The new Constitution of Thailand, which aims to establish a good governance framework for the country, is widely known as one of the most progressive legal documents. It mandates the establishment of various transparency and accountability institutions, the disclosure of public information, and public participation in policy formulation. Ensuring public access to information is fundamental to fostering effective participation.

The World Bank Office Bangkok has been working with the Thai government, academic institutions, and civil society organizations to promote public participation within the World Bank’s projects. During the World Bank’s project cycle, information becomes available to the public at different stages. The participation of civil society during the project cycle is crucial to the successful design, implementation, and monitoring of the projects.

The Bank has been working with many organizations to promote better involvement of civil society. The article “Civil Society Monitoring of the Social Investment Fund” by Dr. Amara Pongsapich, the Director of the Social Research Institute, at Chulalongkorn University, illustrates how academic institutions and civil society organizations throughout Thailand have worked together to monitor the sub-projects of the Social Investment Fund, which supports demand-driven projects of local communities. Dr. Kittipong Kittayarak, Director of the Thailand Criminal Law Institute, also kindly contributed a brief article on the Legal Development Project, which has a component to promote an enabling environment for civil society participation.

The World Bank Office Bangkok will be working more closely with civil society counterparts to enhance effective public participation in World Bank projects as well as to support the fundamental principle of participation set forth by the new Constitution of Thailand.
How does a project, funded by the World Bank, go from idea to reality? There are six phases of the project cycle. During all of these phases, there are opportunities for people and civil society organizations to get information about the project and provide input or assistance in implementation, design, and monitoring. Information on projects is available from the World Bank’s website, http://www.worldbank.org or http://www.worldbank.or.th

Computer terminals for accessing the World Bank’s website, or http://www.worldbank.or.th

The project cycle can be seen as a six-step process starting from identification of need until the final completion and evaluation of results. The whole process could take up to 10 years.

The first phase, identification, is carried out by the borrower with the Bank’s assistance, as needed. During this initial stage, planners answer questions such as: who will benefit from the project? Will the project contribute to economic development or poverty alleviation? How will it affect local populations? Will project benefits be greater than costs? Are there other options for achieving the same objective? If the conclusion is favorable, at this stage of the cycle, a Project Information Document (PID), which describes the project, is prepared by the World Bank and is made publicly available through the Bank’s Public Information Centers and country offices.

Once the priority for the project is agreed upon, the next stage, project preparation, begins. Preparation transforms the project idea into a detailed proposal that takes into account technical, economic, social, institutional, financial, and environmental factors.

The Bank then conducts an Appraisal, or detailed review of proposal. During on-site visits, a team of the Bank staff and consultants assess the project, including the capacity of implementing agencies. The team summarizes its findings and recommendations in a Project Appraisal Report Document (PAD), which, after being reviewed within the Bank, forms the basis for negotiations with the borrower.

During the fourth stage, negotiations, the Bank and the borrower reach agreement on the measures necessary for a successful project. The PAD is then submitted to the Bank’s Board of Executive Directors for approval. Once the loan or credit is approved, implementation of the project begins and the PAD is also made publicly available. The borrower is responsible for implementation, but the Bank plays an important role in supervision and, when needed, provision of technical assistance.

The sixth and final stage of the project cycle is evaluation, during which the project’s outcome is measured against its original objectives. An Implementation Completion Report (ICR) is prepared by the country department prior to the anticipated closing date and distributed to the Bank’s Board no later than six months after that date. An independent department of the Bank, the Operation Evaluation Department (OED), is responsible for rating the development impact and performance of all completed projects. OED reports its findings directly to the Bank’s Board and President. Results and recommendations feed back into the design and implementation of policies and lending operations.

### THE WORLD BANK PROJECT CYCLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Cycle</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Available to the Public</th>
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| **Identification** | **Joint Borrower/Bank Involvement** | - Sources of project ideas:  
  * Bank economic work * Prior projects  
  * Other Agencies  
  - Initial summary of project approved by country department  
  **Responsibility of Borrower** | **Project Information Document (PID)** |
| | **Technical/financial assistance available from:**  
  * Borrower * Bank * Other agencies  
  - Studies (economic, technical, institutional, social, financial), etc.  
  - Study of impact on environment  
  - Project summary revised by the Bank  
  **Responsibility of Bank** | **Technical Information** |
| | **Evaluation of project viability:**  
  * economic + technical + institutional + social  
  * financial + environmental  
  **Joint Borrower/Bank Involvement** | **Environmental Assessment (EA)** |
| | **Borrower reviews final documents**  
  - Terms and conditions of loan agreed  
  **Approval** | **Revised Project Information document (PID)** |
| | **Board of Directors of the Bank approves loan**  
  - Signing of loan agreement by both parties  
  **Implementation/Supervision** | **Project Appraisal Document (PAD) or Technical Annex (TA)** |
| | **Loan declared ready for disbursement**  
  - Implementation by Borrower  
  - Supervision by Bank  
  **Ex-Post Evaluation** | **Legal Agreement** |
| | **Completion and audit reports**  
  - Analysis used for future project design  
  **Monitoring Thailand** | **Impact studies** |

The World Bank works with Thailand’s government and university researchers to produce its popular Monitor publications. Find the latest Economic, Social, and Environment Monitors at www.worldbank.or.th.
The Social Investment Fund was conceived in 1998 as a fund to provide financial support directly to community local organizations for capacity building and community empowerment. The philosophy and management structure of the Social Fund is innovative in that the Social Fund Office operates as an autonomous and independent unit. Although it is part of the Government Savings Bank, it is not considered a government organization. Furthermore, it was envisaged since the initial stage that a monitoring mechanism be incorporated as part of the Social Fund office as an internal monitoring mechanism. At the same time there was a need to have a monitoring system somewhat separate from SOFO.

