# BANGKOK

## An Ethical City in 2030

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# Introduction

## Bangkok as an Ethical City in 2030

Bangkok has the ability to achieve the status of "ethical city" by the year 2030; however, this can not happen organically. Through an examination of various frameworks that are currently in place in the city, we have highlighted specific areas of concerns which we believe need the most work. We have looked at how current frameworks already in place can be improved upon and other recommendations and considerations that should be taken into account to help develop new frameworks for the city to proceed in making a bid for "ethical city" in 2030. We have also spent time defining specific terminology for this report and the context of those definitions. Understanding what is meant by "ethical" and the concept of smart cities makes the areas of concern that we have focused on clear. We hope that the various recommendations and principles laid out below are taken into consideration and help Bangkok on its mission to become an ethical city.

## Definitions

### Introduction – the minority and majority world context

There have been numerous attempts to proactively engage our thinking in new ways that help shape the future of our cities. Global attitudes towards such an approach are inspired by such principles as the United Nations Global Compact, the New Urban Agenda (UN-Habitat III initiative) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, while the majority believes these as universal principles, we acknowledge that the weight and bearings of these values may differ across the minority and majority world contexts.

While this document is grounded upon these ethical principles, we acknowledge them only as an outline or starting point towards enabling broader civic discussion on what values should be included in the context of the City of Bangkok, Thailand. The following sections highlight our position on specific terminologies used throughout this document, as well as the foundational commitments that are embedded in our working definitions.

### Ethical City

While many descriptions of ethical cities exist, the notion of ethics (as a set of agreed values or what is indeed deemed *ethical)* is arguably context-dependent (Andrejević et al., 2020; Björnsson, 2019). This concept of contextualism in ethics highlights the idea that while something is deemed

ethical in one context, it may not be upheld in the same virtue in another (Björnsson, 2019). Therefore, a definition of ethical cities, in which we have aligned this document to, should allow for contextual adaptability. Thus, our position is aligned with that of Barrett et al. (2021), who defines an *ethical city* as:

> *"...a place where plans, policies and projects are designed and delivered in such a way as to address core urban concerns in an integrated manner" (Ibid., pg. 1).*

However, we go further and suggest that while core urban concerns may differ and be context-dependent, at a foundational level, this definition could begin by addressing the urban challenges outlined by Barrett et al.: "…poverty and inequality, governance, democracy and social inclusion; and sustainability." (ibid.).

When operationalizing this definition, the intent is to actively exercise and encourage opportunities to shape and reshape the city's values on the account of the evolving nature and context of the city and the systems that inhabit it. This position allows for ethical pluralism and the diversity of fairness-related actions that are born from the multiplicity of perspectives on the ethics of a city. In particular, where Barret et. al. (2021) suggests:

> *"... there can be no blueprint for the ethical city. Every city, region or nation is different and must create its own ethical frame. […] Definitions of the ethical city should be refined by each community in a dialogue with those in power—local authorities, government agencies, politicians, ruling elites and corporations" (Ibid., pg. 2).*

**Foundational positioning**

While we have proposed a working definition of *ethical cities*, it is by no means considered as final, rather a fluid position. Our position is founded upon by the following definitions:

*Ethics*

For the purposes of this document, *ethics*, as a noun, means:

> *"Moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity" (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.).*

When *ethics* is operationalised, it means:

> *"To promote what is right, fair, good or just, but not necessarily what is most accepted as the norm".*

This definition is stacked upon two founding layers:

- It is based on the most accessible and mainstream definition of ethics, in this case Google (and its embedded dictionary application, the Oxford English Dictionary). This allows for broader inclusion of diverse stakeholders, inherent in a city, into the conversation around ethics.
- A (first-pass) horizon scan into the current language around values, used in relevant documents on city-related programs and initiatives (that include Bangkok's Resilience strategy, contextualizing urban liveability in Bangkok Summary Report, Thailand's smart city initiative), as a basis to direct the literature review and final definitions. Some of these include:
    - Equality and inclusiveness, collaboration and building together many voices
    - Quality of life promoting safety, accessibility, health and wellbeing for all
    - Environmentally friendly urbanization and increasing public and community-driven action on awareness, preparedness and adaptation
    - Strong and inclusive government
    - Community-based economy and industry
    - Human-centric approaches to building and shaping a better future, and promoting existing soft Infrastructures like human and social capital.

*Cities*

In an effort to embody the hard and soft aspects that are inherent in the context of cities, our foundational positioning aligns with the notion that a city must exist in two different paradigms – the physical and visible aspects, and the soft and invisible infrastructures. Therefore, our definition encompasses two diverse descriptions of cities:

> ***Sociological definition of a city****: "For sociological purposes a city may be defined as a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals" (Wirth, pg. 8, 1938).*

> ***Functional definition of a city****: "It is generally agreed that whatever else a city may be it is a unit of settlement which performs specialized functions in relationship to a broad hinterland" (Trigger, pg. 577, 1972).*

In addition to these definitions, we include an ecological perspective that considers the impact of the anthroposphere on the broader ecology and associated environments. For this, we posit the following statement:

> ***Ecological integration into the definition of a city****: Human settlements, including cities or areas in which human and human-made systems exist in, are part of an ecosystem that needs to balance the needs and requirements of the planet, without adversely impacting on the ecosystems that sustain it.*

**Ethics of digitalisation**

While digitalisation is often misrepresented as digitisation, both terminologies are interlinked as a process. For this reason, we suggest that ethics (or any application of an ethical framework) be applied to the process(es) of digitalisation. To support this, we propose the following statement:

> *Ethics of digitalisation is concerned with both the process of digitisation, meaning "the conversion of analogue data (esp. in later use images, video, and text) into digital form." (Savić, pg. 30, 2020); and digitalisation, meaning "the adoption or increase in use of digital or computer technology by an organization, industry, country, etc." (Ibid, pg. 29), as a socio-technical system shaping the political, social, cultural, ecological and ethical contexts.*

**Foundational positioning**

While we have proposed a working definition concerning the *ethics of digitalisation*, it is by no means considered as final, rather a fluid position. Our position is founded upon by the following definitions:

**Digitisation**
For the purposes of this document, *digitisation*, means:

> *"the conversion of analogue data (esp. in later use images, video, and text) into digital form" (Savić, pg. 29, 2020)*

*Digitalisation*
For the purposes of this document, *digitalisation*, means:

> *"the adoption or increase in use of digital or computer technology by an organization, industry, country, etc." (Savić, pg. 30, 2020)*

*Digital transformation*
While there is debate from various disciplines as to what is considered *digital transformation,* for the purposes of this document, our position considers the adoption of technologies and its processes in the larger context of the social, cultural, and ecological spheres. For the purposes of this document, we posit the following position:

> *Digital transformation is concerned with technologies (and its processes) and its rate and range of adoption, and impact across the socio-cultural-eco-political spheres. In this context, digital transformation is concerned more about*

*the complex and complex adaptive systems around it, than it is about the digital technology itself.*

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# Bangkok: Vulnerability and Development

## Inequality

Even before COVID-19 has hit the world, inequality is one of the prevalent concerns in all societies, especially in developing countries, and it makes a city vulnerable and less resilient in various dimensions. Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, is no exception. Literature suggests that although the city of Bangkok continues to evolve, inequalities still exist. An analysis of Bangkok's urban fragility points out that inequality lies at the root of the problem, and this has led to other interrelated problems including wealth inequality, spatial segregation resulting from the growth of gated communities, poor urban planning and management of land use, traffic congestion, and social fracture—particularly political polarization which has threatened social cohesion and civic participation (Ratanawaraha, 2016). In the same token, Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) points out that inequality is the root of structural problems in Thai society—deterioration of democracy, social instability, social marginalization, human trafficking, market monopoly, crime, and corruption to name a few (Jitsuchon, 2020).

Based on the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council's Poverty and Inequality report (2019), Thailand has a long history of wealth inequality (see Figure 1), and it has led to a number of interrelated problems including education and health care access. That is, low-income families usually cannot afford schooling and quality health services. As an illustration, at basic education level, the gap between the rich and the poor was twofold, and the gap widened significantly at higher education level—thirteenfold in 2019. In terms of health, there was a tendency for low-income families to opt for community health services or local hospitals owing to social security while higher income earners were likely to choose well equipped public and private hospitals. In fact, the influence of economic inequality has extended to the allocation of health care resources to regions (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2020). This obviously keeps the status quo.
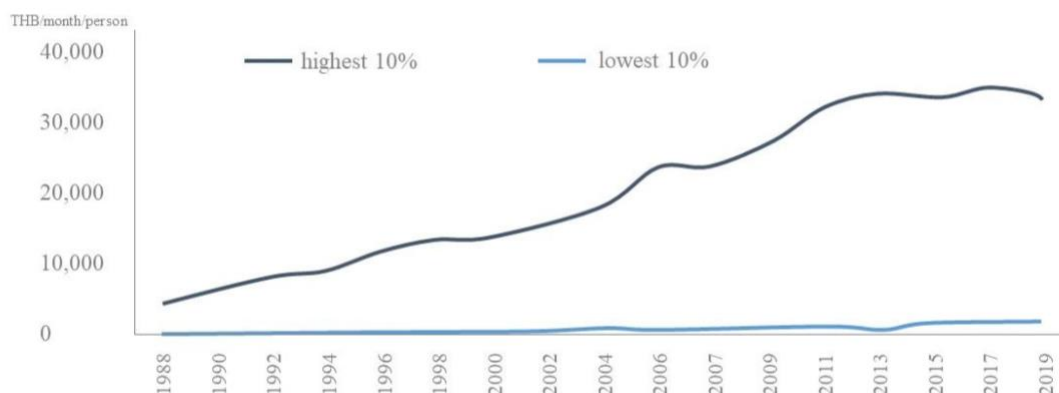
*Figure 1*. Income share held by the highest and lowest 10% Thai population (1988-2019)

