

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

Thailand is a unitary monarchy, with two tiers of subnational government. The country counts 76 provinces (including the metropolitan city of Bangkok) and 441 municipalities (cities, towns and subdistricts).¹



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).²

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

The SDGs are integrated within the **20 Year National Strategy Framework (2017-2036)** and the **12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021)**. Overall, the country has been guided by the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP).³ Providing guidelines for inclusive, balanced and sustainable development, SEP is in conformity with the core principle of the 2030 Agenda. Thailand's **SDGs Roadmap** provides the blueprint to move forward in six key areas: policy integration and coherence, enabling mechanisms, partnerships, pilot projects, monitoring and evaluation, and awareness-raising.

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The **National Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD)**, chaired by the Prime Minister, represents the central mechanism to advance all SDGs. The CSD has designated government focal points for each of the 169 targets, while its four **Sub-Committees** support the integration of all government efforts at the central and local levels, and ensure that sufficient funding and resources are available to promote effective implementation and concrete outcomes.⁴

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The VNR taskforce for the 2017 VNR comprised lead agencies of 17 SDGs and the National Statistical Office. Several rounds of consultations were conducted to gather relevant information. For the 2021 VNR, the **Working Group on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda**,⁵ presented a draft to various sectors to garner additional information, case studies, and views. The Working Group ensured the participation of all sectors by leveraging the coordination of network representatives from each sector, in order to disseminate the draft VNR to all relevant stakeholders. In addition, online tools and methods were also utilized in lieu of physical consultations, given the limitations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included local government authorities who have played a key role in SDG localisation, deepening the engagement of local communities in advancing sustainable development.

1.3 MONITORING

To advance the SDGs implementation, the CSD has established a coordinating body for each of the SDGs, formulated roadmaps for all 17 SDGs, identified 30 priority targets, synthesized examples of SEP for SDGs model projects, examined gaps and discrepancies between the national baselines and the proposed global indicators. One of the four Subcommittees within the CSD is the **Sub-Committee for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Sustainable Development**. The Electronic Monitoring and Evaluation of National Strategy and Country Reform (eMENSOCR) functions as the main means of monitoring and evaluation of progress on strategies and plans at all levels.

1. See: https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOFI_2019_report_country_profiles_DEC2019_UPDATES.pdf

2. See: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16147Thailand.pdf> (2017); https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279482021_VNR_Report_Thailand.pdf (2021)

3. Conceived by His Majesty the Late King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

4. These four Sub-Committees are: (1) Sub-Committee for the Advancement of the SDGs, Sub-Committee for the Promotion of the Application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, Sub-Committee for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Sustainable Development and (4) Sub-Committee for Strategic Environmental Assessments.

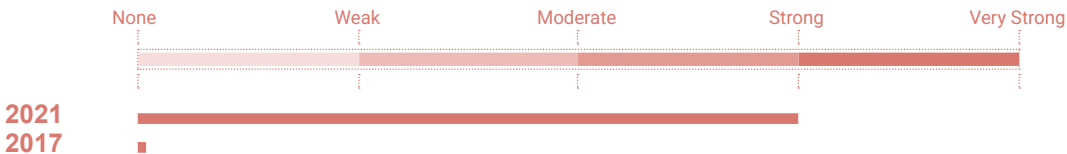
5. This Working Group was appointed to replace the Voluntary National Review Working Group, which was disbanded as a result of the motion taken at the meeting of the CSD on 10 December 2019. The new Working Group is made up of the National Statistical Office and the government sector focal points for all 17 Goals.

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

Thailand is among the Asian countries with weak enabling environments at local government level, (along with Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam). That is to say, it follows a traditional top-down approach, with limited or no consultation of LRGs. LRGs are not mentioned among the participants of the CSD. However, the 2017 VNR specifies that local authorities were consulted during the reporting process, along with other stakeholders. Indeed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as chair of VNR Taskforce, organized public consultations in three regions: **Bangkok** (central region), **Chiang Mai** (Northern region) and **Songkla** (Southern region). In 2021, local government authorities were part of the consultations set up by the Working Group on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: Local governments were consulted in the 2021 VNR process.

