

EDUCATION IN THAILAND 2004



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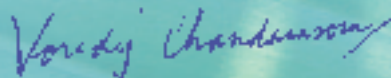
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PREFACE

The Office of the Education Council under the supervision of the Ministry of Education takes great pleasure in presenting a national report on educational development, **Education in Thailand 2004**.

This publication gives an overview of *Thailand* in terms of the government and administrative structure, the society and economy, the framework of education and the educational system. It also summarises the progress of related aspects of educational reform, ranging from educational administration and management to international cooperation and exchange for education. It is expected that the information provided in this report will foster a comprehensive understanding of educational development in *Thailand* and promote international cooperation and exchange in education.

The *Office of the Education Council* would like to extend appreciation to the advisors to this report for their valuable suggestions and comments. Our gratitude is also bestowed on concerned agencies for providing us with valuable information pertaining to their contributions to educational reform. To name a few, such agencies include the *Bureau of International Cooperation* under the *Office of the Permanent Secretary*, the *Office of the Basic Education Commission*, the *Office of the Vocational Education Commission* and the *Office of the Higher Education Commission*.



Prof. Voradej Chandarasorn, Ph.D.
Secretary - General
The Education Council

Editorial

For 7 consecutive annual series, the report on Education in *Thailand* has reflected considerable progress in educational development in *Thailand*.

At an individual level, education provides us with necessary skills and gives us the opportunity to learn about other countries and people from different backgrounds. Education also allows us to maximise our potential and to pursue careers for which we are qualified. At a national level, education plays a critical role in developing human resources and increasing the capacity and international competitiveness of the country. To thrive in the globalised era which is characterised by tremendous breakthroughs, particularly in science and technology, it is imperative that all individuals have access to lifelong learning and be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge as required in a knowledge-based economy and society.

The first chapter of this publication provides the general background of *Thailand* in terms of government and administrative structure, society and economy and challenging roles of Thai education. The 1997 economic crisis that has affected Thai society adversely together with dazzling transformations that are transpiring throughout the world on an everyday basis in the era of globalisation have prompted an urgent need for *Thailand* to strengthen its human resource base. Taking into account such circumstances, there has been a growing demand for the reform of Thai education so that Thai people are not deterred from thriving in the knowledge-based economy and society.

The framework of education includes the *1997 Constitution* that has provided challenging guidelines for educational reform in several provisions, and the *1999 National Education Act* which serves as a master legislation on education in the country and has placed the holistic reform of education on *Thailand's* national agenda ever since. In addition, Chapter 2 also covers the *15-year National Education Plan* that was prepared by the *OEC* and authorised

for implementation by the *Council of Ministers* in 2002. The *National Education Plan* has served as the framework for formulating the development plans pertaining to basic education, vocational education, higher education as well as religion, art and culture.

The educational system that focuses on lifelong learning is described in Chapter 3. As one of the principles and ultimate goals of education in *Thailand*, lifelong learning is promoted through the transfer of learning outcomes and the validation of experience. In this regard, learners are allowed to transfer their learning outcomes between all types of education: formal, non-formal and informal education while workers are encouraged to have their experience validated.

An overview of the transition to a new system of Thai education along the lines stipulated by the *National Education Act* has been provided in 7 succeeding chapters.

Chapter 4 demonstrates that necessary measures have been stipulated to increase the overall efficiency in educational administration and management. Previously, there were 3 main agencies responsible for educational administration and management, namely the *Ministry of Education*, the *Ministry of University Affairs* (now known as the *Office of Higher Education Commission*) and the *Office of the National Education Commission* (now known as the *Office of the Education Council*). To materialise the holistic and extensive reform of education, these agencies have been merged into a single ministry. Apart from the streamlining of educational administration and management at a central level, action has been taken to decentralise authority from the central level to educational service areas, educational institutions and local administration organisations. It is also suggested in this chapter that additional measures be implemented to facilitate educational administration and management conducted by the private sector.

Another key factor to success in educational reform is the combination between effective mobilisation of resources and investment for education, allocation of budget and budget management. Contributions from public and private sources, together

with existing practice and new initiatives in budgetary allocations are described in Chapter 5.

Undoubtedly, educational reform can not succeed without the reform of learning, a key issue in educational reform that directly benefits all people and can be implemented without any required regulation. In this regard, reform of curricula, reform of the learning process and establishment and development of lifelong learning sources, play a vital role. In addition, Chapter 6 touches on the modification of the admission system that has been conducted, at both basic and higher education levels, to avoid too much emphasis on examinations that depend mainly on rote learning. New types of model schools including state-supervised schools, bilingual schools, schools for gifted students, Buddhism-oriented schools, model ICT schools and perfect schools are categorised in this chapter as innovative schools.

In Chapter 7, initiatives regarding educational standards and quality assurance have also been introduced to ensure improvement of educational standards and quality for all learners. Both internal quality assessment and external quality assurance have been implemented in increasing numbers of basic and higher educational institutions.

Chapter 8 of this publication illustrates the reform of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel, the key actors in learning reform, in terms of training, development and promotion, professional standards control and personnel management.

The utilisation of technologies for education, in terms of the establishment of organisations, development of national policies and plans, development of infrastructure and networking system, development of materials and other technologies for education, and development of personnel and learners, is delineated in Chapter 9. If administered appropriately, technologies for education, in particular ICT and eLibrary, will not only bridge the digital divide and hence increase access to education for all but also improve the quality of teaching and learning. The utilisation of technologies for education will certainly play a vital role in transforming Thai society into a

knowledge-based society in which lifelong education for all is not just an option but a necessity.

In this era of globalisation, another major contributor to the success of educational reform is international cooperation and exchange for education. Several aspects involved in this issue have been illustrated in Chapter 10.

The overall achievements in terms of access to education, participation and progression as well as the outcomes of education and learning are illustrated in Chapter 11 in which several tables have been presented.

The future perspectives are summarised in Chapter 12. In this regard, crucial factors in education have been reviewed and future tasks, strategies and plans for educational reform have been elaborated.

It is expected that the new *Ministry of Education* will be moving, with increasing efficiency, towards the success of educational reform, with the aim to promote equity and quality in education as well as maximising benefits for learners. This in turn will lead to a better quality of life for Thai people and an increased competitiveness of the country. To conduct the radical but essential reforms introduced by the *1999 National Education Act*, a complete change in the mindset, behaviour and practice of those at all levels of educational management is imperative. Participation, cooperation and contribution from all stakeholders and parties as well as the general public are also required.

Office of the Education Council
July 2004

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACER	Australian Council of Educational Research
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APEID	Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development
AUN	ASEAN University Network
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BMA	Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
CBF	Thailand-Australia Capacity Building Facility
CRC	Commission on Religion and Culture
DFA	Department of Fine Arts
DLF	Distance Learning Foundation
DPE	Department of Physical Education
DRA	Department of Religious Affairs
HKIED	Hong Kong Institute of Education
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
ISAT	International Schools Association of Thailand
KEDI	Korean Educational Development Institute
KMITNB	King Mongkut Institute of Technology North Bangkok
KU	Kasetsart University
MICT	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOL	Ministry of Labour
NECTEC	National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board
NFEC	Non-Formal Education Centre
NSO	National Statistical Office
NSTDA	National Science and Technology Development Agency
OBEC	Office of the Basic Education Commission
OCSC	Office of the Civil Service Commission
OEC	Office of Education Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECF	Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund
OER	Office of Educational Reform
OHEC	Office of the Higher Education Commission

ONESQA	Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment
ONFEC	Office of Non-Formal Education Commission
OPEC	Office of the Private Education Commission
OVEC	Office of the Vocational Education Commission
RIHED	Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development
RIT	Rajamangala Institute of Technology
RTG	Royal Thai Government
RUs	Rajabhat Universities
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation
SOU	Sukothaithemmathirat Open University
SPAFA	Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts
TGIST	Thailand Graduate Institute of Science and Technology
Thai TESOL	Thais Teaching English as a Second Language Association
TROPMED	Regional Centre for Tropical Medicine and Public Health
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UTCC	University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

Chapter 1

General Background



The general background of education in *Thailand* presented in this chapter includes the following: 1) government and administrative structure 2) society and economy, and 3) changing roles of Thai education.

1.1 Government and Administrative Structure

The provisions relating to constitutional government and monarchy laid down in the 1932 *Constitution* specified three basic concepts regarding the governmental structure of *Thailand*. Firstly, the Monarch is regarded as Head of State, Head of the Armed Forces and Upholder of the Buddhist Religion and all other religions. Secondly, a bicameral *National Assembly*, which is comprised of *Members of Parliament* and *Members of Senate*, administers the legislative branch. Thirdly, the Prime Minister as head of the government and chief executive oversees the executive branch covering the *Council of Ministers* which is responsible for the administration of 19 ministries and the *Office of the Prime Minister*.

The democratic system in *Thailand* has recently undergone refinement to promote and encourage public participation in economic, social and political development plans. Section 76 of the *1997 Constitution* reflects the rights of the people in political

participation and also the right to voice public opinion on major problems.

Resulting from the *Constitution* were various independent organisations such as the Office of the Constitutional Court and the Administrative Court, aimed at inducing balance, transparency and accountability within the political and administrative system of *Thailand*.

Under Section 89 of the *Constitution*, the *National Economic and Social Council (NESAC)* was established to give advice and recommendations to the *Council of Ministers* on economic and social problems. Before plans, including the national economic and social development plan can be adopted, opinions must be obtained from the *National Economic and Social Council*. The *Council* has 100 members, 40 of whom are representatives of all country areas; another 40 members are representatives of occupations and enterprises; and 20 members represent different fields of knowledge.

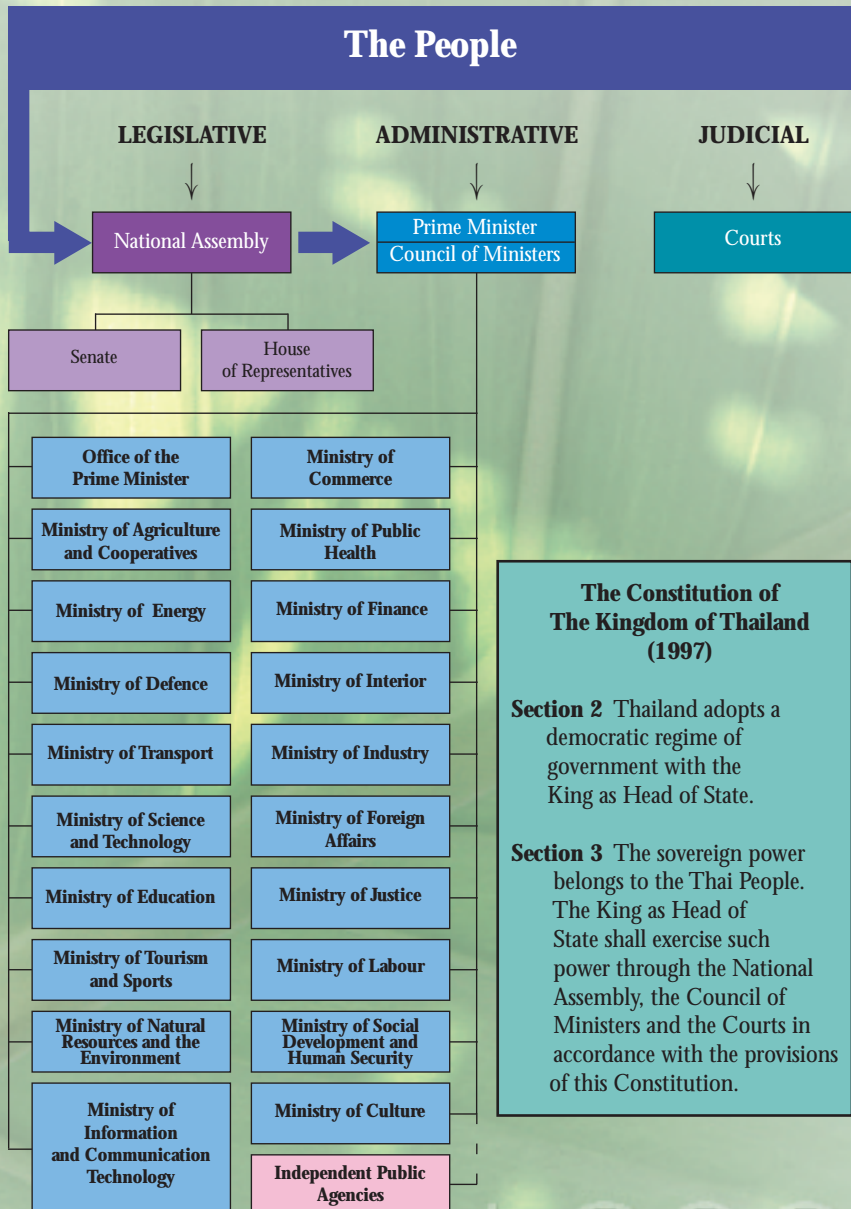
Excluding *Bangkok Metropolis*, the country has 75 other provinces, each of which is administered by an appointed governor and is sub-divided into districts, sub-districts or tambons (groups of villages) and villages. Only the *Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)*, which is divided into 50 districts, is administered by an elected governor.

Figure 1.1 presents the new organisation of the Royal Thai Government after the reform of the bureaucratic system in 2002. Six new ministries were established as follows: 1) *Ministry of Energy*, 2) *Ministry of Tourism and Sports*, 3) *Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment*, 4) *Ministry of Information and Communications Technology*, 5) *Ministry of Social Development and Human Security*, and 6) *Ministry of Culture*.

As for the *Ministry of Education*, three departments that used to be under its supervision before bureaucratic reform are now under the supervision of the newly established ministries. The *Department of Physical Education* is now under the supervision of the *Ministry of Tourism and Sports*. The *Office of the National Culture Commission* became the *Ministry of Culture*. At present, religious affairs are under the auspices of two agencies consisting of the *Department of Religious Affairs*, an agency under the aegis of the

Ministry of Culture and the Office of National Buddhism, an independent public agency directly under the Prime Minister.

Figure 1.1 Organisation of the Royal Thai Government

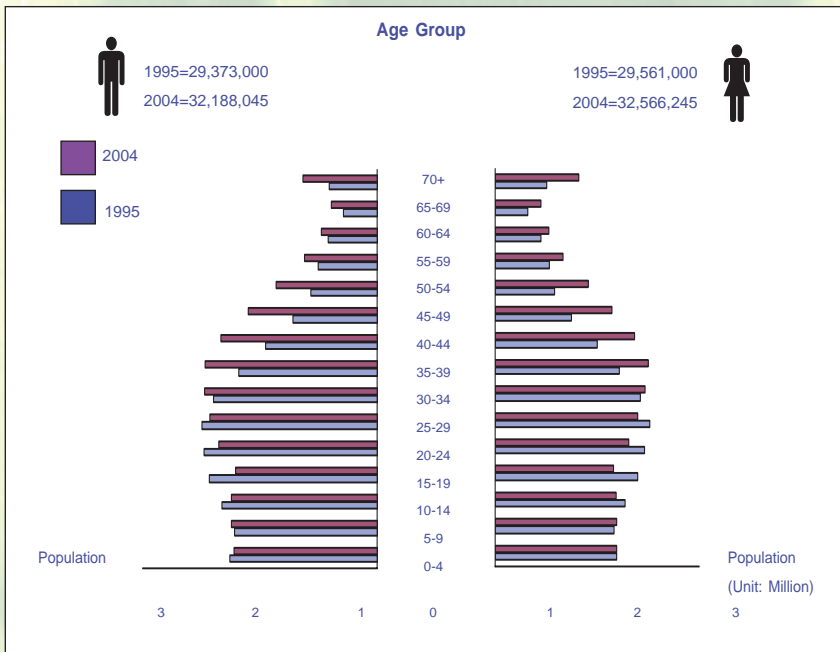


1.2 Society and Economy

1.2.1 Population and Employment

The total population of *Thailand* increased from 58.9 million in 1995 to 64.2 million in 2003 and it was estimated to be 64.8 million in 2004. The number of females is slightly higher than that of males (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2 Population Pyramid of Thailand: 1995 and 2004



Source: Thailand Population Projection, 1999-2016.

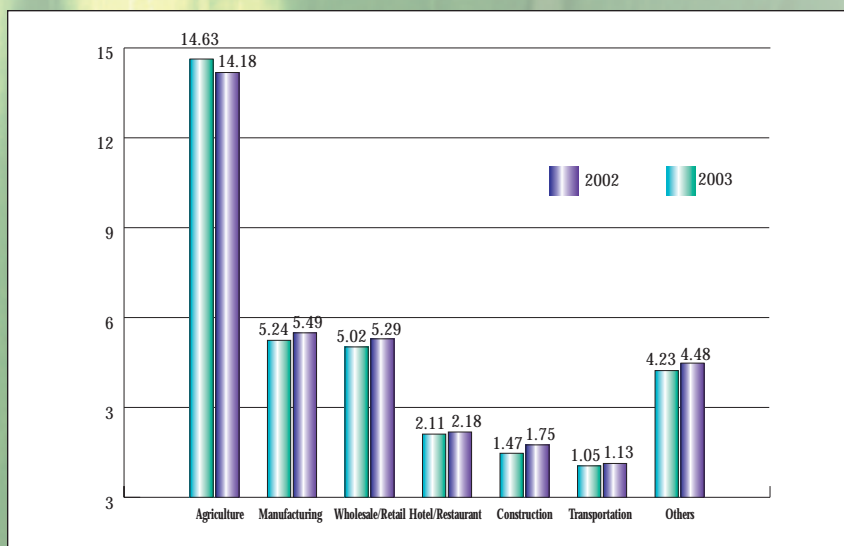
In its Survey of Employment Conditions (November, 2003), the *National Statistical Office (NSO)* found that among a total population of 64.24 million, around 15.67 million people were under 15 years old while the rest of the population, or about 48.57 million, were over 15 years old.

Among those over 15 years old, 13.29 million people were not in the workforce while the rest or about 35.28 million were in the workforce.

In November 2003, 34.50 million people were employed. Approximately 14.18 million people (male: 8.08 million; female: 6.10 million) were employed in the agricultural sector while 20.32 million people (male: 10.95 million; female: 9.37 million) were employed in non-agricultural sectors.

Compared to November 2002, the number of employed persons in November 2003 has increased by 750,000 people. Employment in non-agricultural sectors increased by 1.20 million people or from 19.12 million to 20.32 million. However, employment in the agricultural sector decreased by 450,000 people or from 14.63 million to 14.18 million. The number of employed persons by sector between November 2002 and November 2003 is shown in the following figure.

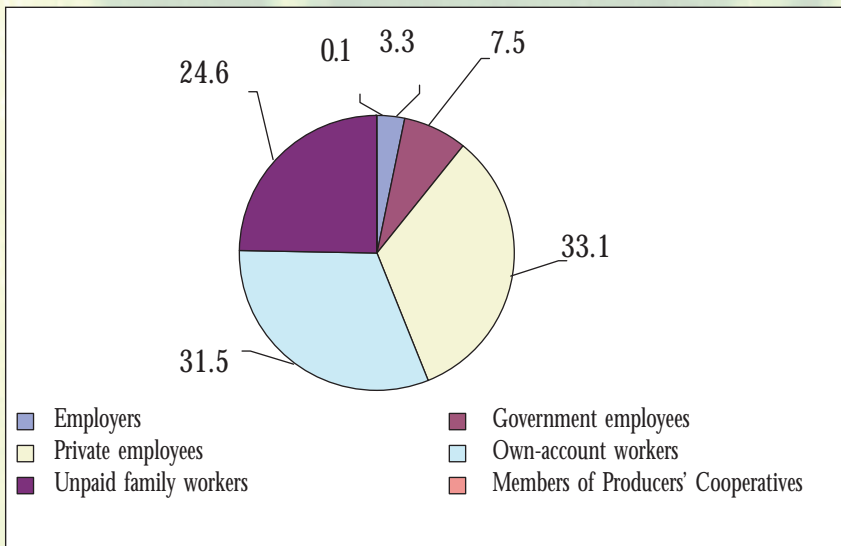
Figure 1.3 Number of Employed Persons by Sector



Source: Survey of Employment Conditions (November 2003), National Statistical Office.

Of the total employed, about 40 percent were employees and of these, 4 in 5 were employed in the private sector and about 31.5 percent were own-account workers. The rest included unpaid family workers and employers which accounted for 24.6 and 3.3 percent of the total employed, while only about 0.1 percent were members of producers' cooperatives (figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4 Percentage of Employed Persons by Work Status



Source: *Report of the Labour Force Survey Whole Kingdom, 2003 (Round 3: July-September), National Statistical Office.*

In the Outlook of Employment Conditions for 2004, the *National Statistical Office (NSO)* forecast that people in the workforce will increase by 2.3 percent which is equivalent to 810,000 people or from 34.8 million people in 2003 to 35.7 million people in 2004. Accordingly, the number of unemployed persons in 2004 will decrease by 160,000 people or from 710,000 people in 2003 to 550,000 people.

As shown in table 1.1, the situation of the labour force has continuously improved; the employment rate considerably increased from 92.9 in 1998 to 97.8 in 2004 while the unemployment rate significantly decreased from 4.4 in 1998 to 1.5 in 2004.

Table 1.1 Key Indicators of the Labour Force in Thailand During 1998-2004

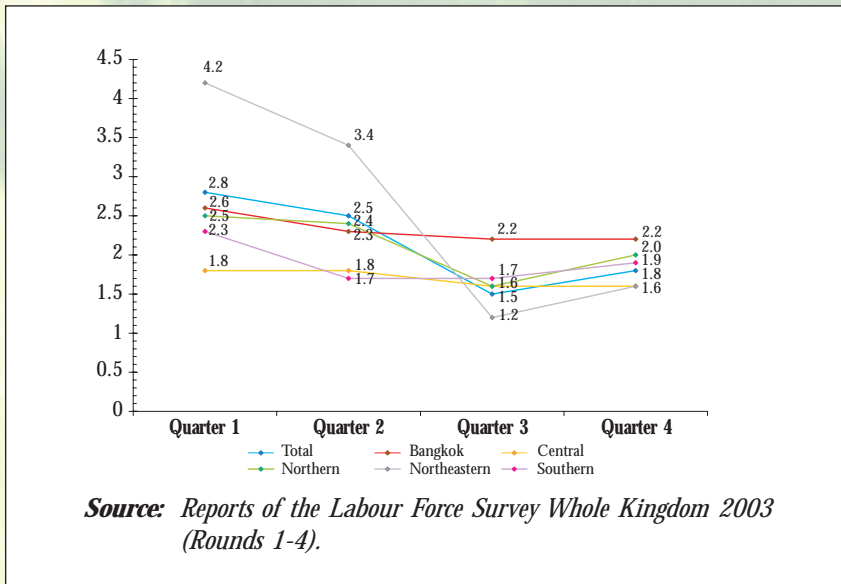
Indicators	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
1. Persons in the Workforce (in millions)	32.4	32.7	33.2	34.0	34.2	35.1	35.7
2. Unemployed Persons (in millions)	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.1	0.8	0.6	0.55
3. Employment Rate (percent)	92.9	93.7	94.2	94.8	96.4	97.9	97.8
4. Unemployment Rate (percent)	4.4	4.2	3.6	3.2	2.2	1.8	1.5

Source: 1. *Important Economic Indicators: Labour (1998-2003)*, National Statistical Office.

2. *Outlook of Employment Conditions for 2004*, National Statistical Office.

As stated in the Report of the Labour Force Survey (Round 4: October-December 2003) of the NSO, the rate of unemployment in the Northeast was highest, followed by Bangkok, the North, the South and Central Thailand. When comparing the unemployment rate by region for the 4 consecutive quarters of 2003, it was found that the rate of unemployment in Bangkok as well as in other regions in the third and fourth quarters was lower than that in other two quarters (Figure 1.5). This is due to the fact that a high proportion of the labour force in Thailand is in the agricultural sector and during the harvest, in the third and fourth quarters, increased employment in the agricultural sector is usually the case.

Figure 1.5 Unemployment Rate by Region

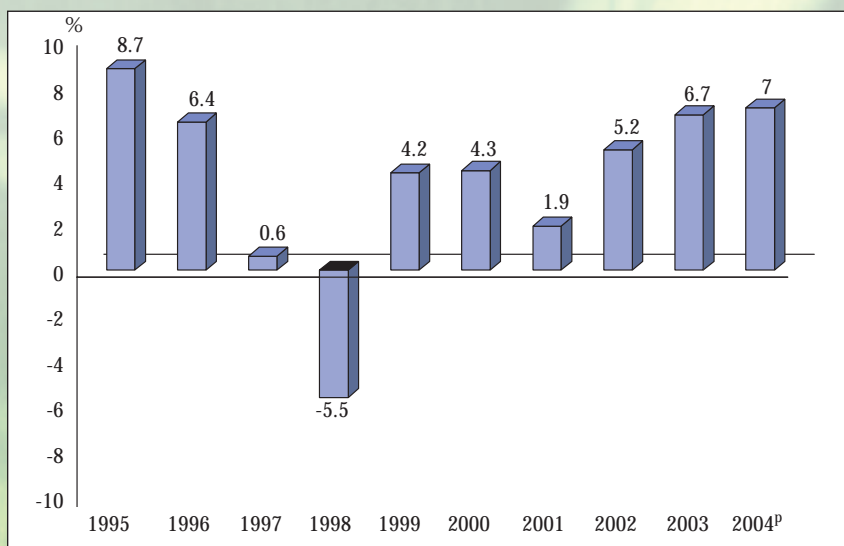


1.2.2 Economic Performance

In March 2004, the *National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB)* released the executive summary of Thai Economic Performance in the Fourth Quarter and Economic Outlook for 2004. As stated therein, the Thai economy has seen a strong growth of real GDP in 2003 (7.8 percent in the last quarter of 2003 and 6.7 percent for the whole year). With several supporting factors, such as global economic recovery, government supportive measures and expansion of private investment and consumption as well as public expenditure and investment, it was expected that such vigorous economic momentum and high official reserves would continue into 2004.

Due to rising global and domestic energy demand against a sharp increase in global oil prices, the *Royal Thai Government* and concerned agencies have had to lower their expectations for the real GDP growth in 2004 from 7.0 to 7.5 percent to 6.0-7.0 percent (Figure 1.6).

Figure 1.6 Real GDP Growth: 1995-2004



Source: Bank of Thailand and National Economic and Social Development Board.
^PPreliminary Data.