## Impacts of demographic change

Apart from inequality, demographic change plays a role in the city's vulnerability. The decline in working age population together with the increase in ageing population pose a challenge to address inequality. Statistics and projections show that working-age population in Thailand has continually decreased since it has become ageing society (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019b; Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development institute, 2019, 2020) (see Figure 2 and Table 1), and Bangkok faces similar situation (Administrative Strategy Division, Bangkok, 2020; Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development institute, 2019) (see Table 2).
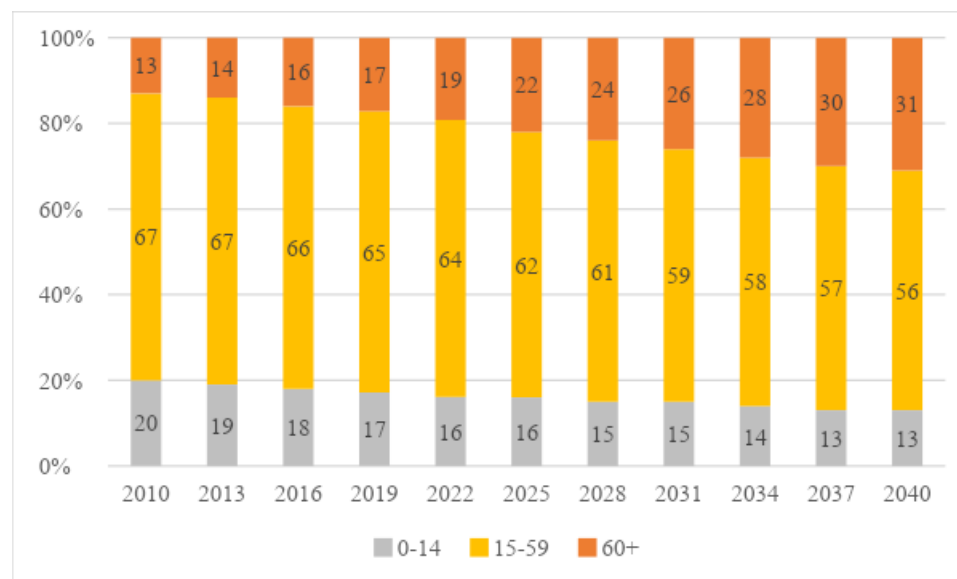


*Figure 2*. Projections of Thailand's population (2010-2040)

*Table 1*. Thailand's population by age group

Thailand

|  | Year | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **1970** | **2019** | **2020** |
| **0-14** | 45.1 | 17.1 | 16.9 |
| **15-59** | 50.0 | 65.4 | 65.0 |
| **60+** | 4.9 | 17.5 | 18.1 |

*Table 2*. Bangkok's population by age group

Bangkok

| | Year | |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** | **2019** | **2020** |
| **0-14** | 13.7 | 13.5 |
| **15-59** | 72.6 | 64.0 |
| **60+** | 13.7 | 19.8 |

The implications of ageing society are far-reaching. It, in the big picture, negatively affects the country's workforce as a whole, leading to higher age dependency ratio (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019b) (see Table 3), which indirectly causes stress to the working-age population, and the proliferation of digital and automated technologies as well as high level of dependency on migrant workers.

*Table 3*. Projection of Thailand's age dependency ratio

| **Year** | **Age dependency ratio** |
|---|---|
| **2010** | 49.3 |
| **2020** | 53.8 |
| **2030** | 67.4 |
| **2040** | 79.1 |

## Migration

The growth of Bangkok as a primate capital city attracts both temporary and permanent migrant workers from other provinces and neighboring countries[1], and according to the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council's report on the impacts of demographic change (2019), migration has been the one of the key drivers of the perpetuation of slums and congested communities in Bangkok. Bangkok Social Development Department's report (2019) indicated that slums accounted for the highest proportion (31.98%) of all registered communities[2] (see Figure 3).

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[1] The number of registered migrant workers in Thailand stood at 2,323,124 in 2020 (International Labour Organization, 2021).

[2] The estimation of population living in registered housing was around 2 million people (as cited in Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019b), but the total population of Bangkok in 2019 stood at 5,666,264 (National Statistical Office, 2020).
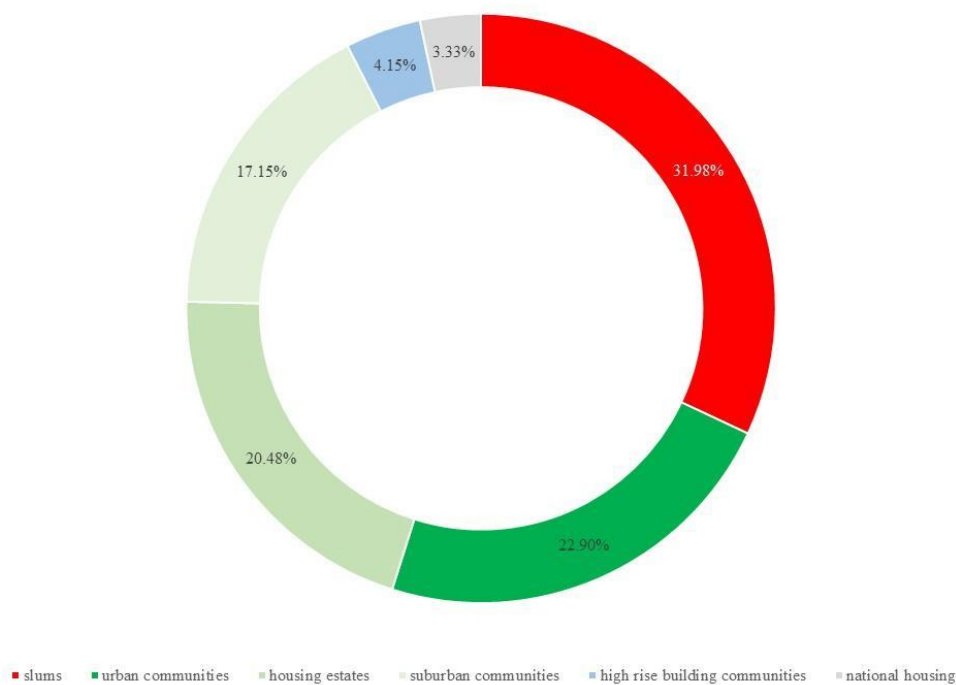
*Figure 3*. Communities in Bangkok by types of registered housing (2019)

In addition, statistics from 2019 show that Bangkok was ranked number one in the country in terms of unregistered/nighttime and commuter/daytime population (National Statistical Office, 2021) (see Table 4).

*Table 4*. Cities among the top five for non-registered (nighttime) and commuter (daytime) population

| Population | Bangkok | Samut Prakan | Pathumthani | Chonburi | Samut Sakhon |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| unregistered population | 33.4% | 9.2% | 6.0% | 5.9% | 5.6% |
| | **Bangkok** | **Ayutthaya** | **Pathumthani** | **Samut Sakhon** | **Nonthaburi** |
| commuter population (work) | 46.3% | 5.7% | 4.5% | 4.3% | 3.4% |
| | **Bangkok** | **Nakhonpathom** | **Nonthaburi** | **Lopburi** | **Pathumthani** |
| commuter population (study) | 43.1% | 5.3% | 4.5% | 3.3% | 3.1% |

Studies show that migrant workers have been a contributing factor in the economy (OECD and International Labour Organization, 2017; Pholphirul & Rukumnuaykit, 2019; Pholphirul & Rukumnuyakit, 2008), and Thailand has been highly dependent on migrant workers both low-skilled and high-skilled (see Figure 4). Around half of workers in the following clusters of economic activities: construction, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and services were low-skilled migrant workers—the average level of dependency ratio of low-skilled migrant workers in these economic activities was 50.2[3] in 2020. This was largely due to the fact that the proportion of the older population has increased and the country has been geared to adopting automated technology and digitalization[4]. Moreover, an amendment to the legislation on migration such as an increase in minimum wage[5] and migrant regularization, allowing illegal migrant workers to register has contributed to the country's high dependency on migrant workers (Nittayo, Tunyavetchakit, Jindarak, & Thongsri, 2020a; Nittayo et al., 2020b).
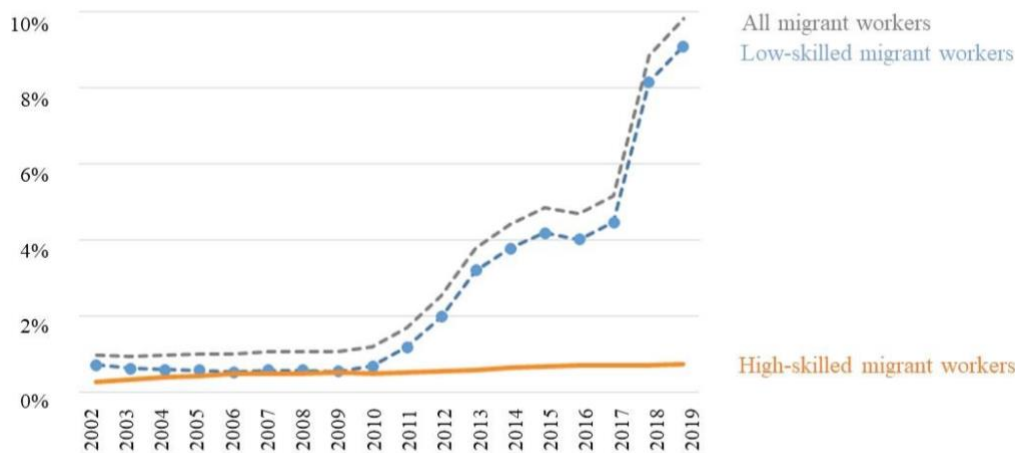


*Figure 4*. Registered migrant workers in Thailand (2002-2019)

However, due to migration, the problems concerning land invasion, waste management, health, and crime have persisted in Thai societies, especially in the urban areas (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019b).

**Implications of COVID-19**

Recently, COVID-19 has worsened the situation for the slums and migrant workers bringing inequality and vulnerability to light. For example, out of 232,416 accumulated COVID-19 cases as of June 24, 2021, 48,135 were migrant workers (International Labour Organization, 2021). As

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[3] This means that the number of migrant workers in a business are estimated to be similar.

[4] Large proportion of high-skilled migrant workers was in the following sectors: information and communication, accommodation and food service, professional, scientific and technical activities, and administrative and support service (Nittayo, Tunyavetchakit, Jindarak, & Thongsri, 2020b).

