

THAILAND REPORT:
CONFINTEA V MID-TERM REVIEW

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CHAPTER ONE

LEGAL PROVISIONS

Background

During the past decade, Thailand has achieved Education for All in many respects, including expansion of early childhood care and development and increase in enrolment rates of primary and secondary education. The most remarkable feat was the proclamation of a National Education Act in 1999. The Act has stipulated a substantial change in educational development, for instance, extension of compulsory education from 6-9 years and provision of at least 12 years of basic education for all citizens. However, there remains a need to improve and upgrade students' learning achievement especially the adult learners who live in the rural areas.

Measures for Development

During the past 6 years after the 5th International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) in 1997, Thailand had meanwhile been in the strong struggles and efforts to swiftly recover from the severe economic crisis at the end of the same year. This crisis caused Thailand to reform the main cores that made the country survive, one of which is education system. In 1999, the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (1999) was proclaimed, in which the 3 significant contexts had been changed, namely educational management and structure, learning and financing. These legal measures will indeed serve Thailand to provide people with easier access to education and wider opportunities in terms of not only education for all based on their legal rights but also of all for education.

With regard to educational management and structure, there were lots of big changes, such as a merging of other major Organizations (Ministry of University Affairs and Office of the National Education Commission) into a single Ministry of Education, decentralization of authority to educational service areas, improvement of quality and welfare of teachers, as well as educational personnel.

For learning : curriculum, teaching methods and materials, application of new technologies in education, educational standards and quality assurance had been improved.

Regarding financing, there was mobilization of resources and investment for education.

The key principles for provision of education are education for all, all for education and lifelong learning, which results from a combination of three types of education : formal, nonformal and informal education as identified in the National Education Act of B.E.2542.

It is assured that the legal provisions in the Act will be another thing to make the commitments made in the Hamburg Declaration and in the Agenda for the Future emerge as true essence of education in the Thai society. The great efforts done through various ways result in quality of adult learning as follows:

1. The new Education Act has been designed to maintain and protect the right of all Thai people to education with 12 years free of education. It also places a very strong emphasis on providing education opportunities for all Thai people to obtain basic education, which is a part to help improve quality of life, as well as knowledge and skills for their working application to make them live successfully in their society.

2. Expanding the range of opportunities is also done through a variety of non-formal education programmes and activities for Thai citizen together with the marginal group to serve the present constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand which states that Thai citizens of all ages, regardless of gender, must have access to equal rights and opportunities. Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission (ONFEC), the new name of the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) after the educational reform, is the new body directly responsible for the promotion and development of adult education. With its policies on development of (1) **basic education** involving literacy promotion, basic education equivalency programme and continuing education based on the needs of the target groups (2) education for **occupational development** (3) education for **life skill development** (4) education for **community and social development**, the ONFEC can provide non-formal and informal education to cover the wide range of the disadvantaged groups based on their rights as stated in the constitution. They are, for example, the prison inmates, the disabled, the aged, the ethnic minority groups, i.e. the hilltribes, Thai muslims in the south, the unreached group of people in remote areas, and the Thai people living in the foreign countries who have the rights to learn as general Thai people, etc.

3. The new approaches of teaching and learning with the appropriately applied curriculum to meet the needs of each specific target groups can also enhance more success in their learning. For example, adult learning today will be focused on learner-centered method with the full participation of learners in all activities concerned to benefit them most. Lots of innovative ways in helping the learners to be successful in their lifelong learning with the most easy access to education are

employed. They are, for example, self-learning programmes through the use of electronic media, distance education programme via satellite, learning method with credit transfer among formal, non-formal and informal education, educational quality assurance, accreditation of the learners' experiences, home school programme, home decentralization of educational provision, more cooperation and participation of concerned Gos, NGOs, and private sector at all levels, etc.

CHAPTER TWO

INVESTMENT IN ADULT LEARNING

As mentioned from the foregoing part, Thailand was in the process of dramatic changes in economy, society and politics due to the severe economic crisis at the end of year 1997, a large number of business collapsed with the huge quantity of workers laid off and unemployed. Therefore, the Eight Economic and Social Development Plan B.E. 2540-2545 (A.D. 1997-2001) aimed to the development of human resource, during which time the government, in 1999, proclaimed the National Education Act of B.E.2542 and the education reform has since been mobilized to improve the provision of both quantitative and qualitative educational services. Such dramatic changes in education provision due to the educational reform are, in the mean time, still carried out carefully through the cooperative efforts among various sectoral organizations both of government and NGOs as well as private sectors. Through the reform, the educational administration and management have jointly been undertaken and decentralized to various educational administration organizations and networks at both central and local levels to enable them to manage, to plan and to operate their own educational programmes. This decentralization is seen to help strengthen more empowerment among all educational units/networks. This has helped encourage the feeling of self-reliance and responsibility as well as the development of democratic system at the grassroot level.

Status of investment

In rendering cooperative efforts and investment among GOs and NGOs as well as other voluntary associations and services (i.e. labour, agriculture, health, industry, commerce, defence, etc.), partnership at national and intermediate levels as well as community level have been encouraged to help harmonize activities, utilize resources more effectively, and mobilize additional financial and human resources where necessary. Besides, community associations, cooperatives, and religious bodies also play important roles in supporting and providing adult and non-formal education services. Their expertises, energy and direct relationships with local community and various constituencies are valuable resources. It is obviously, therefore, that adult and non-formal education will strongly rely on the involvement of the NGOs and the private sectors as the pillars of an emerging civil society, and their roles

are not seen as a substitute, but rather as a complement to the role of the government sector because NGOs and private sectors are seen to have more flexibility and are more responsive to local needs than are government agencies. Their capacity to experiment and their lower levels of bureaucracy allow them to formulate alternative adult learning initiatives which reflect everyday realities.