Around 90 percent of domestic oil consumption is obtained through import. In 2003, around 290 million barrels (equivalent to 0.79 million barrels per day) were imported. In the first quarter of the year 2004, the increase in domestic energy demand resulted in increased import of oil and around 83 million barrels of oil (equivalent to 0.91 million barrels per day) were imported.

According to the *Department of Energy Business*, the average oil price per barrel has increased continuously from 26.79 dollars in 2003 to 29.54 dollars in the first quarter of 2004. The current situation relating to volatile oil prices which resulted in increased import costs along with other global factors, such as interest rate hikes will inevitably result in higher inflation rate and lower rate of GDP growth in 2004. Consequently, the government has been intensely campaigning to create public awareness of the energy crisis and encourage energy-saving measures. Special attention will also be placed on sound macroeconomic management as well as measures

relating to poverty reduction, income distribution and increasing competitiveness as well as surveillance systems in various important sectors.

1.3 Challenging Roles of Thai Education

Assuming the role of a key catalyst in developing the human resources of the country since 1961, education in *Thailand* has gone through a truly comprehensive reform in accordance with the *1997 Constitution* and *1999 National Education Act*.

To be able to thrive in the global arena, which is bringing about extensive and expeditious socio-economic, environmental and cultural changes both in the country and around the world, the country's competitiveness and people's competency to proactively adapt to the changing environments needs to be enhanced.

The present government deems that *Thailand* should be a centre of excellence in Thai cuisine, fashion and automobile production since these areas have high potential in increasing national competitiveness in the global arena. Consequently, it is necessary that education equips concerned personnel with expertise in these related fields. So far, several activities have been undertaken to fulfill this expectation.

The delicious taste of Thai dishes, the abundance of Thai culinary materials from a successful agribusiness sector, a global awareness of healthy herbal foods and nutritious diets and an international recognition of Thai cuisine are prerequisites for the accomplishment in transforming *Thailand* into the World's Kitchen.

Education is essential for those wishing to invest in or to work as chefs in Thai restaurants overseas. The curriculum for Thai chefs has been planned by the Department of Skill Development, Ministry of Labour.

The Thai Restaurant Alliance Co., Ltd. (TRA) with a registered investment of 1 billion baht or approximately 25,200,000 dollars as well as a committee consisting of concerned agencies were set up to be responsible for the "Thai Kitchen Goes International Project." With the aim to make Thai cuisine a world cuisine by the year 2007, the project includes following activities: 1) Export of clean and chemical-free crops under the "Farm to Table" concept, with

vegetables sent directly from farms to the international market; 2) Presentation of the “Thai Select” logo to qualified Thai restaurants overseas where authentic Thai food is served; 3) Provision of loans for investment in operating or expanding Thai restaurants overseas; 4) Franchising of Thai restaurants to foreign countries; 5) Export of Thai chefs; and 6) Export of Thai restaurant brands to the target cities such as London, Paris, Berlin, New York and Tokyo.

Thailand's annual export trade fashions and accessories is worth around 350 billion baht. Such great success resulted from the unique charm of Thai silk, the talented designers, the fine workmanship and creativity, supportive government policies and the availability of products that are diverse, stylish, of high quality, reasonably priced and internationally recognised. Focusing on the development and promotion of garments and textiles, jewelry and ornaments, footwear and leather industries, the Bangkok Fashion City Project was set up with the aim to turn Bangkok into the “Paris of Asia” by 2005 and a world-class fashion hub by 2012. In this regard, the Thai government has allocated 1.8 billion baht (around 456 million dollars) while the private sector has contributed 487.9 million baht to the project.

In response to the national policy in developing the fashion industry, educational institutions can play a more vital role through active participation in several activities under this project including the establishment of organisations such as a fashion trend centre and a fashion school and the training of required personnel.

With financial support from the *Ministry of Industry, Chulalongkorn University* will conduct the training of 1,000 designers and coordinate the establishment of the Fashion Centre. Targeted at drawing in graduates with bachelor degrees, the University will design the curriculum in collaboration with well known universities and Fashion Centres abroad. As for skilled workers in related fields, they will also be trained in terms of fashion trends and marketing management.

Thailand's automotive industry looks very promising due to several supportive factors including political stability, strong economic growth, growing domestic demand, booming exports (export value

of vehicle and parts between January to February 2004 is 20,942 million baht), a relatively cheap and well-trained workforce, capable suppliers, tax reductions, the relaxation of foreign ownership restrictions, other supportive government's policies and incentives for foreign investment, participation in free-trade agreements and the presence of world-renowned automobile manufacturers.

With close collaboration from the private sector participating in the project, the government targets to double production capacity to 1.8 million in 2011, the year that *Thailand* has high expectations for positioning itself as the world's ninth-largest car manufacturer or literally transforming itself into the "Detroit of Asia."

In an effort to facilitate car manufacturers, the government has allocated a 1.2 billion-baht budget for the development of human resources, information centre, and related technologies as well as improvement of manufacturing standards and infrastructure and facilities in the automotive industry.

Education can certainly contribute to the project's goal of doubling the number of required personnel in related fields by 2006 and also help prevent a shortage of specialists and skilled technicians when automotive plants in Thailand double their capacity by 2011, as planned.

In this regard, a project to upgrade skills of 400,000 engineers and technicians in the fields relating to automobile production in line with the requirements of Japanese auto assembly plants will be conducted. The *Ministry of Industry of Thailand*, the *Federation of Thai Industries*, the *Japanese External Trade Organisation (Jetro)*, the *Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan* and Japanese auto makers will co-host the project. It is expected that the training will require around 1.5 billion baht and 4,000 Japanese technicians over the next 10 years.

Ten major reasons for success in the tourism industry of *Thailand* are: national stability and peace, a friendly and service-oriented people, the excellent reputation for product delivery and a broad range of natural and cultural heritage attractions and special interest activities, such as Pattaya Music Festival and *Thailand* Grand Sale, the long-standing visa-free and visa-on-arrival policy, the low cost of living, geographical advantages, extensive airline and

aviation access, vigorous promotional campaigns, outstanding transportation, infrastructure, accommodation and restaurants and strong regional tourism cooperation.

To transform Bangkok into the “Tourism Capital of Asia” and *Thailand* into one of the five most popular destinations in the world, several actions have been undertaken, including allocation of increased funding for tourism-marketing promotion, the establishment of the *Ministry of Tourism and Sports*, the organisation of the APEC Leader Meeting in Bangkok in October 2003, the promotion of a wide variety of top-class quality products in the “One Tambon, One Product” (OTOP) Scheme, the introduction of low-cost airlines and the ongoing construction of Suvarnabhumi International Airport.

The tourism industry has long been a big foreign-exchange earner, a great contributor to the country’s gross domestic product and an enormous source for jobs in the services sector including transportation, hotels and lodging, food and beverage as well as medical care and banking services. ***Since there are great number of people associated with the tourism industry, development of the required human resources through provision of good-quality training and education is certainly a key factor to the success of the industry.***

Essential factors that support the Thai government’s goal to become the largest manufacturing base of Hard Disk Drives (HDD) worldwide include *Thailand’s* cost-competitiveness, a skilled labour pool, a solid infrastructure, a growing domestic market, a strong support of industry, its central location in Asia, a friendly business environment, the presence of major manufacturers of HDD, the establishment of the *Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT)*, the *Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA)* and the *NECTEC* Software Park, the government’s policy relating to improvement of the quality of human capital and development of e-commerce, e-government, and e-education as well as the government’s supportive measures for ICT and software industry.

It should be noted that the NECTEC Software Park also operates as a centre of excellence in combining corporate with academic institutions with an aim to broaden knowledge and



enhance skills of Thai IT professionals through various kinds of educational activities. In addition, the new investment policies of the Board of Investment (BOI) also focus on promotion of knowledge and skills building For example, an additional 1 to 2 years of income tax breaks will be granted for manufacturers of approved HDD projects on the condition that their employment of Thai personnel in the field of science and technology, their investment in training Thai staff, Research and Development or Design, developing vendors and supporting educational institutions meet the BOI's criteria. To qualify for additional tax breaks, the interactions with Thai entrepreneurs, Thai Research and Development facilities or Thai educational institutions must be identified in the company's action plan.

In addition to the training of personnel associated with the 5 clusters of industry as mentioned above, the *Ministry of Labour* has established training centres throughout the country to improve the general quality of labour in *Thailand* and to develop skills with new tools and machinery. Several corporate institutions also provide special training to industry, such as the Thai Automotive Institute, the Electrical and Electronic Institute and the Thai-German Institute, which assist technicians from factories or business to upgrade technical skills as well as communication and leadership skills. These initiatives will provide vital links between industry and academic and research institutions to further develop the Thai workforce's technological skill capacity.

Apart from equipping Thai people with necessary knowledge and skills so that they are able to pursue promising careers, an effective educational system should focus on providing them with the ability to think critically, make rational judgments and live in harmony with other members of society.

Chapter 2

Framework of Education



At present, the framework of education in *Thailand* is based on the *1997 Constitution* and the *1999 National Education Act*. They provide principles and challenging guidelines for the provision and development of Thai education in order to prepare all Thai people for a learning society. The *Constitution* has greatly increased the rights of Thai people to political participation and the rights to voice public opinion on major problems while the *National Education Act* has introduced new initiatives and provides principles and guidelines for the comprehensive reform of education in *Thailand*.

Embracing equity and quality in education and aiming at increasing the quality of life of Thai citizens, the *National Education Plan (2002-2016)* was prepared following the *Constitution* and the *National Education Act*. The provisions in the *Constitution* relating to education as well as essential features of the *National Education Act* and the *National Education Plan* are summarised below.

2.1 The 1997 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand

The new *Constitution* promulgated in October 1997 contains several provisions relating to education, religion and culture. It is stated in *Section 81* that the State will ***improve education to be in harmony with economic and social change***, which means that the

Government is committed to initiate educational reform whenever it is necessary to keep up with the pace of change.

Besides, it is provided in the constitution for the first time that all Thai people will have an equal right to receive basic education for at least 12 years, of quality and free of charge (*Section 43*).

The new *Constitution* ensures that all people will have both the right and duty to receive education and training (*Sections 30 and 69*) as well as academic freedom (*Section 42*). It also includes the right to receive care and education for children, youth, women, the elderly, the underprivileged and the handicapped as provided in *Sections 53, 55 and 80*. These provisions will protect the right to education of all Thai people thereby moving forward towards a knowledge-based economy and society.

In providing education, maximum public benefit in national communication resources (*Section 40*) and the conservation and restoration of local wisdom (*Section 46*) will be taken into consideration. The role of the private sector in the provision of education at all levels is also emphasised (*Section 43*). It ensures the right of local organisations to participate in the provision of education which will promote the decentralisation of educational management (*Section 289*).

Furthermore, participation of local people and communities in educational provision will be enhanced which will make education both relevant to the needs of the people and responsive to changing environments, demands and opportunities at a local level.

These challenging guidelines mandated by the *1997 Constitution* have been promulgated for implementation through the *enactment of a national education law* since 1999.

2.2 The 1999 National Education Act

In order to meet the requirements of section 81 of the *1997 Constitution*, the first *National Education Act* was promulgated in August 1999 to serve as the fundamental law for the administration and provision of education and training.

For several decades, the *Ministry of Education* also supervised issues relating to religion and culture in addition to education. The

1999 National Education Act was drafted in that spirit. It includes 9 chapters prescribing the objectives and principles; educational rights and duties; educational system; national education guidelines; educational administration and management; teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel; resources and investment for education and technologies for education.

Since the bureaucratic reform in 2002, however, religious affairs have been under the supervision of the *Office of the Prime Minister* and the *Ministry of Culture* while cultural affairs have been under the supervision of the *Ministry of Culture*. To reflect the revision, the *National Education Act* was amended in 2002.

The *Amended National Education Act 2002* differs slightly from the *1999 National Education Act* as presented in the following table:

Table 2.1 Amendments of the National Education Act 2002

	1999 National Education Act	Amended National Education Act 2002
1. Name of the Ministry	- The Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture	- The Ministry of Education
2. Responsibilities of the Ministry:	- Overseeing all levels and types of education, religion, art and culture	- Promoting and overseeing all levels and types of education.
3. Administrative Structure of the Ministry	(1) National Council of Education, Religion and Culture; (2) Commission of Basic Education; (3) Commission of Higher Education; (4) Commission of Religion and Culture.	(1) National Council of Education; (2) Commission of Basic Education; (3) Commission of Higher Education; (4) Commission of Vocational Education.

2.3 The National Education Plan (2002-2016)

As mandated by Section 33 of the *1999 National Education Act*, a 15-year *National Education Plan* was prepared by the *OEC* in place of the former *National Scheme of Education*. Authorised for subsequent implementation by the *Council of Ministers* on June 17, 2002, the *National Education Plan* focuses on the integration of all aspects of the quality of life. It emphasises human-centred development and an integrated and holistic scheme of education,

religion, art and culture. In this regard, Thai people shall attain full development in terms of physical and spiritual health, intellect, morality and integrity as well as a desirable way of life that focuses on living in harmony with other people.

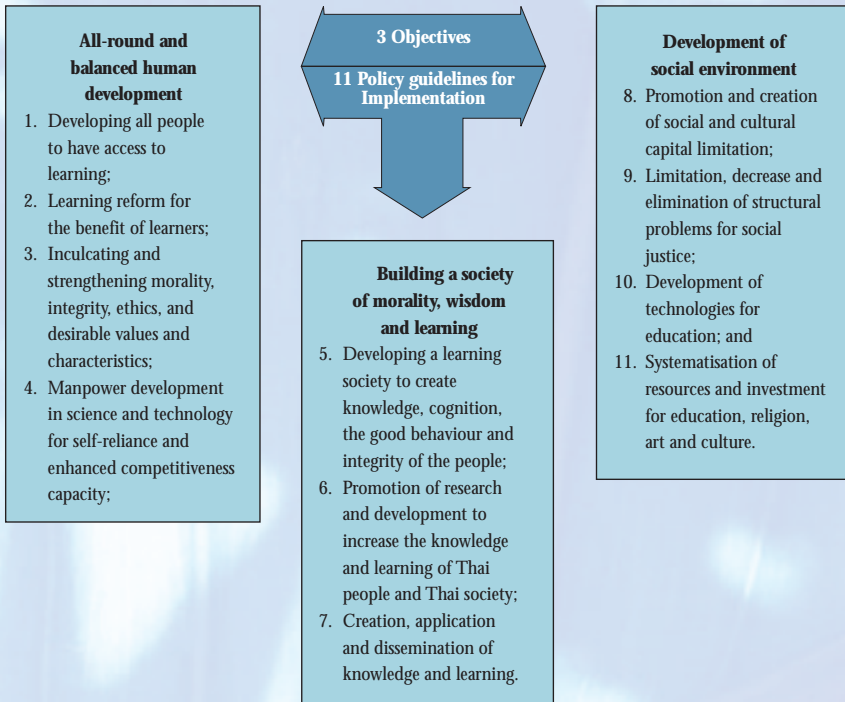
Covering the 15-year period from 2002 to 2016, the *National Education Plan* will serve as a framework for formulating the development plans pertaining to basic education, vocational education, higher education, and religion, art and culture. It also provides guidelines for formulating operational plans at the levels of educational service areas and educational institutions.

The *National Education Plan* represents a major reform plan, bringing together the relevant provisions of the *Constitution* and the *National Education Act*. Besides, it is based on the government policy aimed at transforming *Thailand* into a learning society, leading to a knowledge-based economy. The scheme enables all Thai people to have equal access to lifelong learning and, by being endowed with intellect, serving as a capital resource for income-generating employment, thus protecting the country from economic and social crisis. It also manifests the vision of long-term development as earlier enunciated in the *Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan* as well as the Act Stipulating the Plan and Steps for Decentralising Authority to Local Administration Organisations of 1999 and other relevant laws and regulations.

The *National Education Plan* stipulates 3 objectives and 11 policy guidelines for implementation as follows;



Figure 2.1 Objectives and Policy Guidelines of the National Education Plan



Based on the principles and guidelines provided by the 1997 Constitution and the National Education Act, it is hoped that the National Education Plan will 1) lead to a knowledge-based economy and society; 2) promote continuous learning; 3) involve all segments of society in designing and decision-making concerning public activities. It is also expected that the National Education Plan will empower Thai people so that they will be able to adjust to world trends and events while maintaining their Thai identity as well as to develop desirable characteristics including virtue, competency, happiness and self-reliance.

Chapter 3

Educational System: Lifelong Learning



In the present educational system, various types and methods of learning are offered to learners regardless of their economic, social and cultural backgrounds. Access to all types and levels of education as well as the transfer of learning outcomes and validation of experience have made lifelong learning possible for all Thai people and thus help transform *Thailand* into a learning society.

3.1 Types and Levels of Education

Education is classified into 3 types: 1) formal education; 2) non-formal education; and 3) informal education.

3.1.1 Formal Education specifies the aims, methods, curricula, duration, assessment, and evaluation conditional to its completion. Through both public and private bodies, formal education services are provided, to those inside the school system, i.e. early childhood development institutions and schools. It is divided into 2 levels: basic education and higher education.

1) Basic Education

Basic education is provided before higher education covering pre-primary, 6 years of primary education, 3 years of lower

secondary education, and 3 years of upper secondary education. Basic education is provided by the following institutions:

- *Early childhood development institutions* i.e. childcare centres, child development centres, initial care centres for disabled children or those with special needs and early childhood development centres operated by religious institutions or by other agencies.
- *Schools* such as state schools, private schools, and those under the jurisdiction of Buddhist or other religious institutions; and
- *Learning centres* i.e. those organised by non-formal educational agencies, individuals, families, communities, community organisations, local administration organisations, private organisations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, hospitals, medical institutions, welfare institutions and other social institutions.

Previously covering only 6 years of primary education, *compulsory education* has been extended to 9 years covering 6 years of primary education and 3 years of lower secondary education as stipulated in Chapter 3 of the *1999 National Education Act*. This requires children at the age of 7 to enrol in basic education institutions until the age of 16 except for those who have already completed grade 9.

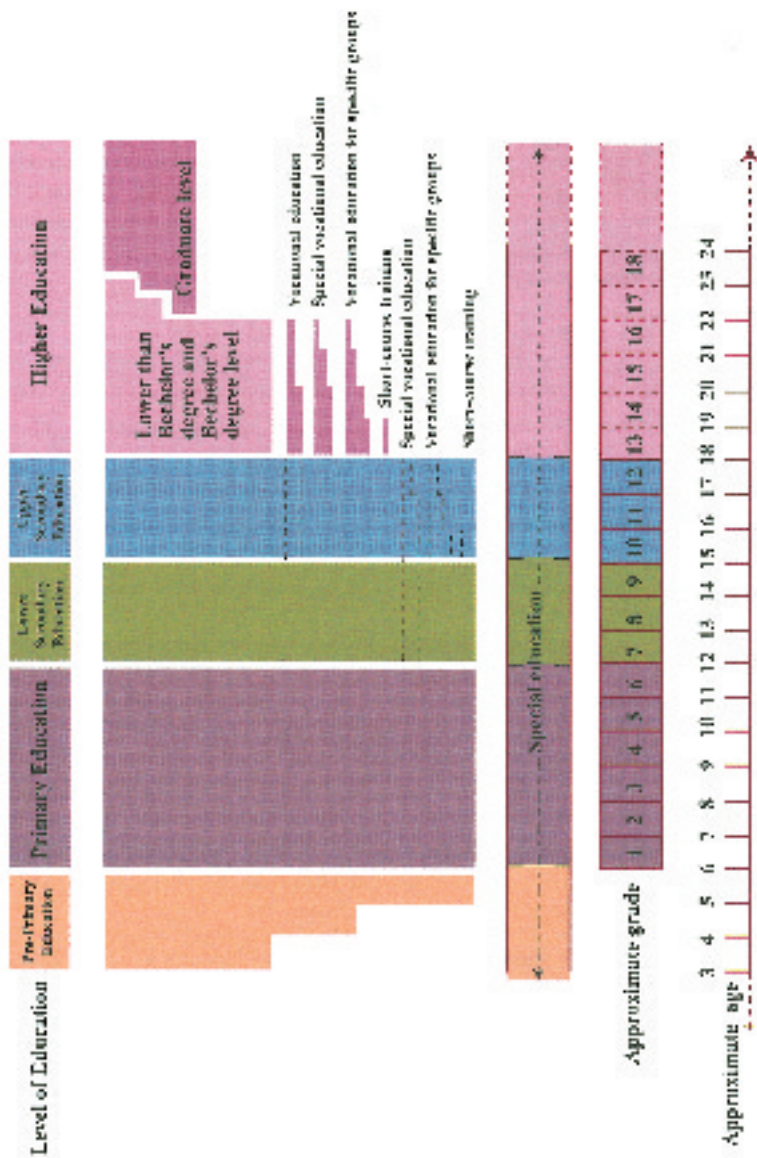
2) Higher Education

Higher education is provided in universities, institutions, colleges or other types of institutions. It is divided into two levels: associate degree and degree levels.

● Associate's Degree or Diploma Level

Higher education at associate's degree or diploma level is mainly offered by colleges and institutions i.e. *Rajabhat Universities, Rajamangala Institute of Technology*, state and private vocational colleges, as well as colleges of physical education, dramatic arts and fine arts. The majority of courses offered are related to vocational and teacher education which require two years of study.

Figure 3.1 Organisation of the Present School System



- **Degree Level**

The study programmes require 2 years of study for students who have completed diploma courses, and 4-6 years of study for those finishing upper secondary education or equivalent courses. The first professional qualification is a bachelor's degree obtained after four years of study. In the fields of architecture, painting, sculpture, graphic arts, and pharmacy, five years of study are required for a bachelor's degree. The fields of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science require six years of study. In some of these professions, additional study is required before professional qualifications, allowing the candidate to practise in his or her field, are awarded.

Advanced studies of at least one but generally two years, combined with a thesis, lead to the award of a master's degree. A doctorate is awarded in some fields and requires additional three years of study following a master's degree.

An advanced diploma or certificate may be obtained after one or two years of course work. It is designed for students who already possess a degree or professional qualification.

In addition, the provision of formal education mentioned above can be classified into the following types:

(1) Special and Welfare Education

Special education is provided for children who are hearing-impaired, mentally retarded, visually-impaired, physically-impaired or health-impaired. Other groups of children who need special education services are specific learning-disabled, autistic, emotionally/behaviorally disordered, as well as gifted and talented children.

The teaching and learning of special education is organised in both special and inclusive schools. Two types of curricula are used: 1) special curricula offered in special schools such as the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind; and 2) regular curricula used in inclusive schools which may be adjusted to meet the special needs of children.

Welfare education is provided for those who are socially and culturally disadvantaged. Students are not only

provided with free education, but also with accommodation, food, clothing, equipment, textbooks and other necessities. They are given special vocational training relevant to the locality of a particular school for future employment.



(2) Vocational Education

In the general stream of basic education, career and technology-related education is offered to school children at both primary and secondary levels to provide them with work experience and basic knowledge for career preparation and technological application.

Formal technical and vocational education and training is conducted at three levels: upper secondary, leading to the lower certificate of vocational education; post-secondary, leading to a diploma or the associate's degree in vocational education; and at university level, leading to a degree.

With a start at upper secondary level, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in *Thailand* provides eight major fields of study, namely: trade and industry, agriculture, home economics, fishery, business and tourism, arts and crafts, textile, and commerce.

Credit accumulated by learners will be transferable within the same or between different types of education, regardless of whether the credits have been accumulated from the same or different educational institutions, including learning from non-formal or informal education, vocational training and work experience.

According to the *National Education Act*, technical and vocational education and training are provided in educational institutions belonging to both the public and private sectors, enterprises, or those organised through co-operation of educational institutions and enterprises.

In summary, vocational education is provided through formal programme, the dual-vocational training (DVT) programme, and the credit accumulative programme.

- For the formal programme, students learn theoretical and practical subjects in schools and spend a semester in the workplace.

- The dual-vocational training (DVT) programme is offered at certificate or upper secondary level as well as diploma or post-secondary level. The DVT curriculum and assessment system has been organised in close collaboration with enterprises; and students in this programme will spend part of their time studying theories in schools and the rest of the time participating in hands-on training in enterprises. Depended upon the contract between institutions and the enterprises, students in this programme can spend one or two days studying in schools and the rest of the week in enterprises. They can also spend the whole week, month, or semester in enterprises in order to ensure continuation and quality of training. In 2003-2004 academic years, there are 43,800 DVT students, or 7 percent out of the total number of vocational education students in 51 programmes and 8,900 companies. Participation of the private sector, especially industries and business in vocational education, has been highly considered at both policy and institutional levels. Such participation is needed for the DVT programme, curriculum development, workplace training, professional development of teachers, and programme evaluation.

- The credit-accumulative programme provides opportunities for adults who are unable to participate in full-time study at an institution. An assessment system for validation of their experiences is also provided to evaluate their knowledge and skills. In addition, credit accumulated can be transferred within the same or between different institutions.

(3) Special Vocational Education

Special vocational education includes

1) *Sports Schools*, which are under the supervision of the *Ministry of Tourism and Sports*, provide admission and full financial support to students with a particular talent for sport from all over the country; and 2) *Dramatic Arts and Fine Arts Colleges*, which are under the supervision of the *Ministry of Culture*, offer certificates equivalent to lower and upper secondary education.

(4) Education for Ecclesiastics

General education is also provided to novices and monks in General Ecclesiastic Schools in various Buddhist temples. They are offered lower and upper secondary education curricula equivalent to those provided by the *OBEC*. Apart from general subjects, the courses include learning units related to religious practice, Buddhist doctrine and the Pali language. There are also two Buddhist universities in Bangkok with various campuses elsewhere offering courses at undergraduate and graduate levels.

(5) Specialised Education

Specialised education, both at basic and higher education levels, is provided by ministries, bureaus, departments, state enterprises and other public agencies in accordance with their needs and expertise, taking into consideration national education policy and standards.

Courses are offered for graduates from primary schools to upper secondary schools, both from general and vocational streams. All responsible agencies have developed their own curricula as follows:

- **Curricula for the production of professional soldiers and police** include the curriculum of Preparatory School for the Armed Forces Academies; curricula of the military, naval, air force academies and police cadets; and curricula for preparing warrant officers for graduates from lower and upper secondary schools.

