tasks of the public and the private sectors, academics, students, interior designers, architects, housing and real estate entities, sanitary ware and construction business entities. At the seminar, there are lectures and discussions to provide knowledge and exchange experience about the friendly housing and environment for the elderly. The lecturers at the seminar are academics and famous specialists in architecture and design, academics from the Faculty of Architecture and the Faculty of Interior Design, real estate entities and mass medias. In addition, at the seminar there is the display of awarded designs of the friendly housings for the elderly, produced by the students of the Faculty of Architecture.

This seminar gets quite well feedback from attendances and mass medias. It is found that after the seminar; information, news on such seminar along with interviews with the guest speakers of the seminar about the friendly housing and environment for the elderly are disseminated and broadcast by various medias, such as television and printed medias, etc.

2) Enactment of the Ministerial Rules of the Ministry of Interior concerning the Facilities within Building Which Are Accessible and Usable to Disabled Persons and Older Persons : 2005

The Ministry of Interior enacts its Ministerial Rules on the Facilities within Building Which Are Accessible and Usable to Disabled Persons and Older Persons : 2005 to be applicable to public buildings and newly constructed public places, such as hospitals, public service agencies, schools, universities, stadiums, conference centers, trade centers, transportation stations, airports, etc. It is prescribed that those public places shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the provisions of such Ministerial Rules; thereby in those public places and buildings, there shall be facilities that are accessible and usable to disabled persons and older persons, such as clear direction/map signs, ramps, elevators, escalators, toilets, parking, etc.

3) Study and development of Minimum Standard of Housing and Environment for Older Persons

The academics of the Department of Housing, the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University carried out the study on the **Minimum Standard of Housing and Environment for Older Persons**, between 2003 – 2004. It is to study the facts concerning the appropriate physical size, shape and aspects of the elderly to use as data supporting their setting up of the minimum standard of friendly and enabling housing and environment for the elderly. In the process of such study, meetings and conferences are held among agencies and entities involved, i.e. the public and the private relevant agencies and entities, including real estate business entities and sanitary ware business entities. It is to disseminate knowledge of the minimum standard of friendly and enabling housing and environment for the elderly, along with encourage the recognition of all the agencies and entities involved about their obligations to observe the Ministry of Interior's Rules on the Facilities within Building Which Are Accessible and Usable to Disabled Persons and Older Persons : 2005. In addition, it is to promote usage of this Study in designing and developing products and their designs as well as construction work to suit the elderly respectively.

Regarding dissemination of the study of the **Minimum Standard of Housing and Environment for Older Persons**, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security takes part in support of publishing documentation and leaflets to distribute to older persons and general people, relevant agencies as well as networks involved in elderly tasks.

For the subsequent study in 2007, the same team of academics will carry out the research and development of the appropriate design of a community primary care unit or health center for the elderly, in order to serve as the prototype of proposed alternatives for buildings and places where to provide health services to the elderly that meet and suit physical condition of the elderly.

4) Study and development of the prototype public toilet accessible and usable to older persons and disabled persons

Further to the study of the Minimum Standard of Housing and Environment for Older Persons, undertaken by the academics of the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University, and the occasion on which Thailand by the Ministry of Public Health acts as the Host of the 2nd World Toilet Expo and Forum held in November 2006; the Thailand Research Fund and the National Health Foundation consecutively support the academics of the Faculty of Architecture, the Faculty of Nursing, Chulalongkorn University to carry out study and development of the prototype public toilet accessible and usable to older persons and disabled persons, as the readily accessible and usable toilet to older persons and disable persons; which is focused on healthy, accessibility, and safety : HAS. Such prototype toilet shall be disseminated to public agencies, private entities and public places and sites as well as general people, in order to maintain as concept in their new construction or improvement of the existing toilets to become accessible and usable to older persons and disabled persons. The research team has surveyed public toilets within public service places of both the public and the private sectors, such as hospitals, transportation stations, trade centers including petroleum/lubrication stations and religious places i.e. temples, etc. This is to use such data to support their design and development of the prototype toilet accessible and usable to older persons and disabled persons, taking account of convenience and safety as well as compatibility with environment either physical or lifestyle condition of people in each area/community.

