

STATE-SOCIETY INTERACTIONS FROM “GOOD GOVERNANCE”

PERSPECTIVE:

THE CASE OF THAILAND

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Abstracts

This research undertakes an inquiry into the concept of “good governance”¹ which, despite a barrage of critiques, has retained its appeal in development practice. Notwithstanding the pronounced respect for local ownership of development, development agencies have upheld a virtuous vision of “good governance”, as if it was immune to or could transcend politico-institutional dynamics and socio-economic specificities. The current thinking constituting the core of the “good governance” agenda envisages complementary relations between the state and society, according to which a responsive and accountable state creates an enabling environment for participation of broad sections of society including marginalised populations, of which voice is articulated by organisations of civil society. Based on the review of the statements by the World Bank and United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP), this research elaborates on divergences between the vision of the “good governance” agenda as such, and an instance of a developing country. Taking Thailand as the subject of its case study, this research emphasises the contingent nature of “good governance” displayed and

¹ In this research, the term good governance is placed in the quotation marks, indicating that the term entails a certain value judgement.