[5] 300 THB per day

a large number of migrant workers were in the construction industry (see Figure 5), construction sites were considered high-risk areas. In late June 2021, there was a sharp increase in infected cases in Bangkok, particularly in large construction sites, and about half of the workers were infected. In response to the spread, the state decided to impose mobility restrictions, announce 30-day closure of construction sites, give 50% compensation of their wage[6] along with supporting and monitoring interventions such as QR code tracking and food delivery for all 48,000 migrant workers living in 585 construction sites in Bangkok. On the surface, these government's interventions seemed to do the job, but in detail, based on the state's 2019 social security record, around half of these workers did not have access to social security (Sumano & Aneksomboonphon, 2021). This means that they did not receive the 50% compensation provided by the state during the closure.
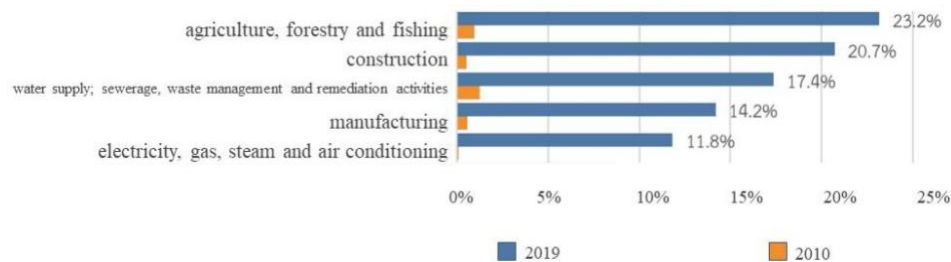


*Figure 5*. Top five economic activities with low-skilled migrant workers in Thailand

Similarly, big clusters of infected cases were reported from slums and congested communities in Bangkok in April 2021 (193 cases out of the total of 304) since the slum dwellers' living condition does not allow them to properly follow guidelines for COVID-19 such as social distancing and home isolation, resulting in big clusters of infected cases in April 2021 (BBC, 2021)

## COVID-19 and digitalization

COVID-19 has worsened the situation for the vulnerable groups, but it, on the other hand, has accelerated Bangkok's digital technology adoption, reinforcing the city's digitalization plan. Thailand is on the road to digitalization or "*Digital Thailand*" and commits itself to becoming a developed country with high level of digital competitiveness, security, social equity, and sustainability within 20 years (2018-2037[7]), and Bangkok is one of the pilot cities gearing towards becoming a smart city. The country's goals, as stated in *Thailand Digital Economy and Society Development Plan* and *Master Plan to Digital Economy*, include digital transformation of business, developing digital infrastructure, providing equal access to public services, content, and educational resources with digital technology, equipping workforce with necessary digital skills, and reforming public services using digital technology and datafication (Digital Economy

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[6] The compensation had a cap of 7,500 THB.

[7] (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019a)

Promotion Agency (depa), 2018; Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, 2016). This means that more and more public services and businesses have adopted digital technologies, particularly digital platforms such as the government's stimulus program through digital wallet. It could be said that digital platforms have been the new normal for the city inhabitants amidst the pandemic, but the reality is that digital divide still persists in the country.

Statistics show that Thai population depended more on digital platforms such as e-payment, but this was still largely limited to teenagers and working age population (see Figure 6) (Kulkolkarn & Pawasutipaisit, 2020; Ratanawaraha, 2020). That is, a large number of the vulnerable population were left out due to the digital divide. For instance, as the majority of ageing population still could not adapt to the new normal lifestyle depending on digital platforms—only 12.9% of them were digital literate, 83.6% of them did not use e-payment, 69.1% did not use Thai Chana—contact tracing mobile application during COVID-19. During lockdown, 89.6% of the elderly did not use online food delivery services despite the fact that Bangkok had faced the highest degree of food shortage compared to other provinces (Foundation of Thai Gerontology Research and Development institute, 2020).
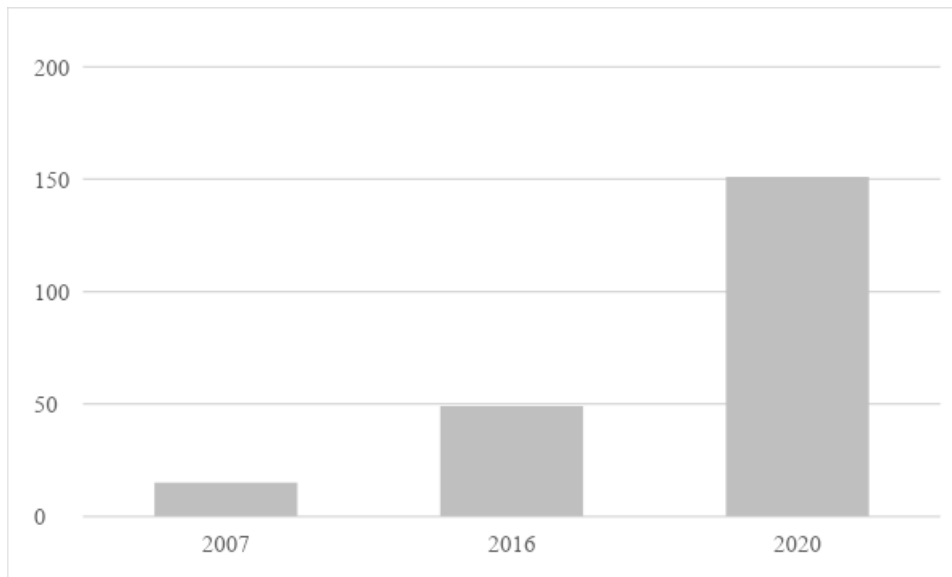


*Figure 6*. E-payment use per year at individual level

Literature suggests that Bangkok urbanization creates paradoxes between digitization and its challenges such as digitalization and inclusiveness/accessibility or control. The state gears towards digitalization as well as making attempts to reduce inequality, but they are often fragmented and do not adopt holistic view and approach. For instance, the state's "Welfare Card" scheme with the objective to reduce socioeconomic inequality reached only 36% of the poor (Jitsuchon, 2020), largely because of its terms and

conditions which screened out certain amount of the poor (as cited in USAID, Unicef, & TDRI, 2020). The คนละครึ่ง (Khon La Khrueng), co-payment scheme acting as economic stimulus during COVID-19 was another case in point. Since the scheme requires a smartphone and a state-run mobile application "เป๋าตัง" (Paotang) G-wallet[8], those who could not afford a smartphone and internet were obviously left out. A study on social justice perception index illustrates this situation clearly. The elderly perceived social justice to be at low level because they generally did not receive adequate government support compared to other population groups (Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology & (TSRI), 2018).

The aforementioned structural problems and digitalization paradox make Bangkok a good archetype of urban development towards an ethical city.

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[8] https://www.xn--42caj4e6bk1f5b1j.com/

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<center>**Ethical values**</center>

## An ethical city

An ethical city must have ethical values as its foundation. This is the foundation upon which a city uses as its framework to govern how its inhabitants behave and conduct themselves. Such values affect the choices the city and its people make in everyday decisions made across different stratas of government, sectors and societies. Because of this, the ethical values to be embraced, utilised or imposed upon a city would be highly dependent on the context available for it.

To derive these values, it would require one to have lived experiences in Bangkok with in-depth knowledge on its society. While some members of the team indeed have such experiences, not all do and hence rely on additional research to analyse and evaluate Bangkok's applicability as an ethical city.

Based on what we have identified from Bangkok as a city and the basis in formulating our understanding on ethics and an ethical city, several areas have emerged as ethical issues to consider.

## Inequality, fragility and vulnerability

In Bangkok, it suffers from a problem of urban fragility, which our analysis suggests stems from inequality. This can come in many forms as highlighted above, such as wealth inequality. This has been further exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the poor were made to wait for the government's national rollout of the vaccines, while the wealthy, well-connected, and celebrities were able to travel overseas to find the vaccines they desired (Ford and Vimonsuknopparat, 2021).

The pandemic played a further role in highlighting the gaps in Bangkok society from a digital perspective, at a time when pandemic safety measures led to more activities and work being forced to transition online. Although Bangkok and Thailand generally have a high rate of social media penetration, it is a different story when it comes to Internet connection. The number of households with internet connection in the capital city had risen steadily from 2017 to 2020, at 2.83 million for 2020. In the same year, about 19 million Thai households have access to internet connection. That means only 28.3 percent of the Bangkok population (assuming Bangkok has around 10 million citizens) has an internet connection, which is only just above the national average of 27.4 percent (estimated Thai population of 69.3 million). This runs contrary to the city's plans of

becoming a smart city driven by cutting edge technology. Even if it were to achieve this goal through selected measures, it is highly likely that not all boats will be floated, and some are bound to be left behind.

An additional concern to keep in mind would be the nature of technology itself. As we have learnt from past and present history times, technology was and is never neutral. As we see the gap continuing to rise due to technology and digital literacy, this will develop a situation where it is no longer about the divides between socioeconomic classes and other forms of stratification of society, a generational divide is also taking place. As technology grows more complex, this will lead to a scenario where older folks who may not be able to keep up with the pace of technology will eventually find themselves left out of the technology-led developments occurring around them. This may even drive them out of the city, as it no longer becomes inhabitable to them when they are unable to access basic services that are now being delivered through the medium of technology.

This flows into a situation where we will see further vulnerability among citizens, therefore poorer societal resilience in the city. This should lead towards an inflection point for Bangkok, where questions must be asked to think more about inequality, fragility and its associated and indirect consequences especially in the long term. Further reflection must be done to ponder: for whom and what are we building this city for, towards a fairer, equal, resilient, and therefore, an ethical society?

## Values to Engage Citizens of Bangkok

All cities, including Bangkok will need to plan for future scenarios no matter how positive or bleak, to either take advantage of opportunities or mitigate risks that may come. It becomes more important then for the social compact of Bangkok, consisting of the city government, policymakers, the private sector, academia, and civil society to come together in considering and exploring how they may want to envision the Bangkok of the future.

We argue that in the face of current and future pandemics and emergencies that may accrue negative consequences for the city, an ethical dimension needs to be incorporated and navigated as part of the development of Bangkok. This should consider the principles and values that it would want to uphold and incorporate in decision-making when creating an ethical urban society. These can be used to engage and include citizens in and when making plans, objectives and vision for Bangkok.

While these values are not exhaustive, based on our analysis and evaluation, we have selected and prioritised three ethical values we believe to be pertinent in transforming Bangkok into an ethical city, which are resilience, inclusion, and fairness and equality.

**Resilience**

According to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), resilience refers to the "ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management". While resilience is often tied to aspects of vulnerability, exposure and risks tied to climate change, environment, and ecology, resilience can also be used in social context, in the form of community resilience, which includes the concepts of "wellbeing, adaptability and resourcefulness in the face of adverse conditions" (Cheshire, Esparcia, and Shucksmith, 2015). This becomes relevant when we take into consideration urban resilience, which refers to the "capacity of a city's systems, businesses, institutions, communities, and individuals to survive, adapt, and grow, no matter what chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience" (Resilient Cities Network, n.d.).

Using the context of a city and in this case, Bangkok, resilience would be linked back to having the capacity to adapt and recover from adverse conditions that can occur to it. By building up its own adaptive capacity, this allows for the city to identify the source of risks or even opportunities that surface. It would then need to understand and devise the right strategies on managing such risks for the long term benefit and existence of its people and the city. This enables Bangkok to be able to better handle shocks like the pandemic, and emerging megatrends like the fast-paced development of technology and its consequences. The key point here would be for the city to reflect better on how it can do better to build up such capacity to react and adapt to different scenarios that may take place, or even in some cases anticipate them proactively so that risks that emerge can be turned into opportunities for the city to take advantage of in building towards a better society than what was the status quo.