5) Study and development of the prototype physical environment and facilities for the elderly in primary care units

In 2007, the Thailand Research Fund jointly with the National Health Foundation will continually support the same team of the academics of the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University to carry out the study to develop designs of the buildings, including their physical surroundings along with facilities to be accessible and usable to older persons, within primary care units or health centers in communities. It is to propose the prototype for physical environment and facilities in primary care units for the older service users because models of the existing buildings of health centers which are under the charge of the Ministry of Public Health, in every subdistrict throughout the Country usually are of 2-storeyed buildings with elevated base, the area under the buildings then is an open area, whereby each service user including the elderly has to enter the buildings by climbing the stairs causing inconvenience for older service users.

In the process of the research, there are inquiries about opinions of the service users and the staff of primary care units and health centers (the “participatory approach”) along with proposal of guidelines to be applied to the design of internal environment of buildings to be usable to the elderly, such as adjusting the surface of the area, fixing hand rails, stairs, ramps, adding a passage, sliding windows and doors, clearly visible symbol signs, parking, toilets, as well as the external gardens and environments of the buildings.

Consequently, this may be deemed as the effort to initiate modification of surroundings and environments of buildings, especially in the context of health services to become accessible and usable to older persons taking account of the limitations of old age. The result of this study will be disseminated to agencies and entities in charge of elderly health care as well as those involved in elderly tasks.

6) The Study of Housing Development for the Elderly

In 2006 **the National Housing Authority**, in collaboration with academics of the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University, carries out the study on housing demand of older persons who live in urban areas in order to get data of facts on size of Thai families, lifestyles and demand for accommodations of persons who are going to be old age and who are already old age. That is to serve as the database to guide and support the National Housing Authority in making of policies and development plans on housing. Such planning is necessary to ensure the supply of housings in sufficient quantities for the increasing number of older persons in each community.

7) The Pilot Project of Friendly Housing for the Elderly

In 2007 **the National Housing Authority** will carry out the Pilot Project of construction of friendly housings for the elderly within communities in the following 2 pilot areas : in Saraburi Province, a province in the middle part of the Country and in Nakhonratchasima Province in the north-eastern part of the Country, in the number of 300 houses (150 houses each province), with construction budgets of 390 million Baht.

The housings for the elderly under this pilot project will be blocks of houses of one storey, of which the designs and internal facilities, such as toilets, hand rails, lighting, etc., suit the elderly. The external environments are also safe and suitable to the elderly, such as a ramp, health garden, exercise and recreational place. The design is in compliance with the minimum standard of housing and environment for older

persons that is studied and developed by academics of the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University as well as the Ministry of Interior's Rules on the Facilities within Building Which Are Accessible and Usable to Disabled Persons and Older Persons : 2005. The construction is expected to be accomplished in 2009.

8) Establishment of An Appropriate Environment for Elderly Research Unit

In recognition of necessity and importance of appropriate housing and environment for the elderly, especially the fact about their declining physical condition; the Department of Housing, **the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University**, by its academics in collaboration with the academics of the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Nursing, establish an appropriate environment for elderly research unit with the objectives as follows:

- To serve as the center to collate data for study and research of knowledge about the friendly environment for the elderly.
- To serve as the research center in order to be developed to become the specialized center on friendly environment for the elderly of the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University.

For the missions of the unit of an appropriate environment for elderly research: Its missions and activities can be summarized as follows:

1. Collect data, knowledge about the appropriate environment for the elderly, either town or country planning, architecture, interior architecture, landscape, housing, industrial design, integrated multiple fields of science such as medicine and nursing, engineering, interdisciplinary medicine, population science and psychology.
2. Study, research to find out solutions to problems of environment for the elderly whether at the individual level i.e. development of prototype housing for the elderly in urban areas, design of accessories and facilities for their independent living; or at the macro level i.e. study of town and country planning along with facilities provided in a town which are accessible and usable to the elderly, etc.
3. Provide knowledge services by disseminating research data, training, seminars, exchange of opinions and servicing in making a research to solve the elderly environment problems.

9) Houses Repair for the Elderly in Communities

The Department of Social Development and Welfare, in 2006 initiates the budgetary support for houses repair for the elderly in communities, including repair of community's activities places for the elderly. The project is operated under collaborations, resources support from, and interactions with local administration agencies by seeking and identifying older persons who face housing problems and improper housing, who are at the top priority to obtain assistance in repairing of their houses. In this regard, budgets, suggestions and designs are provided to repair their houses to enable them to achieve safety in living.