While investment and contributions through the inter-sectoral as well as inter-ministerial cooperation are of significance, the government has until now played a central role in funding adult and non-formal education. However, in response to the worldwide economic recession the government in the past cut down its contribution and had to manage on small budget allocated to adult education, and some adult education programmes had to rely on the supports of NGOs and private sectors as well as international funding institutions. In 1998 fiscal year, for example, the education budget for Thailand was set at 23.1 per cent of the country's total budget – about 4 per cent of GDP. This demonstrated the commitment of the Thai Government towards providing education for the people of Thailand. However, of this funding, the adult and non-formal education received only 1.19 per cent of the country's budget, showing a distinct bias towards formal education in funding programmes. It was considered that many adult learners worked and gained income, which should therefore allow them to pay for their own further education. This had ignored the fact that often the money earned from jobs was barely enough for day-to-day survival of the workers and their families. With a limited budget it was difficult for the non-formal education organization to effectively reach those being unable to afford or have easy access to further education opportunities. Furthermore, 69 per cent of the budget allocated to education was set aside for staff salaries and the rest of the budget was then used for investment and development of equipment, land and construction.

Policies and Strategies in Promoting Public Investment

Despite these obvious financial limitations, adult education in Thailand is still conducted and developed in such an extent that innovative ways are found to overcome low funding constraints. For example, the following activities are in progress:

1. Providing continuing education for those completed grade 6 but lack of opportunity and resources for further education.
2. Providing educational services for the disabled with appropriate curriculum and learning materials.

3. Extending educational opportunities to the general public through knowledge dissemination via radio and television programmes, public libraries, village reading centres, and satellite distance education programme.
4. Promoting self-learning activities through the use of multi-media.
5. Establishing community learning centres in every sub-district.
6. Promoting opportunities and management of educational programmes for the Thai people who lack the opportunity in furthering or completing their basic education but living and working in abroad.

Apart from the aforementioned, numbers of the following programmes/projects are as well in place to improve the investment in and the funding for the adult / non-formal education:

1. Encouraging the participation of the private sectors and other educational partnership. This will be achieved through tax incentives in return for education donations.
2. Establishing a master plan which outlines the roles of government organizations, the private sectors and other educational partnerships.
3. Rendering cooperation and participation as well as ideas and aid among the national and global networks to co-ordinate the management and improvement of educational resources through sharing of educational media.

As adult and non-formal education services are provided by various government agencies apart from the Ministry of Education, their roles can be summarized as follows :

Ministry	Activities
1. Office of the Prime Minister	Organizes educational activities for youth and women for the promotion of arts and culture and national identity as well as consumer protection and narcotics control.
2. Ministry of Defence	Provides academic and professional programmes for enlisted men and service families.
3. Ministry of Interior	Provides academic and professional programmes for local leaders ; sub-district and village headmen, community leaders, public health officers, underprivileged children both in the cities and remote areas, and prisoners.

4. Ministry of Public Health	Provides academic and professional programmes for voluntary health officers in villages as well as organizing various activities to promote quality of life development and provides information to the people.
5. Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	Organizes activities to provide academic and professional programmes relating to agricultural, forestry and fishery development for young farmers, farmers and fishermen.
6. Ministry of Industry	Organizes activities promoting the industrial sector and provides learning opportunities for workers and the general public both in academic and professional programmes.
7. Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Organizes activities for skills development in rural areas, assessment of skills, child and youth welfare, rehabilitation of the disabled, community services, hilltribe welfare, work safety, etc.
8. Ministry of Transport and Communication	Organizes educational activities promoting traffic safety and provides knowledge for drivers as well as hostesses for public transport.
9. Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment	Provides knowledge relating to the use of toxic chemicals, pollution control, technology transfer, environmental quality promotion, environmental training and research, and public relation promotion.
10. Ministry of Commerce	Organizes educational activities relating to internal commercial affairs to increase the income of people in rural areas as well as business promotion and development.
11. Ministry of Justice	Provides academic and professional programmes including information and knowledge concerning Juvenile and Family Court affairs, as well as organize activities for criminal control.
12. Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Organizes activities promoting educational opportunities for Thai residents overseas.
13. Ministry of Finance	Provides knowledge relating to giving credit to farmers in order to increase their productivity and income as well as passing on new agricultural technologies.

14. Ministry of University Affairs	Provides educational services, both academic and professional programmes, including quality of life promotion to the people and communities.
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Cost and Finance in Education

As regards the cost and investment in education, the sources of educational finance in Thailand mainly come from central government budget, while other sources come from local funding, non-governmental budget, foreign loans and technical assistance, and provision of education by private sector. As for the central government budget, the education sector has actually received the largest share of total public expenditure for a decade. For example, in the fiscal year 2000, the government support for education has reached 25.7 per cent of the total budget. The budget appropriation proposed for consideration for the fiscal year 2001 was reduced to 24.4 per cent of the total budget with the higher amount of 221,649 million Baht. The largest amount of education funding in 2000 was allocated to pre-primary and primary education, amounting to 44 per cent. At secondary education level, with 23.5 per cent of the total public expenditure for education, general education received a larger share while vocational education was provided with a smaller portion, and the shares of higher education was 15.6 per cent, while non-formal education was only 1.3 per cent. Same as in the year 2000, the highest percentage distribution of the educational budget proposed in the budget bill for the fiscal years 2001 and 2002 was for pre-primary and primary education, while non-formal education received only 1 per cent. Private education, in the other hand, has played a significant role in relieving the government burden on financial resources for education. Considering the provision of general education, the private sector is found to help save a large amount of government budget.

In the fiscal year 2003, budget expenditure is 999,900 million baht which is a decrease of 23,100 million baht or 2.3 per cent lower than that of FY 2002 and which is equivalent to 17.5 per cent of GDP. The Ministry of Education itself receives the highest budget allocation, a total of 158,425.5 million baht to provide quality educational services at all levels which will lead to a knowledge-based society and to administer and foster religions arts and culture and strengthen them as a core in developing people's morals and ethics on the basis of Thai cultural identity. Out of the Ministry of Education's budget, the Department of Non-Formal Education which undertake the responsibility of adult / non-formal education receives an allocation of 3,621.3 million baht. In terms of social development activities which are under

responsibilities of several ministries, the government has allocated an amount of 458,987.7 million baht, equivalent to 45.9 per cent of the total budget of social development activities, poverty resolving and upgrading quality of life in which the government will emphasize educational reform and personal enhancement. Education will be equitable and transfer new body of knowledge to the society in order to upgrade the country. Private sector, community and local organizations will be encouraged to participate in education provision. Education organs will be supported in becoming autonomous and upgrading the production of human resources to be conscientious and knowledgeable in meeting society's needs and being competitive in the world arena. Religious education will be provided to Buddhist monks along with the fostering of religions. The government will also provide arts and cultural learning centres. Workers will be given training to upgrade their skills while Thai overseas workers' interests will be protected. Family institution, community and private organizations will be encouraged to take part in preventing, rehabilitating and resolving the narcotic problems and protecting of safety in life and properties of people.