**Inclusion**

In the societal, urban community context, social inclusion is "the process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights" (UN, 2016). This is explicitly part of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, for the purposes of developing peaceful, holistic, resilient and inclusive societies.

To be inclusive in the Bangkok context, its society would need to focus on ensuring all voices are heard and are not discriminated against, regardless of whether they are of particular nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Opportunities should be provided without barriers for everyone in the city to participate and live freely as a citizen of Bangkok. This can be taken into consideration for policy-making, city planning, urban design and decision-making across different layers for the city. This can go a long way of ensuring social cohesion as well as social integration of different peoples with varied backgrounds – ensuring all citizens of Bangkok would be able to be proud and take ownership in the city that they live in.

**Fairness and equality**

Fairness and equality are closely linked with inclusion. Fairness is sometimes linked to social justice, which provides the view that everyone in society deserves equal distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges. This is closely related to equality, in the provision of status, rights, and opportunities. It can come through different perspectives, such as gender equality and wealth equality, ensuring that one is able to live, make decisions and face implications without being discriminated against due to factors that can at times be out of their control.

Thai society in general is often seen as being stratified, formulated based on a combination of pre-capitalist and capitalist structure of social classes (Thongsawang, Rehbein, and Chantavanich, 2020). The monarchy would be at the top of the social pyramid, where its status is hereditary, while other members of society may achieve social mobility though face difficult challenges rising up the ladder depending on networks, influences and capabilities. Removing barriers to social mobility in Bangkok would aid the promotion of a fair and equal society, allowing people to thrive or fall on their own basis rather than inherent characteristics that they may not have control over.

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<center>**Areas of Concern**</center>

## Inequality and Accessibility

The expanding use of digital technology within economic, political, social and cultural life at Bangkok is generating some concerns about the emergence of new forms of inequalities and the duplication of existing inequalities among societies. These developments, nonetheless, are part of rapid social change, which is ushering in a digital society.

Concerns rise over the widening digital divide as "digitally disadvantaged" people continue to experience difficulties accessing self-service kiosks and QR code-related services at many public facilities such as eateries and now, possibly, restrooms in Bangkok.The digital divide was already an existing phenomenon that became increasingly visible as a result of COVID-19. Due to social distancing measures, many of the in-person activities have now moved online. Thus, senior citizens and other digitally marginalized communities especially women, children and migrant workers experience much more difficulties adjusting to the changes and performing essential tasks, including online banking, QR code-based entry logs, shopping and reservations. This raises a concern over the growing ethics of digitisation of the city, as it is in a way or the other exacerbating inequality.

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a greater problem faced by households in Thailand than poor Internet accessibility is having no computers to use at home. Compared to countries around the world, only 21% of Thai households have computers, which is lower than the global average of 49% and the developing countries' average of 38% (Rattanakhamfu, 2020). Rattanakhamfu (2020) also mentioned that the proportion of Thai households with home Internet access is 68%, which is higher than the global average of 55 percent and the developing countries' average of 44% in 2018.

Thus, despite the fact that networks are well connected and moving toward 5G technology, 20-30% of individuals in densely populated regions are unable to engage in online activities due to poverty, making access to appropriate devices difficult (Thailand Institute of Justice, 2020). Similarly, although Thailand has a high rate of social media penetration, there is a massive digital divide which prevents the most vulnerable in society from accessing the government's aid programmes. This is especially true for low-income workers and small business owners, migrant workers and this was more clearly visible as they were hardest hit by the pandemic.

People endured income losses, retrenchments, pay reductions, or a significant decrease in income during the Covid-19 pandemic. They inadvertently become a vulnerable group in the digital world,

particularly among taxi drivers or motorcycle taxi drivers. Given these difficulties, the government intends to recruit "digital volunteers" as a mechanism for conducting surveys and connecting data between the government and the communities (Thailand Institute of Justice, 2020). The government tried to fix the disparity of computer and internet use by conducting projects and creating strategies to support educational units, as well as helping community and district units obtain computers and internet access. However, they still lacked enhancement for effective accessibility to information and communication in remote areas. But having said that, not a lot of strategies have been made to target the digitally disadvantaged population, especially in the city where they find that the average population is not divided digitally and have access to resources.

## Inadequate response measures

The Thai government responded early to COVID-19 by providing stimulus packages including a number of provisions to protect employment earnings and secure jobs. Thailand's 11.7 million salaried employees were eligible for the Social Security fund and there were also provisions to support income for those in informal employment at 5,000 baht per month ($153) for three months (Assadullah & Bhulla-or, 2020) but there were major challenges in reaching out to the most vulnerable groups. To qualify for income support, one must have internet access and a savings account; this has excluded some of the poorest groups, including daily wage employees, street sellers, and taxi drivers, among others.

Similarly, Techakitteranun (2020) mentions in her article that millions of Thai employees were excluded from the government's "No One Left Behind" scheme, which guaranteed cash assistance every month for three months. Thousands of people were wrongfully excluded from this premier government program due to an administrative error that misclassified the eligible population. This shows lack of policy priority for the most vulnerable group by the Thai government and shows the crack in the formulation of the policy framework. Even before the COVID-19 epidemic, millions of Thais were disenfranchised. Thailand cannot afford to widen the wealth gap further given its already highly unequal distribution of income and wealth especially with the increase in digitisation of infrastructures and services.

## Way forward

There is no perfect "recipe" to overcome the digital divide, but the goal that many shared policies have been given by different states, international organizations, associations and other non-profit entities that deal with Internet governance, is to decrease the gap that currently exists. It is absolutely important to adopt a series of key principles for the governance of the network,

providing younger generations with adequate digital education which should serve to grow good digital citizens and the need to improve media literacy more generally of all sections of the population, with particular reference to minority groups, vulnerable or for which there are particularly critical issues.

The main challenge for Bangkok is to to reduce the gaps between the rich and poor, and between the educated and uneducated related to accessibility to information technology, by providing internet and mobile networks for everyone in all areas in order to disseminate information, news and education to them at the same level. This would lead to developing the country sustainably through digital development- a basic factor for improving the quality of people's lives in the long run. Here, transparency principle (Hongladarom, 2004) and enabling everyone to access information become especially crucial.

In turning Bangkok to an ethical and rights respecting city, embedding values and rights into the design of the city comes into question. When designing data-driven cities and mechanisms it is of utmost importance to ensure that people's right to data protection is respected, yet not used as an obstacle (UNICEF, 2021) making it more difficult to access systems. This is especially important to enable a rights respecting city because these two fundamental rights are regarded as enablers of other values and rights in today's digital world (McDermott, 2017). When working around questions in the context of embedding rights and values into the design of cities, data protection and privacy discourse could inform ethical design as well.

Surveillance issues at the border and in the city should also be kept in mind when designing ethical cities for "everyone" including vulnerable groups (Hayes, 2017). This is important because every group of people should be able to enjoy their right to data protection and privacy the same way and the current application of laws in different parts of the world, especially in the migration context, do not seem to enable this enjoyment to a full extent (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2020). These considerations are crucial in looking for answers for what good looks like for a human rights respecting city in the digital context where people's agency, control over their data, needs and rights are respected.

An ethical city vision where discrimination based on age, sex, gender, or other vulnerability layers are addressed is of utmost importance. To enable people to exercise their right to data protection in a data-driven city, the transparency principle of data protection (Hongladarom, 2004) and link that to the discussions on digital literacy become highly relevant. This is because transparency is key to designing an online world where migrants', the elderly people's, children's and other vulnerable groups' needs and best interests are the priority. The transparency principle empowers vulnerable groups because only when they know about their rights, can they act on them . In a city where we give great importance to children, vulnerable children, migrants, LGBTQI+ and any other vulnerable group, operationalising values such as "fairness", "equality", and "accesibility"

as well as fundamental rights such as data protection, privacy and non-discrimination call for a careful consideration for different rights and how these could be balanced in an ethical city.

The current data protection legal framework doesn't address vulnerable data subjects and provide additional safeguards for migrants. The cabinet has approved the deferral of the full enforcement of the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) for a year, with the explanation the country is facing a difficult time with the COVID-19 pandemic and the legislation's related processes have yet to be settled (Masagee et al., 2021). When applying data protection rules into practice, it is crucial to particularly think about accessibility issues, balancing of different fundamental rights and freedoms and make sure that fundamental rights – for example, children's right to play in UNCRC could be underpinned in a data protection respecting data-driven environment. This approach can especially be relevant for operationalising "fairness", "accessibility" and "equality" into the cities as embedding data protection rules might also allow stakeholders to question different perspectives, cultures, vulnerabilities and consider "accessibility", "equality" and "fairness" concepts in a pluralistic society when imagining ways to find a balance between different rights and freedoms. The current frameworks do not necessarily protect vulnerable groups' rights in the context of data protection and therefore it is of utmost importance to address the legal and policy frameworks concerning data processing activities and accessibility matters to be able to contribute to an ethical city.

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# Orientation

## Bangkok: Ethical City in 2030

This paper acts as a guiding document to support the current urban initiatives towards Bangkok's aspiration of becoming an "ethical city" by the year 2030. This document is driven by the city of Bangkok and Thailand's current drive to pursue solutions to address urban issues at the national and city scale. It complements the broader urban initiatives that have already commenced that include Thailand's 4.0 model (smart city initiative) and Bangkok's Resilient Cities Strategy.

As this report is a precursor to the works that will need to be conducted for the city of Bangkok to progress towards an ethical city, it is directed primarily towards the *incubation* entry point. That is, this report reviews existing knowledge and is aimed at analyzing relevant stakeholders (presented in the following section), and introducing additional theories and frameworks that were considered critical in supporting the existing approaches. The following approaches were chosen for its focus on disciplinarity, ability in creating opportunities for polyvocality and diverse methods of participation, and contextual adaptability.

The following theories, bodies of knowledge and systems of practice are proposed as conceptual frameworks to integrate into the current approach towards Bangkok's aspiration of becoming an "ethical city" by the year 2030:

*Actor network theory (ANT)*: is a sociological theory developed by Bruno Latour, Michel Callon and John Law, that focuses on the constant shifting networks of relationships between actors (Muniesa, 2015). ANT allows for a methodological approach to designing particular stakeholder maps that acknowledges the concept of a constantly shifting actor-network relationship, this characteristic is prevalent within the urban context, which makes the ANT model suitable for understanding how you can approach contextual, particularly in situations where values are diverse or contested.