Such repair of houses for the elderly mostly consists of work of repair or modifying the roofs, walls, pillars and lavatories. In addition, the operation of the tasks in some areas is also provided additional budgetary support by the local administration organizations in order to repair houses for all older persons in need of such assistance almost at once without their waiting for a long time.

In 2006, there are 2,450 houses of older persons and 880 community's activities places throughout the Country having been repaired.

10) Privilege and Convenient Services for the Elderly

Many of the public agencies entitle older persons aged 60 years and more to some privilege, such as exemption of fees for visiting tourist attractions i.e. zoos, national parks, wildlife preservation parks, national museums, historical sites, etc. This is to extend chance to the elderly to take their leisure to do anything useful and have recreation by visiting many interesting places.

Older persons are also entitled to the privilege in transportation and traveling, i.e.

The agencies under the charge of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, such as the Department of Land Transport (transport stations), the State Railway of Thailand, the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (fixed-route buses), the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand, the Department of Air Transport (airports), the Airports Authority of Thailand Co., Ltd., arrange facilities and safety in the mass transit services as follows:

- Arrange particular seats that are convenient to older persons in purchasing the tickets without waiting for a long time, and arrange rest seats on their travels.
- Arrange officers to provide tourist information, i.e. timetable/ schedule, price of tickets/fares, other linking mass transit systems, first aid to the ill.
- Arrange toilets accessible and usable to the elderly at transport stations.
- Arrange particular seats suitable for the elderly in taxis.
- Arrange elevators, escalators, help centers, rest places, ramps for wheelchairs under the principle of Universal Design.

Regarding privilege of deduction of fees for the elderly, can be summarized as follows:

- The Transport Company Limited which is in charge of the inter-province mass transit permits half-price fares for the elderly.
- The Bangkok Mass Transit Authority grants privilege to older persons aged 60 years and more to be entitled to half-price fares.
- The Subway Rapid Transit System grants half-price tickets to older persons aged 60 years and more.
- The Thai Airways International Plc. grants 15% discount of tickets for older persons aged 60 years and more.
- The State Railway of Thailand grants half-price tickets for the elderly.

11) Study and Development of “Standards of Practice for Institutional Care for the Elderly

The Department of Social Development and Welfare, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, in collaboration with academics of educational institutes and specialists of the agencies involved, carry out a study to prescribe the **Standards of Practice for Institutional Care for the Elderly** with objectives to upgrade services provided in the elderly homes. The result of the study leads to the prescription of standards of practice for institutional care in the elderly homes as follows:

- 1) The administration standard
- 2) The health care standard
- 3) The social welfare standard
- 4) The housing and environmental standard
- 5) The internal control and supervision standard

In each standard, there is setting up of practical guidance to serve as indicator and also setting up of result criteria for the implementation of tasks, which the

personnel and caregivers involved can deem as their working aim. At the beginning of implementation of these standards (2005 and 2006), it is prescribed to monitor and assess the application of these standards from time to time. Such assessment shall be undertaken from internal assessment (prior to external assessment.) In this regard, personnel of elderly homes shall take their self assessment result (SAR) based on the relevant practical manual, indicators and result criteria set up for each standard. Subsequently, the outcome of assessment will indicate effectiveness of implementation of those standards, including its limitations and impediments. Finally, it will lead to improvement and modification to suit the real circumstance.

In the meantime, **the Department of Correction, the Ministry of Justice**, initiates the project to promote and develop life quality of older prisoners in 131 jails throughout the Country, by survey of statistics of older prisoners in each quarter of a year, including survey of their problems and need. In such regard, certain services are provided to older prisoners, i.e. primary health examinations, appropriate nutrition, group activities to do religious, sports and recreational activities to strengthen their mental healthiness, as well as granting necessary devices and equipment to them such as glasses, walking sticks. It is to encourage morale of older prisoners to make them feel that they are still valuable social members and can correct themselves to be good citizens of the society after completion of their punishment.

12) Establishment of the Elderly Care-giving Learning Center

The National Housing Authority undertakes the construction of the Elderly Care-giving Learning Center at Bangphli District, Samutprakan Province, not far from Bangkok, aiming to serve as center for learning and training of elderly caregivers, where many activities for the elderly will be arranged. Such activities will deal with health, education and learning, transmission and exchange of elderly knowledge and intellect, entertainments and recreations, including religions, tradition and culture. It takes the budgets of 23.4 million Baht to construct this Elderly Care-giving Learning Center and the inauguration of this Center is expected to be in December 2007 to exalt the reputations of His Majesty the King on the occasion of His Majesty's 80th Birthday. Finally, the National Housing Authority will deliver this Center to the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security to take charge of it.