CHAPTER THREE

INCREASING PARTICIPATIONS

Thailand has realized that education can provide an opportunity for human beings to improve their quality of life and enable them to live together in peace and harmony. Education will make them to be capable of adjusting themselves under different circumstances and in changing society. Consequently, development in various aspects such as social, economic, politic, education, environment, science and technology have given pressure to upgrading and developing basic knowledge of the people. Furthermore, these developments also encourage to have a new concept, Education For All, with more emphasis on the responsiveness to basic learning needs of human beings and a more self-development in a continuous and qualitative way. In this regard, the Thai government provides policy for life long education resulting from integration of formal, non-formal and informal education. Section 11 and 12 of 1999 National Education Act states that parents, guardians, state, private person, local administrations, organizations, individuals, families, community organizations, private organizations, enterprises, which are the stakeholders, should provide life long education and continuous development of knowledge and learning processes.

Participation in Adult Education and Life Long Learning

Through the Office of Non-Formal Education Commission (ONFEC) the following measures have been developed for the promotion of adult education and lifelong learning :

1. Conducting research, planning and development: intensive study and conducting survey.
2. Providing the policies, strategies and implementing.
3. Developing curriculum, educational materials and measurements
4. Conducting adult education and life long learning for the people
5. Promoting, supporting, co-operating various programmes on life long education for different target groups.
6. Setting standard, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of adult/lifelong education.

All stakeholders are as well encouraged to participate in following programmes to provide adult education and life long learning to the target groups in the country:

1. Identifying goals for the target groups, areas and setting policy development together among stakeholders.
2. Implementing plan according to the principle/idea of all stakeholders and encouraging individuals to participate.
3. Raising awareness and encouraging the services and participation among stakeholders for strengthening and continuing the cooperation.
4. Sharing experiences and information as well as learning, together and rendering cooperation among themselves.
5. Implementing / conducting the programmes as planned.

Learning Network

To increase knowledge and ability of the people, the Thai government provides educational policies through National Education Act 1999, section 18 (3) to establish learning centers throughout the country. It aims to increase the people's knowledge and ability in performing their developmental activities for their community and society. In addition, the Act emphasizes on mobilization of cooperation among public, private sectors, families, enterprises and local wisdom. It encourages the stakeholders to play an important role in the management of sub-districts and life long education that meets the requirement of the community. In line with this educational policy, in 2003, a number of 7,706 community learning centers in 7,232 sub-districts have been established in all districts with participation of various organizations, public and private sectors. These centers are providing opportunities for life long education in the communities and are the places for the people to exchange experiences, knowledge and local wisdom. These centers also introduce new technologies and thoughts. Teaching aids, printed materials, radio, TV satellite receivers, computers etc, are used to facilitate education and for familiarity. In addition, these centers are responsible for organizing activities in life long education as required by individuals and groups. Resulting from establishment of community learning centers, education management with community participation has been continuously developing with an increasingly wider coverage and all stakeholders are participating jointly in developing learning network which improves a better quality of life of the people in community.

Life Long Education by the Government and Stakeholders

The government together with Stakeholders have considered the following measures as of most important for providing lifelong education programmes to serve the Thai people all over the country:

1. To ensure the universal right to literacy and basic education, the Thai government strongly emphasizes on providing education opportunities for all target groups. Varieties of basic education programmes are designed to serve the people and to improve the quality of life and to live successfully in society. It provides knowledge and skills for application in work and in general living. Basic education is designed for the people to get jobs, to achieve self-reliance and self-development, to live with merit and dignity and to participate effectively in their society.
2. For coping with changing environment of working places, the vocational education and training programmes are provided to the people to develop skills and for becoming an entrepreneur and a paid worker. So it is needed to develop consistently with the changing environment, and also must be responsive to the needs of communities at the local level, for unemployment and for the people moving back to the villages and small towns after being made redundant. Community business people and the other type of workers are considered to be served to improve the skills and management of the entrepreneur for the quality of life.
3. Informal education service has been designed to provide the informal service or life long learning so that the people can seek up-to-date knowledge and state – of – the – art information technology which are necessary for their living and also improving the quality of life to adapt themselves in rapidly changing technological society.
4. Continuing education programme has also been designed to provide people having no chance to study formal education with educational opportunity to gain their knowledge.
- 5.

Motivation of Stakeholders

Nowadays, information technology intensely impacts on all dimensions of the life. Government has been promoting the information technology in the industrial sector and in the agricultural fields. People are becoming more self-reliance as they do not longer rely on the

government. Both public and private sectors are placing emphasis on communities as a starting point for economic changes.