- **Curricula for specific technicians** include those for training military technicians to work in the Armed Forces, and those for training specific technicians for various agencies such as *Irrigation College*, *Railway Technical School*, etc.

- **Medical science curricula** are organised for secondary school graduates requiring 1-4 years of study in the institutions of the *Ministry of Public Health*, the *Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)* and the *Thai Red Cross Society*.

● **Curricula for other specific purposes** are organised for graduates from lower secondary schools, both in general and vocational streams, and general upper secondary schools as required by each institution, such as the *Merchant Marine Training Centre*, *Cooperatives School*, *Postal School* and *Civil Aviation Training Centre*, etc.

Table 3.1 Specialised Education Provided by Various Agencies

Responsible Agencies	Type of Institutions
● Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Irrigation College ● Veterinary School ● Cooperatives School
● Ministry of Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Merchant Marine Training Centre ● Railway Technical School ● Civil Aviation Training Centre
● Ministry of Information and Communications Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meteorological School ● Postal School
● Ministry of Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School ● Military, Naval, Air Forces Academies ● Medical Colleges ● Nursing Colleges ● Technical Training School ● Survey School
● Royal Thai Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Police Cadet Academy ● Nursing College ● Police School
● Ministry of Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nursing Colleges ● Public Health Colleges ● College of Medical Technology and Public Health
● Ministry of Science and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chemical Practice Institute
● Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Law Training Institute
● Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Medical College ● Nursing Colleges
● Thai Red Cross Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nursing College

3.1.2 Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education services are provided by both public and private bodies to those outside the school system, i.e. early childhood population, school-age population who have missed formal schooling and over-school-age population:

1) Provision of Non-Formal Education for Pre-School Children:

- Provision of educational services to 2-6 year-old children or from birth to 6 years.
- Early childhood development in centres established by local communities for children aged 3-6 years.
- Family-based early childhood development.
- Child development of the private sector organised by the *Council of Early Childhood and Youth Development Organisations* consisting of 50 member organisations.

2) Provision of Fundamental Education for Literacy

This educational service is provided to promote literacy for adults aged 14 years and over who are still illiterate. Non-formal activities to eradicate illiteracy are currently organised as follows:

- *The Literacy Campaign*, with volunteer teachers and volunteer village tutors, has continued to promote the eradication of illiteracy among the adult population.
- *Functional Literacy Programme*, organised for illiterate adults, emphasises an integration of literacy and problem-solving skills for the improvement of the quality of life.
- *The Promotion of Thai Language Usage* for Thai Muslims in 5 southern border provinces.
- *Hill Areas Education*, aiming to provide educational services to promote literacy among the hilltribes by using non-formal education volunteer teachers.

3) Provision of General Non-Formal Education

This educational service provides continuing education programmes for those having no chance to study formal education from primary to higher levels, and is normally organised

in public schools or official premises, factories or other organisations. Learners are awarded the same qualifications as those in the formal school system. The learning process is organised in 3 ways: classroom learning, distance learning and self-learning.

4) Vocational Non-Formal Education

Vocational Non-Formal Education is offered by the *MOE* through polytechnic colleges, industrial and community colleges under the supervision of the *Office of Vocational Education Commission* and the *Office of the Non-formal Education Commission*, the *Ministry of Industry*, the *Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives*, and the *Ministry of Labour* through regional institutions and provincial skills training centers under the supervision of the *Department of Skills Development*.

Non-formal vocational and technical education and training can be divided as follows:

- *Training Course for Vocational Certificate*. This programme is designed for primary school graduates who have no chance to study at a higher level. It is organised to provide educational opportunities to target populations in rural areas through training in vocational skills and quality of life promotion leading to a certificate equivalent to that of general lower secondary school.

- *Short-Course Vocational Training*. Short-course vocational training is provided in many areas by both public and private institutions and agencies. These courses are offered from 3 hours to 1 year depending on the content and objectives. Pre-employment training and upgrading training are offered by educational institutions as well as related agencies, such as *Skill Development Institutions*. At present, short-course vocational training programmes are designed to serve the needs for self-employment and to articulate with formal programmes in order to serve lifelong learning.

- *Interest Group Programme*. Teaching and learning activities are organised according to the individual needs and interests of the general public. Those having the same interests can form a group of 5-15 persons and receive training of up to 30 hours.

- *Non-Formal Programme for Certificate in Vocational Education*: Non-formal education activities leading to the Certificate in Vocational Education are provided through distance learning to lower secondary school graduates, both the unemployed and those working in public organisations and private enterprises. This programme requires at least 3 years of study, except when there is a transfer of academic performance or experience.

5) Quality of Life Improvement Activities

The *MOE* and other agencies responsible for education services, welfare and public services provide training activities concerned with quality of life improvement to the general public.

3.1.3 Informal Education

Informal education enables learners to learn by themselves according to their interests, potential, readiness and the opportunities available from individuals, society, environment, media or other sources of knowledge as follows:

- Informal education programmes provided by libraries, museums and science/technology centres, etc. as well as by mass media i.e. radio, television, newspapers and magazines, etc.

- Informal education programmes of community learning networks i.e. community learning centres, village reading centres, sub-district health offices, sub-district agricultural offices, as well as natural learning sources in each community.

- Learning from various sources as follows: 1) local wisdom which includes culture and the body of knowledge in each community; 2) local media which plays an important role in passing on knowledge and social values through several kinds of performance; 3) families which are learning sources from birth for all people; and 4) networking through cooperative activities.

It could be perceived that all ministries are involved in providing informal education to promote lifelong learning. The services provided include educational activities or academic and professional programmes for different target groups relating to the responsibilities of each ministry.

3.2 Transfer of Learning Outcomes

The *National Education Act* acknowledges the importance of all types of education and is paving the way to create links between the 3 types of education: formal, non-formal and informal education. Chapter 3 of the Act specifies that credits accumulated by learners will be transferable within the same type or between different types of education, regardless of whether the credits have been accumulated from the same or different educational institutions, including learning from non-formal or informal education, vocational training or from work experience. In line with the *National Education Act*, relevant ministerial regulations and ministerial rules were issued.

For basic and higher education at associate's degree level, two ministerial regulations and two ministerial rules were announced. One ministerial regulation prescribes differentiation of the levels and types of basic education services while another stipulates differentiation or equivalence of the various levels of non-formal and informal education. According to this ministerial regulation, non-formal education is divided into 2 levels: basic education and higher education at lower-than-degree level. Non-formal education services with specific curricular or training needs as well as informal education services are not classified into levels but equivalence of levels could be agreed by relevant committees who would take into account learning outcomes, skills and work experience of learners. Besides this, two ministerial rules were issued to facilitate the implementation of the transfer of learning outcomes as presented below.

3.2.1 Equivalence of Levels of Education

A ministerial rule was issued for the equivalence of levels of basic education and higher education at associate degree level in higher education institutions providing education at associate degree level. In this ministerial rule "equivalence of levels of education" means "evaluation of learning outcomes, knowledge and experience that learners have gained from informal education and non-formal education in order to determine which level of education they are equivalent to."

Essential features of knowledge, skills, process, virtue, ethics and value will be evaluated in line with the structure and standards of learning in each particular curriculum by authorised educational institutions and the agencies that supervise them. The *MOE* has to design and/or provide instruments such as tests, portfolios and forms used in administering interviews and observation as well as render recommendations to authorised education institutions.

3.2.2 Transfer of Learning Outcomes at Basic Education and Diploma Levels

A ministerial rule was issued for the transfer of learning outcomes at basic education and diploma levels. In this ministerial rule “transfer of learning outcomes” means “evaluation of the learning outcomes, skills and experience that learners gained from formal, non-formal and informal education including apprenticeship and on-the-job training, in order to transfer them as part of a particular curriculum at the level of basic education as well as in higher education at associate degree level.”

The implementation of the ministerial rule is based on two principles. The first principle specifies the proportion, fields, subjects and learning substance or units that can be transferred. The second principle mentions that documents, evidence and various instruments, such as tests, interviews and observation, will be considered by the committee responsible for the “transfer of learning outcomes.”

3.2.3 Transfer of Learning Outcomes at Degree Level

At degree level, two ministerial announcements were issued regarding the transfer of learning outcomes of higher education providing the following implementation guidelines:

1) The announcement on “criteria for transferring learning outcomes at degree level into formal education” emphasises minimum requirements in transferring learning outcomes, from formal; non-formal; and informal education, as part of a particular curriculum in formal education at degree level. As mentioned therein, there are 2 main principles in the equivalence of subjects and transfer of credits/learning outcomes.

Both principles specify details concerning the related fields, subjects and learning substance or units that will be transferred. The first principle deals with the equivalence of subjects and transfer of credits within formal education while the second principle deals with transferring learning outcomes from non-formal education and informal education into formal education.

2) The announcement on “recommendations of the best practices in transferring learning outcomes at degree level” prescribes general recommendations on best practices in transferring learning outcomes at degree level. Most of the contents in the recommendations are similar to those in the “criteria for transferring learning outcomes at degree level into formal education.” However, the recommendations specify the time frame and fees as well as recommending how to record the results of evaluation.

In this regard, higher education institutions, which have already established requirements in transferring learning outcomes at degree level that are more exacting than those specified in both announcements, are allowed to retain their original requirements. In contrast, higher education institutions, which have never established their own requirements in transferring learning outcomes at degree level, will follow the requirements specified in the *MOU*'s announcements.

3.2.4 Establishment of Vocational Qualification (VQ)

Qualified workers are needed to facilitate changes for international competitiveness and sustainable development. In order to meet this goal, continuing vocational education must be accessible to workers so that they can keep abreast with new technology and advance in their career. A new approach of vocational education and training has been shifted towards development and recognition of “competencies.” The Thai government recently approved the proposal of the *Federation of Thai Industries* in establishing the *Thai Vocational Qualification Institute (TVQI)*. This organisation will be responsible for development of the Vocational Qualification (VQ) based on occupational competency standards; assessment and validation of workers' experiences; and organisation of training to bridge the skill gap, at institutions or in the workplace, in cooperation with

educational institutions. The Vocational Qualification will be interrelated with vocational education qualifications so as to promote continuing or lifelong vocational education. Agencies involved in establishment of the TVQs include the *Ministry of Education*, the *Ministry of Industry*, the *Ministry of Labour*, the *National Economic and Social Development Board*, the *Federation of Thai Industries*, the *Thai Chamber of Commerce*, and the *German-Thai Institute*.

3.2.5 Validation of Experience

In addition to the transfer of learning outcomes, concerned agencies and educational institutions are attempting to initiate the validation of experience so as to enable qualified applicants to further their study as well as to promote continuing education and lifelong learning. The validation of experience corresponds with the competency-based vocational curriculum in which competency-based training is underscored and competence in terms of theoretical knowledge; know-how (practical skills); and attitude/personality that are necessary in students' future careers is assessed against the performance criteria.

In an attempt to initiate the validation of experience and competency-based vocational curriculum, concerned agencies have piloted the Thai-French Continuing Vocational Education Project which focuses on competency-based training. This means that trainees, trainers and representatives from enterprises (administrators and mentors) are required to work in close cooperation; the trainers who act as teachers/coordinators will also conduct the follow-up activities to monitor the competency of the trainees in their workplace.

The objective of the project is to allow people who finish training to continue their education in order to get a Certificate, a Diploma or a Bachelor's Degree. As specified in the project, the following 3 steps are involved in validation of experience:

- 1) Orientation: An applicant prepares required documents with assistance from a representative from an educational institution. Documents required include results of the tests of each course in the project; a competency assessment report in which assessment of competency, attitude and knowledge of procedure has

been made; and portfolio in which past experience and present duties, participation in other training activities as well as existing qualifications are described;

2) Assessment and interview: Assessment of the documents and interview of the applicants will be conducted by a committee comprising of 3 persons from enterprises and 2-3 persons from educational institutions; and

3) Decision-making: Based upon the results from the previous steps, applicants will be divided into 3 categories: (1) Applicants who have passed all the tests in a course will receive credits for that course and such credits can be transferred to the normal curriculum; (2) Applicants who can not perform well will be asked to relearn some parts of the course; and (3) Applicants who perform very poorly will be asked to take the entire course again.

Considering the value of the learning process that Thai workers went through while working abroad and the occupational skills that they obtained, another project named "Validation of Work Experience of Thai Workers" was initiated. The project conducted by *OEC*, in cooperation with the *MOL* through its *Regional Institute for Skill Development* in Khonkaen and the *Non-Formal Education Centre (NFEC)* in Lampang, gave emphasis to validation of occupational knowledge/skills and work experience; quality improvement of basic education; and development of occupational skills. In validating the work experience of these workers, two performance criteria were used in the process of assessment. These are the *NFEC's* Standards Criteria for Knowledge and Experience and the National Standards Criteria for Occupational Skills that the *NFEC* and the *MOL* generally use for similar assessment.

Around 198 workers, who used to work abroad and were living in both provinces, participated in the project. Only 88 workers whose knowledge and know-how met the mentioned criteria obtained certificates guaranteeing that their experience was validated by the *NFEC* and the *MOL*. Further support in terms of study, training, occupation and wages were also given to them.

Lifelong learning has long been one of the ultimate goals of the Thai educational system since it is believed that it will eventually lead to a knowledge-based society. It is anticipated that a more flexible educational system will draw future generations of Thai people towards lifelong learning. Hence, concerned agencies and educational institutions have continuously attempted to promote the transfer of learning outcomes as well as the validation of experience in order to create linkage between all types of education and enhance continuing education and lifelong learning.



Chapter 4

Educational Administration and Management: Transition to a New Structure

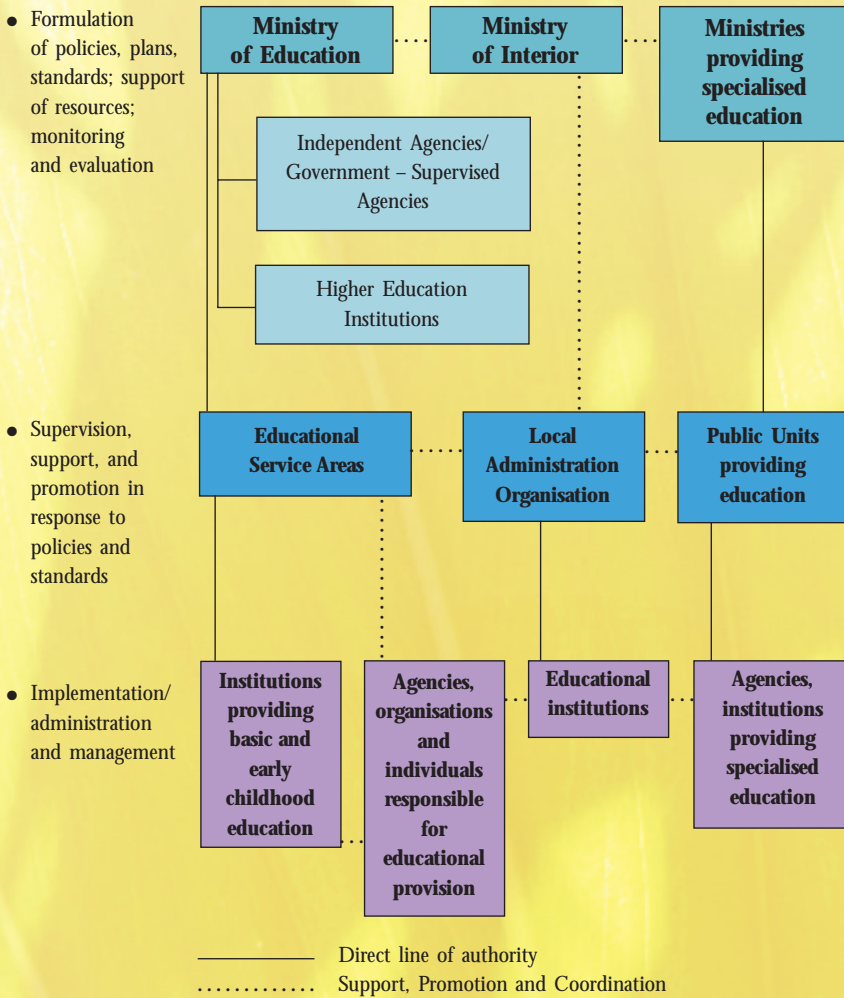


The main objectives aspired to the most recent bureaucratic reforms are: (1) To improve the quality of services provided by bureaucratic organisations; (2) To revise their roles and duties and to reorganise them as appropriate and necessary; (3) To enhance their competence along with universal standards; and (4) To support the democratic system by encouraging people to participate and express their opinion.

Along this line, the reform of educational administration and management has been carried out in accordance with the *1999 National Education Act* and the *2002 Bureaucratic Reform Bill*. The major streamlining in this regard has been the merging of 3 agencies, namely the *Ministry of Education*, the *Ministry of University Affairs* and the *Office of the National Education Commission*. These agencies have been reorganised into a single Ministry, the *Ministry of Education (MOE)*.

However, local education administration is still under the supervision of the *Ministry of Interior (MOI)*. In addition, other ministries also take charge of educational management in specialised fields or for specific purposes (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Educational Administration and Management Structure



The recent reform of educational administration and management is based on the following three principles: (1) unity in policy and diversity in implementation; (2) decentralisation of authority to educational service areas, educational institutions and local administration organisations; and (3) people's participation in educational administration and management at central level as well as in educational service areas and educational institutions.

Conducted by the State, local administration organisations and the private sector, educational administration and management in *Thailand* is thus classified into 3 categories as follows:

4.1 Administration and Management of Education by the State

Education in *Thailand* is administered and managed by the government at three levels: central level, educational service areas and educational institutions at all levels of education.

4.1.1 Administration at Central Level

After the merging of concerned agencies, the main responsibility for education in *Thailand* is under the *Ministry of Education (MOE)*. According to the amendments of the *National Education Act*, the *MOE* is responsible for promoting and overseeing all levels and types of education; formulation of education policies, plans and standards; mobilisation of resources for education; promotion and co-ordination in religious affairs, art, culture and sports in relation to education; as well as the monitoring, inspection and evaluation of educational provision.

The administration and management at central level is under the responsibility of 5 main bodies as follows:

1. The *Office of the Permanent Secretary* is responsible for managing general administrative works; coordinating activities within the Ministry, performing other official functions mandated by law; preparing the Ministry's budget and working plans as well as monitoring, inspection and evaluation of results in the discharge of functions in accordance with the Ministry's policy, guideline and working plans; performing functions relating to the *National Education Law* which are not under the duties of other agencies; carrying out other works as provided by ministerial regulations regarding official responsibility division,

2. The *Office of the Education Council (OEC)* is responsible for proposing the *National Education Plan* which integrates religion, art, culture, and sports into all levels of education; proposing educational policies, plans and standards for implementation in accord with the *National Education Plan*; undertaking, coordinating and promoting research for development

of education, learning networks, and national wisdom as well as developing information networks for educational policy and plan development; proposing policies and plans for mobilisation of resources for education; evaluation of provision of education as stipulated in the *National Education Plan*, and providing opinion and advice on concerned laws and ministerial regulations as stipulated in the *National Education Act*.

3. The *Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)* is responsible for proposing policies, development plans, standards, and core curricula for basic education; mobilising resources; developing administration systems, promoting and coordinating information networks for learning and teaching; developing educational innovation; supervising the monitoring, inspection, and evaluation of the provision of basic education; and conducting secretarial works of the Basic Education Commission.

4. The *Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC)* is responsible for proposing policies, development plans, and standards for higher education; mobilising resources; coordinating and promoting development of human resources and capacity of all students; proposing establishment, dissolution, amalgamation, discontinuity and improvement of higher education institutions and community colleges; monitoring, inspection and evaluation of the provision higher education; and conducting secretarial works of the Higher Education Commission. In so doing, the academic freedom and excellence of degree-level institutions in accord with the laws on the establishment of such institutions and other relevant laws will be taken into consideration.

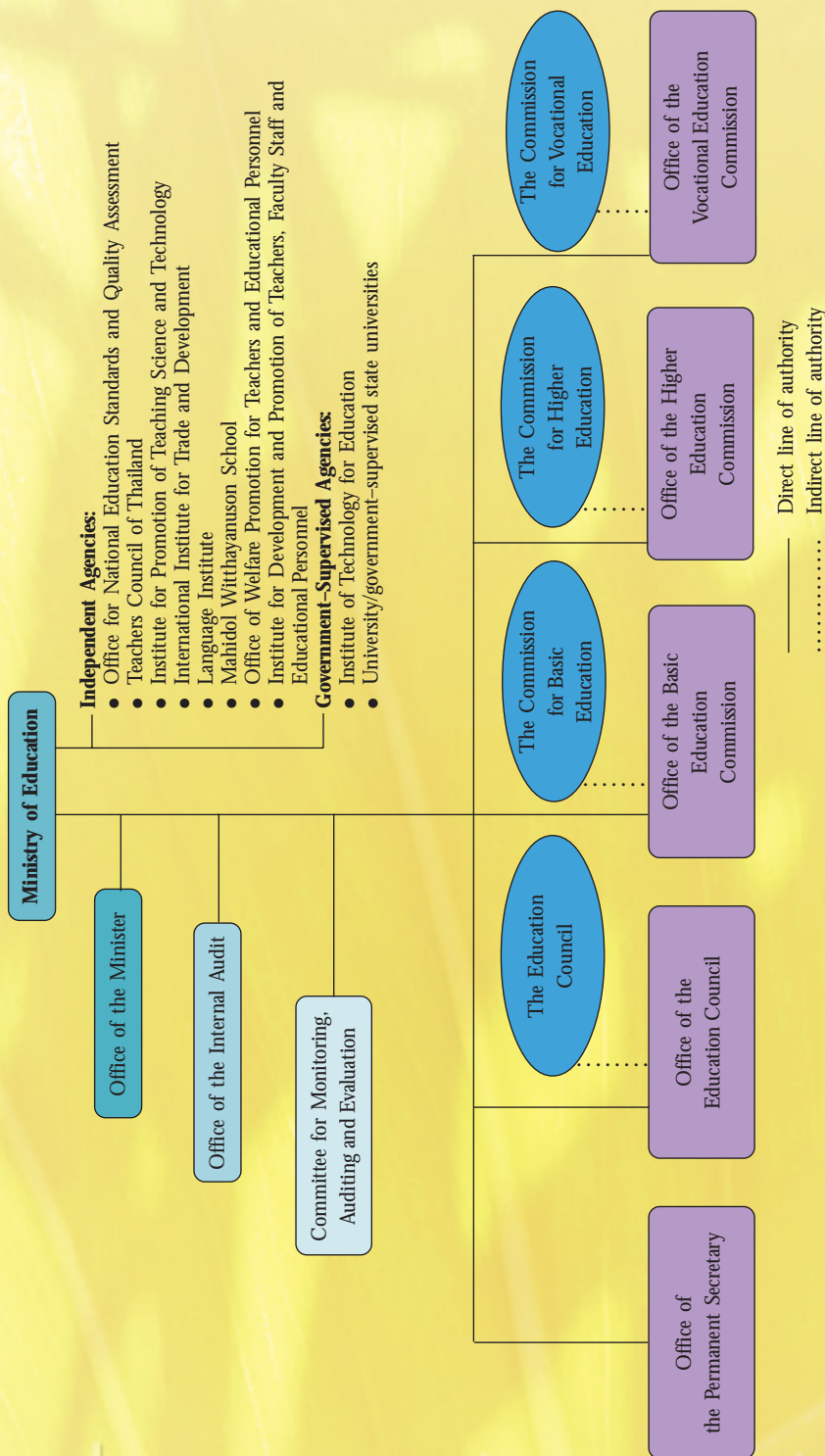
5. The *Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)* is the main organisation responsible for technical and vocational education and training in *Thailand*. The *OVEC* embraces administration and management of vocational education at two levels: 1) National Level: The Vocational Education Commission, which is comprised of representatives from the private sector as well as concerned agencies, is responsible for formulating long-term plans and other major policies relating to technical and vocational education and training in *Thailand*. 2) Institutional Level: The 412 colleges under the *OVEC* are merged into 28 multi campus vocational

institutions. Each institution is absorbing between 10-15 colleges spanning 2 to 3 provinces. Through the mentioned reorganisation, it is expected that these new institutions will have increased autonomy, accountability and consistency in meeting educational and occupational standards. The main objectives in establishing 28 institutions are as follows: develop a strong partnership with the private sector; remobilise resources; develop demand-driven programmes in line with local needs; identify and strengthen areas of excellence in each institution; develop multidisciplinary programmes; widen participation in continuing vocational education and lifelong vocational education; and develop vocational qualifications and validation of prime-learning systems.

To restructure bureaucratic organisations, it is necessary that their personnel be downsized. In streamlining the *MOE*, it is estimated that around 33.57 percent of its personnel will be removed. At the moment, the administrative structure at central level is organised as presented in Figure 4.2.



Figure 4.2 Organisation of the Ministry of Education at Central Level



4.1.2 Administration in Educational Service Areas

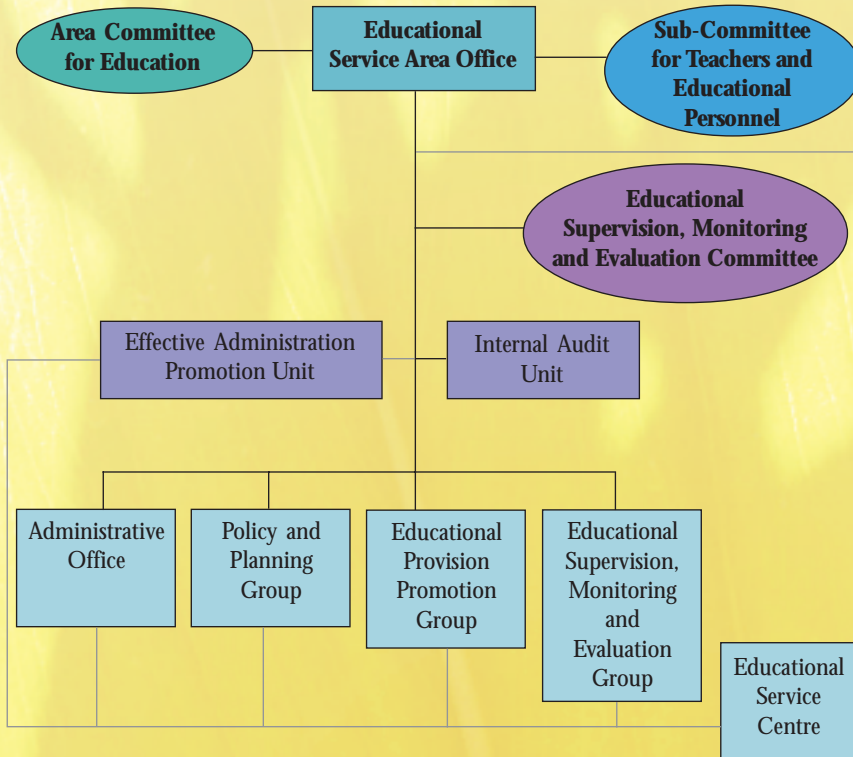
The educational service areas have been established under the jurisdiction of the Basic Education Commission in response to the decentralisation of authority for educational administration as stipulated in the *National Education Act*.