3.4 Care and support for caregivers

1) Training of elderly care-giving

The Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labor, the Thai Red Cross Society and the Senior Citizen Council of Thailand, are all the agencies that regularly arrange particular training of knowledge and skills in elderly care-giving in every year. The target trainees are classified into 2 types, namely:-

1.1) Training of Health Personnel

This is the training of knowledge, skills and experience in elderly care-giving to physicians, nurses, medical and health staff, either treatment science, health promotion, prevention from risky health factors, or health rehabilitation. It is to particularly strengthen their abilities in giving care to the elderly. The trainees will come from medical service institutions throughout the Country, such as central, provincial and community hospitals and health centers. The courses and time taken in training will depend on contents and priorities of subjects that certainly concern

particularly the elderly health care, such as a specific treatment for a specific disease either physical or mental disease, etc.

In addition, in each year medical schools and colleges provide support of scholarships and specific fields of medical training to any interested physicians, especially the field of geriatrics, as well as support of a scholarship to enroll in additional study or training in a foreign country.

1.2) Training of Elderly Caregivers

It is the training of knowledge and skills of primary care to general people or persons going to act as elderly caregivers, or those who presently are elderly caregivers. That is to provide and strengthen their knowledge and skills in giving care of older persons either healthy or dependent or chronically ill or almost all the time being in bed ones. Most of the target trainees will be family members of the elderly or general persons who are interested to be the elderly caregivers.

The training of elderly caregivers is found apart from being provided by the faculty of nursing in universities and the public and the private nursing colleges, it is also provided by the private vocational colleges that are under the Ministry of Education. Those vocational colleges take part in providing training to produce caregivers to give care to children and older persons. After these students have passed the training, they will be provided proper job placement with proper remuneration.

2) Projects concerning HIV/AIDS : Development of a Model Package for Enhancing the Quality of Life of HIV/AIDS Affected Older Persons

The Project concerning HIV/AIDS and older persons launched in the northern part/region of Thailand : Development of a Model Package for Enhancing the Quality of Life of HIV/AIDS Affected Older Persons, is the Project initiated by the Faculty of Nursing, Chiang Mai University, in collaboration with the 4 colleagues, namely the Northern Region Economic and Social Development Office, the Help Age International, the northern branch of the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand, and the Foundation for Older Persons' Development; under the budgetary support by the United Nations Population Fund. It is aimed to seek for or develop and implement a model package for enhancing the quality of life of older persons affected by HIV/AIDS both directly (those who are infected with HIV/AIDS) and indirectly (those who act as caregivers of their children or grandchildren infected with HIV/AIDS), to enable them to access quality of life.

The duration of this Project is of 2 years and a quarter, commencing from October 2004 and ending on December 2006. The target areas are 4 districts of Chiangmai Province where HIV infections are found at the high rate.

The model package for enhancing the quality of life of HIV/AIDS affected older persons has the main objectives to reduce or relieve problem condition and both short term and long term impact on older persons, especially older persons who act as caregivers of their children, grandchildren or family members infected with HIV/AIDS. The activities carried out to assist those older persons consist of:

-Activities to reduce the economic impact

There is assessment of income need of HIV/AIDS affected older persons and then the Project provides financial support to each target district to establish its circular/current fund to build income of its district. In first year of the Project, the fund of 10,000 Baht is supported to each district and in second year, the support is

increased to be 70,000 Baht for each district. The occupational activities undertaken are raising fish, and livestock such as chickens and pigs, producing artificial flowers, herbs, foods, desserts, organic fertilizers, etc. These activities, apart from enabling the HIV/AIDS affected older persons to access occupational and income chance, also help them to reduce their expenses in buying daily foods as their fish or chicken raised or even vegetable planted can be ingredients of cooking. In addition, those older persons will be proud of their contribution made to their families and will not be lonely as they join into groups to do such professions making them feel sure to access assistance and not be abandoned by their communities.