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNRs and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments' annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

Different LRG initiatives are mentioned throughout the 2017 report, including in dedicated boxes at the end of the follow-up of the progress on each SDGs. The 2021 VNR has a specific section called "SDG Localisation" and it presents initiatives such as the assessment that the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and other relevant agencies, has set up to identify the capacities and readiness of various areas across the country in terms of SDG implementation. As such, 9 provinces and 5 local government authorities from 6 regions and 4 development groups within Thailand were selected as pilot areas.⁶

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

- The municipality of **Umong** successfully used the SEP approach to make local residents more financially secure through the establishment of a Community Welfare Fund.
- Starting with the establishment of the "Mae Wong Care for Forest Network", the village of **Mosawan** has addressed water scarcity: now every household has enough water for domestic use throughout the year.
- **Bangkok** Metropolitan Administration has come up with the project on Urban Regeneration and Conservation aiming to turn 17 old districts into livable spaces.
- Phuket committed to the Global Covenant of Mayors on Climate Change and Energy (GCoM).
- The **Baan Mankong programme** is a successful example of collaborative approach for slum upgrading. Implemented by the national Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), in close collaboration with community organizations and with the support of local governments, the programme has provided secure land and housing to two thirds of the country's urban poor over the past decade. The institutionalized participation of informal communities in the development of the urban fabric has renewed the city's policy practices and the authorities' vision of the future of the metropolis.

6. These areas will be supported in their awareness raising efforts on the SDGs, the promotion of the participation of all sectors in SDG advancement, and integration of the SDGs into provincial and local development plans. This implementation will be expanded into other areas in the future. Pilot Provinces: Kalasin/ Narathiwat/ Nan/ Yasothon/ Loei/ Lopburi/ Phetchaburi/ Surat Thani/ Chachoengsao
Pilot Local Government Authorities: Sri Saket Municipality/ Baan Rai Tambon Local Government Authority (Uthai Thani Province)/ Krabi Local Government Authority/ Wang Phai Municipality (Chumphon Province)/ Surat Thani Municipality.

2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

The municipality of **Nakhon Si Thammarat** has implemented a joint project with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to develop a VLR. At present, the following actions have been implemented as part of the project:

- ▶ A project inception meeting was organized in February 2021 in order to build understanding of the SDGs and to identify an approach and priority issues for the VLR.
- ▶ The municipality organized a training workshop in March 2021 to raise the capacities of local officials and personnel with regards to the drafting of the VLR.
- ▶ A SWOT analysis conducted by the municipality showed that Nakhon Si Thammarat has strengths in the capacity of personnel and education infrastructure. Challenges remain with regards to the management of water resources, traffic management, unemployment, and environmental issues.
- ▶ At present, the municipality is in the process of gathering information and data, as well as best practices from stakeholders in local communities, in order to draft the VLR.

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

In 2017, the national government has been restructuring land tax by replacing the Building and Land Tax Act 1932 and Local Maintenance Tax Act 1965 with the draft Land and Building Tax Act in order to empower local governments to efficiently and adequately collect taxes in consistent with the present situations as well as to have sufficient resource to run their local projects. The draft Acts will provide just and reasonable tax schemes, stimulate efficient land use, encourage land tenure distribution, and reduce disparity in land ownership.

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: In Thailand, **decentralization** has slowed significantly because of instability in the political system in the country; the Ministry of Interior can intervene in or modify local policies.

Thailand has integrated the National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan 2015 and Climate Change Management Master Plan 2015-2050. One of the initiatives is the Community Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) designed to create a warning and evacuation system for communities to be self-reliant. In 2016, CBDRM was implemented in 972 communities/villages.

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The Women's Development Strategy (2017-2021) serves to promote women's role in the national development process. The Strategy also ensures that all government agencies and local governments allocate funds and develop policies that respond to the needs of women. This strategy has been extended in order to align it with the 20-Year National Strategy (2018-2037). The 2021 VNR acknowledges that "women's participation in politics remains low in Thailand, and there is a need to raise the capacities and skills of women in this area, especially at the local level. This includes creating incentives for women to increase their participation in politics or in the public space even further".

3.2 COVID 19

No reference to LRGs.

4. SDG INDICATORS⁷

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		17.9 (2020)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	30 (2020)
	Rural	22 (2020)
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		23.7 (2018)
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		45 (2015, Bangkok)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		29.8 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		52.24 (2020)

⁷ The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>. More information on the country's progress towards the SDGs here: <https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/tha>