The country is currently divided into 175 educational service areas in 76 provinces, with 172 areas in the provinces and the remaining 3 areas in Bangkok. Each educational service area is responsible for approximately 200 educational institutions in which there are around 300,000-500,000 students.

Recently, the *MOE* requested all educational service areas to complete self-evaluation forms so as to assess their readiness in terms of coordination with educational institutions under its supervision; physical resources including buildings and equipment; administration including management of assets and appointments of committees; personnel management in line with the new structure; and academic matters such as plans and projects focusing on improving quality of educational institutions under its supervision.

In each educational service area, there is an Area Committee for Education comprised of representatives of community, private and local administration organisations; teacher associations; educational administrator associations; parent-teacher associations; and scholars in education, religion, art and culture. The Area Committee for Education and its Office is responsible for the following: 1) Establishment, overseeing, monitoring and evaluation, dissolution, amalgamation or discontinuance of basic education institutions; 2) Coordination, promotion and support for private educational institutions in the educational service areas; 3) Coordination and promotion for local administration organisations so as to be able to provide education in accord with educational policies, development plans and standards specified by responsible bodies at central level; 4) Promotion and support for education provided by individuals, families, community organisations, private organisations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, and other social institutions offering a variety of training; and 5) Allocation of budget for providing educational service to educational institutions and for their own operation. The organisation of administration in educational service areas is shown in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Organisation of Administration in Educational Service Areas



4.1.3 Administration in Educational Institutions

Educational administration and management in educational institutions can be divided into two categories:

1) At Basic Education Level

The *Ministry of Education* decentralises authority in the areas of educational administration and management regarding academic matters, budgets, personnel and general affairs administration directly to educational institutions.

In each educational institution providing basic education or education at lower-than-degree level, there is a board composed of 7-15 members who are the representatives of parents, teachers, community organisations, local administration organisations, alumni and scholars. The board of each educational institution takes

charge of the following responsibilities: 1) Approve the policy and budget of educational institutions/schools; 2) Promote academic matters and the development of teachers and educational personnel; 3) Mobilise resources for education; 4) Promote internal quality assurance and external quality assessment; 5) Participate in the monitoring, appraisal and assessment of the administrators of educational institutions; and 6) Promote and support the performance of educational institutions/schools.

State educational institutions which are legal entities are empowered to take charge of, oversee, maintain, utilise and earn interest from their properties, both state land as provided by the State Land Act and other properties; earn income from their services; and charge tuition fees neither contrary to nor inconsistent with their policies, objectives, and main missions. In the past, immovable properties acquired through donation or purchase or in exchange for their income used to be regarded as state land. As legal entities, however, state educational institutions have the right of ownership in such properties. In this regard, concerned laws and committees are needed to deal with concerned issues such as income and interest of educational institutes including interest from the state land.

Following the principle of decentralisation of authority to educational institutions, the school-based management (SBM) approach has been implemented. Keeping in mind that the development of learners' potential is the ultimate goal in SBM, educational institutions are required to take on greater responsibilities as follows:

- **Academic Matters:** Each school can provide any or all of the three types of education: formal, non-formal and informal education. Schools are required to promote learning reform by changing the teaching-learning method from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred approach. As regards the reform of the curriculum, each school is responsible for prescribing curricular substance relating to the needs of the community and society, local wisdom and attributes of desirable members of the family, community, society and nation.

- **Budget:** In order to meet the objective of decentralisation, budget decision making is delegated to the educational institutions/schools. General subsidies are distributed as per head expenditure directly to both state and private schools. State schools have the autonomy to utilise the budget allocated in response to their needs, taking into consideration the quality of education as well as the efficiency and accountability of the administration.

- **Personnel:** Schools will be authorised to take responsibility for their own personnel management, including recruitment of teachers as well as appointments, training, rewarding and dismissal. Moreover, they are required to mobilise human resources in their locality to participate in educational provision. These resource providers will contribute their knowledge, experience and expertise to the development of schools in their own communities.

- **General Affairs Administration:** Each school has the autonomy to design its own working system and processes without any interference from the Ministry, with the aim of achieving national education goals. The management of the school is under the responsibility of its administrator and the school board.

2) At Higher Education Level

To improve the quality of higher education, state universities will be transformed to state-supervised universities. All higher education institutions are legal entities and are allowed to function with freedom. This means that each higher education institution can develop its own administration and management system with flexibility and academic freedom under the supervision of the institutional council empowered by its own Act.

4.2 Administration and Management of Education by Local Administration Organisations

In accordance with the *National Education Act*, local administration organisations can provide education at any or all levels of education according to their readiness, suitability and the requirement of the local areas. The *MOE* is responsible for prescribing

Table 4.1 Relationships between Public Educational Organisations and Local Administration Organisations

Public Educational Organisations	Local Administration Organisations
<p>1. Ministry of Education will be responsible for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Formulating the criteria and methods for assessing the readiness to provide education of local administration organisations. (2) Supporting and collaborating with local administration organisations so as to enable them to provide education in line with policies and standards. (3) Giving recommendations on educational budgetary allocations of local administration organisations. <p>2. Educational Service Areas Area Committees for Education</p>	<p>Local Administration Organisations i.e. municipalities, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Pattaya City, Provincial Administration Organisations, District Administration Organisations and the other local administration organisations established by the law will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have the right to provide education at any or all levels in accord with readiness, suitability and the requirements of the local administration organisations. 2. Participate in the provision of education by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 being a committee representative of local administration organisations, committees organisations, committees in each level (at the central level, in educational service areas and in educational institutions). 2.2 mobilising resources for education in local areas i.e. allocation of local income for education.

Public Educational Organisations	Local Administration Organisations
<p>and Educational Service Area Offices are responsible for the promotion of and collaboration with the local administration organisations in the provision of education in line with policies and educational standards.</p> <p>3. Basic Education Institutions Basic educational institutions are responsible for the provision and service of education to people in local areas. In each educational institution, there is a board supervising and supporting its management.</p> <p>4. ONESQA This Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) is responsible for developing the criteria and methods of external quality assessment of educational institutions under the supervision of local administration organisations as well as submitting the report to local administration organisations.</p>	<p>2.3 monitoring, auditing and evaluating the provision of education as the main organisations and representatives of people in local areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Administration Organisations cooperate with educational service areas. 2. The representatives of local administration organisations participate in the Area Committees for Education. <p>The representatives of local administration organisations are members of the board that supervises and supports the management of basic educational institutions.</p> <p>Local Administration Organisations are responsible for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing and internal quality assurance system in educational institutions. 2. Endorsing the results of external quality assessment conducted by the ONESQA. 3. Improving and developing educational institutions as proposed by the ONESQA.

the criteria and procedures for assessing the readiness to provide education of the local administration organisations as well as co-ordinating with them and promoting their capability in provision of education in line with the policies and standards required. Besides, the *MOE* will also advise on the budgetary allocations for education provided by local administration organisations. The relationships between state educational organisations and local administration organisations can be represented in table 4.1.

Most of the local administration organisations, including the Provincial Administration Organisations and the Sub-District Administration Organisations as well as other local administration organisations, have never experienced the provision of education. In transferring the authority in educational provision from the *MOE* to local administration organisations, it is thus necessary to assess their readiness in providing education. The criteria and methods for such assessment are being prepared by the *MOE*. Responsibilities that have already moved from the *MOE* to local administration organisations include the child development centres at pre-primary level as well as tasks that can be conducted without assessment such as the procurement of educational materials and supplementary food (milk).

So as to prepare the local administration organisations for the provision of education, a 15-year policy has also been formulated. Issues focused on in the policy include: equal opportunity in basic education; educational administration systems; teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel; and quality and standards in line with readiness and suitability of local administration organisations as well as requirements of the local areas.

4.3 Administration and Management of Education by the Private Sector

There are two categories of private educational institutions: 1) private educational institutions that provide general education which range from kindergartens to primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities; and 2) private educational institutions that provide vocational education. At present, most

private educational institutions are proprietorial schools, with a few prestigious schools still associated with Christian denominations.

According to the *National Education Act*, private educational institutions can provide education at all levels and of all types. In this regard, the State is responsible for overseeing educational administration and management as well as monitoring the educational quality and standards of private educational institutions.

It is essential for the government to provide support for private educational institutions to promote their role in providing education at all levels and of all types. Relevant policies and measures have been defined by the State regarding the participation of the private sector in the provision of education. Besides, private educational institutions providing education at degree level are allowed to function with autonomy, develop their own system of administration and management, flexibility, and academic freedom. The State will provide support in terms of grants, tax rebates or exemptions, and other benefits to private educational institutions as appropriate, including academic support.

Relevant laws and regulations have also been prepared to facilitate private education. In addition, a strategic plan for the reform and promotion of private education has been formulated to provide a framework for the development of private education during a 5–10 year period. In addition, the *MOE* has conducted a pilot project on the educational administration and management of private educational institutions as legal entities.

4.4 Strengthening Professional Development

According to the *National Education Act*, all school principals and educational administrators need to have professional licenses in order to assure that students receive the quality education provided by professional school principals and educational administrators

To comply with such stipulated matters in the law, it is necessary that all training courses concerned be revised to cope with the changing situation brought about by the reform of educational administration and management.

Realising the importance of the Departments of Education Administration in higher education institutions which offer

Master's and Doctoral degree programmes and in-service training courses for school principals and educational administrators, the *OEC* initiated the establishment of a coordinating body among the departments. After several seminars and discussion, the Education Administration Directors Council of Thailand (EADiCT), was established and 57 directors of the Departments of Educational Administration across the country became its founding membership.

With strong and continuous support from the *OEC*, the EADiCT has played an important role in strengthening education administration science through various activities, such as seminars, symposiums in educational administration, selecting and awarding outstanding research studies, textbooks, and lecturers in education administration as the best practices in order to push forward the improvement of the educational administrative science.

During 2004, the EADiCT will be transformed into the Association for Professional Development of Educational Administration. Through association and the exchanging of experience with other countries, it is expected that educational administrative science in *Thailand* will be greatly improved.

The reform of educational administration and management not only reduces redundancy and administrative expenditure but also increases efficiency in educational management. Continuing efforts and collaboration from all parties concerned are needed to push forward decentralisation of authority and the increase of people's participation in educational administration and management.



Chapter 5

Resources and Investment for Education



The mobilisation of resources and investment for education, the allocation of budget and budget management are necessary mechanisms to consolidate educational reform efforts. To make these mechanisms effective, new laws and regulations as well as new approaches to administration must be addressed.

5.1 The Mobilisation of Resources and Investment for Education

The mobilisation of resources for education will proceed more successfully according to Chapter 8 of the *National Education Act* if the following actions are taken:

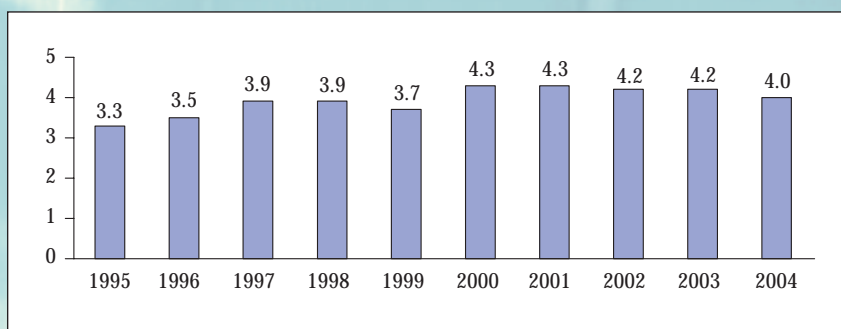
Since financial resources for education in Thailand are derived from both public and private sources, the current state of cost-sharing between participants in education and society as a whole will be divided into 2 categories: public educational expenditure and contributions from the private sector and society.

5.1.1 Contributions from Public Sources

The investment for education from public sources includes the central government budget and subsidies for local funding and private expenditure. The education sector has received the largest share of total public expenditure for the last decade. As

presented in the following figure, the share of education as a proportion of GDP rose from 3.3 percent in 1995 to 4.0 percent in 2004.

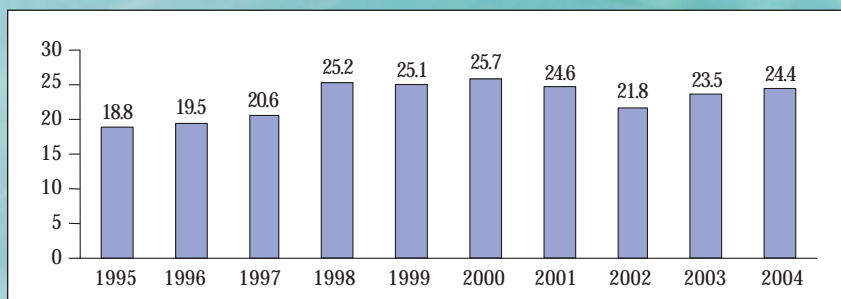
**Figure 5.1 Educational Budget as % of GDP:
Fiscal Years 1995-2004**



Source: Bureau of the Budget.

In 1998, although the total government budget for education was reduced from the previous year due to the impact of the economic crisis, the share of public expenditure for education rose sharply to 25.2 percent of the national budget reflecting the Government's commitment to education. The size of the education share was largest in the year 2000 at 25.7 percent before declining to 21.8 percent (235,092 million baht) in 2002. In 2004, 24.4 percent (251,234 million baht) of the budget was allocated for education (Figure 5.2).

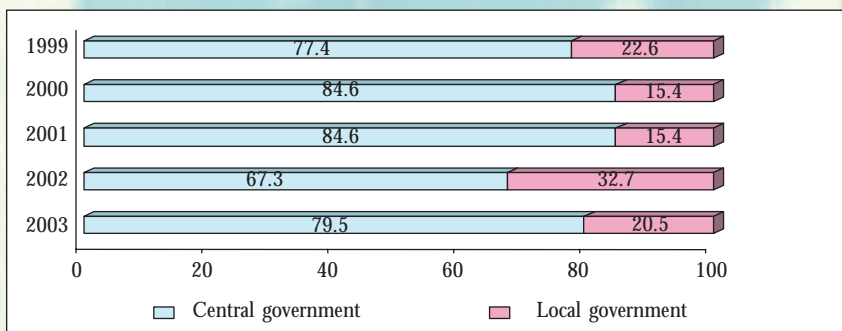
**Figure 5.2 Educational Budget as % of National Budget:
Fiscal Years 1995-2004**



Source: Bureau of the Budget.

The current reform proposal has encouraged greater support for education from local resources, however, the major source of local funding for education still comes from the central government. The share of central government subsidies for municipal schools under the responsibility of the *BMA* and Pattaya City has remained nearly two times higher than the local budget. As shown below, the share of local organisation budget in Pattaya City, dropped considerably from 32.7 percent in 2002 to 20.5 percent in 2003.

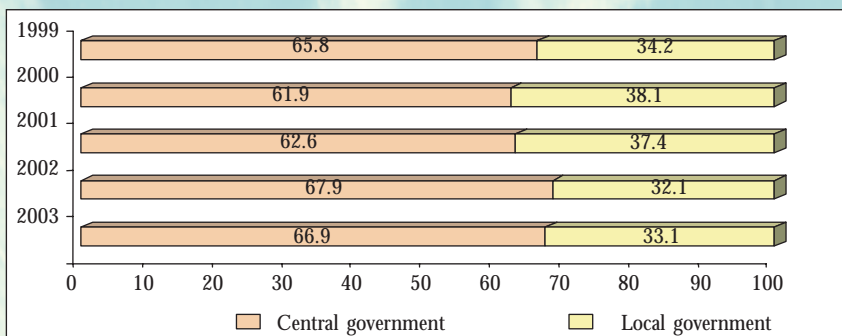
Figure 5.3 Educational Budget Distribution of the Municipality of Pattaya City: Fiscal Years 1999-2003



Source: Education Division, Municipality of Pattaya City.

As for the share of local funding for education under the responsibility of the *BMA*, this has increased slightly from 32.1 percent in 2002 to 33.1 percent in 2003 (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 Educational Budget Distribution of Department of Education of BMA: Fiscal Years 1999-2003



Source: Department of Education, BMA.

5.1.2 Contributions from Private Sources

Contributions from the private sector and society are comprised of non-government sources and private educational institutions. Expenditure from households, which is included in this category, has not been covered in this report.

(1) Non-Government Sources

Resources from non-government sources of educational finance are irregular and intermittent. These sources include: (1) Donations made by individuals and communities which vary both in cash and in kind; (2) Other revenue of educational institutions, for instance, those from academic services, students' products and property; and (3) Foreign loans or international funds such as those from the *World Bank*, *ADB*, *OECD* and other countries such as *France* and *Germany*.

(2) Private Educational Institutions

Private education has played an important role in relieving the government burden on financial resources for education. In the last decade, the percentage of private educational institutions in providing general education at the pre-primary and primary levels were 25 percent and 10 percent respectively. Participation from private educational institutions at the secondary level decreased both in general and vocational streams.

In the past, private educational institutions had a significant role in providing vocational education. Nevertheless, their share has decreased considerably. In 2003, the proportion of private educational institutions providing vocational education at the secondary level has declined by 70 percent when compared to the year 2002.

Due to the increasing popularity of general education, the number of students wishing to enter vocational education in both state and private educational institutions has significantly and constantly decreased for several years despite an increasing social demand for skilled labour. On the contrary, the demand for higher education has risen while state degree-level institutions can absorb only a limited number of students. Consequently, private degree-level institutions play a more significant

role in providing higher education and their relevant share has continuously increased.

At the level of basic education, the government distributes subsidies to students in both state and private schools. Private degree-level institutions do not receive government subsidies and have to charge higher tuition fees than state degree-level institutions that have received government subsidies.

To promote the role of the private sector in providing both basic and higher education as well as to relieve the government's burden of educational financial resources, additional government support is needed in order to lessen the disadvantages suffered by the private sector in terms of costs.

To mobilise resources for education in line with Chapter 8 of the *National Education Act*, the following action was taken:

- 1) Two acts were drafted to amend the relevant laws so as to increase the tax rebates on donations for education and the tax exemption for educational materials. Regarding the increase of tax rebates on donations for education that will materialise shortly, a more simplified process of requesting such rebates has also been proposed.

- 2) A committee comprising of representatives from the *MOE* and the *Ministry of Finance* has taken into consideration several measures to attract more participation in educational provision from the private sector. In April 2004, the *Council of Ministers* approved that the *Ministry of Finance* grant property-tax exemption to private educational institutions and that the *MOE* and concerned agencies modified the rules and regulations relating to private educational institutions based upon the principle of equal treatment when compared to public educational institutions.

Previously, it has also been suggested that a law, which will authorise the State and local administration organisations to levy educational taxes, be issued as specified in the *National Education Act*. Moreover, in the case where the State is authorised to levy inheritance tax, such a tax will be used for educational purposes. Since there is not enough information on the appropriateness of educational taxes and how to use such taxes for

educational purposes, no concrete action has been taken regarding the levy of educational taxes as yet.

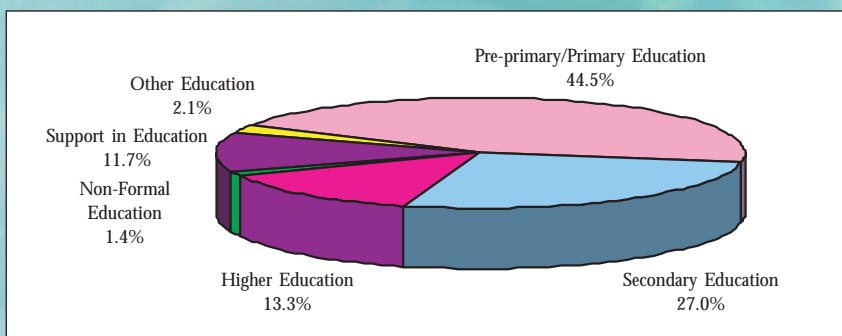
(3) Business Sector

Focus on encouraging the business sector to participate in human resources development, financial contributions as well as an in-house training to 50 percent of the employees has been made mandatory under the *Labour Skills Development Act* issued by the *Ministry of Labour*. Companies with not less than 100 employees will be required to contribute 1 percent of their wages to the Labour Skills Development Fund after a related ministerial directive is published in the Royal Gazette. Employers providing training to their staff will be granted tax benefits and expense deductions as well as loans from the Labour Skills Development Fund to subsidise training or skill testing programmes. Non full-time employment namely farming, fisheries, forestry, animal farming and salt farming will not be included in this scheme.

5.2 Allocation of Budget

As shown in figure 5.5, the largest proportion of educational funding in 2003 has been allocated to pre-primary and primary education, amounting to 44.5 percent. Secondary education and higher education received 27.0 and 13.3 percent respectively, while only 1.4 percent of the total educational budget was allocated to non-formal education.

Figure 5.5 Percentage Distribution of Educational Budget by Function: Fiscal Year 2004



Source: Bureau of the Budget.

5.2.1 Existing Budgetary Allocations

In 2003, an educational fund became available for the disabled after the *MOE* announced “The 2003 Ministerial Regulation on the Educational Fund for the Disabled” while the distribution of extra educational expenditure was allocated for gifted students as well as socially and culturally-disadvantaged students. As for gifted students, the extra educational expenditure includes only those who study in schools for the gifted but excludes those who are studying in normal schools.

Following are some responsibilities of the State, as stipulated in Section 60 of the *National Education Act*, regarding distribution of budgetary allocations for operating and capital costs; general subsidies for per head expenditure and distribution of loans.

1) Distribution of Government’s Budgetary Allocations for Operating and Capital Costs of Educational Institutions:

- **State Educational Institutions Providing Basic Education:**

All the capital costs of state educational institutions providing basic education as well as their operating costs, which are used for school administration; development of teachers and students; and salaries for their teachers, are included in the government’s budgetary allocations.



- **Private Educational Institutions Providing Basic Education:**

As part of the general subsidies for per head expenditures of private educational institutions, the government absorbs the salaries of their teachers so as to decrease the burden on private educational institutions in providing basic education. In contrast to state educational institutions, all the capital costs of private educational institutions are dealt with by themselves.

- 2) **Distribution of budgetary general subsidies for per head expenditure for those receiving compulsory and basic education:**

For the year 2004, the government allocated around 26,988 million baht budget for general subsidies for per head expenditure for around 11,987,904 students receiving compulsory and basic education. It covers 1,588,196 pre-primary students; 5,539,908 primary students; 2,732,862 lower-secondary students; and 2,126,938 upper-secondary students. In comparison to the year 2002, the budgetary general subsidies for per head expenditure increased from 26,650.4 by 1.25 percent or 337.6 million baht.

The government's general subsidies for per head expenditure for those receiving compulsory and basic education will be distributed as follows:

(1) In comparison to ordinary students, the government provides larger subsidies for disadvantaged students in welfare education schools; students from low-income families; disabled students in schools for the disabled; and students in Sports schools. For example, expenses for uniforms and other items are not included in the general subsidies for per head expenditure for ordinary students and are absorbed by household expenditure.

(2) Schools that use English as a medium of instruction and international schools prefer not to receive general subsidies for per head expenditure and are allowed to collect fees for tuition and basic facilities as well as other expenses as they deem appropriate and necessary.

(3) Budgetary general subsidies for per head expenditure for state and private educational institutions are differently distributed.

Both state and private educational institutions receive the same amount of general subsidies for per head expenditure for operating costs covering fees for tuition and basic facilities. Apart from the operating costs, general subsidies for per head expenditure of private educational institutions also include teachers' salaries. State educational institutions also receive, as separate subsidies, all of their capital costs as well as teachers' salaries, which are in line with specific salary scales and higher than some private educational institutions.

- **Government Subsidies for Per Head Expenditure of State Educational Institutions**

For state school students, various rates of general subsidies for per head expenditure are applied. The rates vary depending on the following: (1) the classification of students into 6 groups; (2) the types and levels of education; (3) the different costs in provision of education as specified by responsible agencies; (4) fields of study (in the case of vocational education).

Different rates of subsidies are also applied for disabled students in schools for the disabled and in inclusive schools as well as for boarders and day students.

- **Government Subsidies for Per Head Expenditure of Private Educational Institutions**

Since government subsidies for private educational institutions are less than those given to state educational institutions; the government allows them to charge "additional fees for improving the quality of education" from students. Other than additional fees for improving the quality of education, private educational institutions are allowed to collect, from their students, other expenses to cover their costs in relation to student lunches, school supplies, laundry, transportation, snack/milk and annual checkup. However, the rates to be collected must not exceed those specified by the *Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC)*.

3) Distribution of Low-Interest Loans to Private Educational Institutions for Eventual Self-Reliance

A. Low-Interest Loans to Private Educational Institutions Providing Compulsory and Basic Education

The *OPEC* supervises two Revolving Funds for the Development of Private Educational Institutions providing compulsory and basic education. Both funds offer loans to be used in the construction of new school buildings or the renovation of old ones.

The Revolving Fund for private educational institutions administered by Islamic Religious Groups in the South of *Thailand* offers interest-free loans while the Revolving Fund for other private educational institutions offers 4 percent-interest loans.

B. Low-Interest Loans to Private Degree-Level Institutions

Four percent-interest loans to private degree-level institutions are provided by the *MUA* from the following resources:

(1) The Revolving Fund for Development of Private Degree-Level Institutions: This fund offer loans to be used in the construction of new school buildings or the renovation of old ones as well as the purchase of school equipment; and

(2) The Revolving Fund for Development of Faculty Staff in Private Degree-Level Institutions: This fund offer loans to private degree-level institutions wishing to send their faculty staff to study abroad at master's and doctoral degree levels in selected fields.