- Activities to reduce the health impact

There is arrangement of health-care mobile units in collaboration with local health centers in each area, thereby health-care volunteers will make appointments with older persons especially the HIV/AIDS affected ones who are the main target group to receive this service. However, services in this Project are also provided to general older persons. At the first step, there will be identifying or a primary diagnosis of disease and treatments. The services are circularly rendered in the 4 districts in every 2 months. At the next step, there will be activities to promote health, provide knowledge on how to prevent from AIDS, self-care and prevention from complications of disease.

The mobile units have provided services in the 4 districts for 48 times with 2,166 older persons using the services (older persons go to use the services in each time at the average of 60 persons.) The diseases and health problems mostly found are diabetes, hypertension, cholesterol and heart attack.

In addition, activities of paying a visit at home of HIV/AIDS affected older persons are undertaken by health volunteers, 10 volunteers per each district. These health volunteer have passed health training and are able to assess health condition of older persons, refer older persons to village health centers and work together with personnel of village health centers. The main duties of these volunteers are visiting older persons at home to give primary health care such as measuring blood pressure, temperature, giving advice to and raising morale of older persons, and taking them to the hospital or health center. Such elderly home visits, are focused on integrated care, not only health care, but also their other problems.

- Activities to reduce the social impact

Under this Project, financial support is provided to arrange activities to strengthen relationships between all ages in the 4 target districts. It is aimed at the good relationships between older and younger persons to adjust the younger' attitude toward the older persons. Forms of activities will depend on the need and capacity of each district, which may be collaboration of the juvenile in repairing houses for the elderly, transmission of the elderly intellect in baskets producing to the younger, a contest of essays of pupils in the title "HIV/AIDS Impacts on the Family", training of Thai massage, Thai classical dancing, as well as activities to promote the juvenile to pay visits to homes of the HIV/AIDS affected older persons.

In addition, there are campaign activities in various forms, such as an exhibition, lecture, domestic culture show; to encourage recognition of the communities in HIV/AIDS impacts on the older persons, including producing of medias, printed matter, CDs, posters, leaflets/brochures, pictures and songs through the medias selected to be suitable to target groups. That will make others to accept, reduce their separation, disgust, restriction the HIV/AIDS affected older persons, and

finally lead to integration of all community's members into assisting and giving care of those older persons respectively.

3.5 Protection of the rights of older persons

1) Dissemination and Distribution of Documentation on the Act on Older Persons : 2003

After the Act on Older Persons : 2003 is in force on January 1, 2004, the National Commission on the Elderly supports the budgets of approximately more than 5 million Baht to produce documentation to disseminate and campaign for the people's knowledge of the Act on Older Persons: 2003. The wide and adequate accessibility of such documentation to all people is expected, the documents, therefore, are produced in various forms, such as the document/booklet on the Act on Older Persons : 2003, manuals on the elderly right for access to the public services, which use the simple language or even dialects, such as the Javi language, posters to give knowledge on the elderly right prescribed by the Act on Older Persons : 2003, leaflets/brochures, song cassette tapes and CDs, VCDs of a short documentary film, radio spots to provide knowledge of the elderly right, including the website at **oppo.opp.go.th**, etc. These documents are distributed throughout the Country, focusing on the target groups of older persons of all levels in communities including destitute older persons. In this regard, local administration agencies at the provincial and the district levels act as the mechanism to distribute, disseminate and provide knowledge of the elderly right.

There are approximately more than 600,000 pieces of documentation concerning the elderly right distributed.

2) The Pilot Project to Implement the Act on Older Persons : 2003 The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons undertakes the Pilot Project to implement the Act on Older Persons : 2003.

In this Project, the pilot area is fixed in Phthalung Province, one of the southern provinces of Thailand. The operation process is focused on providing knowledge and understanding in order to reach the joint consent among the agencies involved, interactions and collaborations including the integration of all parts and sectors involved into every step of implementation both at the provincial and the community levels. It is aimed that this Pilot Project can put into effect the plans, programs or activities that will bring advantages to the life quality of older persons pursuant to the intention of the Act on Older Persons : 2003. The implementation of this Pilot Project obtains good collaboration from all parts and sectors involved, and is well supported and facilitated in many ways by the Governor of that Province, the folk sector in communities, including elderly groups and clubs.