*Cybernetics:* Is a theory of systems, communication and information theory in the context of complex and complex adaptive systems. This is relevant when considering the multitude of 'systems' that exist within the urban city and the complex nature in which they behave. According to Barile et al. (2019), Dubberly & Pangaro (2019), the core of cybernetic thinking is primarily concerned with system structures, how they function, the manner by which they communicate with other 'systems' and the ways in which they control their actions. In other words, cybernetics is a way of understanding the complexity and dynamics between systems and subsystems, and how these relationships and interactions play out in the context of a whole system. In light of its history in urban planning, the goal of cybernetics as a theoretical base is not to suggest that all systems

are reducible to components, but to help think about systems (technological, political, cultural, social, ecological, and even cities) from a broader perspective that includes different ways of ascertaining data. For example, Bell & McLennan (2021) advocates the importance of interdisciplinarity in understanding a system as no one discipline holds complete knowledge about a single system and its components. And, as Bell and McLennan (Ibid) point out, expert knowledge about a system's individual components "will not reveal its most characteristic properties" (pg. 200)

***Sustainability Transition Studies (STS) and Socio-technical transition (STT)***: STS (and its main conceptual framework, the Multi-Level Perspective – that comprises three analytical levels: the *niche*, the *socio-technical regime*; and social-technical landscape) primarily concerned with identifying and mapping the long-term processes of change. Which is relevant to the context of urban renewal programs where the adoption of technologies can create a spur of new radical innovations in the use of technologies, or how technologies are embedded in the socio-cultural context and social structures

***Design through Research (RtD)***: RtD is a conceptual framework that integrates academic (scientific) methods, processes of design systems of practice, in which new knowledge is generated through the process of creating an artefact, as opposed to being focused on the artefact itself. In other words, RtD is primarily concerned with how the actions and interactions of its participants produce new knowledge. This approach is considered valuable in the context of engaging and interacting with diverse stakeholders (such as the public and citizens across the various areas of Bangkok) where the concept of values are diverse and often contested. RtD allows for participants to generate knowledge through their actions, as well as what is captured in typical formats such as surveys, questionnaires, structured interviews, etc.

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# Stakeholders

| STAKEHOLDER | INTEREST | INFLUENCE | MODE OF PARTICIPATION | POTENTIAL RISKS | POTENTIAL BENEFITS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ministry of Digital Economy and Society | High | High | Collaboration with Smart Green ASEAN Cities project - by EU and ASEAN<br>The project's framework aims to support sustainable urbanization in the region, reduce the environmental footprint of urban areas and improve the quality of life of residents<br>the EU would provide funding of €5 million (US$6 million) to selected ASEAN cities to develop smart, sustainable and environmentally friendly urban areas | Little freedom on smart city framework – funding from EU has to be spent on initiatives designated by EU | Funding and guidance from a supervisory board |

| Ministry Transport | High | High | 1. To increase the capacity for infrastructure system and efficient transport services to comply with the integrated strategy for development. 2. To build up and develop the extensive networks of mass transit system and public transport services for both passengers and goods, to offer equal opportunities to travel to the public and act as a catalyst for the sustainable development of the country. 3. To streamline the existing transport network. 4. To ensure public safety of transport system, lessen its environmental impact, enhance the quality of life of people and minimize the economic loss. 5. To maximize the potential for good governance and systematic monitoring with the public participation in making and inspection so as to raise the quality of public transport services. | Lack of budget to implement ethical approaches | Wants to build and develop existing infrastructure for accessibility that could align with our vision |
| Ministry of Social Development and Human Security | High | High | 1.Promote opportunity to access social services based on the self-sufficiency approach 2.Create immunity and enhance capacity of target groups to realize their full potential. 3.Embrace social synergy as a mechanism for social development.4.promote good governance in organizational | Have their own agenda | Wants to focus on marginalized groups |

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| | | | management in striving to become a leading social agency. | | |
| Ministry of Energy | High | high | $60 million to fund more than one thousand small-scale energy efficiency and renewable, reflecting the government's determination to decrease reliance on fossil fuels. economical use or reduced expendable use of energy, and energy efficiency improvement, i.e. doing the same activities with less energy, involving, among others, lighting, hot water production, cooling systems, transportation or running machines in the manufacturing process. Ministry of Energy has developed the Thailand Integrated Energy Blueprint (TIEB) with focus on (1) Energy security, to supply energy in response to the energy demand which consistent with the rate of economic growth, the rate of population growth and the growth of urban areas, and diversified energy to the appropriate resources. (2) | Focused on energy efficiency across the entire country rather than just focused on Bangkok, would not be the priority | Has budget to increase ethical efficiencies when it comes to smart cities |

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| | | | Economy, Taking into account the energy costs are reasonable and not an obstacle to economic and social development of the country in the long term. Reforms in fuel prices structure in line with costs and the tax burden reasonable to level up national energy utilization performance with the promotion of energy efficiency. (3) Ecology, increased domestic renewable energy production and production energy with high performance technologies to reduce the impact on environment and community. | | |
| Digital Economy and Promotion Agency (DEPA) | High | high | local governments to deploy technology e.g. sensors, integrated data systems and a digital twin to monitor and predict foreseeable disasters - https://theaseanpost.com/article/developing-thailands-smart-cities | Already has plans to implement smart technologies without specific data privacy in place | Has the ability to implement frameworks that align with our interests |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| National Steering Committee on Smart City Development | High | High | Collaborate and align with ASEAN smart city network | Focused on ASEAN smart city framework, little motivation to compromise | Has the entire ASEAN smart city network contacts |
| National Housing Authority | High | High | raise awareness on the New Urban Agenda and its implementation to ensure that development of cities fosters prosperity for all. Focus areas include urban rules and regulations, urban planning and design, municipal finance and national urban policies. It supports environmental, economic and social sustainability through participation of all stakeholders, particularly at the local level. | Focused on new urban agenda | Focused on local agenda and prosperity for all which aligns with our focus on marginalized groups |
| Personal Data Protection Committee | High | High | Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) 2019 → postponed enforcement to 2022 | Slow implementation of frameworks | Ability to create data protection frameworks around smart city data |

| National Charter of Thailand (NCT) | High | High | tasked with planning the sustainable development of the nation's cities<br>NCT has developed a blueprint for creating "smart blocks", experimental zones comprising of 0.25 square kilometers, in communities where physical 'smart' infrastructure such as sensor connectivity and the Internet of Things (IoT) will be deployed to gather data and to gauge public acceptance for increased tech adoption | Planned data collection does not align with data privacy initiatives | Working on nations blue print and can create ethical foundation for not only Bangkok but other smart cities in Thailand |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Migrant Community | High | Low | Community outreach, needs assessments, surveys | Little influence on city government | Understands what needs work and allows for true bottom up approach |
| LGBTQ+ Community | High | Low | Community outreach, needs assessments, surveys | Little influence on city government | Understands what needs work and allows for true bottom up approach |

**Table References**

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# Reflection

## Abhibhu Kitikamdhorn

Bangkok is chosen as an archetype for our thought experiment on ethical city because it has incubated smart city and digitalization developments championing digitalization and social equality while having deep-rooted inequalities. Here, digital solutions are considered one of the key enablers for people-centric smart city development and social equality in the eyes of the authorities, so they heavily feature in various initiatives aimed at reducing social inequality. Nevertheless, evidence shows that digitalization and smart city development are perceived differently by the city inhabitants. In many cases, the use of digital solutions does not bridge the digital divide but rather preserve the status quo since affordability and accessibility still matter for the marginalized population. There are also cases in which urban planning leans towards a top down decision making and control such as the Smart Community project to turn Klong Toey slums into a smart community in spite of the slum dwellers' resistance. These reflect that the ethics of urbanization and digitalization are often overlooked. That is, Bangkok's developments have posed ethical challenges concerning rights and social equality in spite of the emphasis on better social inclusion.

It is obvious that there is no one size fits all approach to build an ethical smart city as the context and relationship between actors within a city have a very influential role in shaping how the city functions and evolves. Policy recommendations may be considered a cliché, but, from our perspective, they could be practical and actionable if they are not grounded from a top down perspective–placing value on inclusivity. Therefore, we adopt multidisciplinary, participatory, and holistic perspectives to frame our document as a stepping stone to a practical implementation within a 10-year time frame for Bangkok to become a more ethical city.

# Ryan Chua

Bangkok was chosen as a thought experiment for an ethical city because it is one currently at the crossroads between being the melting pot of cultures and peoples in Thailand underpinned by certain values that make Bangkok today, and the technology-driven, smart-focused urban plans to remake Bangkok tomorrow. It helped for our team that we had essentially two Bangkok locals who could provide further insight into life in Bangkok and the choices made at the ground and governance levels that have led to what the city is today.

In attempting to understand what makes an ethical city and why Bangkok should be one, the team collectively built on each other's strengths and collaborated and discussed the main directions for this before proceeding to have further depth through individual research to be compiled later. These questions involved understanding the local contexts and nuances of Bangkok and its inhabitants, and the key challenges the city faced as a society. Building on the individual strengths of the members of the team, which had a fairly strong emphasis on social issues, this led to us naturally converging towards social themes, such as accessibility, inequality, inclusion, and resilience, as compared to some other areas that were important but were not able to fit in directly such as environmental concerns.

In doing this exercise, recognising that some of us had either not been to Bangkok or had only a largely superficial understanding of the city and its inhabitants, there were concerns on whether our work would be representative, whether it has taken into consideration all the key concerns, and whether it would be ethical ourselves to prescribe a set of ethical values that a city ought to achieve. As these conversations took place in discussions and monologues, we tried to alleviate such concerns in conveying the message in acknowledging that there is ethical pluralism to consider, and that the ethical values we are supposedly prescribing are just some of the few to prioritise especially from a societal perspective.

Having said that, this document only cuts across several prioritised elements to the ideal state of an ethical city in the context of Bangkok, and is definitely not exhaustive. A project and group of people with more time and resources at hand should seek to visit and embed themselves in Bangkok society to understand the deep-rooted challenges its people face, which is likely to be muddled with politics across different levels. This will better illuminate the "true" reasons for decision-making that has made Bangkok the city it is today, and what can be done to turn it into one that is considered an ethical society.

**Danny Bettay**

*On the nature of Ethics*
The biggest obstacle I faced during the Clinic was confronting the ethical paradox I was presented with. That is, I was asked to contribute to an Ethical City bid for the city of Bangkok. While the concept does not bear any ethical concerns, the idea that one (from another country, culture or world view) could suggest what is considered ethical for another, could itself be considered as 'unethical'. This is because I don't share any lived experience or ethnical connection with the city or the country of Thailand, nor do most of my other colleagues. In my training, this would be considered "neo-colonial research". However, while I can argue that two of our six-person group share lived experience or ethnical connection to Bangkok, the question is "If we an outsider read our bid and asked about how we determined the ethics of Bangkok, how could I justify that the values of my colleagues, represent Bangkok as a whole?". Nevertheless, as a practice, it went against all that I was taught on the nature of ethical research.