A monitoring and evaluation team was established to commence in April 1999. It was agreed that since social fund is supporting grassroots activities in every province of the country, the monitoring team members should come from regional academic institutions. Twelve regional teams are formed to work with a central core team. Regional reports are submitted to SOFO and the central core team. The core team coordinates monitoring activities, produces one integrated report from the regional reports, and submits to The Social Fund Executive Committee every three months. The center core team is coordinated by Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute.

The twelve regional teams are:
- Upper North - Chiangmai University
- Lower North - Naresuan University
- Upper Northeast - Rajabhat Institutes at Sakon Nakhon, Loei, Udon Thani, and Mukdahan
- Central Northeast - Khon Kaen University and Mahasarakham University
- Lower Northeast - Rajabhat Institutes at Surin, Buriram, Ubon Ratchathani, and Nakhon Ratrasima
- Central - Thammasat University
- East - Hua Chiew University
- West - Mahidol University
- Upper South - Walailuck University
- Lower South (1) - Songkhla Nakarin University (Had Yai)
- Lower South (2) - Songkhla Nakarin University (Pattani)
- Bangkok - Chulalongkorn University

The ultimate goal of the Social Fund is community strengthening and sustainable development. Information sharing and exchange of experiences among project team members are also encouraged in the form of workshops and seminars. Therefore, methods of monitoring need to be qualitative and quantitative. To assess and monitor project activities qualitatively, the monitoring team members visit and observe activities at project sites. In addition, the monitoring team assesses learning processes of project team members by attending workshops, seminars, and meetings of the provincial and regional committees.

One outcome of the monitoring activities is the restructuring operation of SOFO. During the first year, project assessment and approval had to go through Bangkok SOFO. Project appraisal and approval took a very long time during the early phase of implementation, and SOFO was criticized for its efficiency. Reconceptualization of SOFO operation resulted in the transferring of appraisal and approval of projects to the Regional Social Fund Committee (RC) which works closely with the Provincial Social Fund Committee (PC) and Regional SOFO.

Quantitatively, the monitoring team adopts an evaluation framework and selects indicators to evaluate projects in terms of input, process, output, effect, and impact. On-going projects are monitored, and completed projects are evaluated.

During the first year, the Social Fund provided supports for four main categories of project: (I) community economy, (II) community welfare and safety, (III) natural resource and cultural preservation, and (IV) community capacity building and networking. The monitoring team agreed to follow-up 10% of the projects being supported through categories 1-4. Toward the end of the first year, category 5: emergency community assistance arising from the crisis, was incorporated.

At the end of the first year, of the 1372 projects in categories 1-4 implemented, the team monitored 228 projects (16.6%). The results of the monitoring process based on the selected indicators are:
The Quality of Growth

The last decade of the 20th century witnessed striking progress in many parts of the world but also saw stagnation and setbacks even in countries that had previously experienced fast economic growth. These large differences and sharp reversals in outcomes have taught us much about what contributes to development. Economic growth remains central—not just its pace, but crucially also its quality.

Four dimensions of quality going into the growth process proved especially relevant for the outcomes from country experience:

- the distribution of opportunities,
- the sustainability of the environment,
- the variability of global risks, and
- the framework of governance.

These qualitative dimensions allow economic growth to bring about relatively greater degrees of poverty reduction and more widespread improvements in the quality of life of the population. At the same time, they also directly comprise development. Viewing both the pace of growth and these qualitative factors defining the nature of that growth puts the spotlight on balanced growth of at least three sets of a country’s assets: physical, human, and natural capital. This view replaces an almost exclusive focus on promoting the accumulation of physical capital. Thus, The Quality of Growth advocates broadening the policy framework to include the human and natural capital and extending the agenda for action to go beyond the pace of growth to include the qualitative attributes of the growth process.

The Quality of Growth is an important resource for policymakers, academicians, and all those working in the area of international development. A co-publication of the World Bank and Oxford University Press, 2000.


The new study—the World Bank’s most detailed-ever investigation of global poverty—adds that economic growth is crucial but often not sufficient to create conditions in which the world’s poorest people can improve their lives.

“This report seeks to expand the understanding of poverty and its causes and sets out actions to create a world free of poverty in all its dimensions,” World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn writes in the foreword to the report. “It both builds on our past thinking and strategy and substantially broadens and deepens what we think is necessary to meet the challenge of reducing poverty.”

More than two years in the making, the World Development Report 2000/2001 draws on a large volume of research, including a background study, Voices of the Poor, which systematically sought the personal accounts of more than 60,000 men and women living in poverty in 60 countries. In addition, the report’s authors conducted extensive research and consultation with a wide array of governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, universities, development think-tanks, private business groups, and others around the world. An on-line discussion of and early draft of the report produced hundreds of responses from 44 countries.