The public agencies that play significant role in this Pilot Project are the provincial public health office, the provincial educational office, the provincial labor office, the provincial transport office, the provincial tourism and sports office, the provincial culture office and the provincial justice office. There are meetings regularly arranged to make understanding and pool collaboration to undertake the tasks in every step. During 1 year's operation of the Project, it is found that there are varieties of plans, projects and activities to protect and promote the elderly right, being put into effect under the cooperation and support from many agencies and entities involved of both the public and the private sectors. In the meantime, some of those plans and projects are also consecutively supported by local administration

agencies either at the subdistrict, the municipal or the provincial level. The major activities that are promoted to be continually organized are as follows : exercise to enhance healthiness in the elderly, providing knowledge on health care, promoting the elderly community and social integration and participation, promoting non-formal education and learning, vocational training, welfare assistance, promoting recreational activities, and producing various types of medias to disseminate, publicize and give knowledge and understanding of the Act on Older Persons : 2003, such as posters, brochures, documents, radio spots and community television programs, community aural announcement broadcasting, etc.

3) Set up of the Committee to monitor and appraise the implementation of the Act on Older Persons : 2003, especially the elderly rights

The National Commission on the Elderly, in 2006, sets up the Committee on Appraisal of Implementation of the Elderly Rights under the Act on Older Persons : 2003, which comprises specialists, qualified persons, academics on the elderly from the public and the private and the educational sectors. Such Committee has objectives to act as mechanism to drive, supervise, monitor and appraise the implementation outcome, focusing on the progress of work performed by the relevant agencies and entities in entitling the elderly to **their lawful interests and protection** as prescribed by the Act on Older Persons : 2003. There are meetings regularly held to monitor and report progress of implementation of the elderly rights as entitled under Section 11 of that Act. There are 9 public agencies that are mainly in charge of providing interests and rights protection of the elderly, namely:

- The Ministry of Public Health;
- The Ministry of Education;
- The Ministry of Culture;
- The Ministry of Labor;
- The Ministry of Transport and Communications;
- The Ministry of Justice;
- The Ministry of Interior;
- The Ministry of Tourism and Sports; and
- The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

The Committee on Appraisal of Implementation of the Elderly Rights under the Act on Older Persons : 2003, designates all those agencies to make periodic reports, to the Committee, on progress of their implementation of commitments, including present the problems, impediments and limitations in work along with solution guidelines and recommendations; so that the Committee will consider and subsequently submit to the National Commission on the Elderly to review and make decision at the policy level respectively.

Implementation and Follow Up

IV. Implementation and Follow Up

4.1 National mechanism on ageing

The National Commission on the Elderly serves as the national mechanism in coordination and interaction in elderly tasks. This Commission is presided over by the Prime Minister, and consists of other members who are specialists and academics from educational institutes. The National Mechanism on Ageing or the National Commission on the Elderly, has the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons under the Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, acting as its Secretary.

The significant duties of the National Commission on the Elderly are :-

1) Promote and support collaborations among all parts and sectors in preparation of the populations for their quality ageing

The 2nd National Plan for Older Persons : 2002 – 2021 particularly prescribes the preparation of populations for their quality ageing. In addition, the Thai government also enacts the explicit policy on human and social development under which there are some parts stipulating preparation for quality ageing. It is aimed to promote and develop the capacity of the elderly in full sphere. The government sets up strategies on preparation for quality ageing in 4 arenas as follows:-

1. Strengthening family and social institutions.
2. Promoting integration of all ages into full sphere protection and development.
3. Preserving and sustaining the social and cultural values of mutual assistance and care, and all ages living together, as well as encouraging the elderly transmission of their knowledge, experience and skills under the project of “**Community’s Elderly Brain Banks**”.
4. Extending and expanding scope and services of social protection welfare for the elderly.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security is the major agency in charge of operation and interaction with other relevant agencies, such as the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, including elderly representative organizations and networks, in the work to promote older persons to achieve their physical and mental healthiness, income security and making their valuable contributions to the society as longest as possible.

Subject to Thailand’s announcement of the National Issue of **Healthy Thailand**, the Ministry of Public Health is designated as the major agency to take charge of coordinate and promote collaboration among the public and the private and the business sectors involved. There is requesting of support and cooperation from those sectors to arrange plans, programs and projects for the target groups of all ages including the elderly, in order to promote **well-being** of all ages both physically and mentally; whereby all ages can live within the friendly environment and enabling society.

