

Policy Brief

Stakeholder Analysis of Communication Policy Reform in Thailand

Monwipa Wongrujira

The regulation of public goods, such as broadcasting and telecommunication, when controlled by the state, could be the best fit at a certain time. When the economics and technology are developed, competition and participation in the communication system and industry may be enhanced. The reform of communication policy and structure is needed. The reform is expected to permit all sectors of a population to contribute to the pool of information that provides the basis for local or national decision-making and the basis for allocation of resources in society. All people should have access to media (both to produce and convey their message and to receive a message). The public should have the opportunity to criticize, analyze, and participate in the communication process.

The Thai case showed that participation from various stakeholders is useful, but it should be more cooperation. Bargaining among stakeholders obviously leads to political constraints throughout the time a specific policy is being developed. Also, the frameworks policymakers have to work with influence the implementation of a certain policy, as do biases or subjective perspectives. Market competition perspectives have gained wide attention, whereas perspectives encouraging accessibility and participation from every part of society have received minimal attention. Thus, policymakers should try to balance these perspectives in an implementation stage. Suggestions for policy makers are:

- More collaboration among different groups of stakeholders
- The seriousness of the politicians and state officials on communication reform
- Balancing the perspectives of the reform (not only focusing on privatization or market competition)
- Legal debates should go beyond the allocation of radio spectrum.
- The convergence of communication technology should be emphasized in its design of new regulatory frameworks.
- More focusing on procedures or systems of oversight for the new independent regulatory agency.
- Surveillance and accountability should be another consideration for the media policymakers (how the agency should function to serve the public as a whole)