For increasing participation of the stakeholders in life long education programmes, the Thai government provides the policies and strategies for getting their motivation in section 13 and 14 of 1999 National Education Act. Laws and administrative regulations are as follows:

1. State supports for gaining knowledge and competencies in bringing up and providing education for their children under their care
2. State supports for provisions of basic education
3. Tax rebates or exemptions for educational expenditures

Lifelong Education by Ministry of Education through Non-Formal Education Department

Resulting from the plans and policies set forth for development of adult and non-formal education, the government through Ministry of Education, in 2002, had accomplished the services and implementation of adult/non-formal education as follows :

Programmes/activities	Numbers of target beneficiaries
Hill area education	82,242
Functional literacy programme	64,898
Primary education	186,127
Lower secondary education	904,634
Upper secondary education	746,152
Non-formal occupational certificate	53,534
Vocational certificate programme	10,774
Vocational short-courses	504,506
Interest-group programmes	222,253
Education for disabilities	6,918
Food generation for out-of-school	29,678
Literacy promotion programmes	150,000
Public libraries development	9,767,979
Village reading centre promotion	70,586,531

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF ADULT EDUCATION

During the past 6 years, a variety of research studies on adult and non-formal education were conducted by the Department of Non-Formal Education. The followings are the outstanding and innovative studies which the NFE Department has recognized as the productive models to be continued for the benefit of the out-of-school disadvantaged who have less opportunity in formal education :

1. Non-Formal Education Elephant Delivery Project

Project strategies

This project has been commenced since the early of 2002. It aims to promote literacy among the disadvantaged hill people at Omkoi district in Chiang Mai , one of the northern provinces in Thailand. The activities of the project are designed to support the NFE volunteer teachers to have capability of organizing literacy promotion activities in the target areas which cover 48 villages. The project employs 4 elephant delivery teams working in the target villages providing non-formal education for 1,595 illiterates. Accompanied with the elephant project team are 2 elephants, 2 elephant riders, an elephant care taker, a NFE supervisor, a local volunteer teacher who knows the tribal language, a vocational teacher and a public health worker.

In Omkoi District, more than 20 elephants are employed to plough the paddy fields or carry logs, rice grains, cash crops, and other materials. After the regular ploughing season, the elephants will be employed to carry learning materials for the literacy promotion project to the villages.

To facilitate the literacy learning the project develops literacy materials for 8 tribal groups which can be used in accordance with the learning of the Thai alphabets. The learning curriculum is comparable to grade 2 level. The project also developed a thin metal board to be used as the chalkboard for practicing writing. This is quite durable than a slate as the latter can be broken easily while transporting in rough terrain.

The teaching starts with the local/tribal teacher assisting the NFE teacher in explaining the content in the people's tribal language.

Under the project, the NFE teachers going with the elephants conduct the following activities :

- Organizing group meeting with the local people, sometime in the form of public forum.
- Organizing recreational activities, such as singing, playing games and local plays.
- Exhibiting pictures and information on health, nutrition, environment, drug, HIV/AIDS, etc.
- Conducting training of vocational skills such as vegetables growing, chicken and pig raising, hair cutting, etc.

Beside literacy learning, the project also provides other learning materials for young children to promote their abilities and skills in learning, while the adults are participating in the NFE activities. The project also provides educational entertainment materials, such as CD, VCD and TV programmes via satellite.

To cover all identified target villages, each elephant team will commute from one village to another by spending about 2-3 days per each village. Each routh trip handles about 7-8 villages. Therefore, it takes each elephant team about 18-20 days to complete a routh trip. After completing each round, the NFE staff repeat the same circle once again. There are several committees working for the NFE Elephant Delivery Project. At the Chiang Mai NFE Centre, there are five people working for the project at the project office. There are an academic support team comprising 12 staff members from the Provincial NFE Centre to support the works of the project. At the district level, the Omkoi District NFE Service Centre appointed an operational team of 15 people comprising NFE volunteer teachers, vocational teachers, and local tribal teachers. The team will be supervised by the Director of Omkoi Distruct NFE Service Centre.

Project achievement

There are several favourable signs of achievement found after one year of commencement. Firstly, the strategies employed have been able to provide access to education for the neglected disadvantaged people. Secondly, the project has been able to involve the people in the community and make use of local resources for organizing educational activities for the people in the remote rural areas. There are also up to 2,410 illiterates or about 40 per cent of the target population participating in the literacy promotion activities. From the on-going assessment, there are 410 people who have passed the literacy test and become literate. The

project has, to some extent, satisfactorily promoted literacy among the people in the target areas. The project, so far, has achieved its goal and in line with its success, the project was awarded a UNESCO's Noma Literacy Prize Honourable Mention Award on September 2002.

2. Project for Development of Non-Formal Education for the Disadvantaged children and Adults With Difficult Circumstances : a Case Study of a Slum Community along the Railroad in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand

Project Strategies

A slum community on the railroad sides in Nakhon Ratchasima Metropolitan area, one of the northeastern provinces with a great number of disadvantaged children and adults was selected for the conduct of this study in 2000. The study is a part of the multi-organizations' concerted project to create a nice-living community. The study was meant to examine the general conditions of the community, and the NFE programmes implemented in the community. The research study concentrates on the development outcomes resulting from the provision of 3 types of non-formal education programmes : the general education, vocational training and informal education through information services.

The target population are that of 284 people in 127 families along the railway sides slum area. The study's expected outcomes were to be able to learn the basic non-formal education needs of the target people at the target areas, and to help promote the quality of life of the target people as well as to enable them to have the abilities in learning and earning a living through their self-help and self-reliance.

Sample of the study were representatives of each of the 127 households in the area. Household survey was employed to get an overview of the community, whereas report of the NFE activities together with additional informal interview was used as a method for data collection. Simple frequency and percentage were used to analyze the quantitative data, and qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis.

Project achievements

The study suggested that the people still lived in poor environmental conditions, and most had no access to basic infrastructure, such as electricity and clean drinking water. In terms of non-formal education programmes, there were still a small number of disadvantaged

children and adults participating in basic education programmes. However, there were quite a few participating in vocational and skills training courses were able to utilize the new skills to earn a living with minimum income.