In addition, as Thailand is facing the ageing society, the 10th National Plan on Economic and Social Development : 2007 – 2011, established by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, which is the principal plan to orientate the development of the Country both economically and socially, also expresses the significance of **preparation of the Thai society for the ageing society**. That is to stimulate all parts and sectors of the society to integrate or take part in implementation of promotion, protection and development of older persons. It is to disseminate and promote the concept of **the Society for All Ages** and then explicitly implement such concept.

2) Monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons in order to build the monitoring and appraisal system for the implementation of commitments on the elderly

It is widely accepted that monitoring and appraisal is the significant and necessary procedure of laying out the policies and plans. The monitoring and appraisal serve as the important instrument to indicate success of implementation of plans and projects concerning the elderly. The monitoring and appraisal will be focused on achievement of the aims in accordance with the indicators as set forth for measurement of implementation of work whether its output or outcome in both qualitative and quantitative means.

In addition, monitoring and appraisal will serve as the significant condition to measure effectiveness and efficiency of output and outcome including limitations and impediments encountered in the implementation procedure. Thus, results of the monitoring and appraisal can lead to adjustment, modification, determination and review of policies and plans to develop the implementation of work on the elderly subsequently.

The National Commission on the Elderly, consequently, appoints **the “Committee on Monitoring and Appraisal of Implementation of the Elderly Work”**, to act as the mechanism at the macro level to monitor and appraise implementation of tasks on the elderly as a whole. The indicators set forth in the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons, will serve as the significant aims for monitoring and appraisal of the work both at the policy and the implementation levels.

The monitoring and appraisal of implementation shall be carried out in every 5 years of the Plan. For the monitoring and appraisal of the first 5 years, it will be the monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the elderly work undertaken between 2002 – 2007. The appraisal team consists of academics and specialists from the College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University.

The indicators of success to be used in monitoring and appraisal of implementation of the elderly tasks both qualitatively and quantitatively will be top-down review and assessment and bottom-up participatory approach. It will indicate progress, success and impediments of work. It is notable that many indicators set forth in the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons are quite similar or consistent with the indicators stipulated in **the Macao Guideline for the Review and Appraisal of Shanghai Plan of Action on Ageing, under the Shanghai Implementation Strategy for Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002**, proposed by UNESCAP as the guidance to recall and suggest the countries in Asia and the Pacific region serving as their applied frameworks in monitoring and appraisal of implementation of elderly work, on a basis of compliance, suitability and compatibility with the particular contexts of each of these countries.

It is expected that the indicators of output, outcome and impact, that serve as the aims of the implementation of commitments, used in the monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons of Thailand will play the significant role in promotion and support of the implementation of commitments on the elderly at the regional level in compliance with the guidelines laid out by the United Nations. Such outcome of monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the elderly tasks is planned to be concluded and disseminated at the end of 2008.

3) A public opinion poll about their knowledge and attitude toward the elderly

The National Statistical Office as the core agency that takes census and surveys of data to support the administration of the Country, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University, in 2007 conduct a public opinion poll of people aged between 18-59 years by random sampling of 9,000 persons who live in Bangkok and in 4 provinces of the 4 regions/parts of the Country, about their knowledge and attitude toward the elderly. That is to know and collect opinions about the public knowledge and how they prepare for their ageing, including their opinion and attitude toward the elderly, in the following: -

- The knowledge of the Act on Older Persons : 2003.
- Preparation for ageing.
- Attitude toward the elderly.
- Opinion about the current retirement age fixed in both the government and the private employment.
- Opinion about their readiness and ability to make contributions as security for their well-being when ageing.
- Opinion on financial security when ageing.
- Opinion on the expected financial sources for their sustaining when ageing.
- Opinion on preparation for ageing in all other arenas.

The obtained data will be used as part of information to support and guide the monitoring and appraisal of implementation of tasks on the elderly under the 2nd National Plan for Older Persons : 2002 – 2021, and disseminate to agencies involved to use in their work.

4) Preparation of annual reports on the “Situation of the Thai Elderly”

The National Commission on the Elderly takes charge of preparation of the annual reports on the **“Situation of the Thai Elderly”** in each year. In the Situation of The Thai Elderly Report presents the facts and the statistical figures, trends and forecasts, discoveries and conclusions through studies of various dimensions concerning the elderly. This Report is carried out in collaboration with various agencies involved along with some educational institutes in providing and supporting their data and information. The main contents of the Report reveal the situation trend of the older population, their health, education, jobs and income, family and housing, and their participation in social activities, as well as the progress of implementation of work on the elderly.