However, while reflecting on this dilemma, I also realised that my position on ethics may also be trying to impart my own values over that of the Clinic and within my own multidisciplinary working group. This was a cross-discipline dilemma, which I was not expecting going into my group and Clinic-wide conversation. From the perspective of our task, this was becoming more or less a negative feedback loop. And while the question still remained – "how do we go about this task without unintentionally imparting neo-colonialist style research practices"; another was raised, "how do you reconcile the ethical tensions within your own multidisciplinary working group?". While I was lucky enough to have a group that was open to conversations concerning ethics, I wonder if the real world would offer such luxuries?

My group and I went to great lengths to discuss how we would approach this dilemma. We diverged and then converged our ideas and talked through the notion of swinging the framing of an Ethical City Bid to something of a precursor-type impact assessment or study. We concluded that we could build the foundations of what work would need to be conducted in order to get to a position to begin an Ethical City Bid in the future (our specific, yet arbitrary, timeframe was 2030). However, this still didn't resolve the problem of how we represent the values of Bangkok in our assessment. Were we in a position to do this? Or would our efforts be better suited to drawing on or creating frameworks that would help conceptualise approaches for Bangkok to consider when thinking about the ethical position of such a diverse city? These unresolved questions framed our decision to focus on values that had been publicly addressed (or communicated), as opposed to conducting "helicopter research" and proposing a set of values on Bangkok.

Undertaking boundary critiques is such a time consuming/research intensive process, let alone having a constraint of such a short timeframe. In addition, when working as part of a group, there are certain obligations and 'professional' ethics that we have to accept. And, while I did feel that I was uncomfortable with the ethical city bid, I had to remind myself that I was part of a group and

my actions (and its consequences) would cascade down to my group and also the Clinic. These were a different form of ethical tensions, that I did not anticipate, but made me reflect about how these situations would play out in a 'real world' scenario. When having conversations with my group, we agreed on framing the "Values" building block to include a section that would include working definitions on ethics, cities and digitalisation. My idea was to be explicit about our foundational positioning and to be unambiguous about the assumptions that we bring into our research, as this would indeed influence the research and the key areas of focus for our group.

There were some key takeaways during our group discussions that influenced the formulation of our working definitions. Firstly, the idea of 'inequality' around technological literacy and overall literacy was a key driver in using the most accessible (both from an access point of view and from a language perspective) definitions as a foundation to enable broader inclusion into the conversation of ethics, cities and digitalisation. Using this as a framing tool was an interesting exercise when researching how certain city planning or technological initiatives were being communicated, including how, by whom and the dominant medium in which it was being disseminated. Second, on the nature of digitalisation, the idea of inequality and basic human rights to privacy as a framing tool also unpacked an interesting perspective on how the idea of digitalisation (and more broadly digitisation and digital transformation) was conceived of and described. To elaborate, a question I posed while researching the topic of digitalisation was "when we talk about (the ethics of) digitalisation are we only concerned with it as a term describing the result of adopting digital technology or are we concerned with the process that is undertaken to conceptualise, design and integrate digital technologies into the urban fabric of our city?" In other words, should we consider digitalisation as a process that involves many different systems and does our concept of ethics change throughout the lifecycle (or process) of 'digitalisation'?

Another meta-level of abstraction that I was also trying to grapple with was, does 'ethics' and 'digitalisation' mean the same as the 'ethics of digitalisation'? In other words, if ethics is primarily concerned with human actions and behaviours, and 'digitalisation' as the increasing use or adoption of digital technologies; does this mean that the ethics of digitalisation is concerned with how digital technologies are being used (i.e. more as an end-product) and not how they are being designed and conceptualised (i.e. the design of a product)? At what point are ethics considered in this process and what can this tell us about how ethics is conceived or enacted in the urban context? How does this translate to 'ethical digitalisation' and what does this mean in the context of digital transformation? While these were really interesting and perhaps pertinent questions to examine, the Clinic was far too short to research the specifics of these questions in any depth. Perhaps, this will be something I continue outside of the Clinic.

**On the nature of intervention**
When considering our *orientation*, it was difficult to visualise our document beyond the 'incubation' phase. The fact that we slightly deviated from the original brief impacted what levers

this body of work was likely to pull, push or influence. As an intervention, this body of work is designed as a guiding document or an impact analysis for the Mayor or City Council of Bangkok that analyses current urban initiatives and existing city programmes from an ethical perspective, to enable Bangkok in building an ethical city in 2030. Given the factor of limited time and resources, all our research efforts were focused on current initiatives that were being driven in respect to the city – Bangkok's Resilience Strategy, Smart City Plan, etc. This framed two key aspects of our body of work: First, it helped frame our approach to the *areas of concerns*. It enabled us to highlight key concerns and the controls in place to address them. Our contribution was analyzing this from an 'ethical city' perspective. Finally, it framed our decision to highlight values that had been publicly addressed (or communicated), as opposed to conducting "helicopter research" or "neo-colonialist research" and proposing a set of values on Bangkok.

The process in which we carried out the activities required to produce this body of work, highlighted two key takeaways for me. First, our work (while it was focused on current initiatives) highlighted what needed to be done if we wanted to address the concerns we had – that is, what are the values held by the inhabitants of Bangkok? Who is defining these values and why? While considering these philosophical conundrums, I was drawn to thinking about how some of these could be considered when thinking about an Ethical City Bid in 2030. If I had the time, I would have provided some suggestions on approaches such as ethnographic interviews and observations used by anthropologists, social scientists, cultural geographers, and the like; cybernetic systems analysis, sustainable transition studies, actor-network theory and design through research.

Second, the other key takeaway from this was the idea that it is not appropriate to intervene for the sake of intervention, but understanding or identifying whether an intervention is actually required. Not all situations require interventions, and in the same vein, not all interventions are universal. In the context of the urban space, where complex and complex adaptive systems coalesce, this is important. As many authors write, cities are wicked problems. When trying to solve problems of the wicked nature, some solutions only create new complex problems and unintended consequences.

# Aashiyana Adhikari

Having lived in Bangkok for almost a year, when our group decided to do an ethical city bid in the same city, it seemed very exciting to me, but when we started researching the city, I realized that simply having lived experience does not qualify me to think about creating policies or even discussing the ethics of the city. The moral quandary I faced was how I felt like an imposter in Bangkok, trying to share insights on a city I barely knew, and how, despite coming from a less developed country than Thailand, I was still living a very privileged life there, not facing any inequalities because of my gender, age, or status as a student.

When everyone in our group meeting was brainstorming about how an ethical city should look like, I started focusing on minor details that I used to see every day but never noticed in such a way that I felt like, 'Yes, this is a significant problem, and something should be done about it.' The small details became so apparent to me, such as how the city is divided in such a subtle way that you can see high rise buildings with digital transactions, infrastructures and services all digitised and see small stalls right below the buildings where many old people running the stall still operate in cash and don't know how QR code works or do not have any bank account to save their money because their livelihood depends on their daily income and they have nothing. When the final product of our research was completed, I noticed that my binary vision of looking into inequality and ethics in relation to digitisation had changed for the better, and now that I look at cities, not just Bangkok, my vision has shifted in such a way that I would now look at cities in a more humanistic light rather than as a purely material aspect of a human life.

## Liz Huth

One of the most complex parts of going about this research project and creating a bid was to come up with recommendations and outputs for a city I have not been to and, as an outsider, work in this area. Although we worked well as a team and helped each other out, it was still a group of primarily outsiders trying to develop solutions to a city we had no ties to. However, we did have two members who did have connections to the city and knew a bit about it which did help on some levels and helped orient the project in the direction that we finally settled on.

The time frame for producing the document meant that we could not delve deeper into subject matters and only cover a few topics briefly rather than go fully in-depth on how Bangkok could create a bid by 2030. We understood that we could not write about every area of concern that the city could improve upon, so we instead picked areas which we could talk about playing to the strengths of our group. This also meant we could not address areas where plans were already in place, which we thought were already benefiting the city.

Working with the group, we were able to work very well together and understand and divide up the work according to each other's interests and strengths and acknowledge the workload each of us had outside of the clinic. All of this made for a very open and accepting environment that allowed each of us to ask for help when we needed it or the ability to help another in the group without feeling bad for asking for help.

**Ayça Atabey**

It was quite challenging to try to embed ethical principles and come up with concrete suggestions for a city that some of us didn't know about. I found it particularly challenging to make tangible suggestions for an ethical "smart" city and kept reminding myself that our suggestions or comments should in some way be linked to Bangkok city context. Although the bid exercise and the tasks given in the clinic were very open to creativity, having chosen a specific city sometimes also felt like we couldn't reflect what we imagine as an "ethical" with the fear of missing the context and realities of Bangkok. However, this challenge has also made the group work very much engaging and it was absolutely great to be on the same boat with my group friends and try to come up with tangible solutions and ideas. In addition, although the scope of the task given to us gives us an area of creativity, its openness made it more challenging for us to come up with concrete work in this limited time. However, our appreciation of multidisciplinary perspectives, needs and differences in understanding the topics that were being discussed, the supportive and motivating energy of everyone in the group, the openness to learning and listening and, above all, our "teamwork" made this clinic even more fantastic.

After this clinic, I find myself more motivated than ever and my approach towards embedding values in design of cities and technologies have significantly changed as I became more "realistic" after the discussions we had with our group on how we can embed values, ethical principles, human rights into the Bangkok city we want to imagine in 2030. When talking about the practical and theoretical challenges of building a city for vulnerable groups as well as from a gender perspective, I realized how each of us agreed on the same values and principles but brought a different angle and understanding on how to interpret notions such as "equality" and "accessibility." This clinic and our group work also showed me how common grounds can be found when treating values that could be perceived differently from different cultures and backgrounds. This allowed me to have a more optimistic approach towards responsible innovation and gave me more hope that a rights-respecting universal framework might be possible one day in data-driven cities where we can all live together in societies that are increasingly diverse and pluralistic societies now and in the future. Despite this very limited time, it was great to always work positively and with utmost motivation towards a common goal, each of us coming from different parts of the world, helping each other and creating our own "ethical city" vision with our team spirit that has become the piece and parcel of our group work.

