

8. Tentative conclusions

This report tries to take stock of the availability of statistical information on Thailand's health system. Its findings are based on information collected during a three weeks mission to Bangkok in March 2006. In addition, we took advantage of the expertise of two professionals from the NHSO who participated in the Master Course on Social Protection Financing (SPF) at the University of Maastricht / Graduate School of Governance: their master theses covered issues of this report (among others).

Despite the fact that care was taken to interpret correctly the findings of the mentioned mission, and to incorporate correctly the findings of the relevant paragraphs of the mentioned master theses – the general feeling prevails that a full systematic and comprehensive understanding of the possibilities and deficiencies, the structures and capacities, the “white spots” and the areas promising effective sustainable improvements of Thailand's statistical system, even if confined to health statistics, is still lacking.

A number of questions have deliberately been left open in this report. These questions will have to be answered during the progress of the overall project. After the basis has been laid (with this report) future collaboration with statistical counterparts will be much more focused and, thus, effective than it could have been during the mentioned mission.

One core problem to be solved during the project remains: the formulation of a realistic INFIMO, realistic in the sense that transition from the present status of Thailand's health statistic's fabric to INFIMO is realistic and manageable within overseeable time limits. In other words, we will try to aim at an INFIMO, which indeed clearly goes beyond the present statistical “design” of Thailand's health statistics, which is a result of historical developments – not of a rational architectural approach, but which realistically takes into account, on the one hand, given administrative procedures, limitations of resources and the like, and, on the other, areas where new developments can be expected with potentially fruitful and effective im