The annual report on the Situation of the Thai Elderly prepared in each year will serve as data and information supporting the determination of policies concerning the elderly, as the Reports will be yearly submitted to the Cabinet for their consideration.

4.2 Regional and international cooperation

1) ASEAN Plus Three Symposium on Older Persons : 2005

Thailand is honorably designated as the Host to hold **the ASEAN Plus Three Symposium on Older Persons**, in Bangkok between 7 – 9 September 2005. The Agendas of the Symposium are focused on **the “Caring Society for Older Persons”**. This Symposium has objectives to serve as a forum to exchange and study the implementation of commitments on the elderly in the Member States of ASEAN+3, along with to set up the cooperation network on the elderly at the regional level. The result of the Symposium shows that all of the Member States of ASEAN+3 have taken steps to prepare their populations of all ages for the quality ageing. In addition, all of these States are of the same and consistent opinions on establishment of the long term care insurance scheme, which is the challenge posed to the implementation of commitments on the elderly in the future. At the Symposium, it is unanimously agreed to continually organize the ASEAN Plus Three Symposium on Older Persons as well as other regional discussions or meetings on the elderly in the similar way to the ASEAN Plus Three Symposium.

Subsequently, the Minutes of **the ASEAN Plus Three Symposium on Older Persons** held in Thailand have been adopted at **the 3rd ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare Development (3rd ASEAN SOMSWD)** and at **the 2nd ASEAN+3 Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare Development**, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November 2005. At those two Symposiums, it is also unanimously resolved to continually arrange symposiums on older persons in the similar way.

2) Cooperation and Support of Knowledge and Information to International Organizations

Subject to the **“Preparation of Readiness for the Ageing Society”** being presently the mainstream in the regional and the international interest, during the recent 2-3 years, the Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons, therefore, has supported knowledge data and information especially those concerning the national policies and plans, the national mechanism in coordination and implementation of work on the elderly, knowledge and information cooperation to many international organizations, as well as has attended the regional and the international symposiums and conferences on the elderly. The Bureau of Empowerment for Older Persons has supported knowledge data and information on the elderly to several international organizations, such as UNFPA, UNESCAP, World Bank, Help Age International, JICA, etc.

Conclusion

It may be said that the implementation of commitments on the elderly performed by Thailand under **the Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)**, is consecutively advancing in the following work:-

- **Older Persons and Development**
- **Advancing Health and Well-being into Old Age**
- **Ensuring Enabling and Supportive Environment**
- **Implementation and Follow Up**

This is because Thailand has issued its 1st and 2nd National Plans for Older Persons. Those plans play the significant role in determination of explicit strategies to develop older persons in each arena. The indicators to measure progress of implementation of commitments on the elderly are also determined to serve as the aims to orientate the implementation performed by all agencies and entities involved. In addition, the agencies and entities involved as well as all parts and sectors are requested to take part in and drive their implementation of work in the ways compatible with the strategies of those National Plans for Older Persons.

In the meantime, as **the Act on Older Persons : 2003** becomes in force, it serves as compulsory measures for all public agencies and entities to observe and for all private entities to provide their cooperation, in promoting, supporting and providing services and facilities as well as care to achieve the well-being of the elderly as a whole.

Moreover, Thailand has announced its national issue on **Healthy Thailand** along with the enactment of the policy and strategies made by the State on such matter, therein some part of the policy prescribes **to strengthen and upgrade life quality of older persons together with to promote the Thai society to become the united society of all ages.**

Apart from those policies and plans mentioned above, the 10th National Plan on Economic and Social Development : 2007 – 2011, also prescribes the aims of economic and social development of Thailand for the next 5 years' term for Thailand to prepare for the ageing society. In such regard, there is setting up of many strategies to develop the Country as a whole in all arenas; so that all parts and sectors (especially the public agencies) can use as the frameworks to orientate their implementation of tasks so as to jointly prepare the Country for the ageing society. That will promote and drive implementation of commitments of all parts and sectors to achieve the identical aim.

Consequently, it may say that during the recent years, the implementation of commitments on the elderly of Thailand becomes clearly advanced, whereby varieties of operation are set up through the integration and participation of all parts and sectors of the society, either promotion, protection or development of the elderly which are in compliance and compatibility with the frameworks of action on ageing under the United Nations' both **the Shanghai Implementation Strategy (SIS) and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)**.

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