# Output: Transcript of Panel Discussion on the Updates of Bangkok 5.0

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  02:08
welcome everyone. Firstly, I'd like to thank you for joining us today for our panel discussion on Bangkok 5.0. To hear more about the progress that has been made towards making Bangkok an ethical Smart City. I am Liz from the Bangkok Post and I'll be your moderator for this conversation. We have with us today an incredible group of people who will be answering multiple questions from both myself and the audience. We are going to have a quick 20 minute q&a And after that we'll open the discussion up to the floor to hear any concerns or questions you may have. Now without further ado, let me introduce our speakers. First we have the Governor of Bangkok Bhu. Governor Bhu has been working on Bangkok 5.0 Throughout his term, and has helped spearhead multiple different initiatives to guide the city to its goal of becoming an ethical Smart City. We also have Danny, a consultant for the government from Bangkok University, who has spent time emphasizing how we can use different concepts of ethics and smart cities to make Bangkok the example. Next we have Ayca, head of the National Data Protection agency who's been striving for data equality. Aashiyana is the Minister of Accessibility and Equality, who has been working together with Ayca in the National Data Protection Agency to tackle issues and areas of concern that they believe are of the utmost importance when it comes to working towards an ethical city. Finally, we have Ryan, an urban ethicist who has been advocating for ethical values to be the foundation of everything as we progress towards becoming an ethical smart city. So, Governor Bhu I turn to you for the first question, what current initiatives are in place in Bangkok to help make Bangkok achieve this goal?

**Governor Bhu**  03:58
Thank you so much for the question, Bangkok Post. So me as the governor of Bangkok gives you a brief of what we have been doing to turn our city into a smart city. Actually in the big picture, we have created seven layers of smart initiative. The first one is smart living. We also have smart environments, smart mobility, smart people, smart economy, smart energy and smart governance. Basically, we try to improve the competitiveness of the city by transforming the businesses, especially small and medium sized, into digital platforms. We also encourage the use of E payment as a basic system. We also developed digital infrastructure to support the transformation by upgrading to 5G by turning street lights into smart poles with free Wi Fi CCTV and sensors. We are also creating a smart traffic light system. Plus we also have to create a data system by putting a data center into the city and to collect data from the city and help us in the decision making process. We also migrate many of our government services to online, we also launched a lot of mobile applications for public services as well, especially for COVID-19.

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  05:22
Thank you so much. And one more question for you: How has the demographic change impacted the city and played a role in the city's vulnerabilities.

**Governor Bhu** 05:31

The impact of demographic change to Bangkok is twofold. The first one there has been increased in the older population at national level and also at, at the city level, Bangkok as well. So Thailand and Bangkok are becoming an aging society. And this leads to the decline in the workforce as a whole. So the city needs to depend more on migrant workers, and also depend more on technology. So this leads to the problem of migration, which is one of the drivers of the existence of the slums in the city, because the majority of migrant workers in the city are low skilled workers, and they depend on income on a daily basis. And a big number of them live in slums. So this means, they cannot afford proper health care, education, or even digital devices to access government support.

**Liz, Bangkok Post** 06:29

Thank you so much for your answers. Danny, I turn to you next. Can you please explain why it's so important in defining what an ethical city is?

**Danny, Government Consultant** 06:39

Thanks, Liz. That's a great question. The reason why it's so important to define an ethical city is because the very idea of what constitutes a city is so in morphus, that it influences our individual and collective notions of ethics as well as since situating. These terms are heavily context dependent. There's this concept of contextualism in ethics highlights the idea that while something is deemed ethical in one context, may not be upheld in the same virtue in another, therefore, a definition of ethical city meant to allow for contextual adaptability.

**Liz, Bangkok Post** 07:19

And how have you used those definitions in the Bangkok 5.0 Smart City Plan?

**Danny, Government Consultant** 07:24

Okay. Well, we've gone back to basics by understanding the terms like epic cities, digitalization individually and drawing as relative Miss into the context of Bangkok. These then drive our epistemological commitment to these higher level abstracted definitions like ethical cities or ethics of visualization or even ethical digitalization. Now why this is important is that we're moving into an epoch, an industrial revolution, if you will, where these definitions will be persistently tested as these new technologies are born, they have when they evolve and how and as they transition into the very fabric of our society. Now, it is important to stress that this is not solely about the definition itself that we're trying to instantiate because these definitions are contextual and need to be adaptable. But it's more about embedding a process in which transparency in the opportunities to define values from the context of its inhabitants, can be carried out harmoniously, safely and inclusively. And could you

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  08:25
just elaborate a little bit on the idea of contextual adaptability

**Danny, Government Consultant**  08:31
Sure. Well, cities exist in two different paradigms, the physical, invisible hard aspects and the soft and invisible infrastructures. And these paradigms have different imaginations of what constitutes a city and values which are important to it. As an example, Bangkok is home to many religious practices. And apart from the dominant belief in Buddhism, this diversity when it comes to understanding value, you need to take into consideration ethical pluralism that might exist because of this diversity. So contextual adaptability is about having a framework in place that allows for many different voices to be heard. This also extends to areas where non-human actors are involved. So when operationalizing a definition, the intent is to actively exercise and encourage opportunities to shape and reshape the city's values on the account of the evolving nature and context, context of the city and those systems that inhabit it. Now, this position allows for ethical pluralism and the diversity of fairness related actions that are born from the multiplicity of perspectives on the ethics of the city.

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  09:40
Thank you so much. Now speaking on diversity, I turned to minister Aashiyana. What do you think are the major concerns that need to be addressed when dealing with the inequality in the city?

**Aashiyana, Minister of Accessibility and Equality**  09:53
Thank you so much, Miss Liz, for your question. So the expanding use of digital technology within economic A major political, social and cultural life in Bangkok is generating some concerns within our ministry about the emergence of new forms of inequalities and the duplication of existing inequalities among societies. This development is part of rapid social change which is ushering in a digital society. Concerned rise over the widening digital divide. As additional disadvantage people continue to experience difficulties accessing to self service kiosks and QR code related services at many public facilities, such as eateries and now possibly restaurants in Bangkok, the digital divide was already an existing phenomena that became increasing increasingly visible to us in our ministry as well as a result of COVID-19. Due to the social distancing measures, many of the in person activities have now moved online. Therefore, senior citizens and other digitally marginalized communities especially women, children and migrant workers, experienced much more difficulties adjusting to the changes and performing essential tasks including online banking, QR code base entry, log shopping and reservation. This raises a concern over the growing ethics of digitization of the city as it is in a way or other exacerbating inequality.

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  11:17
Thank you, and why, why are the previous response measures inadequate? And what steps are being taken to move forward?

**Aashiyana, Minister of Accessibility and Equality** 11:25
I think that's a very excellent question, Miss lis. So when COVID-19 hit the world, we responded early by providing stimulus packages including a number of provisions to protect employment, earnings and secure jobs. Thailand's 11 point 7 million salaried employees were eligible for the Social Security fund and there were also provisions to support income for those in informal employment at 5000 baht per month, that would be 150 $3 for three months, but we had major challenges in reaching out to the most vulnerable groups. To qualify for income support, one must have internet access and a savings account. This excluded some of the poorest group including daily wage employees, street sellers and taxi drivers, among others. First, there is no perfect recipe to overcome this digital divide. But the goal that many shared policies that we have recently created, along with different states around the world international organizing, international organization, Association and other nonprofit entities, deals with internet governance is to decrease the gap of internet accessibility that currently exists. We have recognized that it is absolutely important to adopt a series of key principles for the governance of the network, providing younger generations like you with adequate digital education, which should serve to grow good digital citizens, and the need to improve media literacy more generally, across all sections of the population, with particular reference to minority groups vulnerable or for which there are particularly critical issues. So we have developed programs for making young people digitally literate and then deploy them to various areas of the city to provide informal training to marginalized groups regarding basics of using this technology to access services and infrastructures.

**Liz, Bangkok Post** 13:17
Thank you. And speaking of vulnerable groups, Ayca should as head of the National Data Protection Agency, how can we address vulnerable data subjects and provide additional safeguards moving forward through the data protection legal framework?

**Ayca, Head of the National Data Protection Agency** 13:33
This is a great question. And to enable the vulnerable people to exercise their right to data protection, especially in today's context, in a data driven city, the data protection laws should be able to cater the needs of those vulnerable people. So this requires keeping the needs and particular vulnerability layers of individuals, as well as groups of individuals in mind. As you know, we are currently revising the legal framework and we aim to achieve a better protection goal for vulnerable people by putting additional provisions and safeguards into the legal framework itself. But in addition to that, it is equally important to try to use what already exists in the legal framework through providing guidance on how to operationalize key principles such as fairness, for instance. In fact, we are currently also working on finding ways to finding ways to give like

me examples are working on a guidance on how to operationalize data protection principles like fairness and transparency could be applied in practice in this context, especially considering migrants children, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups in mind to make sure that no one is left behind and everyone can enjoy their right to data protection.

**Liz**  14:52
Thank you so much. And can you please explain to our audience why it is so important to enable said Since the ability to exercise their right to data protection,

**Ayca, Head of the National Data Protection Agency**  15:04
sure, again, great questions. Thank you for that. So protecting data means actually protecting people themselves. So data protection laws are important because they can empower people, prevent harmful data practices, limit data exploitation. And they're also crucial for individuals to have strong rights over their data, their agency, and actually very basically enjoyed their fundamental right to data protection itself. So data protection principles, like fairness especially means like balancing the already existing power as symmetries and imbalances between people like data subjects, and organizations, other players, and since we are today talking about ethical cities, I think it is also important to consider the crucial role of data protection in the context of embedding rights and values into the system's cities, since data protection and privacy discourse, especially protection by the fourth and by design, principles, concepts, could inform ethical design in digital cities context, as well. Thank you very much for your questions.

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  16:21
Thank you for such a thoughtful answer. I'm moving on to Ryan. Next, what were the key values you considered when engaging with the citizens of Bangkok?

**Ryan, Urban Ethicist**  16:31
into this? For the question, I think having gone to the Bangkok and also interviewing, doing research over there, we know that there are certain sort of ethical values that that can formulate for the city, and in Bangkok, where it's so diverse and so dynamic, get so fragmented and unequal across different structures and generations of society. So the key things that Sophie does in much of it comes in the form of inequality, and also the poor access accessibility. So in terms of inequality, one major issue I think Bangkok, is seen to have comes in the form of urban fragility, and that stems a lot from the inequality that has emerged itself. And this can come in the form of wealth inequality, spatial segregations, poor urban planning, traffic congestion, and even in turn, and, for example, one big issue would be in terms of how public service is provided in access by people, or there's a vast difference between how people receive access between those that are public hospitals and clinics versus those that are private sector ones. We've seen also that when it comes to vaccinations that happened for COVID-19. Another important point to bring up as well, is in terms of digital inequality, where we see the divide that exists in terms of digital literacy. But

it's not just between the typical urban rural divide, it's also across generations. And it's a major concern, given that Thailand is now one of the fastest aging countries in the world. And that's something to keep in mind. So this leads to a situation where you see that there's poor resilience and city and there's something that the city needs to reflect more volunteers about the impact it can have on the long term, and what you should do to fix it and make it fairer, equal, resilient, and therefore an ethical society.