Based on the analysis of the initial study, a few points were proposed as recommendations for project improvement and for other development project working with community people :

1. Development of the community has to a holistic approach and coordination among concerned agencies, government and NGOs. If concerned agencies developed their action plans and implement the activities in concerted maner, greater effect can be expected.
2. The community learning centre should be used as a focal point for organizing educational and developmental activities. There is no need for each development organization to set up a centre for implementing its own development activities.
3. The learning contents have to be relevant to the daily life conditions of the target people. If the main concern of trhe community people is to earn a living , the activity should be income-generation or occupation oriented.
4. A close collaboration among concerned agencies has to be sought to maximize the effectiveness of the project activities.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROFESSIONALIZATION OF ADULT FACILITATORS

Today, non-formal/adult education still plays an integral part in the national education system based on the National Education Act of B.E. 2542. Most of activities are organized through the District NFE Centres and Community Learning Centres (CLCs) in almost every sub-district scattering around the country, with the aim to promote community participation in educational provision through the collaboration among concerned local administration organizations. At the local level, volunteer teachers and facilitators are still the major part in running and undertaking NFE programmes/activities. They, therefore, must be well trained for 3-5 days before working as well as in-service training by the Provincial NFE Centres to make them have good understandings, necessary skills and knowledge on various matters concerning teaching and learning, curriculum, philosophy, media and materials, etc. which will be of great benefits to various kinds of target groups. The strategy used for training them to get community cooperation and participation is to deal with 7 steps as follows:

- Step I : “Pai Soo” (go to the people)
- Step II : “Yoo Duay” (stay with the people, not to be stranger)
- Step III: “Chuay Kid” (think with the people, as a member of the Group, not as an expert)
- Step IV: “Jit Prasarn” (plan with the people)
- Step V : “Ngan Dern” (operate with the people)
- Step VI: “Pra Mern Phon” (evaluate with the people)
- Step VII: “Prachachon Tum Tor” (leave the continuing activities in the hands of the people to enable them to be self-reliance in their way of life)

In addition, at the central office, educators must be well equipped with necessary capability, skills and knowledge in today digital world to have wider visions, up-to-date knowledge/information in terms of self-lifelong learning through various kinds of training : distance training through multi-media, face to face training for administrators and educators or have further studies in the educational institutions so that they can seek more and more appropriate ways in developing adult education work at the national and international levels with more efficiency.

Presently, the Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission (ONFEC) has personnel engaged in adult and non-formal education tasks as follows :

Types of personnel	Numbers of personnel
Illustrators	2,833
Civil Servants	1,209
Full-time employees	1,833
Part-time employees	1,214
Total	7,089

Types of facilitators	Numbers of facilitators
NFE volunteer teachers - Low land : 3,518 - High land : 874	4,392
CLCs facilitators	5,917
Occupational Certificate facilitators	1,477
Vocational Certificate facilitators	421
Total	11,920

Apart from educational personnel development, training of the important mechanism to other personnel concerned must be encouraged which will allow full participation of community organization. They are, for example, entrepreneur training, local administration organization training, etc.all of whom will undertake the role as the change agents at the local level.

CHAPTER SIX

ADULT LEARNERS EMPOWERMENT

Rights of Learners

According to the National Education Act of 1999, all individuals shall have equal rights and opportunity to receive basic education provided by the state for the duration of at least 12 years. Such education, provided on a nationwide basis, shall be of good quality and free of charge. Therefore, persons with physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, communication and learning deficiencies; those with physical disabilities, or the cripples; or those unable to support themselves; or those destitute or disadvantaged; shall have the rights and opportunities to receiving basic education.

The learner driven approach

The new education act believes that all learners are capable of learning and self-development. Learners are the centre of all educational activities. Provisions have been made for educational institution to formulate their own institutional curriculum to ensure that the needs of the learners and the needs of localities are met. Learners are encouraged to pursue their own course of study to satisfy their needs and situations. The primary role of the teacher is to facilitate adult learners to learn at their pace and to the best of their potentiality. The learners always have a say in the selection of the contents of study. In some cases, learners themselves, with the help of facilitators, design their own curriculum.

The curriculum

The Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission has developed a curriculum framework for basic education. There are three major categories of subject areas : basic subjects, life experiences, and quality of life improvement. Basic subjects include Thai, mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Life experiences includes social/community development, health education, arts, and career and information technology. Quality of life improvement requires learners to engage in social work or self-development activities. Besides, learners are required to conduct a project work for each of the subject taken. This gives learners the opportunity to put what they have learned into practice.

As stated earlier, educational institutions develop their own curriculum under the national framework. It is always the case that local

culture and contents are well addressed. Local wisdom and resources are integrated into the learning process. Integrative approach and team teaching are encouraged, as opposed to teaching each subject area in isolation.

Teacher training

Traditionally, teachers concentrated on transferring the substance of knowledge to the learners with teacher-oriented approach. At present, attempts have been made to develop teaching efficiency of the teachers by shifting to learner-centered approach. Learners learn how to think, to act, and to solve problems of their own. Teachers are encouraged to serve as facilitators, counsellor who give learners some advise on how to learn by themselves from printed media, public libraries, learning centres and local wisdom.

National assessment systems

To ensure the national standards and improvement of the education quality at all levels, the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment was established to take care of the external quality assurance. Each individual educational institution is responsible for its own internal quality assurance. All educational institutions receive external quality evaluation at least once every five years.

Adult learning outcomes assessment is the full responsibility of individual educational institution. Apart from the proficiency in each subject area, the learners, as a requirement for their graduation, must be assessed to the following areas : the quality of life improvement, the institutional criteria for desired characteristics of the learners, and the language proficiency test. For the quality of life improvement, learners are required to take part in either social work or self-development activities. The desired characteristics, approved by the institution board, focus on the moral and value aspects of the learners. Meanwhile, the language proficiency test assesses the reading, writing, thinking and analytic skills of the learners.

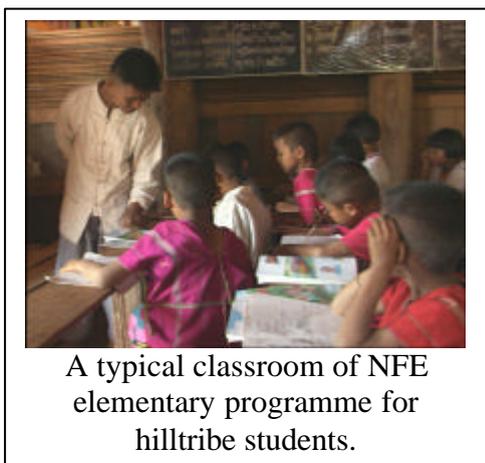
Furthermore, during the last semester, learners are required to take a national test to see the overall performance of the learners as well as the performance of the educational institution.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BEST PRACTICES AND INNOVATIONS

1. Bi-lingual literacy programme the Pwo Karen Hilltribe in Omkoi District of Chiang Mai Province, Thailand: A pilot project under cooperation of Department of Non-formal Education, SIL and UNESCO APPEAL

Reaching marginalized groups, such as rural poor villagers and ethnic minority, is currently an important task of UNESCO APPEAL. Manual of learning material development for ethnic minority had been prepared and training for policy makers and practitioners from 8 countries had been done. National pilot projects had consequently been developed and partially supported by UNESCO APPEAL. Bi-lingual approach becomes new framework for these projects to i.e. mother tongues would be learned first so that learners can have bridge for facilitating of national language learning. By having experience on their own writing systems, minorities would be strongly empowered, and able to better preserve their cultural heritages.