4) Distribution of Loans for Learners from Low-Income Families

Established in 1996, the Education Loan Fund has been regulated by the *1998 Education Loan Fund Act* which later was amended by responsible agencies so as to reflect the intentions of the *National Education Act*. The amount and proportion of distribution of loans from the school year 1996 to 2003, as classified by levels of education, is presented in table 5.3.

From the beginning, the loans have been allocated to poor learners from low-income families who wish to continue their upper-secondary education to undergraduate level in both general and vocational education. This includes learners in non-formal education who wish to further their studies from lower secondary level in the types of education stipulated by the *Ministry of Education*.

Under the Education Loan Fund, the *Ministry of Finance (MOF)* has been responsible for loans allocation while *Krung Thai*

Bank Public Company Limited takes charge of debt repayment from learners after their graduation. As of May 2004, 30 percent of the total debts had not been paid and around 540 million baht in outstanding debts has been incurred.

5.2.2 New Initiatives in Budgetary Allocations

1) Establishment of the Income-Contingent Loans (ICL) Fund

Apart from a growing concern over inefficient resource utilisation and the increase of outstanding debts from educational loans over the past several years, there are several other factors that played a major role in initiating the financing arrangements known as 'Income-Related Loans (IRL)' or 'Income-Contingent Loans (ICL)'. Included among them are unjust, unfair and inefficient resource mobilisation and allocation as a result of low cost-sharing among university students, who enjoy greater benefit after graduation, when compared to those who do not have access to higher education. In addition, the supply-side budgeting system does not encourage quality improvement through market competition. Thus, the ICL Fund is designed as a mechanism to change from the existing supply-side to the more demand-side budgeting system as well as to increase students' cost-sharing in higher education and to produce graduates in the areas that most suit the country's economic and social needs. It is also expected that a more efficient system of resource utilisation and collection of the repayments for educational loans at higher education level will be derived from the ICL Fund.

With this in mind, the government and concerned agencies decided that the Education Loan Fund should be dissolved and the ICL Fund should be established in its place. This decision was proposed to the *Council of Ministers* and was approved in principle, in April 2004.

Under the new loan scheme, the government will advance tuition fees to students in each higher education institution through the ICL Fund while students will pay back their loans according to their future income.

The ICL Fund will offer loans only to students wishing to enrol at higher education level. Secondary students are not included in the ICL Fund; however, secondary students as well as university students from poor families will be assisted financially. In this regard, it is proposed that an assistance fund should be established to give scholarships and grants to destitute students as well as students who choose to study in the fields that respond to the country's future needs.

In implementing the ICL Fund, university students who do not wish to borrow from the Fund and choose to pay their tuition fees in advance will receive a discount. The up-front payment will be included in the revolving fund under the new loan scheme.

As for university students who choose to borrow from the Fund, they will be required to use smart identity cards to pay for their tuition fees. After graduation, whenever students who have incurred the debts are able to secure employment with an income level that reaches the first repayment threshold, they will be obliged to start repaying their debts through the public tax system. Since student liabilities incurred in the ICL Fund have no real interest and no time limit for repayment, default risks are abolished. A reliable and universal system of unique identifiers generated from the 13-digit ID card as well as a computerised record-keeping system will be needed to facilitate the Revenue Department in tracking accurate liabilities of students and in eliminating the default risks.

The decision-makers relating to the establishment and implementation of the ICL Fund, in terms of policies, strategic and implementation plans, main tasks, and timeframe, sit on the *Committee on Facilitating the Reform of Financing Arrangements in Higher Education* that is chaired by the *Deputy Prime Minister*. Its 5 sub-committees comprising of representatives from concerned agencies include the *Revenue Department*, the *Comptroller General's Department*, the *Budget Bureau*, the *Educational Loan Fund*, the *NECTEC*, the *Public Relations Department*, the *OEC*, the *OHEC* and the *OVEC*. These sub-committees are responsible for the following tasks: (1) development of the administrative system for

Table 5.1 Distribution of Loans in Academic Years 1996-2003 by Level of Education (as of January 31, 2004)

Unit: million baht

Levels of Education Academic Years	General Upper Secondary	Vocational Upper Secondary Education	Technical Vocational Education	Lower-than-Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Others	Total
1996							
Amount of Loans	858.20	771.35	576.76	52.94	1,392.11	1.23	3,652.59
No. of Borrowers	58,961	34,322	20,143	1,940	33,030	48	14,8444
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	14,555.38	22,473.92	28,633.27	27,288.66	42,146.84	25,625.00	24,605.84
1997							
Amount of Loans	1,828.80	2,204.55	2,174.81	203.05	5,819.09	20.89	12,151.19
No. of Borrowers	1,44306	102,680	71,754	6,472	109,828	387	435,427
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	12,673.07	21,470.10	30,309.25	31,373.61	52,073.15	53,979.33	27,906.38
1998							
Amount of Loans	2,485.54	3,507.14	3,881.64	296.25	9,186.22	86.47	19,443.26
No. of Borrowers	230,465	180,676	136,334	9,750	187,806	2,018	747,049
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	10,784.89	19,411.21	28,471.55	30,384.62	48,913.35	42,849.36	26,026.75
1999							
Amount of Loans	2,650.58	3,685.76	4,762.53	291.59	12,198.94	156.98	23,746.38
No. of Borrowers	260,541	192,523	166,061	9,454	250,101	3,188	881,868
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	10,173.37	19,144.52	28,679.40	30,843.03	48,776.05	49,240.90	26,927.36
2000							
Amount of Loans	2,203.08	2,876.64	4,950.31	259.35	13,981.19	179.06	24,449.63
No. of Borrowers	252,142	167,462	178,128	8,652	291,368	3,238	900,990
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	8,737.46	17,177.87	27,790.75	29,975.73	47,984.64	55,299.57	27,136.41
2001							
Amount of Loans	2,595.03	3,064.82	5,458.69	238.30	16,645.63	478.60	28,481.07
No. of Borrowers	278,794	169,184	189,330	7,704	335,069	7,574	987,655
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	9,308.06	18,115.31	28,831.62	30,931.98	49,678.22	63,189.86	28,837.06

Table 5.1 Continue

Unit: million baht

Levels of Education Academic Years	General Upper Secondary	Vocational Upper Secondary Education	Technical Vocational Education	Lower-than-Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Others	Total
2002							
Amount of Loans	2,194.28	2,763.87	5,619.40	216.48	18,565.47	351.29	29,710.79
No. of Borrowers	262,495	166,570	189,336	7,082	372,022	5,712	1,003,217
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	8,359.32	16,592.84	29,679.51	30,567.64	49,904.23	61,500.35	29,615.52
2003							
Amount of Loans	1,720.97	2,225.16	5,002.53	195.89	19,235.21	193.93	28,573.69
No. of Borrowers	219,637	145,346	164,567	6,097	377,585	3,742	916,974
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	7,835.52	15,309.40	30,398.14	32,128.92	50,942.73	51,825.23	31,160.85
Total Amount of Loans (million baht)	16,536.48	21,099.29	32,426.67	1,753.85	96,923.86	1,468.45	170,208.60
No. of Borrowers	1,707,341	1,158,763	1,115,653	57,151	1,956,809	25,907	6,021,624
Average Amount of Loan per Borrower	9,685.52	18,208.46	29,065.19	30,688.00	49,531.59	56,681.59	28,266.23

Source: Office of the Educational Loan Fund.

the demand-side financing arrangements; (2) development of the administrative system for the ICL Fund; (3) transfer from the *Educational Loan Fund* to the ICL Fund; (4) development of the budget system for higher education; and (5) campaign and publicity of the reform of financing arrangements for higher education.

With a strong political will under the leadership of the current government, it is expected that the implementation of the ICL Fund can take place within a few years. Meanwhile, a more in-depth study in terms of appropriate tuition fees, interest rates and threshold income has been undertaken to accelerate the issuance of relevant policy guidelines and implementation of concrete actions.

2) New Forms of Scholarships and Loans

Since the present government regards education as a key tool in combating poverty, several projects and activities have

been implemented to ensure a better quality of life for the poor and the disadvantaged so that they will be able to take part in the future development of the country. In this regard, extra budget to be used for educational purposes has been allocated in addition to normal distribution of educational budget and general subsidies for per head expenditure that have been distributed only to educational institutions. Examples of projects and activities with similar purpose include the following:

(1) One District: One Scholarship: In 2004, the *MOE* collaborated with the *Ministry of Interior*, the *Office of the Civil Service Commission*, the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* and the *Government Lottery Office* in organising a project entitled, “One District: One Scholarship.” This project addresses the issue of equal access to quality education for all Thai people in line with Thailand’s commitment to Education for all. This scholarship will be provided continuously and the *Office of the Lottery Service* will allocate a 1,000 million-baht-budget on an annual basis. Applicants for the scholarship are poor students whose family income does not exceed 100,000 baht per year. In addition, these students are required to have a minimum of 3.00 GPA and to pass the English writing test and an interview.

A student’s chosen field of study should be in line with provincial strategic planning. The *Office of the Civil Service Commission* is responsible for reaching agreements with foreign educational institutions on behalf of students planning to study abroad. Those who wish to study in Thai public universities are required to pass an entrance examination. Alternatively, they can choose to study at private universities. In 2004, a total of 924 fellowships, one per district, have been awarded to needy secondary school students to enable them to further their education. Among these, 186 students will study in *Thailand* while the rest or 738 students will go to study in *France, Japan, China, Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, India, Austria, Spain, Russia, Malaysia, Denmark, Sweden* and *Egypt*.

(2) Essay Writing Scholarship Project: In 2004, the *MOE* implemented an Essay Writing Scholarship project. Approximately 400,000 essays were sent to the *MOE*. Scholarships

were awarded to students from poor families or disadvantaged groups who explained in essay format why they needed a scholarship. The *OBEC* will track the scholars and monitor the outcome of the project in terms of improvement in the quality of life.

(3) The Bicycle-Lending Project: In 2003, the *MOE* in cooperation with the *Ministry of Industry* has been involved in this project in which 426,734,545 baht or 10,668,360 dollars have been allocated and 75,900 bicycles have been provided on loan for students in grades 10-12. Any student living in remote areas where the journey to the school is more than 3 kilometres with a family whose annual income does not exceed 300,000 baht is able to borrow a bicycle from this project. The borrowed bicycles will be returned to the project after graduation.

5.3 Budget Management

According to the *National Educational Act*, there will be a system for auditing, monitoring and evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness in utilisation of the educational budget.

Responsible agencies of the *MOE* and the *Budget Bureau* have implemented a pilot project, namely "Performance-Based Budget Management". Under this project, 37 schools providing basic education in 9 provinces have been experimenting with a system for auditing, monitoring and evaluation based on efficiency and effectiveness in utilisation of educational budgetary allocations.

At higher education level, the *Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC)* appointed a Sub-committee consisting of representatives from Bureau of the Budget, the *OHEC* and the *Comptroller General's Department* as well as experts specialised in accounting and computer systems to supervise a pilot project that was set up with an aim to experiment the system relating to budget, materials, finance and funding accounts in universities through a 3-dimensional cost-accounting model. The software system was also specially designed for this accounting model in which costs are reflected in 3 dimensions: 1) In the planning dimension, costs will be calculated in line with the budget plan of the *Comptroller General's Department*; 2) In the organisational dimension, costs will be calculated in terms of organizational structures such as Faculties

and Departments; and 3) In the funding dimension, costs will be calculated in terms of objectives in funding such as teaching-learning provision, student development activities, research, academic services to the community, administration and management, and quality assurance systems and mechanisms. It is expected that through piloting the system, universities will be able to calculate their actual operating costs of educational provision.

Undeniably, effective mobilisation of resources and investment for education, allocation of budget and budget management is essential to the success of educational reform, particularly the reform of learning that directly benefits all Thai people. Greater efforts thus have been made to implement the reform proposals for the new system of resources and investment for education.



Chapter 6

Reform of Learning

Learning reform is at the heart of educational reform and can be implemented without specific regulations. As the reform of learning is aimed at providing the highest benefits for all Thai people, it has been implemented widely through various efforts from policy level to institutional or grassroots level.

6.1 Reform of Curricula

As stipulated in Section 28 of the *National Education Act*, curricula at all levels of education will be diversified and commensurate with each level, with the aim of improving the quality of life suitable for each individual's age and potential. The substance of the curricula, both academic and vocational, will aim at human development with a desirable balance regarding knowledge, critical thinking, capability, virtue and social responsibility.

Apart from the characteristics mentioned above, the *National Education Act* requires that higher education curricula will emphasise academic development, with priority given to higher professions and research for development of the bodies of knowledge and society.

1) Basic Education Curriculum

In accordance with Section 27 of the *National Education Act*, the *Basic Education Commission* is in charge of prescribing the

core curriculum for basic education while basic education institutions are responsible for prescribing curricular substance. The basic education curriculum has, therefore, been prepared at two levels: national and institutional.

- **At National Level**

At national level, the *2001 Curriculum for Basic Education* has been formulated. Covering 12 years of basic education (grades 1-12), this *Curriculum* is divided into 4 stages. Each stage comprises 3 years, with each year consisting of 1,000-2,000 hours.

Five groups of knowledge and skills as specified in Section 23 of the *National Education Act* have been included in this *Curriculum*. They are classified into 8 groups of subjects: Thai Language; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies; Religion and Culture; Health Education and Physical Education; Art; Career and Technology-Related Education; and Foreign Language. In addition, there is one activity focusing on developing learners in line with their interests such as that related to scouting, and advice for further study.

A nationwide training programme for various levels of administrators, supervisors, teachers and personnel in related departments has also been organised to make necessary preparations for schools. Implemented in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10 in 2003 and in grades 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 in 2004, the *Curriculum* will be fully implemented in grades 1-12 in 2005.

With an emphasis on preserving Thai identity and promoting good citizenship, a desirable way of life, livelihood and further education, this standard-based *Curriculum* has been the essential foundation for 4 following curricula at basic education level:

(1) 2003 Curriculum for Pre-primary Education:

Organised for children aged 3-5 years, this curriculum focuses on preparing them in terms of physical, intellectual, emotional/mental and social domains.

(2) Curricula for Non-formal Education: Formulated in line with *2001 Curriculum for Basic Education*, these curricula are comprised of *Curriculum for Non-formal Basic Education; Curriculum*

for *Non-formal Vocational Education* (at lower secondary level-vocational stream); and *Curriculum for Non-formal Vocational Education* (at the level of lower certificate).

(3) 2002 Curriculum for Vocational Education (at the level of lower certificate) and 2003 Curriculum for Vocational Education (at the associate degree level): Both curricula are competency-based which means that standards in terms of knowledge; know-how; attitude; and personality that are necessary in students' future careers are specified therein. Such standards cover 9 work fields comprising Trade and Industry; Commerce; Arts and Crafts; Home Economics; Agriculture; Fishery; Business and Tourism; Textile; and ICTs. Students studying in these fields will have an opportunity to take part in hands-on training in participating factories or companies for at least 1 semester.

To expand students' opportunities in this regard, several entrepreneurs and educational institutions have agreed upon a specific programme namely "bilateral cooperation" in which students will be able to take part in on-the-job training for half of their total study period. Several educational institutions and firms understand that giving work experience to students will benefit everyone in the long term.

(4) 2003 Curriculum for Special Education: in line with *2001 Curriculum for Basic Education*, the 2003, *Curriculum for Special Basic Education* was drafted. To facilitate students with all types of disabilities, the learning standards as specified in *2001 Curriculum for Basic Education* had to be revised. In addition, substance relating to rehabilitation and life skills was also augmented in this curriculum to accommodate learners who are autistic and/or mentally-retarded.

- **At Institutional Level**

As stipulated in Section 27 of the *National Education Act*, educational institutions are required to develop a curricular substance relating to the needs of the community and society, local wisdom and attributes of desirable members of the family, community, society and nation.

The sub-committees under the Committee on Academic Quality Development appointed by the *MOE* proposed that the approximate proportions of the core curriculum and curricular substance developed by educational institutions should be 70:30. Such a proportion will be flexibly applied in compliance with the nature of each subject.

2) Higher Education Curricula

During 2002-2003, several actions were taken to reform higher education curricula as follows:

(1) A project that includes a cooperative education system in higher education has been initiated by several public universities including the *Rajamangala Institute of Technology (RIT)*. The objectives of the project are to enhance students' working skills through direct experience; to lessen unemployment; and to update the curricula in line with the recommendations of entrepreneurs. In this cooperative education, third- and fourth-year students will actually work in offices and factories that have joined the project. After working as temporary employees for at least 16 weeks, students will gain hands-on experience and 3 credits.

There were 596 students, studying in 4 fields from 17 universities, participated in hands-on training in 274 companies in the academic year 2002. With 30 million baht budget, the project in 2003 was separated into 2 phases: In phase I, there were 873 students, from 24 universities studying in 13 fields; in phase II, there were 2,500 students from 25 universities.

(2) Each higher education institution also develops its own curricula under the condition that they are commensurate with specified structures and standards. These include:

- The *RIT*: Several curricula at various levels (certificate, diploma and degree) in the fields of science and technology and social sciences developed by the *RIT* focus on improving students' critical thinking and skills as well as in providing them with hands-on experience. Examples of curricula that were improved by the *RIT* include *Curriculum for Vocational Education* in the fields of industry, agriculture, business administration (commerce), home economics and fine arts.

● The *Rajabhat Universities (RUs)*: Formerly known as the *Rajabhat Institutes*, the *RUs* developed several higher education curricula, including the new 5-year curriculum for training of new teachers for basic education (bachelor's degree); education (diploma); educational administration (diploma); teaching (master's degree); educational administration (master's degree); the production of educational personnel (bachelor's and master's degrees); and the development of in-service teachers and administrators (bachelor's degree).

(3) By taking into account the demand-driven and competency-based nature of students' future careers, the new strategy in implementing higher education curricula has been introduced by the *Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)*. Based upon expertise in specific technical fields, 11 educational institutions under the supervision of *OVEC* were selected as pioneers in this so-called "Area of Excellence" strategy. In the near future, higher education curricula (technical fields) offered by these educational institutions will include Rice Technology; Hotel Management; Tourism Industry; and Jewelry Industry.

(4) Higher education curricula in the field of special education are developed so as to train personnel in teaching those with disabilities. These include the training of personnel in the following fields: Thai Sign Language; Interpreter for Thai Sign Language; Advisory Service for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities; Special Education; Teaching Hearing-Impaired Persons; and Teaching Mentally-Retarded Persons.

(5) The framework of recommendations was proposed to enhance the diversity of higher education curricula in the following fields: nursing science; agro-industry; accounting; biotechnology; science (physics, chemistry, arithmetic and biology); hotel management (including service industry and tourism); and English.

(6) Both state and private universities were supported in providing international curricula which offer study programmes that use English as the medium of instruction. In 2003, 521 international curricula were offered by both state and private universities in Thailand.

(7) The standard criteria in higher education curricula were developed in terms of utilisation, flexibility and internationalisation. The standard framework for qualifications of

graduates was also improved to create recognition in *Thailand* and in foreign countries as well as to facilitate the transfer of credits between educational institutions.

(8) Substance relating to history, rural study, traditional medicine (herbs and massage), and arts and culture have been integrated into higher education curricula as an attempt to promote local wisdom.

(9) Relating to the development of occupational skills and generation of self-employed persons and new entrepreneurs, various short training courses were developed by the *MOE* and concerned agencies as well as the Department of Skill Development under the *Ministry of Labour (MOL)*. The *RIT* also conducted four projects in this regard: Three projects, focusing on the development of self-employed persons, were intended for various target groups including the *RIT*'s fourth-year students; communities' leaders and farmers; and graduates from the *RIT* and other institutions. Another project was directed at generating new entrepreneurs from students who had completed vocational education (at associate's degree level). In the fourth project, it is expected that 790 students will participate. About 400 students were trained in 2003 while the rest will be trained in 2004.

Apart from these, the Department of Skill Development under the *MOL* has also developed 314 short courses focusing on preparing and upgrading various occupational skills.



Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn observing a teaching demonstration of a kindergarten class at Ban Doi Lan Border Patrol Police School in Mae Suay District, Chiang Rai Province.

Those completing the training courses will receive a certificate; however, no qualifications will be issued in this regard.

6.2 Reform of the Learning Process

As indicated in Section 22 of the *National Education Act*, education will be based on the principle that all learners are capable of learning and self-development and are regarded as being most important. The teaching-learning process will aim at enabling learners to develop at their own pace and to maximise their potential.



Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn observing religious instruction at Nirandornvidhya School in Muang District, Narathiwat Province.

1) At Basic Education Level

To reform the learning process in the best interest of learners at basic education level, considerable efforts have been made as follows:

(1) Teachers are encouraged to develop their own teaching materials. In so doing, activities, experiments and hands-on experience will be emphasised along with the needs of learners and the community. Moreover, the teacher's role will be that of a facilitator who assists learners to learn by themselves.

(2) Various training activities were specially organised to provide teachers with the knowledge relating to the learning process of learners; classroom research; and development of teachers' bodies of knowledge and teaching methods in 8 groups of subjects. Instruction manuals have also been provided for teachers for self-development.

(3) Apart from revising the learning standards to accommodate learners who are hearing-impaired, visually-impaired, mentally-retarded and autistic students, specific courses were also organised to provide necessary knowledge and skills for teachers and superintendents of these learners.

(4) A project called “Learning Paths of Thai People” was implemented by the *OEC* in cooperation with responsible agencies. The project focuses on setting up strategies to promote desirable characteristics and learning methods in Thai people/learners aged 0-20 in compliance with the developmental stages of their age groups, the *2001 Curriculum for Basic Education*, the curriculum for vocational education and the curriculum for higher education. In this project, age groups are divided into 7 clusters as follows: 0-3, 3-5, 6-8, 9-11, 12-14, 15-17 and 18-20.

(5) Education Improvement Model: In this national pilot project supervised by the *OEC*, the “Education Improvement Model” has been developed by Thai educators. It is hoped that the model will integrate teacher in-service training in the use of new educational technologies, including information technology, with administrative and community support for student learning and modern school-based continuous assessment. The new school model will help raise educational standards by ensuring accountability and the cooperation of stakeholders.

(6) Learning Reform Schools for Developing Quality Learning: The objectives of this technical assistance (TA) are to strengthen the capacity of the *Royal Thai Government* to carry out the educational reform and to pursue sustainable and quality development in teaching and learning, administrative leadership and community accountability.

Initiated by the *OEC* and in cooperation with responsible agencies, this Pilot Project was carried out in 250 pilot schools. A team of four domestic and three international consultants were recruited. The domestic consultants conducted the following reports: Learning Process Reform of the Pilot Schools: The Selected Models; Learning Process Reform Situation in Pilot Schools: Lessons and Policy Recommendations; Reforming Process for Learning Quality Development: Assessment and Assurance; and School-

Based Management: Thai Ways and Methods. The international specialists produced three separate reports as follows: The Report on Teacher Development for Quality Learning; The Report on ICT for Direct Instruction and In-Service Training; and The Report on School Reform Policy. In addition, the *OECD* also published the “Synthesis Report: From Crisis to Opportunity, The Challenges of Educational Reform in *Thailand*.”

Apart from the reports mentioned above, the success of the pilot project can be seen in the expansion of similar project. As a result, reform of the learning process has been introduced by the *MOE* in 2,500 pilot schools and is now expanding to approximately 10,000 network schools. Throughout the country, there are 160,000 teachers who have shared their experience in reforming the learning process with other teachers in the form of networking.

2) At Higher Education Level

Activities implemented to reform the learning process for the best interest of learners at higher education level include cooperative education and bilateral education which enhances students’ working skills through direct experience. The *RUs* focus on active learning (learners participate in learning) and on development of measurement and evaluation.

6.3 Reform of the Admission System

In the near future, the Bureau of Educational Testing will be established as a public organisation to supervise the implementation of national tests and other activities relating to the admission system of basic and higher education institutions which are now under the responsibility of the *Office of the Basic Education Commission* and the *Office of the Higher Education Commission*.

The newly modified admission system requires that educational institutions at both levels should consider additional factors as follows:

1) At Basic Education Level

The *National Education Act* stipulates that all individuals shall have equal rights and opportunities to receive basic education

provided by the State. To serve such intent, it is essential to specify the precise methods of admission and the number of students allowed for enrolment in each basic education institution to ensure transparency, accountability, equity and equality.

As specified in the *OBEC's* announcement, a priority task of basic education institutions is to provide education for children living in their vicinity. Gifted and talented students will be admitted in any school and their proportion in normal schools is around 5 percent. The same proportion is applied to students admitted through special conditions. In the case that places in any school are left, children living outside its vicinity are allowed to enrol. At primary level, these children will be admitted by means of their drawing ability. In addition to drawing, other methods are allowed in the admission of students at secondary level. Such methods will be agreed upon by the committee responsible for admission of students in each school and must be revealed to the public.

The relevant criteria for and percentage of admission of students in grade 7 can be summarised in the following table:

Table 6.1 Criteria for and Percentage of Admission of Students in Grade 7

Admission Criteria	Percentage		
● living in the vicinity of the schools	50	60	70
● gifted students	5	5	5
● special conditions	5	5	5
● scores from the national tests taken in grade 6*	20	20	20
● living outside the vicinity of the schools	20	10	-

Source: *Admission of Students under the Supervision of OBEC (Academic Year 2004).*

Students studying in grades 3, 6 and 9 have been obliged to take the national tests organised by the OBEC since the academic

year 2001. They are required to take the national tests in the following subjects (table 6.2).

Table 6.2 Subjects Required in National Tests

Levels of Education	Subjects Required
Grade 3	Mathematics and Thai language
Grade 6	Mathematics, Thai language, Science and English
Grade 9	Mathematics, Thai language, Science, English and Social Sciences

Source: Bureau of Educational Testing, OBEC.

In the academic year 2004, students studying in grade 12 are also obliged to take the national tests. The subjects to be included in national tests at grade 12 in the academic year 2004 are now under consideration.

2) At Higher Education Level

The previous admission system at higher education level was considered inappropriate since it depends solely upon an entrance examination that evaluates students' academic performance at a specific instance.

The current admission system at higher education level was improved by adding up two more factors which are (1) student's grade point average (GPA) in grades 10-12; and (2) students' percentile rank. The percentile rank is based on students' GPA and calculated by each school. The percentage of both factors is 5 percent each. This means that GPA and PR play a trivial role comparing to the result of the entrance examination that is equivalent to 90 percent.

