

Press Release

Rural And Social Management Institute (RASMI) and The Thailand Research Fund (TRF) have co-organized the Brainstorming sessions, in order to build the Road Map on Sufficiency Economy as the guideline to implement the sufficiency approach, and to appoint the national economic policies in the near future. The first meeting has witnessed the overwhelming voting to establish the public organization to lead and steer the Sufficiency Economy continually, and to as well collaborate with the different sectors of the society. Additionally, the outcome of the Brainstorm also saw the need to establish the curriculum on Sufficiency Economy in the Thai educational institutes, with the aim to implement the actual practice. The main target is to change the academic study into the real-life situation study. Simultaneously, the Sufficiency Economic Networks would need to be set up, to promote the alternative approach in economics worldwide.

Recently RASMI and TRF have conducted the first Brainstorming Meeting in order to organize the Road Map on Sufficiency Economy, and to establish the international networking. The participants consisted of the representatives from both the public sector and the private sector, the academics, NGO's and the civil society. Altogether, 110 people attended.

Professor Dr. Apichai Puntasen, Director of RASMI announced on the objective and the target of the Road Map on Sufficiency Economy that there is currently no clear direction for Thailand on which way to move towards the sufficiency, and what would be the following steps after. While the national policies are also not clear regarding the sufficiency concept, particularly on the importance of policy ranking that would enable the Sufficiency Economy to operate at various levels, especially when some public personnel might not understand the real meaning and the aimed target of the sufficiency philosophy. There is also the confusion generated by those who attacked the Sufficiency Economy, with the statement that this approach is the major obstacle to Globalization. This is rather contradicting to the development objective of the sufficiency theory, in actual.

The core objective of the Sufficiency Economy has been announced clearly that "It was essential to catch up with the Economic Globalization" and "To be ready for the upcoming changes". Above all, the Sufficiency Economy also considers the build up of efficient self-immunity against the changes brought by Globalization, and to prevent it from damaging the nation's economic foundation. Therefore, Thailand would need to have the effective strategies and the clear Road Map, in order to continually carry out the necessary policies along with building the Networking and the appropriate understanding between nations.

In designing the Road Map, there would be altogether 3 Brainstorm Meetings supported by the academic research team. This Road Map would steer the direction and the target of the Sufficiency Economy at the national level. It would address the vision and the leaping steps in the next 5 years. The proposal could lead to the changes in rules and regulations, knowledge management, information management, budget management system, participating organization, collaborating network, and the critical success factors

in each dimension. Priorities would need to be organized in each topic, with the achievable proposal and the step-by-step application, to enable the major public units to allocate their own strategies at the national level. While other public administrations and the civil society could also clearly see the national direction, and are willing to develop their tasks in the same manner.

While Dr. Sumet Tantivejkul, the board advisor on the Road Map project said that the objective in organizing this Road Map was to provide Thailand with the guiding tool to drive safely on the global road. It also should not be forgotten that Thailand is not the only country to travel this road, but a number of countries are also using the same road. However, they all have the different road maps under the different languages, nevertheless some of them do share the similar concepts to the Sufficiency Economy, under the different names. Therefore, this Road Map project is to search for the common ground, with the academic comparing analysis, the knowledge publication, and establishing the international networking among the different countries, in order to steer the movements towards the same direction, which is the balance point where these countries themselves could be prepared for the changes, and catch up with Globalization on the Road of Sufficiency.

The first Brainstorming Meeting has consisted of the small breakdowns of the economic group, the capital and technology group, the knowledge and health group, the environmental group, and the power distribution group. There has also been a proposal on the extensive vision on Thailand to live and prevail in the society, that is economically sufficient with the appropriate self-immunity that would allow everyone to stay happily and sustainably under the wave of Globalization. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to have the balance on the 5 following points including the balance of sharing and caring for those in need along with reducing the social gap, the balance in self dependency on the internal capital and technology vs. the importation of capital and technology from the overseas, the balance between the environment and the development, and the balance of the physical and mental health and the well-being of the whole society.

At the same time, the focus groups have presented the similar critical points including the mechanism problem in mobilizing the Sufficiency Economy in reality, the problem of popularity and media attention, the understanding problem on the Sufficiency Economy, the problem of discontinued policies, the problem of politics and social conflicts that has weaken the community's strength, and the readiness of the different local communities.

The initial conclusion from the Brainstorm Meeting ended with the recommendation to establish a body of the public organization to host the mobilization activities continuously, along with coordinating with the different working sectors to enhance the strength among the general public through the education process, with the knowledge management where the community is the core center. Further, the Sufficiency Economy in education would need to stress on the self practice, rather than the one-way learning, while the objective of education is to be the study for self independent survival. At the same time, the public sector would need to organize the basic welfares where everyone could access. While the work mechanism among the public and private sectors, and the communities would need to be truly in harmony. Further, the knowledge development that would support the sustainability of the environment should be encouraged. It is also vitally necessary to educate the communities to use lesser space and

resource to perform their activities, and where possible the local knowledge and the community rights should be prioritized. Last, there should be some measure indicators (from the communities) to examine the state's election and its work of public administration.

The information from this first Brainstorm Meeting would be carried onto the next session, particularly upon the subject of critical points and the development of some research questioning that would support the formulation of the Road Map. The second Brainstorm Meeting will be conducted in 2 months.

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