A typical classroom of NFE elementary programme for hilltribe students.

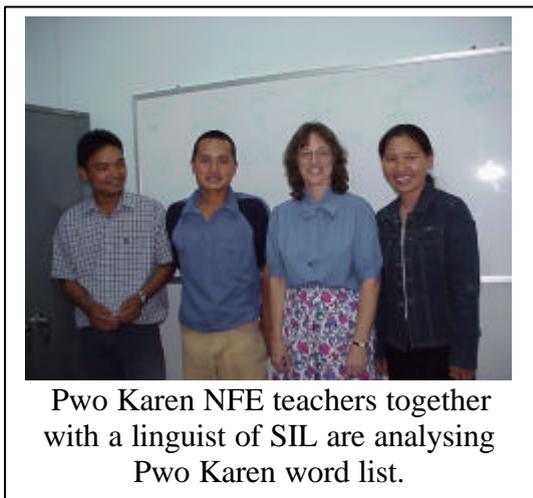
In Thailand, learning Thai language is one of requirements for hilltribe students of non-formal elementary education programme, and used as instruction language. Due to lacking of appropriate language environment, i.e. in some hilltribe villages no one can even speak Thai, most students face several troubles and cannot proceed well enough in this learning situation. This pilot project is aimed at finding ways to facilitate

learning of hilltribe learners though bi-lingual approach. Villagers of Pwo Karen hilltribe of Omkoi District, Chiang Mai Province are identified as the target learners. They have no scripts for representing their own writing system.

Through a close cooperation with SIL, the most active international agency with expertise on preserving of languages of minorities, the working team have learned a great deal on linguistic analysis of Pwo Karen oral language, developing of alphabetical chart by using Thai scripts, developing of learning materials and teacher training.

The working team had firstly visited 2 Pwo Karen villages in the area of Omkoi District, then on 3-7 March 2003 a workshop for

development of community survey instrument and plan of field data collection was organized. The second workshop on phonemic analysis of Pwo Karen was done on 10-14 March 2003. The findings of previous research on Pwo Karen in Srisawat District, Kanchanaburi Province and Hot District, Chiang Mai Province, were used as the basis for collecting words to illustrate the Omkoi Pwo Karen sound system. About 360 words were selected for identifying the consonants, vowels and tones of Omkoi Pwo Karen. Three NFE Pwo Karen teachers of hilltribe learning centers from Omkoi District were the key informants.



Pwo Karen NFE teachers together with a linguist of SIL are analysing Pwo Karen word list.

On 17-19 March 2003, the word list was brought to the target Pwo Karen village in Omkoi District for revalidating with local Pwo Karen. A sample of passage, using Thai alphabet for representing a short oral folktale, was written. Also, samples of additional vowel sounds were recorded for doing further acoustic analysis. Pwo Karen Alphabet design Workshop was held on 12-24 May 2003. The purpose of this workshop was to determine Thai

scripts needed to represent Pwo Karen phonemes. Participants were asked to write stories in Pwo Karen using the designated scripts. Then, the scripts which suitably represented the Pwo Karen sounds were identified in the stories. Options for the representations of Pwo Karen sounds not found in Thai were presented and discussed. The Pwo Karen then made decisions on what scripts could represent their special sounds well enough. They also tested their new writing system by writing a list of words for each consonant and vowel. These lists were checked by the Pwo Karen and made correction. Problems were discussed as they came up and changes to the writing system were made as necessary.

During May 26 – July 18, 2003, collection of information on cultural themes and the village calendar by the Pwo Karen students with the help of Pwo Karen adults in Nong Ung Tai village was made. On July 21- August 1, 2003, curriculum development workshop was organized. The target learners would be adults (17-35 years of age) who are interested in language study and have time to participate learning group at night. Learning materials called "Big Books", which can be used for weekly instruction, were developed. The contents were derived from ways of living of Pwo Karen community. Text typing, using of Thai scripts from the designated alphabet chart, and illustrations had been made by NFE Pwo Karen teachers. Weekly and daily teaching plans were

also recommended for the NFE Pwo Karen teachers who were assigned to try out at the two pilot sites. Teacher training will be organized afterwards.

The first writer workshop will be held at both Pwo Karen villages on October 2003. Participants will be villagers who have enough basic reading and writing skills, be interested in Pwo Karen language preservation and have experience in this new bi-lingual literacy programme. They will have chance to practice producing booklets, poster, and other printed materials themselves. Later, it is hopeful that they can compile Pwo Karen-Thai dictionary and set up their own village library as a cultural place for collecting all kinds of stories of the community, written or printed in their own writing system.

Computer, printer and digital camera will be available for teachers and Pwo Karen learners as soon as possible so that they can have better chance to explore producing materials together. At the same time they can gradually develop computer literacy skill. Report on project evaluation and model of bi-lingual literacy programme for hilltribe community will be finalized next year.

Learning experience from this project will have serious impact on revision of NFE curriculum for hilltribes, learning material development and teacher training as well as reconsidering of literacy programmes for other ethnic minorities of Thailand.

2. Development of a learning family: Case of Na Noi



Na Noi and her family.

Ban Lim Tong of Nang Rong District, Buriram Province is similar to other rural villages of the northeastern region of Thailand. Main income of the villagers is from growing rice and raising live stock. They take a great risk on agriculture practices since they have no suitable irrigation system and no negotiation power on marketing.