In the future, however, students wishing to pursue higher education will not be required to take an entrance examination. On the other hand, the following aspects will be taken into account: (1) GPA - 5 percent; (2) PR - 5 percent; (3) results of the national tests taken in grade 12 in eight core subjects - 40 percent; (4) results of aptitude tests in not more than 3 subjects as required in any

specific field - 50 percent. In this regard, non-academic performance such as record of students' participation in activities that bring about social benefits will also be considered as a requirement in enrolment or interview.

So far, the renewed factors of the admission system as mentioned above have been approved by the *Council of Ministers* only in principle. A board, which was appointed to stipulate policy relating to the admission system at higher education level, was requested to review these factors. It is expected that these factors will be readjusted and used in the admission system at higher education level by 2006.

6.4 Innovative Schools

In order to improve educational administration and management in educational institutions, the current Prime Minister of *Thailand* requested that education be provided in an innovative framework in a project called "*Mini-Ministry of Education.*" Chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the *MOE*, the "Educational Innovation Development Committee" was established to supervise the project which will be implemented during the fiscal years 2003-2006. The project, in which students will be regarded as individuals with different capabilities and aptitudes, included five types of model schools in the school year 2003 as follows:

1) State-Supervised Schools

State-Supervised Schools are divided into 2 types which are autonomous schools and independent schools. The class size will not exceed 40 at primary level and not exceed 35 at secondary level. In 2004, 19 schools wishing to be state-supervised schools submitted their request for the *MOE's* approval. Among these, 14 are secondary schools and the rest are primary schools. It is expected that state-supervised schools will increase by 10 percent each year during the school years 2004-2007.

2) Bilingual Schools

Focusing on using English in communication, there will be 2 types of bilingual schools comprising of English Programme (EP) schools and Mini-English Programme (MEP) schools. The

“Educational Innovation Development Committee” under the supervision of the *Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)* will assess schools wishing to be bilingual schools in terms of curricular substance, the teaching-learning process and knowledge/qualifications of teachers. In addition, it was also stipulated that in each school year, bilingual schools should provide at least 3 percent of their seats to disadvantaged students whose capabilities meet the criteria set for EP and MEP.

- In the MEP, English will be used as a medium of instruction for 8-14 periods per week. All subjects can be taught in English depending on the schools’ readiness, except for Thai Language and Social Studies (only the parts of the curriculum that are related to Thai tradition, culture and law).

- In the EP, English will be used as a medium of instruction as follows: 1) At pre-primary level: The maximum usage of English is 50 percent of the total periods per week; 2) At primary level: English is used in selected subjects including English Language, Mathematics, Science and Physical Education. The advantage to the teaching-learning process in terms of the ability to communicate in English as well as the knowledge and understanding of the substance of each subject will be taken into consideration; and 3) At secondary level: English is used in all subjects, except for Thai Language and Social Studies (only the parts of the curriculum that are related to Thai tradition, culture and law).

In 2003, there were around 104 state schools wishing to be bilingual schools. Among these, 59 state schools, comprising of 17 primary schools and 42 secondary schools, were approved to conduct MEP. Out of 59 schools that were initially approved to conduct MEP, 45 schools (10 primary schools and 35 secondary schools) were later approved to conduct EP.

In 2004, there are around 198 schools wishing to be bilingual schools. Among these, 99 schools meet the initial requirements for bilingual schools set up by the *OBEC*. At a later stage, the *OBEC* has to assure that these schools will be able to strictly follow its requirements before giving approval to these schools.

3) Schools for Gifted Students

Education for gifted and talented students is provided at various educational levels. The *OEC* has formulated a strategic plan for gifted and talented students as well as pilot studies and numerous research and development projects on gifted education. Concerned agencies have explored children's hidden talents, through a series of tests, observations and evaluation conducted by psychologists and other experts, as well as providing expert advice on how to motivate gifted children to their parents. The "Gifted Education Curriculum", in which acceleration, enrichment, extension and monitoring programmes have been included as well as its supportive activities, the "Specialised Education", and the advanced placement programmes have also been provided in several educational institutions. Incentives for gifted and talented students, such as a career path, as well as incentives for teachers, administrators and educational institutions, such as tax reduction for private schools for gifted students, have also been taken into account.

Currently, there are 75 schools wishing to provide education for gifted and talented students. Gifted education has also been provided by concerned agencies through several projects including Junior Science Talent Project, (J.S.T.P.) and the Development and Promotion of Science and Technology Talented Project. It is expected that the provision of gifted education will remarkably be improved by the *National Centre for the Gifted and Talented* which has been established in response to the Prime Minister's policy.

4) Buddhism-Oriented Schools

The principle of threefold training comprising of morality, mentality and wisdom will be practiced in the Buddhism-Oriented Schools, together with the 4 following virtues: (1) to associate with well-behaved and intelligent persons, and to have the appropriate media for learning; (2) to pay attention to one's studies based on an appropriate curriculum; (3) to possess a critical and rational thinking process; and (4) to be able to apply the knowledge learned in conducting daily activities in accordance with Buddhist principles. Similar to the Buddhist way of life that has been assimilated into the

way of life and culture of most Thai people throughout history, Buddhist philosophies will be integrated into the teaching-learning process, the learners' development activities, the school administration and the entire school environment.

Currently, more than 10,000 schools are requesting the *MOEs* approval to conduct Buddhism-Oriented Schools. In this regard, the *MOE* will consider the readiness of these schools in terms of physical environment, basic life development activities, the teaching-learning process, school ambience and human relations, and administration and management.

5) Model ICT Schools

Model ICT Schools are schools that apply ICT in developing the body of knowledge as well as integrating ICT into the teaching-learning process and the learners' development activities. So far, there are 12 model ICT schools. All these schools will be supervised by one of the following universities/institutions: *Chulalongkorn University, Kasetsart University, Silpakorn University (Sanamchandra Palace Campus), King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT), and King Mongkut's Institute of Technology North Bangkok (KMITNB).*

In this regard, the Constructionism theory will also be applied in the teaching-learning process. Personnel responsible for model ICT schools are also seeking participation from the private sector in terms of equipment and facilities, personnel and innovative ideas in the teaching-learning process. In cooperating with the private sector, related criteria; measures; procedures and incentive measures such as tax reduction will be specified.

6) Perfect Schools

In addition to five types of model schools as mentioned above, a project entitled "One District: One Perfect School" was recently launched. Better known as 'Dream Schools', the Perfect School occurred from the need to create model schools to act as mentors in developing other schools at the district and sub-district levels. So far around 920 model schools have been developed in all aspects, particularly information and communication technologies (ICTs). Focusing on improvement of ICTs for learning, teachers,

students, as well as network linkage for learning among schools and learning sources, the project will be conducted in three phases. In the first phase, improvement activities will be taken in a school selected by the district community. In the second and third phases, such activities will be expanded to other schools at sub-district level and nationwide.

The key tasks in developing the Perfect Schools are:

1) Autonomy and flexibility in administrative and management structure;

2) Development of teacher and educational personnel: Supervised by the Rajabhat Universities, this task will be conducted in line with the teaching-learning theories and by keeping in mind the application of ICTs in the teaching-learning process;

3) Development of curriculum, materials and learning sources: This task will focus on improving intellectual ability, reading habits, lifelong learning, E-learning system, E-book, and textbooks;

4) Application of ICT for learning and development of software in terms of cost-effectiveness, network linkage, speed and data security system; and

5) Internal quality assurance and external quality assessment.

6.5 Establishment and Development of Lifelong Learning Sources

New lifelong learning sources have been established while the existing ones have been maintained to enhance lifelong learning. According to Section 25 of the *National Education Act*, the State will promote the running and establishment, in sufficient number and with efficient functioning, of all types of lifelong learning sources, namely: public libraries; museums; art galleries; zoological gardens; public parks; botanical gardens; science and technology parks; sport and recreation centres; data bases; and other sources of learning.

Various efforts have been made to enable individuals to learn at all times and in all places from several lifelong learning sources including the following:

1) Under the management of the *National Science Museum Organisation (NSMO)*, a State enterprise under the supervision of the *Ministry of Science and Technology*, there are four museums as follows:

(1) The Science Museum is *Thailand's* most modern science museum located in Pathum Thani, north of Bangkok; it was built at a cost of 1.4 billion baht and founded in 2000 to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 60th birthday. Focusing on the nation's sustainable development through increasing public understanding and direct participation in the development and excitement of science and technology, the Science Museum displays the links between science and technology that are present in nearly every aspect of our lives through the use of interactive exhibits. In June 2004, the Science Museum organised its annual conference in which products of latest technologies invented by Thai scientists, such as nanotechnology, solar cell, advanced polymer and green products, were highlighted. More information on the Museum can be accessed through http://www.nsm.or.th/english/Science_Museum.html.

(2) The Information Technology and Telecommunication Museum (ITTM) presents interactive exhibits relating to history and the future of computer technology and telecommunication technology. More information about the ITTM can be accessed through http://www.nsm.or.th/english/infotech_and_telecommunications.html.

(3) The Natural History Museum (NHM) offers some of the specimens and collections preserved mainly for the purposes of its research for public viewing. More information about the NHM can be accessed through http://www.nsm.or.th/english/natural_history.html.

(4) The Environment and Ecology Museum (EEM) is scheduled for completion in 2005. Living exhibits of 3 ecosystems, namely North American temperate forest; an Asian tropical forest; and the freezing arctic/Antarctic plains, will be displayed. Through the use of Automatic temperature and humidity control systems that imitate the changing of seasons and climates for each region, it is expected that visitors will understand the complexities and

vulnerability of natural ecosystems and appreciate the beauty and value of Thai natural heritage. More information in this regard can be accessed through http://www.nsm.or.th/english/Ecology_and_environment.html.

2) The National E-learning Centre: The establishment of the the National E-learning Centre was authorised by the Council of Ministers in March 2003. Established by the *MOE* and *NESDB*, the Centre provides E-learning and E-training services as a source for self-study. It is hoped that the Centre will 1) contribute to the development of Thai society as a knowledge seeking society; 2) inspire learners to think creatively; 3) help learners acquire good reading habits; 4) be an alternative learning source for children and youth in the community; 5) help expand the knowledge industry and 6) help promote E-learning and E-training through related exhibitions and competitions.

3) Since 2002, several new public libraries have been established and services in approximately 900 public libraries have been improved. Free internet service is provided in all Chalmrarakumari libraries as well as provincial and district public libraries. Many higher education institutions including the *RITs* have been working on E-libraries and Living Libraries.

4) Other types of lifelong learning sources have also been restored. These include national museums and historical parks under the supervision of the *Department of Fine Arts (DFA)*; arts and cultural centres under the supervision of *RUs*, and sport and recreation centres in 116 youth centres under the supervision of Local Education Administration Areas as well as museums of Natural Sciences which aim at preserving the natural environment, including plant species in Nong Raviang and marine life in Trang.

5) Training has also been organised for several personnel responsible for various kinds of lifelong learning sources. The trainees range from English teachers who supervise English Centres under the supervision of the *Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission* to librarians in schools under the supervision of the *MOE* and personnel looking after botanical gardens in schools under the supervision of the *OVEC*. Initiated by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, botanical gardens in schools have

been established in order to preserve local botanical species.

6) Through the cooperation between the *Bangkok Metropolitan Area* and the *Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission*, 3 manuals relating to the learning sources in Bangkok and other provinces have been published. Teachers, wishing to organise special activities for their students, are able to choose from the six hundred learning sources containing therein.

Educational reform is not only an attempt to reach equal rights and opportunities to access education but also a struggle for educational quality and standards which will be the essential factor in the provision of education in the era of a knowledge-based economy and society.



Chapter 7

Educational Standards and Quality Assurance



The purpose of establishing educational standards is to stipulate certain qualities in the provision of education such as desirable attributes of learners, curriculum and teaching-learning processes. To generate quality assurance in educational institutions; they are expected to develop educational quality within the domain of their regular activities and administrative tasks. In so doing, it is anticipated that educational quality will flourish. Improvement of educational quality will be beneficial to direct recipients of the service including students and parents as well as indirect recipients of educational services such as enterprises, Thai people and society as a whole.

To ensure improvement of educational standards and quality at all levels and of all types, two major tasks which need to be accomplished are: 1) the development of educational standards; and 2) the development of a quality assurance system.

7.1 Development of Educational Standards

Currently, there are 3 types of educational standards comprising of national education standards; educational standards for internal quality assurance; and educational standards for external quality assessment.

7.1.1 National Educational Standards

In order to formulate the core standards for the educational development of the country, national educational standards must be developed. In accordance with the *1999 National Education Act*, the *Office of the Education Council*, the *Office of the Basic Education Commission*, the *Office of the Vocational Education Commission* and the *Office of the Higher Education Commission* are responsible for proposing national educational standards, basic education standards, vocational education standards and higher education standards respectively.

National educational standards will serve as the basis for 2 other types of educational standards which are educational standards for internal quality assurance; and educational standards for external quality assessment. At the moment, the national educational standards are approved by the *Education Council* and will be submitted to the *Council of Ministers* for consideration. However; all agencies concerned have made some progress in the development of relevant educational standards. For example, learning standards for basic education have been formulated in response to the 2001 basic education curriculum. In addition, the *Committee for Development of the Evaluation System of Higher Education Quality* has appointed a Sub-Committee to develop and set national standards for higher education. Several pieces of research and relevant studies relating to the development of national education standards have also been conducted.

7.1.2 Educational Standards for Internal Quality Assurance

The national educational standards have not yet been approved by the *Council of Ministers*. However, concerned agencies have already developed educational standards for internal quality assurance as a guideline in the provision of education by educational institutions under their supervision.

7.1.3 Educational Standards for External Quality Assessment

The *Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA)* conducts external quality assessment at the

levels of basic education and higher education (lower-than-degree and degree levels) in line with relevant educational standards that focus on assessment of educational institutions in the following respects: (1) educational achievement (output/outcome); (2) input/process; and (3) efficiency in administration and leadership.

1) Educational Standards for External Quality Assessment at Basic Education Level

Educational standards for external quality assessment of basic education institutions were approved by the *Council of Ministers* in January 2000. These standards, which are composed of 14 standards and 53 indicators, can be classified into 3 groups as follows:

1) *Standards of Learners*, consisting of 7 standards with 22 indicators, aim at physical, spiritual, intellectual and social development;

2) *Standards of Process*, consisting of 3 standards with 21 indicators, focus on administrative and teaching-learning processes; and

3) *Standards of Inputs* specify the characteristics or readiness of administrators, teachers and the curriculum. They are composed of 4 standards, with 10 indicators.

2) Educational Standards for External Quality Assessment at Higher Education Level

Educational standards for external quality assessment of higher education institutions have been stipulated. These include: (1) Graduates Quality; (2) Teaching and Learning; (3) Academic Supports; (4) Research and Innovation; (5) Academic Services; (6) Preservation of Arts and Culture; (7) Management and Administration; and (8) Internal Quality Assurance System.

7.2 Development of a Quality Assurance System

A quality assurance system is comprised of quality control, quality audit and quality assurance. Quality assurance can be divided into 2 main factors: internal quality assurance; and external quality assessment. To enable linkage and consistency between internal quality assurance and external quality assessment, the system,

criteria and methods for internal quality assurance as well as for external quality assessment have been formulated.

In summary, there are three main issues relating to the development of a quality assurance system as follows: formulation of the system, criteria and methods for quality assurance; internal quality assurance; and external quality assessment.

7.2.1 Formulation of the System, Criteria and Methods for Quality Assurance

In 2003, the *MOE* announced two relevant ministerial regulations comprising of ministerial regulations for the system, criteria and methods for internal quality assurance of basic education institutions; and ministerial regulations for the system, criteria and methods for internal quality assurance of higher education institutions. Both ministerial regulations were approved by the *Council of Ministers* in June, 2003 and are now under the consideration of the *Council of States*.

1) The System, Criteria and Methods for Internal Quality Assurance

(1) At Basic Education Level: The system, criteria and methods for internal quality assurance of basic education institutions are composed of the following aspects:

- All educational institutions should conduct internal quality assurance annually.
- The continuous process of internal quality assurance of all educational institutions consists of planning, assessment and improvement of their performance. Each educational institution is required to prepare its own educational development plan in line with the objectives and principles of the *National Education Act*, the National Education Standards as well as the aims, philosophy, and charter of the institution; clearly determine the time frame of implementation; continuously monitor and assess its own performance; and finally use the assessment results to improve and develop the quality of education.
- At all stages of internal quality assurance, emphasis should be placed on the coordination and participation of

all parties concerned, i.e. the institution's personnel, the institution board, the parents, as well as the personnel of various agencies and organisations in communities, educational service areas and regions.

- Each educational institution is required to complete its internal quality assurance report before the beginning of the following academic year. The assessment results of educational quality as well as guidelines or programmes for improvement and development of educational quality must be presented during the following year. As for the report, it must be submitted to the parent organisation, the agencies concerned, the *ONESQA* and be made available to the public.

(2) At Higher Education Level: Based on the standards set by the *Committee for Development of the Assessment System of Higher Education Quality* and in line with the missions and varieties of higher education institutions, the system, criteria and methods for internal quality assurance of higher education institutions have been developed. There will be 9 aspects relating to internal quality assurance of higher education institutions including (1) philosophy, mission, objectives and implementation plan; (2) teaching-learning provision; (3) student development activities; (4) research; (5) academic services to the community; (6) preservation of arts and culture; (7) administration and management; (8) finance and budgeting; and (9) higher education quality assurance systems and mechanisms.

2) The System, Criteria and Methods for External Quality Assessment

(1) At Basic Education Level: The system, criteria and methods for external quality assessment of basic education institutions are composed of the following aspects: (1) Meaning, principles, objectives, significance and scope of external quality assessment; (2) Meaning, qualifications, ethics, staff management and duties of external assessors; (3) Stages of external quality assessment; (4) Guidelines for data collection and inspection; (5) Guidelines for data analysis and external quality assessment of educational standards; (6) Guidelines in writing reports for external

quality assessment; and (7) Educational standards and indicators for external quality assessment of basic education institutions.

(2) At Higher Education Level: Similarly, the system, criteria and methods for external quality assessment of higher education institutions have also been developed in line with educational standards and indicators for external quality assessment of higher education institutions.

7.2.2 Internal Quality Assurance

To serve as a basis for external quality assessment, all educational institutions have to implement an internal quality assurance system which is comprised of quality control, quality audit and quality assessment. In developing and implementing internal quality assurance systems, basic and higher education institutions have carried out the following activities:

1) Internal Quality Assurance at Basic Education Level

Several basic education institutions are able to meet with the criteria set for internal quality assurance including:

- Around 36 percent of basic education institutions at the level of primary education;
- Around 69 percent of basic education institutions at the level of secondary education. The extent of their accomplishment varies from level A4 (Accredited System) to level A3 (Achievement); and
- Around 94 percent of basic education institutions under the supervision of the *Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)*. In this regard, the *BMA* labeled these basic education institutions as “quality schools.”

2) Internal Quality Assurance at Higher Education Level

The *Rajamangala Institute of Technology (RIT)* is quite successful in terms of internal quality assurance. Approximately 55 percent of its institutions were granted ISO 9000 accreditation. It should be noted that university autonomy and academic freedom have been emphasised, meaning that universities are free to choose

their internal quality assurance systems as deemed most appropriate to their conditions and requirements. They are, however, requested to ensure that their systems cover the dimensions of higher education provision.

To set up a broad framework and guidance directions in relation to internal assessment for universities and institutions, a working group has been established. Several training programmes for trainers and internal auditors inspecting universities and institutions have been organised. At the same time, the flow of communication has been enhanced to allow all involved to learn of one another's development so that proper actions can be taken accordingly. An e-group for the internal auditors has also been set up for such purposes.

So as to promote internal quality assurance system in basic and higher education institutions, concerned agencies have carried out several supporting activities including: 1) development of personnel; 2) conducting pilot projects; 3) provision of financial support; 4) performing monitoring and advisory tasks; and 5) dissemination of documents, media and equipment.

7.2.3 External Quality Assessment

External quality assessment of all educational institutions will be conducted at least once every five years since the last assessment. The assessment outcomes will be duly submitted to the agencies concerned and made available to the general public. Before going any further, it may be best to mention the roles of *ONESQA* in external quality assessment.

The *Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA)* was established as a public organisation in November 2000 to take charge of external quality assessment. Once known as the *Office of Education Standards and Evaluation (OESE)*, *ONESQA* holds the following responsibilities: Development of the external assessment system; Development of standards and criteria for external quality assessment; Certification of external assessors; Supervision formulation and certification of standards; Development and training of external assessors; Submission of an annual report on educational quality and standards assessment to the Council of

Ministers, the Minister and the agencies concerned; and Dissemination of the report to other agencies involved and the general public. To carry out these tasks, *ONESQA* appointed 3 committees comprising of the Executive Committee for the Office; the Committee for Development of Assessment Systems for Basic Education; and the Committee for Development of Assessment Systems for Higher Education.

It is expected that by August 2005 or within the first round of external quality assessment, 39,663 educational institutions will have been assessed. In conducting external quality assessment during the period, *ONESQA* has employed the “Amicable Assessment Model” and contracted out external assessors. Qualified persons from private, professional or academic organisations have been selected to be trained as external assessors. Certification of external assessors is based upon their criteria of competency for accreditation and registration. Once certified, their performance will also be evaluated periodically.

1) External Quality Assessment at Basic Education Level

As mentioned earlier, 38,427 basic education institutions will have been assessed by August 2005 or within the first round of external quality assessment. As of December 2003, 11,951 basic education institutions were prepared for external quality assessment. Details relating to external quality assessment of basic education institutions in each region are shown in table 7.1.

Between 2002 and 2003, *ONESQA* planned to certify 2,250 external assessors to conduct external quality assessment of basic education institutions and about 1,928 external assessors were certified.



Table 7.1 External Quality Assessment of Basic Education Institutions (as of December, 2003)

Region	Number of Basic Education Institutions
North	2,589
Central Thailand	2,112
Northeast	4,319
East	656
Central Thailand	631
South	1,644
Total	11,951*

Source: ONESQA's website.

* Remarks: Among these, 8,856 basic education institutions have already been assessed while the rest are under assessment.

2) External Quality Assessment at Higher Education Level

At higher education level, external quality assessment will be conducted through the initial inspection of annual reports as well as other reports resulting from internal quality assurance of vocational education institutions and higher education institutions. The external assessors will review documentary evidence and data as well as visit these educational institutions in accordance with the assessment process. This will lead to the certification of quality and standards of vocational education institutions and higher education institutions based on the standards and performance indicators developed by the Committee.

External quality assessment at higher education level has been conducted in both vocational education institutions and higher education institutions as follows:

(1) External quality assessment of vocational education institutions By August 2005 or within the first round of external quality assessment, it is expected that 783 vocational education institutions will be assessed. Between 2002 and 2003, ONESQA was able to assess 188 vocational education institutions. Details relating to external quality assessment of vocational education institutions are shown in table 7.2.

Table 7.2 External Quality Assessment of Vocational Education Institutions (Fiscal Years 2002-2003)

Responsible Agencies	Number of Vocational Education Institutions		
	Planned	Assessed	To be Assessed
Office of the Vocational Education Commission			
Northern Region	72	16	56
Northeastern Region	111	25	86
Southern Region	80	35	45
Central Region	83	16	67
Eastern Region	37	4	33
Bangkok	29	10	19
Total	412	106	306
Office of the Private Education Commission			
Northern Region	43	13	30
Northeastern Region	76	8	68
Southern Region	54	13	41
Central Region	54	14	40
Eastern Region	36	4	32
Bangkok	90	21	69
Total	353	73	280
Office of the Sports and Recreation Development			
Northern Region	4	2	2
Northeastern Region	4	1	3
Southern Region	4	2	2
Central Region	3	1	2
Eastern Region	1	1	-
Bangkok	1	1	-
Total	17	8	9
Municipality	1	1	-
Total	783	188	595

Source: ONESQA's website.

Between 2002 and 2003, *ONESQA* planned to certify 500 external assessors to conduct external quality assessment of vocational education institutions and about 326 external assessors were certified.

(2) External quality assessment of higher education institutions: By August 2005 or within the first round of external quality assessment, it is expected that 301 higher education institutions will have been assessed. As of February 2004, *ONESQA* was able to assess 83 higher education institutions. Details relating to external quality assessment of higher education institutions are shown in table 7.3.

Table 7.3 External Quality Assessment of Higher Education Institutions (as of February, 2004)

Responsible Agencies	Planned	Under Assessment	Assessed	To be assessed
State Universities	20	5	5	10
Government-supervised Universities	4	1	2	1
Rajabhat Universities	41	6	15	20
Private Higher Education institutions	57	7	9	41
Rajmangala Institutes of Technology	39	11	1	27
Community Colleges	10	0	0	10
Patumwan Institute of Technology	1	0	0	1
Buddhist Universities	2	0	0	2
Asian Institute of Technology	1	0	0	1
Ministry of Public Health	40	9	11	20
Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	2	0	0	2
Thai Red Cross Council	1	0	0	1
Ministry of Culture, Dept. of Fine Arts	16	0	0	16
Ministry of Defense	44	0	0	44
Royal Thai Police	13	0	0	13
Ministry of Interior	1	0	0	1
Ministry of Transport	4	1	0	3
Ministry of Information and Communication Technology	2	0	0	2
Ministry of Science and Technology	1	0	0	1
Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	2	0	0	2
Total	301	40	43	218

Source: ONESQA's website.

Between 2002 and 2003, *ONESQA* planned to certify 450 external assessors to conduct external quality assessment of higher education institutes and about 244 external assessors were certified.

The relevant system, criteria and methods have been established and are being implemented with considerable progress. The national educational standards, which will serve as the core standards for the educational development of the country, have also been developed. Continuing efforts and collaboration from all parties concerned are necessary in improving educational standards and quality at all levels and of all types.



Chapter 8

Reform of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel



The reform of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel may be divided into 4 key areas: training; development and promotion; professional standards control; and personnel management.

8.1 Training

As stipulated in the *National Education Act*, the training of teachers will be improved so that teaching will be further developed and become a highly respected profession. In order to achieve such a goal, the training of teachers has been reformed in 2 main respects: reform of the teacher training system and reform of teacher education institutions.