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  18:27
Thank you so much for bringing up the topic of resilience, I would like to know why it is so important for us to consider resilience and adoption when considering external factors that impact the city.

**Ryan, Urban Ethicist**  18:40
That's a good point to bring up. And it's an important point, because, for example, the World Bank considers resilience as the ability to withstand, recover from and reorganize in response to a crisis that all members of society may develop or maintain the ability to try. And oftentimes when we think about resilience, we think about the risk exposure vulnerability, oftentimes, it's linked to disasters and the environment. But these sort of aspects can also be applied to a city where if we don't deal with what we consider perhaps as existential issues for the city in the form of inequality and accessibility, we can see that perhaps the city might itself disintegrate not just in physical but also human infrastructure in the city, you know, seeing more heightened sentiment and frailty towards major issues, whether it's political, socio economic or environment, or even as we see in this instance, when it came to COVID were that the society itself, or the city itself was not prepared for the situation or the prices that will come from it and the waves of other issues that came after. So we need to put more thought into how we can build up the city's capacity to adapt to these different shocks whether it's in the form of pandemic or flooding economic downturns and how we can react to it to make sure that it can actually build back better than just going back to the status quo.

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  20:10
Thank you so much for your answer. And thank you to the rest of our panelists for their incredible answers. I would now like to open up the questions to the audience. If you have any questions you'd like to ask the panel, please feel free to ask no need to raise your hand etc. And if you don't have any questions at the moment, I have a few more for our lovely panel. Yes, please feel free to.

**Audience Question**  20:58
Okay, thank you very much for the presentation. I have a question for the governor. I just want to know how much the ethical city 5.0 is somewhat changing the way you're doing politics, and the way you are reflecting about your program and the way you communicate to your audiences.

**Governor Bhu** 21:26

Basically, in the past, we like to do things in the top down approach. But now, in the lens of ethical city, we try to open up, like, open up for participatory approach. We like. we try to open up the input from the public itself by, for example, we open call for proposal for initiative from the public that can participate in the bid plan of the of the of the city as moving towards being a smart city, for example, we let the public submit proposal for design of the streetlights, for example. In the past, we'd like to impose our our thinking, our way of thinking in terms of smart city to the to the city itself, but we tried to open up more.

**Liz, Bangkok Post** 22:37

Thank you for that question. Next, I see. We have a question from Wolfgang Schultz, and then we'll follow straight off with the question from Liz Sylvan.

**Audience Question** 22:49

Yes, an extremely inspiring approach, I must say. And someone on the panel mentioned the rural areas as well. And I would be interested in whether your concept already considers the effects that that bringing Bangkok on a new level in terms of ethical standards, what that actually means for possible mutual learning or even tension between the city and the rural areas. Have you given this some thoughts how the rural areas around Bangkok or how Thailand can profit from from the from the gain and level of ethical urbanism that you have created? would be interested in some thoughts and reflections on that.

**Ryan, Urban Ethicist** 23:49

In go with that, so. But it's not perfect from time, sir, on this. But I think the sort of the comparison with the Rural aspects is also itself thinking about what we usually see in general terms, in terms of learning from how we can sort of build back better in terms of resilience from the rural aspects. I would agree with that aspect to think about, I think there are examples of when, for example, whether the when the pandemic hit or past crisis that happened, we observe some of the fragility that can happen in cities because maybe they don't see it coming or their focus or priorities or in other areas, but for the rural communities, they have a different sort of approach to it. And sometimes that can work better in that sense. So that's something that is worth looking more into, especially in the context of Bangkok maybe, and comparing it with others of rural aspects or even semi urban ones. in how they have different approaches and dealing with resilience, then that could also lead into, for example, thinking about maybe cities or society's capabilities and that sense to deal with them. I think that sort of halfway answers the question, but probably not necessarily Muslim, man. But very helpful. Thank you.

**Audience Question** 25:30

But first, I want to apologize, because I'm running back to back today. And so I will be unfortunately leaving and just want to say what a fantastic presentation this was. But I'll go straight

to my question. Which is, I appreciated how you described the many, many ways the city is composed of individuals who have different ethical structures. And when you have such a context, and you want to think about how to make a decision that will suit multiple parties, what is your approach to engaging your various constituents? And when not if you end up not aligning with all of them? How do you approach that problem?

**Danny, Government Consultant**  26:32
Thank you. So we've started thinking about this very, very issue. And it's, it's really bad how we address contested ideas of what is right and what is wrong. And, and the, the associated, the associated kind of values that come along with making those sorts of decisions. One of the things that we've gone into looking at how we approach, thinking about ethics, and having conversations about ethics was conducting several sorts of values, value based design methodologies. So we looked at ethnographic interviews and observations of participatory design, in design through research to really understand what, what values really means, in the context of different social and cultural structures. One of the ways that we talked about, well, how do we approach it? How do we approach a conversation where different groups should be addressing or moving towards a certain direction? And some of them, I don't think there's really a right answer. So your right answer for that question. And I think that is, because it's so contextual, that it really needs to be thought of based on the context of the situation, but one of the ways we've, we thought about how we would approach this would be identifying, you know, some of the different sort of levels of governance, you've got multi level governance, multi level governance, analyses, as well as things called Sustainable transition studies that have some really interesting governance frameworks around how do we, how do we build something for the moment? How do we build a structure for something like an event for something that happens at a moment that you deal with that, that you deal with that issue in the consequences and then that that structure can then either be dismantled or moved or, or molded into something different to tackle a different problem. So it's kind of got elements of multi level governance sendible transitions, theory, individual actor network theory in it as well. But like I said, I don't think there's a single fight answer for the question, but um, we've, it's something definitely that we've talked about, and, and look at how we can best approach it. And I think it's one of those situations in, in design, where it really is designed through research, you, you kind of learn, learn through through the, through the issues of dealing with your own through the stakeholders that you involve tackling that issues. So hope

**Liz, Bangkok Post**  30:00
Thank you so much for that. I was just looking to see if there's any other audience members who'd like to ask our panel a question. If you have any thoughts you'd like to add, please feel free to just go ahead and ask your question.

**Audience Question** 30:17

Yeah, I have a question on the data protection aspect. There are differences in cyberspace, which you don't see in physical space, such as the invisibility of surveillance, the ability to gather large data sets. So how do you differentiate the ethical challenges in cyberspace as opposed to the ethical challenges in the, you know, the conventions of urban management, which are oriented towards physical space?

**Ayca, Head of the National Data Protection Agency** 30:52
Thank you so much for your question from mankind. Feature question. So how do we differentiate between,

**Audience Question** 31:01
I said cyberspace has some fundamental differences when compared to physical space, the invisibility of surveillance, which is very, very easy in cyberspace, very hard in physical space, the ability to gather large and perfect data sets, the, to use statistical correlations through data mining to dissolve the barrier between the private and the public realm. So with these kinds of challenges, perhaps the ethical issues you're dealing with in cyberspace are very different from those you would deal with and what the conventions of urban management have been, which are oriented towards physical space.

**Ayca, Head of the National Data Protection Agency** 31:45
Thank you so much for your question. In our agency, we solely focus on data protection, that and, and for the urban and the physical spaces that you have mentioned, I will kindly ask my dear friend, Ash, Rihanna, also, to answer together, we have a committee together that we work towards, we have a committee working on different aspects of these issues together. And we also consult we also consult citizens themselves, actually, when we decide on ethical issues, and like on have to decide how to put that how to make that difference, as well, we very much value the participatory design, in that context, as well. But to make that differently, we don't make such a clear difference in any of our guidelines currently, or we don't actually consider currently doing and making that difference in the revision of the data protection laws themselves per se Ashiana. Dear, if you have anything else to add, or Yeah. So for us,

**Aashiyana, Minister of Accessibility and Equality** 33:08
like, so we i So this meant we will only look after like this ministry is only after inequality. And so for private if I would talk about urban privacy and digital privacy. Yes. I think when you gave your presentation, we talked about this aspect as well. So yes, there is a little bit of differentiation. And that does not mean that we look into it completely in a separate way. We go together hand in hand. I did not understand your question completely. So I don't know if I'm answering your question correctly or not. But if you have any specific other question, I'm very happy to answer your question.

**Ayca, Head of the National Data Protection Agency** 33:46

Yeah, yes, the same, especially for V as Ashiana said be particularly worked on inequality and data protection privacy..

**Liz, Bangkok Post** 34:05

Um, we're nearly at time for this discussion. So if we have any final questions from the audience, now's the time to ask them.

**Liz, Bangkok Post** 34:18

If not, I'm going to ask the panel one final question, which is how can we continue working towards a functional ethical city and what other initiatives or plans do you have in place? All right,

**Aashiyana, Minister of Accessibility and Equality** 34:43

let me let me go first. So for our inclusion, because we are saying that we are going to include more people including marginalized communities including migrant workers and everybody so we are planning so the first thing that we found was that inability of people to use the internet. So when we talk about so many different things, there is one simple thing that people are not able to access the internet. So for that we are actually deploying a lot of volunteers that will go out to different parts of the cities, because there is an urban and rural divide, even within the city. Even when we don't look out of the city, we can find slums, right next to a very big building or something. So what we are, what we have decided, is we are going to send out volunteers that would help those people who are marginalized, get connectivity with the internet, and also provide schemes packages that will help them easier to help them to make it easy and accessible to use the internet and also to use the digital services that has been tied up to use the infrastructures in their regular life. That is something that our ministry is looking after.

**Danny, Government Consultant** 36:04

Just in addition to that, at this early stage of the project, one of our main initiatives, or at least one of our main directors is to, we're in the process of conducting boundary critiques. So we're looking at, at the moment, at how we, how we parcel these, these, these elements that we're looking at, in terms of what falls under the category of ethical cities. And then parceling this off into little projects, manageable projects, in which we could go out and start working towards delivering one of the things that we've we've noticed is through other initiatives, and not just within Bangkok, but around the globe, in terms of how they address, dress, you know, they're smart, they're smart city, or just urban initiatives is that there's, there's never a clear indication about how these large projects fail or succeed. However, we always, we always hear of stories of, of how these projects boil over financially and or otherwise, which tends to give you this idea of how we're not planning for these things properly. You tend to sacrifice or you lose, you lose a form of basically, a bit, you sacrifice a bit of the project or a bit of your intent. And that's not what we're trying to do. I don't think we

have the luxury to do that. And I think so, what we're doing is trying to approach this ethical city in a way that we can carefully deliver these initiatives and ensure that we capture everybody, including non-human actors.


**Liz, Bangkok Post**  38:32
I believe that we are at time so please join us next time for our next panel discussion on more updates on Bangkok 5.0.