Mrs. Sanit Tipnangrong (Na Noi) was born 38 years ago in a poor family and married with a poor man in this village. The family worked very hard for a long time, but its economic situation was never improved. Debt has been increased accordingly due to inadequate income for family consumption and further investment, and having no specific plan for debt reduction. She needed somebody to help her in such a hopeless situation.

Started in 1998, Suksapatana Foundation and other partners, including NFE Department, send volunteer teachers who had special training on

Constructionism of Professor Seymour Papert of MIT Media Lab to work with Na Noi (at the time she finished only grade 4 of local elementary school). They had encouraged her to keep record of her reflection on family difficulties so that they would have concrete data for analyzing root causes of family poverty.

One thing both sides were able to agree upon was that she needed to learn about production planning. Thus, they started to identify time schedule and money needed to invest for each vegetable plot the family grew for sale. That was quite right start. Then, the second question came to her, i.e. how much money she could get from growing vegetable and how she spent the available money. Production planning was thus extended to financial family planning, i.e. Na Noi started family bookkeeping system herself. Details of daily income and expenditure items were cumulatively recorded. The book then became a "learner-generated learning materials". A scheme of expenditure classification was also set for benefit of financial analysis. At the end of each month, she calculated and compared all expenditure types and brought to family discussion. Family members spent time to look at the objective financial data and analyzed how high amount of each type of expenditure, how reasonable it was, who should be responsible for some unreasonable expenditure items, for example buying canned coffee instead of using instant coffee. Also, they discussed about how to reduce some types of expenditures and monitored family financial situation accordingly. Through this learning process, Na Noi can supply objective and transparent financial data for the benefit of family learning. She also had chance to practice literacy skills everyday. In addition, she became role model of her children with regard to family and personal financial planning. Better mutual understanding and joining effort among her family members for the benefit of eradicating family poverty was predominantly observed.

However, manual classification of expenditure at the end of each month was time consuming, unable to check and having little room for creating more flexible classification scheme. Thus, computer skill was needed. A computer set and training of Microsoft Excel use was then provided for Na Noi at her house. She then had a good chance to continuously practice with the teachers and use new technology as a tool for her family learning. She found herself that financial data could be analyzed a lot faster than before, and represented in more understandable forms. She could do forecast income and expenditure of each month throughout the year and show line graph for using as reference for comparing with actual data compiled at each month. Income, expenditure and also expected risks of rice and various types of vegetable production can be also

compared so that her family can use for making more reasonable decisions on future production plan.

When Internet access was later set up at her house, she had better chance to connect to some external agencies and ask for needed information. She can also provide advice and exchange experience with other villagers who had similar problems and interest.

Currently, Na Noi and her daughter can handle a mini-computer club at her house well enough. She can teach children and youth in her village basic computer skill, especially how to use Microsoft Excel for analyzing of family financial records. She is still active in providing support for neighbors who are trying to overcome similar family troubles. She also tries to involve in several kinds of community development activities such as setting up community retail store, organizing youth club and housewife group, disseminating relevant information through village broadcasting station, and organizing study visits in order to learn new things from other communities.

Through this learning process, Na Noi and her family members can develop gradually a new mindset which is necessary for fighting poverty problem. She had created her own "live curriculum", i.e. learn some skills necessary for solving her family problems, learn at the right time and with teachers who know well enough about learning process and eager to learn something unknown with her. On January 2003, Na Noi can declare that her family has no more any debt, and need no intensive care as in the past. She hopes to live peacefully her family life on the basis of sustainable economic system guided by the King.

3. Development of a learning community: case of Ban Samkha

Poverty reduction can be effectively managed at community level. Villagers of Ban Sikh, Mae Ta District, Lampang Province wondered that after 20 years of government-led community development why economic situation of their community could not be improved. Almost households had considerable debt. Thus, they needed to know how much debt all 152 households (656 inhabitants) had, where it came from and how to help each other to overcome such community pressure. At the first community debt survey, it was surprisingly found that total debt was about 18 million Baht. It was a lot higher than previous expectation and brought a great deal of pressure to the whole community. Started in 2001, through the whole village meeting which is the most important mechanism of community decision making process, they decided to do research, which aimed at solving the problem themselves, by forming a research team of 14 members led by village headman. Every household then kept records of all daily income and expenditure. A scheme of data classification was decided. At the end of each month a research

committee, together with 10-14 households under his/her responsibility, analyzed group data and then the whole community data would be consolidated by research team. Community income and expenditure data were reported to the village meeting and discussed for finding suitable ways of expenditure reduction and income increment. By considering on expenditure side, some new occupations had been emerged and some villagers had new chances for making additional income. This cannot be done in case of doing bookkeeping at individual household like Na Noi's. Also, they can realize gradually that debt was mainly the consequence of inappropriate mindsets and ways of living, especially relying too much on materials advertised through mass media during the last 20 years. By comparing monthly income and expenditure, they can expect at what time of the year they need to find out extra income for covering the increased costs. The most important learning experience was that they need more knowledge on management, not money or materials from the government, for solving the poverty problem.

Children and youth were the prime movers of Ban Samkha village to explore learning about computer and internet. They needed the new technology for benefit of their school education, while adult people were not willing to spend more money on this matter. Finally, Samkha Constructionism Lab, equipped with some used computer and internet, can be established at the village elementary school through continuous support provided by Suksapatana Foundation, Siam Cement Group and NFE Department. It turns out that the Lab becomes learning center for all. School students and teachers can take benefit during day time. Youth club takes charge of the Lab during after school hours and weekends on the basis of who use who pay, naturally at affordable level. By taking such responsibility, they also had a great chance to practically learn about "management".

At the beginning, adult villagers did not see any advantages of the new technology. A school teacher and her students had tried several measures to motivate them, i.e. doing paper works for village headman, finding some interesting information from internet and disseminating through village broadcasting station, and offering free computer training for everyone. However, there was no satisfactory result.

There were 3 activities which nearly all villagers participated, i.e. community retail store, village trust fund and bookkeeping as mention earlier. When the transactions became bigger, the community needed help from a professional accountant to revise the existing bookkeeping system. Siam Cement (Lampang) Ltd., National Electronics and Computer Technology and NFE Department have then cooperatively developed 3 packages of computer software and provided training for local children and youth and then ask them to train some responsible persons later. This

was the starting point for adult villagers to see computer as a functional tool for improving community work effectiveness.