1) Reform of Training System for Teachers and Administrators of Educational Institutions

The training system for teachers and educational personnel is undergoing a remarkable reform. The following training activities are among those organised especially for teachers and educational personnel:

(1) Development of a Curriculum for the Training of New Teachers: Initiated by the *Office of Educational Reform*, a curriculum for the training of new teachers was developed by the *Ministry of Education (MOE)*. The two main elements in this curriculum include:

- Development of a 5-year curriculum for the training of new teachers at bachelor degree level: According to the new curriculum, 4 years will be dedicated to coursework while the rest of the time will be devoted to the teaching practice.

- Scholarships and job security: In order to attract qualified students into the teaching profession, scholarships and job security were also emphasised. A project in which 7,500 scholarships will be provided with a 4,125 million baht budget has already been approved by the *Council of Ministers*. In this regard, selected students, who enrol between the academic years 2004 and 2006, will receive scholarships for 5 consecutive years and upon graduation, they are required to teach 8 groups of subjects in basic education institutions.

(2) School-based Training (SBT) for In-service Teacher Development: The *1999 National Education Act* requires the teaching profession to be developed on a continuous basis and the pedagogical practices to be shifted away from teacher-centred towards learner-centred pedagogies. The previous training programmes for developing in-service teachers in *Thailand*, usually organised by the central agencies in a city, involved high expenditure and teachers' absence from teaching, and took place in a very short time without continuity in terms of monitoring and evaluation.

To lessen these problems, the *OEC* has introduced a new, effective and sustainable method of teacher training that takes place in educational institutions namely the school-based training (SBT) for in-service teacher development. In this regard, 4 pilot projects were launched, namely National Teacher Project, Master Teacher Project, Project on Research and Development on Models of School-Based Training and Projects to Support School-Based Training: Policy and Strategic Plan for In-service Teacher Development for the Promotion of Learning Reform. The results of a study reveal that SBT is a new paradigm to effectively develop

teachers and the teaching profession as well as contribute to the success of learning reform in *Thailand*. The “Guidelines for SBT for In-service Teacher Development for Basic Education in *Thailand*” prepared by the *OECD* has already been approved by the *MOE* to be distributed to relevant educational institutions.

(3) Training of in-service teachers for a bachelor degree in education: It was recently stipulated that in-service teachers will be allowed to teach in educational institutions on the condition that they have a licence for the teaching profession. In requesting a licence, they must have at least a bachelor degree in education.

All the in-service teachers currently holding a diploma are thus required to be trained for a bachelor degree in education. In this regard, they have to complete a course which takes about 2 academic years or 4 semesters (66 credits).

In collaboration with concerning agencies, the *Rajabhat Universities* will conduct a 5-year project between 2003 and 2007. Training courses are offered in 7 programmes comprising of pre-primary education; primary education; Thai language; social sciences; general sciences; industrial arts; and business. Those who complete these courses will also be able to transfer their learning outcomes and teaching experience.

The project focuses on training in-service teachers at their respective schools. For its implementation in the first-year, approximately 90 million baht was granted and 12,000 out of 34,546 teachers were trained. Within a 5-year period, it is expected that all in-service teachers holding a diploma will be trained for a bachelor degree in education.

(4) Training of in-service teachers for a post-graduate certificate or a master’s degree in teaching: In-service teachers, holding a bachelor degree in fields other than teaching, are encouraged to be trained for a post-graduate certificate or a master’s degree in teaching. The annual target is to train 10,000 teachers for a post-graduate certificate in teaching and 1,500 teachers for a master’s degree in teaching. However, the annual target was not met in 2003.

(5) Training of in-service administrators of educational institutions for a post-graduate certificate in educational administra-

tion: It was recently stipulated that in-service administrators of educational institutions will be allowed to supervise educational institutions on the condition that they have a licence. In requesting a licence, they must have a bachelor degree in educational administration or at least a post-graduate certificate in educational administration in addition to a bachelor degree in another field.

Some of the in-service administrators of educational institutions hold a bachelor degree in fields other than educational administration; they are thus required to be trained for a post-graduate certificate in educational administration. In this regard, they have to complete a course which takes 1 academic year or 2 semesters.

In collaboration with concerned agencies, the *Rajabhat Universities* have conducted a 5-year project in which these in-service administrators of educational institutions are trained for a post-graduate certificate at their respective educational institutions. This began in 2003, and approximately 30 million baht was granted for its implementation in the first year. The annual target of the project is to train 5,000 in-service administrators of educational institutions for a post-graduate certificate in educational administration.

(6) Training of in-service administrators of educational institutions for a master's degree in educational administration: In-service administrators of educational institutions, holding a bachelor degree in educational administration, are encouraged to be trained for a master's degree in educational administration. The annual target of the project is to train 3,000 in-service administrators of educational institutions for a master's degree in educational administration. However, the annual target was not met in 2003.

2) Reform of Teacher Education Institutions

(1) In transforming the *Rajabhat Institutes* from teacher's colleges to universities, the quality of faculty staff has to be enhanced. In this regard, 179.5 million baht budget was allocated for the fiscal year 2004. As for the budget that the *Rajabhat Universities* requested for fiscal years 2005-2010, it will be considered along with the budget requested by other teacher education

institutions. The *Office of the Education Council (OEC)* and concerning agencies were designated by the *Council of Ministers* to set standards for enhancing the quality of faculty staff in teacher education institutions.

(2) Focusing on achieving the excellence of the Faculties of Teacher Education and Education Science in teacher education institutions, extensive research and development activities have been conducted. For example, a project highlighting school reform through research processes has currently been piloted in 5 schools in Supanburi and has been implemented to a larger extent by 31 *Rajabhat Universities*. Each *Rajabhat University* has received financial support equivalent to 50,000 baht and implemented the project in at least 1 school.



8.2 Development and Promotion

The development and promotion of teachers, faculty staffs and educational personnel has been undertaken as follows:

1) Establishment of an Independent Organisation

The drafted act to establish the Institute for Development and Promotion of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel was prepared and two funds were proposed. They are (1) Fund for Development of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel to provide funding support for education, training and observation tours within the country and abroad to teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel of both public and private institutions; and (2) Fund for the Promotion of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel enabling them to initiate, innovate and obtain the achievement of quality on a continuous basis.

In an attempt to eliminate the overlaps between the responsibilities of governmental organisations and restrict the establishment of new funds, the government requested the *MOE* to review the following issues: (1) Whether the functions of the Institute for Development and Promotion of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel can be undertaken by other governmental organisations; (2) If the mentioned institute is to be established, the Institute for Development of Educational Administrators, which is now under the supervision of the *Office of the Permanent Secretary*, should be terminated; and (3) Whether those two funds should be established. If so, details relating to administration, the availability of resources, estimated expenditure and government subsidies, should be provided.

2) Personnel Development

In light of the development and promotion of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel; the following activities have been implemented:

(1) Scholarships for master's and doctorate degrees in the fields of science and technology as well as academic training activities have been provided for qualified teachers through 2 projects namely: Training of Teachers with Special Talents in Science and Technology; and Development and Support of Teachers with Special Talents in Science and Technology. So far, 23 scholarships have been granted.

(2) Teachers and students, with special talents in the fields of mathematics, chemical science, biological science, physics and computing, will be fully supported. Qualified students will be selected as representatives of the country in the International Academic Olympics. So far, scholarships have been granted as follows:

- 1,795 scholarships at bachelor degree level and 42 scholarships at master's and doctorate degree levels were granted to teachers with special talents in related fields; and

- 168 scholarships at secondary level and 812 scholarships at higher education level were granted to students with special talents in related fields. At higher education level, overseas

scholarships were granted to 131 students while the rest, or about 681 students, are studying in *Thailand*.

(3) So as to raise the quality of teaching in the fields of general science and applied science, related research projects and teacher-training activities are organised.

(4) So as to improve the quality of teaching in the field of English, several teacher-training activities are organised. Through the collaboration between the *MOE* and international bodies, study kits are also available for self-study of English teachers. The study kits, namely “English through Entertainment” are comprised of teaching plans; videos; and cassette tapes.

Two special projects relating to the development and promotion of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel have been implemented by the *MOE* as follows:

(1) The first project focuses on the preparation of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel for educational reform. Under this project, 3 separate sets of training materials have been designed for administrators, teachers and community leaders respectively; and

(2) The second project focuses on strengthening the professional standards of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel. For this project, 2 separate sets of curricula have been implemented. The first set of curricula emphasises whole-school reform and aims at training administrators as well as teachers in 40,000 schools at all levels. The second set of curricula comprising of 14 courses and aims at training 500,000 teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel. Among these, 28,289 teachers and educational administrators were trained between 2000 and 2002. It is expected that the first round of training will be completed by 2006. As considered appropriate and necessary, the second and third rounds of training will be implemented in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

3) Recognition and Rewarding of Model Administrators and Outstanding Teachers

To recognise the importance of school administrators as key agents for learning reform, *OEC*, in cooperation with the *Educational Administration Director Council of Thailand (EADiCT)*,

has initiated the rewarding of Model Administrators. This award will be given to administrators with knowledge, morality, capabilities and outstanding performance in school administration whilst promoting the reform of learning.

The most significant agents of learning reform are teachers. In order to recognise the importance of the teaching profession and the quality of teaching and learning, outstanding teachers have been selected and rewarded. In this regard, several awards have been given to National Teachers, Master Teachers, Spearhead Teachers and Thai Wisdom Teachers.

8.3 Professional Standards Control

Regarding professional standards control, responsible agencies have performed activities in 2 main areas: institutional development and the development of professional standards and ethics.

1) Establishment of a Professional Organisation

According to the proposed reforms of the *OER*, a *Council of Teachers and Educational Personnel* will be established to be responsible for setting professional standards; issuing and revocation of professional licenses as well as monitoring observation of professional standards and ethics.

Under the supervision of the *MOE*, two organisations have been established by the House of Representatives since 2003. These are: (1) The *Teachers Council* will be reorganised to take on the responsibilities of the proposed “*Council of Teachers and Educational Personnel*” as mentioned above; and (2) The *Office for Welfare and Security Promotion of Teachers and Educational Personnel* has been established to take charge of the promotion of welfare and security of teachers and educational personnel, under the supervision of a committee chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Education.

2) Development of Professional Standards and Ethics

During the transitional period, the *Teachers Council of Thailand* has implemented the following activities:

(1) Set up 3 features of professional standards and ethics especially for teachers as follows:

- Academic Background and Professional Experience: Teachers must hold at least a bachelor's degree in education or a bachelor's degree in another field plus at least 24 credits in education from additional study or training. They must also have teaching experience for at least 1 year and must have been accepted by their evaluators;

- Professional Standards: Teachers' experience and teaching practice must correspond with professional standards; and

- Professional Ethics: Teachers' behaviour must correspond with professional standards.

(2) Formulate 5 implementation plans in relation to the professional standards and ethics for teachers as well as educational personnel as follows:

- The Plan for Developing and Raising Professional Standards, which is composed of 3 projects, focuses on professional development through research as well as the maintenance of professional standards and ethics and advancement of in-service teachers;

- The Plan for Professional Control, which is composed of 4 projects, focuses on developing data bases of teachers and educational personnel as well as systems and procedures in issuing professional licenses and maintaining standards and ethics;

- The Plan for Accreditation of Teacher Education Institutions, which is composed of 2 projects, focuses on issues relating to the certification of the curricula and academic status of institutions responsible for the production and development of teachers and educational personnel;

- The Plan for Accreditation of Professional Expertise, which is composed of 3 projects, focuses on developing a professional network and setting up the assessment procedures needed in accrediting professional expertise and experience as well as institutional development; and

- The Plan for Development of Professional Organisations, which is composed of 3 projects, focuses on implementing a 5-year development plan for teachers and educational personnel covering the period from 2002-2006 as well as developing professional organisations and modifying regulations.

8.4 Personnel Management

To reform the personnel management of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel, 3 laws have been drafted as follows: 1) The Drafted Act on Administrative Procedures for Teachers and Educational Personnel; 2) The Drafted Act on Administrative Procedures for Civil Servants in Higher Education Institutions; and 3) The Drafted Act on Administrative Procedures for Civil Servants.

According to the Drafted Act on Administrative Procedures for Teachers and Educational Personnel, the personnel management system has been organised into 3 levels as follows: 1) The Commission for Teachers and Educational Personnel responsible for personnel management at a central level; 2) The Sub-Commission for Teachers and Educational Personnel in Educational Service Areas responsible for personnel management in educational service areas; and 3) The Educational Institutions Committee responsible for personnel management in each educational institution. The objective of such systematisation is to decentralise power in personnel administration and management.

At present, special salary scales for teachers and educational personnel are under consideration. In addition, several issues in relation to personnel administration and management have been improved by responsible agencies. These include setting up the framework, namely the “Academic Rank Classification” which specifies the academic status of teachers and educational personnel as a criterion to compensate them with appropriate remuneration and benefits.

With regard to the *Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC)*, its administrative system of personnel management will go through a tremendous change. Personnel in state universities will be affected the most; their status will be shifted from that of civil servants to employees and the privileges attached to civil servants may be lost. To reduce the effect of the transformation, the *OHEC* will allow each state university to have its University Council to set up its own rules and regulations for personnel administration and management.

As with other factors that are essential in educational development, the reform of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel is inevitable. It is expected that such reform will not only contribute to the success of learning reform but will also be beneficial to teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel as well as learners.

Chapter 9

Utilisation of Technologies for Education



Utilisation of technologies for education is crucial in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Technologies for education may be classified in terms of broadcasting media, printing media and non-traditional media or the so-called 'new media' including products and services that provide information or entertainment using ICT-related technologies such as computers and/or the Internet.

Despite the substantial development of mass communication and ICT in *Thailand* in the recent past, human and social development has not been emphasised along the way. Realising the important role of technologies for education in enhancing the competitiveness of *Thailand* and its people in a knowledge-based economy and society, several actions have been taken by the *Royal Thai Government*. These included the establishment of the *Ministry of ICT* after the reform of the bureaucratic system in 2002 and stipulation of measures relating to the utilisation of technologies for education in the *1997 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand*, the *1999 National Education Act* and various ICT-related policies and plans.

Sections 40 and 78 of the *1997 Constitution* and Sections 63 to 69 of the *1999 National Education Act* have paved the way for major actions to be taken so as to promote the utilisation of technologies for education as follows:

- (1) establishment of organisations;
- (2) development of policies and plans;
- (3) development of infrastructure and networking systems;
- (4) development of materials and other technologies for education; and
- (5) development of educational personnel and learners.

9.1 Establishment of Organisations

In accordance with the *1997 Constitution* and the *National Education Act*, relevant organisations are required to be established for the promotion of technologies for education.

Organisations responsible for broadcasting media:

As specified in the *1997 Constitution*, there will be an independent regulatory body with the duty to distribute transmission frequencies and supervise radio or television broadcasting and telecommunication businesses. The utmost public benefit at national and local levels in *education*, culture, State security and other public interests including *fair and free competition* will be taken into account in carrying out the related activities.

According to the *National Education Act*, the government will be responsible for distributing frequencies, signal transmission devices and other infrastructure necessary for radio broadcasting, television, telecommunication radio, and other media of communication for use in the provision of education and the enhancement of religious, artistic and cultural affairs as necessary.

At the moment, responsible agencies are in the process of establishing two independent organisations to take charge of the responsibilities mentioned above.

Institution responsible for technologies for education:

As stipulated in the *National Education Act*, the government will establish a central unit responsible for proposing policies, plans, promotion and co-ordination of research, development and utilisation of technologies for education, including matters relating to evaluation of the quality and efficiency of the production and application of technologies for education. Following the establishment of this

institution, financial resources will be mobilised for the establishment of the Technology for Education Development Fund.

At present, an Act to establish an institution responsible for the supervision of technologies for education has already been drafted and is still under legal procedures.

9.2 Development of National Policies and Plans

Several plans and policies have been developed to promote the utilisation of technologies for education as follows:

1) The NESDB Plan for Development of Mass Communication and ICT for Human and Social Development (1999-2008)

In line with the *1997 Constitution and the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001)*, this plan emphasises human and social development thus replacing a mere concern for economic prosperity. In this regard, mass communication (the broadcasting media and the printing media) and ICT are recognised as essential and effective tools.

2) Master Plans regarding the broadcasting media:

The *MOE* has issued three master plans relating to the broadcasting media: (1) Master Plan for Educational Radio Broadcasting; (2) Master Plan for Educational Television; and (3) Master Plan for Educational Multimedia.

3) A policy regarding the production, development and usage of materials and other technologies for education:

As stipulated in Section 64 of the *National Education Act*, the government will promote and support the production and refinement of textbooks; reference books; academic books; publications; materials; and other technologies for education through acceleration of production capacity; provision of financial subsidy for production and incentives for producers; and development of technologies for education. In so doing, fair competition shall be ensured.

Accordingly, a policy with regard to the production, development and usage of materials and other technologies for education was issued in December 2002. This policy prescribes

guidelines which can be divided into 3 areas: (1) promotion and support for the production and development of materials and other technologies for education as based on the 2002 Core Curricula for Basic Education; (2) quality assessment of materials and other technologies for education; and (3) the selection and usage of materials and other technologies for education.

To implement the above mentioned policy, a Ministerial Regulation was announced in December 2002 in order to 1) promote and support the production and development of all types of materials and other technologies for education for all learning substances and grades; 2) ensure free and fair competition in so doing; and 3) encourage educational institutions to procure and use materials and other technologies for education of good quality in the teaching-learning process.

4) The National IT Policy (2001-2010) or IT 2010

The National IT Policy was set up in 2001 by the *National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre (NECTEC)* under the supervision of the Ministry of Science and Technology in cooperation with the *NESDB* and relevant agencies in the private sector and was approved in March, 2002. This policy stipulates 5 specific strategies relating to e-Government; e-Commerce; e-Industry; e-Education; and e-Society.

Strategies relating to e-Education include the training of teachers; development of content; networking of educational administration systems; increase of ICT usage; and the development of ICT infrastructure. In this regard, two following goals must be achieved: 1) By 2010, all schools will be able to connect with the IT network; and 2) Computers or IT will be used as part of the teaching-learning process at all levels. The expected portion of usage should be increased to 10 percent by 2006 and 30 percent by 2010.

5) The National ICT Master Plan (2002-2006)

The National ICT Master Plan was supervised by the newly established *Ministry of ICT*. This 5-year master plan, which transfers the policy and main principles of the National IT Policy into implementation, was approved by the *Council of Ministers* in September 2002. It covers various aspects including the National IT

Policy; the SWOT analysis of ICT development in *Thailand*; the vision; the mission objectives; the strategies and programmes that are in line with the *Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan*; and the monitoring and evaluation system. Both the National IT Policy and the National ICT Master Plan serve as a framework for responsible agencies, which include the Ministry of Education, in formulating related policies and development plans.

6) The National ICT for Education Master Plan (2004-2006)

To formulate policies and development plans concerning technologies for education, responsible agencies including *MOE*, *MUA* and *OEC* have drafted the *MOE's ICT Master Plan* for the newly established *MOE*. To complete the 3-year master plan, the 24 billion-baht budget will be spent on the following 4 main strategies: 1) Development of learning quality through application of ICT; 2) Development of educational administration and management as well as educational provision through application of ICT; 3) Training and Development of ICT-related personnel; and 4) Distribution of ICT infrastructure for education.

The largest portion or about 82 percent of the budget, which is equivalent to 20 billion baht, was allocated for the fourth strategy. The remaining budget allocated for the first, second and third strategies are equivalent to 11.2, 5.3 and 1.5 percent respectively. For the fiscal year 2004, around 9 billion baht will be spent.

To implement this master plan, four sub-committees have been appointed to oversee the following issues: (1) development of software for education; (2) development and maintenance of an educational network; (3) development of educational personnel relating to ICT; and (4) administration of strategies relating to ICT for education. The plan also specifies that basic educational institutes will be able to access the Internet as per the following timeframes: (1) covering all secondary schools by 2003; (2) covering 80 percent of primary schools by 2004; and (3) covering all primary schools by 2005.



Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn observing long distance education through Thai Khom satellite and students' activities at Mae Fah Luang Learning Centre for Hilltribes in Omkoy District, Chiang Mai Province.

7) The “National Education Network (EDNET) Project”

As a major scheme which covers the period from 2002-2005, the EDNET project comprises of 5 plans: 1) Plan for development of IT infrastructure; 2) Plan for development of eLibrary and E-learning centres; 3) Plan for production of electronic media for teaching and learning; 4) Plan for development of human resources for ICT; and 5) Plan for research and development in international connectivity.

9.3 Development of Infrastructure and Networking System

Section 78 of the *1997 Constitution* specifies that the government will develop public utilities and facilities systems and information infrastructure thoroughly and equally throughout the country. In this regard, several activities have been implemented as follows:

1) IT Infrastructure and Networking System

In 2003, the IT infrastructure (electricity and telephone) and networking system were expanded to cover 56 percent of primary schools, all secondary schools and all higher education

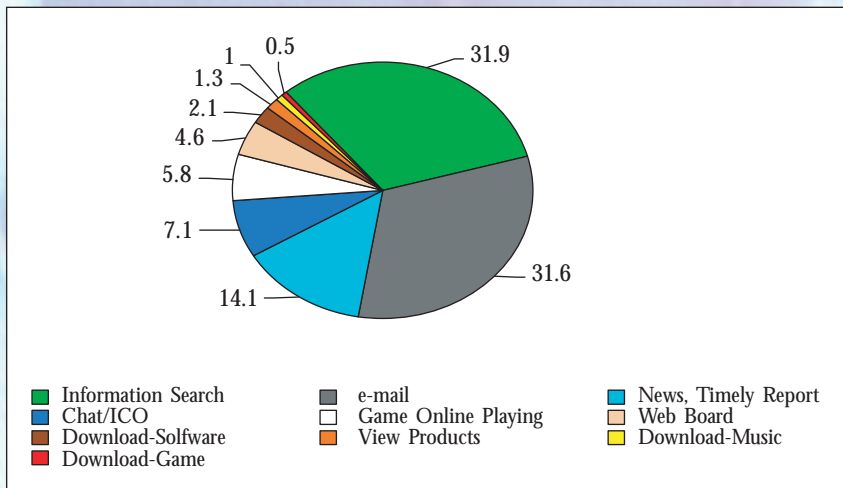
institutions. The *Ministry of Industry* aims at accelerating expansion of IT infrastructure to cover 80 percent of primary schools during 2004.

Under the networking system called EdNET, the SchoolNet (basic education level) and the UniNet (higher education level) were able to link more educational institutions. As of April 2004, the SchoolNet (<http://www.school.net.th>) was able to serve 4,794 basic education institutions. In 2003, the information superhighway called “UniNet” (<http://www.uni.net.th>) was able to connect 145 universities and provided 38 distance learning classrooms.

2) Access to Computers and the Internet

In 2003, *the National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre (NECTEC)* conducted a survey of Internet users in Thailand in which types of activities on the Internet as well as educational attainment and English proficiency of Internet users were revealed. As shown in figure 9.1, information search and e-mail are the two most common activities on the Internet. They account for 31.9 and 31.6 percent respectively.

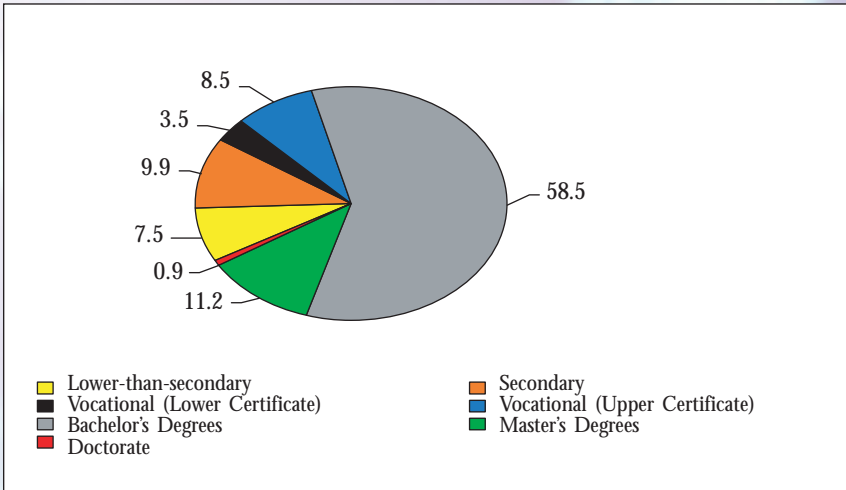
Figure 9.1 Top Ten Activities on the Internet



Source: Internet User Profile of Thailand 2003.

The educational attainment of Internet users ranged from lower-than-secondary to Doctorate. Among these, 70.6 percent were holders of bachelor’s degrees or higher (figure 9.2).

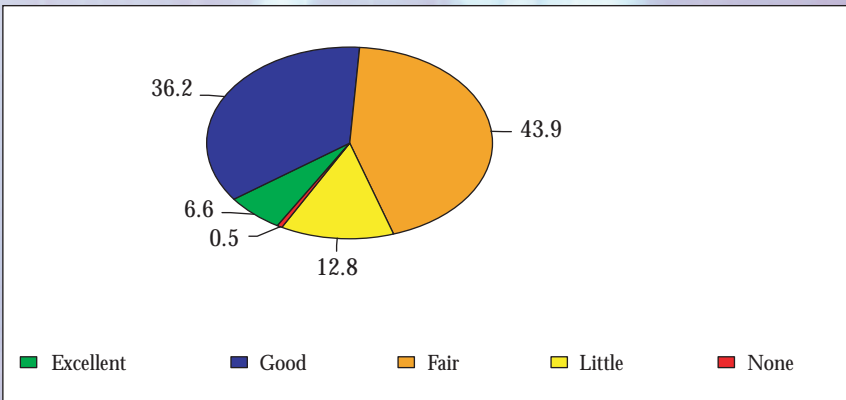
Figure 9.2 The Educational Attainment of Internet Users



Source: Internet User Profile of Thailand 2003.

As shown in figure 9.3, the majority (86.7 percent) of Internet users in this particular survey saw themselves as capable users of English whose English proficiency was fair or higher.

Figure 9.3 Levels of English Proficiency of Internet Users



Source: Internet User Profile of Thailand 2003.

The survey report also found that a sharp increase in the numbers of Internet users has occurred since 1999. As shown in the following table, the number of Internet users has increased continuously from 30 in 1991 to 6,031,300 in 2003.