Mrs. Nari Inmapan (Na Tim) has only grade 2 certificate from school and keeps telling others that she is an illiterate. She is recognized as a diligent and honest person. Thus, she was selected by committee of



Prime Minister Dr. Taksin Shinawatra is discussing with Na Tim and her daughter at Samkha Constructionism Lab

community retail store to take responsibility as its manager some years ago. After trying so hard to keep record of all transactions and calculate annual dividend for all members, her literacy skills have been improved tremendously. Her daughter had shown her that a new bookkeeping computer programme can be used for improving her manual work. Then, she started her personal and meaningful learning from her daughter. Currently, she can use the programme herself

well enough.

By realizing that a low-educated woman like Na Tim can learn and use computer skill well, more villagers come to the Lab and spend their convenient times to learn new skill from their children.

Children and youth can gain gradually self-confidence through such management experience. Later, they had chance to organized several camps themselves, i.e. English, homework and Lanna (local dialect) camps. They have created new activities such as Brain Bank (using donated money for constructing knowledge through practicing roles of young entrepreneurs) and Meditation center. They are also participating actively in the process of creating community bank and long-stay service which is every new to this rural community. Adults accept more their capability and increasingly need their involvement in community affairs.

Actually, there are several external partners involved in this process of community learning. The villagers need continuous support, but it should be provided at the right time and amount so that they can keep improving their own capability and spirit of self-reliance. Thus, suitable coordination among internal and external facilitators become a key factor for creating of learning environment for all.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FUTURE ACTION FOR 2009

ICT for adult education:

Based on ICT National Master Plan (2002-2006), Thailand will become the center of ICT development and business in the region, especially in the area of software development. Entrepreneurs as well as majority of Thai people have widely and fairly access to data from various service systems and use directly for value-added production and service of all branches, especially in ICT, for the upgrading of competitiveness advantages and keeping of survival opportunity in the world market and for creation of knowledge-based and learning society. Thai people are able to apply ICT for serving needs of quality of life improvement and social security. Attention to human resource development by applying ICT in the area of education and training, and strengthening of rural community for achieving of sustainable national development are the main national target.

Some national strategies mentioned below indicates important support factors for extending of non-formal and informal education services in the near future.

Equity of access to ICT infrastructures:

- having high speed telephone line (at least 32 kilobits/second) in every village, at least 4 telephone numbers within 2005
- users at provincial level have access to ICT network at speed of 2 megabits/second within 2006
- providing of high speed network service at a fair price in every province within 2005
- more than 70% of people in disadvantaged areas have enough access to ICT within 2006
- setting up a community ICT service center in every sub-district within 2006
- at least 300,000 teachers have access and use ICT for teaching within 2006, whereby 70% of them are teachers working in rural communities
- having at least 1 community radio station in each province and 1 community television station within 2006

Understanding of ICT advantages:

- at least 70% of labor forces can get access to ICT and at least 40% of them can search data from Internet within 2006

- at least 90% of new school leavers are able to use ICT within 2006
- every sub-district can be able to provide contents and information about its own local wisdom for disseminating through Internet within 2004
- at least 50% of people are able to understand legal rights of personal as well as public data within 2006
- ICT use will be secured for all

Using ICT for SMEs: encouraging of using ICT among SME entrepreneurs for the benefit of business improvement, preparation for competition in the free market economy and reduction of impact emerged from uncertainty of economic situations.

Using ICT for public administration and services: by having better infrastructures and appointed chief of information technology in every department, government agencies can use ICT for improving the existing administrative and service systems, for upgrading of educational qualification, for doing research and development which will lead to reduction of impact from emergent change of economic situations and long-term upgrading of competitive potentials in the free market.

Using ICT for creating of value-added production and service and upgrading of quality of Thai society: encouraging use of ICT for creating of value-added economic activities and upgrading of quality of Thai society by relying on the principle of sufficiency economy, in order to adjust economic and social foundations of Thai society for the benefit of building competitive advantages in the knowledge-based economic system.

Department of Non-formal Education can play a vital role, in cooperation with other agencies, to promote the following skills:

- basic knowledge and skills of using computer (computer literacy)
- skills of data searching, analysis and make use of available information (information literacy)
- critical thinking, creativity and ability of life-long learning

This can be done by extending some related pilot projects, such as Tele-center Development and Literacy Development through Computer Software throughout the country. Internet centers at about 7,000 sub-district offices can be used as network for NFE learning stations. Community learning centers can be upgraded to serve this purpose. Also, computers and Internet of elementary & secondary schools can be linked to Distance Education Institute which will be newly established under Ministry of Education this year for providing e-learning services for both school students and adult learners. Developing of education programmes

which emphasize on learning process, training of local personnel and developing of relevant software packages will be important targets in the near future.

Expansion of NFE Basic Education for Disadvantaged Groups

In 2009, it is also hoped that Thailand will have the National Distance Education Centre as the central institution for provision of adult /non-formal and informal education for all, especially the unreached people across the country via all 4 kinds of media and materials : on air, on line, off line and printed materials by cooperating with organizations concerned of government and private sectors. We also intend to make a linkage with the international organizations as the networks to join hands together at the national and global levels in supporting and promoting those who are deprived of educational opportunity and those who are still illiterate to have necessary basic knowledge, life skills and vocational skills for better quality of their own lives and their communities. Besides, we also hope that there will be CLCs equipped with perfect media throughout the country. In addition, all of organizations will be mobilized and encouraged to take full participation in organizing appropriate adult / non-formal and informal education programmes to meet the needs of their own staff at all levels, as well as extending their programmes to the communities nearby with the awareness of the importance of education in terms of education for all and all for education.

Eradication of Illiterates

In summary, we finally hope that the number of illiterate people of the country around 3 per cent will be reduced until disappear by the year 2009, and education of general people will also be upgraded to higher level due to the easier access to education via various appropriate options through various channels.