Table 9.1 Number of the Internet Users in Thailand

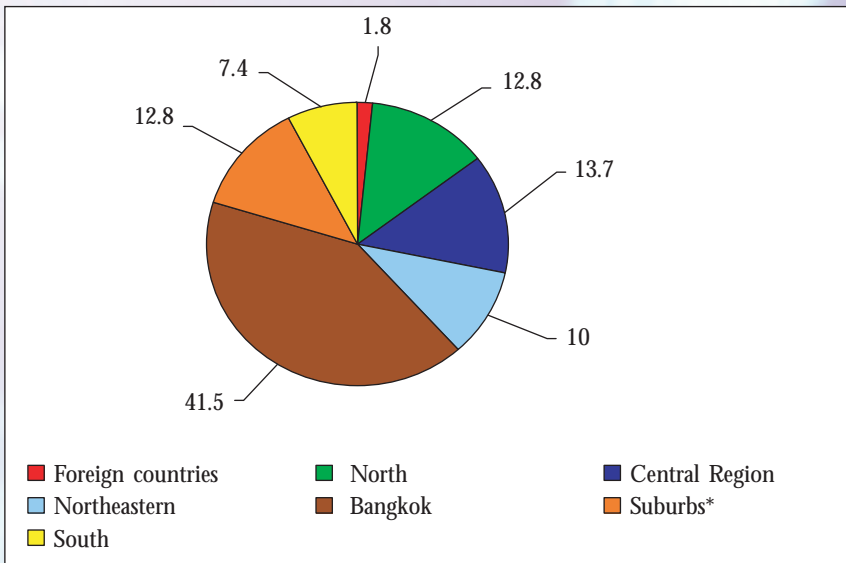
Year	Number of Internet Users	Source
1991	30	NECTEC
1992	200	NECTEC
1993	8,000	NECTEC
1994	23,000	NECTEC
1995	45,000	NECTEC
1996	70,000	NECTEC
1997	220,000	Internet Thailand/NECTEC
1998	670,000	Internet Thailand/NECTEC
1999	1,500,000	ISP Club/NECTEC
2000	2,300,000	ISP Club/NECTEC
2001	3,500,000	NSO/NECTEC (household survey)
2002	4,800,000	NECTEC (estimate)
2003	6,031,300	NSO survey

Source: Internet User Profile of Thailand 2003.

Along with its attempt to reduce domestic long-distance call costs, the *Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT)* has introduced the affordable budget PC programme in which desktop and notebook PCs were sold at a very low price in 2003. In response to this programme, both generic and brand-name computers have significantly reduced their prices. This resulted in increasing numbers of computers; the number of Internet users also increased from 480,000 in 2002 to 6,031,300 in 2003.

Nevertheless, the number of the Internet users in 2003 accounted for only 9.4 percent of the total population (64,184,520 million people) in the same year. It was also acknowledged that the number of Internet users in Bangkok and its vicinity was significantly higher than in other regions. As shown in the following figure, Internet access is highest (41.5 percent) in Bangkok and lowest (7.4 percent) in the South.

Figure 9.4 Distribution of Internet Usage by Region



* Suburbs herein include Nonthaburi, Pathumthani and Samutprakarn

Source: *Internet User Profile of Thailand 2003.*

The ratio of computers per head of students at basic education level is quite low. As stated in the National ICT for Education Master Plan (2004-2006) of the *MOE*, the ratio of computers per head of students in primary schools, secondary schools and vocational education, are 1:120, 1:54 and 1:23 respectively. Such proportions imply that level and stream of education are among the factors affecting the number of computers in educational institutions. Hence, access to computers in secondary schools is greater than that in primary schools. Similarly, access to computers in vocational education is greater than that in general education.

According to the *OEC's* survey reports in which the access to computers and the Internet in primary and secondary schools throughout the country in 2001 was explored, proportions of such access result from various factors. These include schools' ownership (whether they are state or private schools) and the region/province in which schools are located. In summary, it was found that the number of computers in private schools was higher than that in

state schools and access to the Internet of secondary schools is highest (89.7 percent) in Bangkok and lowest (24.1 percent) in the Northeast. Overall, it was estimated that the number of educational institutions that are able to access the Internet has risen from 8,648 in 2001 to 14,157 in 2002.

The Education Bureau under the supervision of the *Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)* and the *MOE*, in collaboration with the *MICT*, the *UNICEF* and the private sector, are continuously attempting to increase the number of computers and necessary equipment in all schools under their administration.

3) Educational Radio Broadcast

Thailand has 514 radio broadcast stations; only 25 of which are designated for educational purposes. The proportion of frequencies distributed to related agencies are 12 stations for the *OHEC*, 11 stations for the National Educational Radio Network under the administration of the *Department of Public Relations* and 2 stations with 3 frequencies for the *MOE*.

- At the level of basic education: Supervised by the *Office of Non-Formal Education Commission (ONFEC)* under the *MOE*, the *Educational Technology Centre* provides supplementary programmes for formal education, non-formal education and informal education.

- At the level of higher education, radio stations operated by higher educational institutions such as *Chulalongkorn University*, *Kasetsart University*, *Thammasat University* and the *RIT*, etc. broadcast programmes providing general knowledge as well as entertainment. At the moment, the *RIT* also plans to expand its station to cover the *RITs* in all regions while *Sukothaithammathirat Open University (SOU)* plans to establish its own station.

4) Educational Television:

Educational television programmes in Thailand are offered by the following agencies:

- (1) The Educational Technology Centre: The Centre produces educational TV programmes for formal education (grades 3-9), non-formal education (grades 7-12 and lower level of vocational education) and informal education as well as general supplementary



His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej is the model teacher in the "Quest for Knowledge" programme broadcast through the community and tertiary education channel of the Distance Learning Foundation (DLF).

programmes and educational news. These programmes are broadcast through Television of Thailand (Channel 11) under the administration of the *Department of Public Relations*.

(2) Higher Educational Institutions: The *RIT and SOU* produce direct teaching programmes particularly for their students. The *RIT* broadcasts programmes via the C-band satellite pattern while *SOU* broadcasts programmes through Channel 11. In September 2000, *SOU* was granted Royal permission to conduct weekday broadcasts via the Ku-band satellite pattern through the community/tertiary education channel of the *Distance Learning Foundation (DLF)*. Occasionally, general supplementary programmes are also produced by *SOU* and *Ramkhamhaeng University*.

(3) Government Agencies and State Enterprises: General supplementary programmes, which are provided by the *Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative*, the *Ministry of Health*, the *Ministry of Interior* and state enterprises such as the *Tourism Authority of Thailand*, are broadcast through Channel 11 or other commercial channels and via Ku-band satellite pattern through the community/

tertiary education channel of the *DLF*.

(4) The *Distance Learning Foundation (The Wang Klaikangwon School, Hua Hin Model: Distance Education via Satellite Broadcast and Flexible Learning)*: With an initial fund of 50 million baht granted by His Majesty the King, the *DLF* was established. In cooperation with the *Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)*, the *TOT Corporation Public Company Limited*, the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, and international organisations under the aegis of the *United Nations*, the *DLF* presently broadcasts educational TV programmes via satellite through 14 channels. Among these, 12 channels are devoted for the direct teaching programmes at basic education level. Normal classroom-setups with students present are used in studios to ensure that students in remote schools realise that they access to the study programmes that are of the same quality/standards and have the same teachers as those in Wang Klaikangwon School, His Majesty the King's private school in Hua Hin, which serves as the parent school. The other two channels are the international channel broadcast in foreign languages and the community/tertiary education channel.

The *DLF* international channel airs its international programmes in Thai, English, French, German, Japanese and Chinese. The programme coverage includes arts and culture, music, science and technology, agriculture, environment, health and innovation. The Ku-band satellite pattern covers *China (Kunming)*, *Cambodia*, *Laos*, *Myanmar* and *Vietnam*. All these neighbours received the Royal Granting of distance learning equipment from His Majesty the King.

The community and tertiary education channel focuses on vocational and university education. Basic knowledge, technical and occupational skills and vocational training are provided in response to society's need. Regular contributors to the programmes, besides Wang Klaikangwon Vocational College are government agencies; for instance, the *Ministry of Health*, the *Ministry of Agriculture*, the *Ministry of Interior*, state enterprises such as the *Tourism Authority of Thailand*, various academic institutions and associations i.e. *Boromrajchonanee College of Nursing* and *Thai Teaching English as a Second Language Association (Thai TESOL)*.

Cooking, tailoring, handicrafts and souvenir making, home economics, computer science, engineering and farming techniques rank as popular main features. The unique characteristics of these programmes which broadcast the process from start to finish allow viewers to actually follow with hands-on experience. The “Quest for Knowledge” programme, in which His Majesty is an example of a model teacher, has recently been broadcast through this channel.

5) eLearning

The eLearning service and eSchool project are examples of the Royal Granting of education and lifelong learning for all from His Majesty the King, from Wang Klaikangwon School to the world at large.

- eSchool project: This project, which focuses on Thais living in the U.S., will be implemented in collaboration with the Distance Learning Centres in Wat Padhammachat, Los Angeles and the Royal Thai Consulate in Chicago.

- eLearning Service: The *DLF* launched the free-of-charge content-based eLearning service from the Distance Learning Television, Wang Klaikangwon, Hua Hin District in May 2002 to honour His Majesty the King on His 6th Cycle Birthday Anniversary. The eLearning web page of the *DLF* “www.dlf.ac.th” allows Internet users anywhere in the world to view “live broadcast” all the educational programmes broadcast via the satellite simultaneously with the actual broadcast. Moreover, by means of eLearning or eTraining, users anywhere are able to participate in the Flexible Learning Scheme via video conferencing and the Internet.

It is worth mentioning that in carrying out His Majesty the King’s lifelong learning policy, concerted efforts and mutual support from various public and private organisations, both within Thailand and in foreign countries, lead to the achievement of the *DLF*. These include *TOT Corporations*, the *Telecommunications Authority of Thailand*, the *Telecommunications Association of Thailand*, the *MOE*, the *Royal Thai Army* and the *Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology*. Apart from that, the US Ambassador also presented the *DLF* with the dish antenna and receiver in March 2003 to assist children in studying English while

the Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning on Distance Education Methodology help organised the Flexible Learning Scheme.

At higher education level, the increasing popularity of eLearning was seen in several universities. Among these are two state universities, namely *Chulalongkorn University* and *Kasetsart University (KU)* that operate Chula Online and KULN (KU Learning Network). The University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC), a private university, has targeted developing 100 eClassrooms by 2005.

Apart from educational institutions, other government agencies also took part in providing online learning. For instance, the *National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA)* in collaboration with *Thailand Graduate Institute of Science and Technology (TGIST)*, has launched “LearnOnline,” a website that was developed to serve as a central place for web-based courses from well-known universities and organizations. One of the courses offered therein has been organised in collaboration with other agencies such as the *Kenan Institute of Asia* and *UTCC* and is called “Business Plan Online.” Other web-based courses offered include Cybertools for Research, Digital Design, Bioinformatics, Biodiversity, Technology Management and English for Science and Technology. More details about LearnOnline are available at <http://www.learn.in.th/>.

9.4 Development of Materials and Other Technologies for Education

In 2002, the *MOE* implemented several projects regarding the development of materials and other technologies for education to be used at the level of basic education. Among these were (1) project on development of teaching materials and other technologies for education for 8 groups of subjects: Thai Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Religion and Culture, Health Education and Physical Education, Art, Career and Technology-Related Education and Foreign Languages as based on the 2002 Core Curriculum for Basic Education; and (2) project on assessment and evaluation of selected materials and other technologies for education produced by the private sector.

As for the development of software, media and learning content, the *MOE* allocated a budget for the fiscal year 2002 of 150,501,960 baht or about 3,762,549 dollars in order to carry out the following six tasks: 1) to procure legal software; 2) to encourage teachers and educational personnel to produce software that aid the teaching-learning process; 3) to encourage educational institutions, learning centres and learning sources to develop websites so as to exchange knowledge; 4) to establish multimedia centres; 5) to develop a standardised database system; and 6) to encourage, through competition, the development of multimedia and software that aid the teaching-learning process.

So far, approximately 300 electronic books and 1,500 websites have been developed and are being used as learning sources. Among these, educational institutions under the sponsorship of the SchoolNet project have developed 700 websites. Moreover, the *MOE* also initiated a competition that will be organized annually so as to support the private sector in relation to development of multimedia and software that aid the teaching-learning process. It is expected that for each year, 100 sets/subjects of multimedia and software will be selected as prototype. So far, 300 sets/subjects of multimedia and software have been developed and 10 multimedia centres have been established.

At higher education level, the *Office of Higher Education Commission* has developed a standardised database system for 24 higher educational institutions and supported the production of multimedia software that aid the teaching-learning process.

9.5 Development of Personnel and Learners

Sections 65 and 66 of the *National Education Act* require the development of knowledge; capabilities; and skills required for personnel and learners. Such development focuses on the ability of producers and users of technologies for education in production and utilisation of technologies that are appropriate; of high-quality; and efficient and the ability of learners using these technologies to acquire knowledge on a continual lifelong basis.

The plan for development of human resources for ICT has been included in the EDNET project. Apart from that, the

development of producers and users of technologies as well as the promotion of learners' rights to develop their capabilities in utilisation of technologies for education according to the *National Education Act* are encouraged in the following plans and projects:

1) The *MICT* has implemented a project called "The Usage of ICT in Developing the Capability of Thai Children." Covering the period from February 2003 to June 2004, the project focuses on the following 4 strategies: (1) strategy for students without background knowledge studying in schools that do not have computers and facilities; (2) strategy for students with some background knowledge studying in schools that have computers and facilities; (3) strategy for teachers and schools; and (4) strategy for all students.

2) The ICT Master Plan for Higher Education (2002-2006): This Master Plan, which aims at training IT-related skills to teachers and educational personnel in higher education institutions, specifies two important objectives: 1) development of designers and users of technologies for education will be supported in order to promote self-study as well as ability in applying technologies to education and in accessing information; 2) 40 percent of personnel in higher education institutions will be trained to use and/or produce technologies for education.

3) IT Plans of Higher Education Institutions: Most of the higher education institutions include training IT-related skills for their teachers, educational personnel and students in their master plans. A number of teachers and educational personnel have been trained to use ICT in developing teaching-learning materials while learners have been trained to use ICT as a tool in accessing information required. Examples of such training are as follows:

(1) In its IT Master Plan, the *RIT* include: training IT-related skills for their teachers and educational personnel; integration of IT in their teaching-learning process, research and development process, educational services and administration; and transfer of knowledge and skills in using IT to their students through the teaching-learning process. It is expected that each year, approximately 2,500-3000 personnel or around 25 percent of *RIT*'s personnel will be trained. So far, about 1, 500 personnel have been trained.

(2) *Ramkhamhaeng University* organises training courses in producing and using technologies for education for their teachers, educational personnel and students. Courses, which range from basic computer skills to usage of multimedia in the teaching-learning process through e-learning, focus on increasing the utilisation of the Internet, interactive television conferencing and interactive communication through satellite broadcast in its teaching-learning process at bachelor and master degree level.

(3) Several universities, including *Sukothaithammathirat Open University*, which provides distance learning services, also organise training courses in IT-related skills for their teachers, educational personnel and students.

4) The *MOE's* Development Plan for Teachers: The *MOE*, in cooperation with JICA, have implemented a 3-year project in which 3,000 teachers in several provinces will be trained to use computers to their fullest benefit. The training is divided into 3 courses ranging from simple usage, producing multimedia and using software in the teaching-learning process.

5) The *MOE's* Personnel Development Plan: For this plan, the *MOE* has allocated a budget for the fiscal year 2002 of 162,334,200 baht or about 4,058,355 dollars. In terms of the number of personnel that were trained, this plan has achieved great success. Instead of training only 203,475 teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel as planned, the *MOE* was able to organise the training for approximately 58 percent or equivalent to 353,407 teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel. In the training, the following six courses were offered: 1) basic computer and internet skills; 2) IT network administration; 3) advanced computer and internet; 4) development of software, media and learning content; 5) training for user of software programmes developed by the *MOE*; and 6) specific training for selected IT personnel.

6) The *BMA's* Personnel Development Plan: The Education Bureau under the supervision of *the BMA* organised seminars and training focusing on photography and audio-visual techniques so that their teachers and personnel would be able to produce television programmes for education.

7) The Education Division of the Municipality of Pattaya

City and of cities other than Bangkok organised training in relation to the production and provision of services concerning educational innovation. Approximately 400 teachers in municipal schools under their supervision were trained between 2000 and 2002.

8) The *Distance Learning Foundation (DLF)* organised several training courses for teachers as follows:

(1) The *DLF Flexible Learning System*: This E-Training Project has been organised in cooperation with the Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning. The training on distance education methodology using ISDN system and VDO Conference aims at improving teachers' skills on the internet, web design, instructional design and multimedia.

(2) Training for teachers responsible for the provision of distance learning via Satellite: Between 2000-2001, the *DLF* trained 2,194 teachers from 1,166 destination schools. Destination schools herein mean schools that receive a signal transmitted via the Satellite operated by the *DLF* from Wang Klaikangwon School.

As a crucial factor in the transformation of Thai society into a knowledge-based society, effective utilisation of technologies for education can help improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as make lifelong education for all Thai people more promising. In this regard, continuous and concrete actions must be taken to deal with the priority tasks. These include development of materials and other technologies for education and bridging the digital divide between Thailand and other countries as well as between Thai people living in urban areas and those living in rural areas.



Chapter 10

International Cooperation and Exchange for Education



Bilateral and multilateral cooperation with educational organisations has greatly contributed to the development of education in *Thailand*.

10.1 Thailand and International/Regional Organisations in Education

Thailand has cooperated with various international and regional organisations, some of which are presented below.

1) The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

Since 1949, *Thailand* has been an active member of UNESCO and has established the Secretariat of the National Commission, based at the Bureau of International Cooperation, *Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education* to coordinate with UNESCO in 5 fields namely: education, science, culture, social sciences, and mass communication.

In 2003, the *Ministry of Education* was involved in several activities with UNESCO. Between 25 and 27 June 2003, the National Seminar and Workshop for ASPNet Administrators and

Teachers was held in Bangkok. The aim was to review the activities of ASPNet at national level. Outcomes of this event fed into the ASPNet 50th Anniversary International Congress held in Auckland, *New Zealand* between 2 and 8 August 2003. The Minister of Education attended the 32nd Session of *UNESCO's* General Conference that took place at *UNESCO* Headquarters, Paris, *France* between September 27 and October 17, 2003 and also participated in the discussion on "Quality of Education". Between 4 and 7 November of the same year, *UNESCO* and the *OECD* organised the 9th UNESCO-APEID International Conference on Education in Shanghai. The main theme of the Conference was "Educational Innovations for Development in Asia and the Pacific." Details are available at: <http://www.unescobkk.organization/education/apeid/conference/conf9/>.

2) International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)

Thailand has cooperated continuously with *IEA* since the 1970s. In this regard, the *OECD* has served as the participating centre represented at the *IEA* General Assembly while different research institutions have participated in various important international research projects. Among these, *Thailand* participated in the Second Information and Technology in Education Study (SITES)-Phase II and III Projects.

The SITES-M3 project research (planned for the period 2003-2006) is the survey module and will build upon the results obtained from the first two modules. Apart from the emphasis on the quantitative evaluation, this project will focus on the impact of using the ICT in instruction on knowledge and skills of the students.

The first two modules of the SITES indicated that the implementation of technologies affects the shift from traditional towards emerging educational methods while the third module may prove the correctness of this approach and whether the general competence and abilities of the new generation are improving or not. Through surveys of head-teachers, technology coordinators, teachers, and students, SITES-M3 will identify trends in the

classroom use of ICT. It will also examine the extent to which various ICT policies and practices are being implemented in schools, the extent to which it is being used to change the curriculum, and how it is altering teacher pedagogical practices and student classroom activities. In addition, SITES-M3 will design and implement innovative ICT-delivered methodologies to assess ICT-related student performance in science and math.

The premise of the SITES-M3 study is that contemporary applications of ICT in education both require and result in new intellectual skills and these require new measures of the impact of ICT on students, schools, and educational systems. While SITES-M3 will include a written test of traditional ICT skill, a primary activity of the study is to create new measures and new methodologies for ICT assessment. The project will also develop ICT-delivered performance assessments of new ICT skills such searching for, analysing, and evaluating information, and using it to solve problems, make decisions, and produce knowledge products. More information on SITES research projects is available at <http://omicron.felk.cvut.cz/~bobr/role/ch93.htm>.

3) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

The *Royal Thai Government (RTG)* has joined *APEC* through representation in the *APEC* Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) and Education Network (EDNET) in which *Thailand* has been actively involved in several projects. There are two centres under the *APEC* umbrella located in Bangkok; namely the *APEC Study Centre* which is attached to Thammasat University and the *APEC Centre for Technology Foresight* which is hosted by the *National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA)*.

In 2003, *Thailand* hosted the Fifteenth *APEC* Ministerial Meeting and the Eleventh *APEC Thailand* Economic Leaders Meeting. In April 2004, the *MOE* took part in the 3rd *APEC* Education Ministerial Meeting in *Chile*, which was intended to formulate strategies for preparing *APEC* students' skills for the 21st century and global economy. In this regard, *Thailand* has also participated in the project named *APEC* Sister School Networking

(ASSN) in which Kung Krabaen Bay Royal Development Study Centre will serve as the venue for the youth camp on mangrove ecosystems in *Thailand*. Useful information and resources regarding the *ASSN* project can be accessed through <http://www.assn.moe.go.th/thai/index-th.htm>.

4) The Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)

Based in *Thailand*, with a branch in *Vietnam*; the *Asian Institute of Technology* is an autonomous graduate institution offering programmes in science and engineering, development and management, with the goal of addressing the needs of the region and contributing to its sustainable economic growth. Since its inception in 1959, the *AIT* has received generous support from the *Royal Thai Government (RTG)* both in terms of land donation and financial assistance. Between 1970 and 2004, around 1,847 million baht was granted to the cooperation programmes between the *RTG* and the Institute. Approximately 23 percent of the financial assistance or 428 million baht was contributed as scholarships during the period. The present cooperation programmes comprise the following components:

(1) Scholarships

- *His Majesty the King's Scholarships* are full scholarships for master's degree programmes granted to qualified candidates from *Thailand* and other Asian countries. Up to October 2003, the total number of these scholarship awardees was 408.

- *Her Majesty the Queen's Scholarships* are provided to qualified students interested in the environment and related fields. Up to October 2003, the total number of these scholarship awardees was 81.

(2) General support

The budget covers operational support for the fiscal year 2002, including support for operations and campus maintenance; support for fellowships for Thai students; support for joint research between the Institute and universities in *Thailand*; and information technology training for executives in the Royal Thai Government.

So far, there are 12,509 graduates from 70 countries. Among these, about 26 percent or 3,258 students are Thai.

Approximately 38 percent of Thais who graduated from the AIT are now working in government organisations and state enterprises. In 2003, there were 1,406 students from 48 countries. Among these, around 34.9 percent or 491 students were Thai.

5) The ASEAN Sub-committee on Education (ASCOE)

In 1992, the ASEAN Committee on Social Development (COSD) established an ASEAN Sub-Committee on Education (ASCOE) and its first meeting was held in Jakarta, *Indonesia*. However, in 2000, ASEAN restructured its organisation and COSD was dissolved with all activities under social development being transferred to a newly established ASEAN Senior Officials on Social Welfare and Development. The ASEAN Sub-committee on Education was subsequently upgraded to the ASEAN Committee on Education but still maintained its original acronym, *ASCOE*. The Committee met for the first time in 2001. The annual project under the cooperation of *ASCOE* is the ASEAN Students Exchange at Secondary Level. *Thailand* has continuously participated in the Project since its inception. In 2002, *Thailand* was privileged to host the Third ASEAN Students Exchange and in 2003, *Indonesia* was the host country of the Program.

In March 2003, *Thailand* organised the Second Regional Seminar for the ASEAN Project on Early Childcare and Development-Phase II in Bangkok. Delegates from all 10 *ASEAN* member countries participated in the seminar hosted by the *Ministry of Social Development and Human Security* and the *National Institute for Child and Family Development, Mahidol University*.

The report of the Second Regional Seminar revealed that the early years of a child's life - from conception through age six and the transition years to primary school - is precisely the most critical stage for development and learning. Opportunities can be maximised by providing holistic, developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant programmes that not only strive for the best possible quality but also support young children, their families and their caregivers to ensure that young children will survive, thrive, and develop to their optimum potential. Early childhood development is vital to human development, and crucial to determining the formation of each country's human capital.

6) The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO)

Thailand's Ministry of Education has continuously had close cooperation with *SEAMEO* since its inception in 1965. The *Bureau of International Cooperation* of the *Ministry of Education* acts as the focal point of *SEAMEO* activities in *Thailand*. Currently, *Thailand* hosts the Secretariat of *SEAMEO* as well as three *SEAMEO* centres, namely the *Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development (RIHED)*, the *Regional Centre for Tropical Medicine and Public Health (TROPMED)* and the *Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA)*.

The Project on Regional Cooperation on Quality and Equity in Education (QEE) was approved at the 37th *SEAMEO* Council Conference In-camera Session in March 2003. The general objective of the project is to enhance cooperation to improve quality and equity in education among *SEAMEO* Member Countries. So far, there are 284 school members nationwide and relevant seminars and workshops have been conducted at both national and regional levels. In May 2004, *SEAMEO*, in cooperation with *UNESCO* and the *Ministry of Education*, organised the *SEAMEO-UNESCO* Congress and Expo on Adapting to Changing Times and Needs.



7) ASEAN University Network (AUN)

The *AUN* is composed of seventeen leading universities in *ASEAN* member countries. The first *AUN* Educational Forum was inaugurated in *Thailand* in May 1998. The *Royal Thai Government* has made annual contributions amounting to 180,000 dollars for the period from 2000-2005 while Chulalongkorn University has hosted the permanent office of the *AUN* Secretariat. The university also organised the ASEAN-China Rector Conference and the Eminent Forum in 2002. In 2003, two Thai universities, namely Chulalongkorn and Burapha participated in the first ASEAN Youth Cultural Forum organised by the *AUN* Secretariat in the Philippines. More information regarding *AUN* activities can be accessed through www.aun.chula.ac.th.

8) University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP)

Thailand is one of the founding members of the *UMAP* and has been actively involved in the staff and student mobility programme under the *UMAP* framework since 1995. Travel and living expenses have been granted to Thai students and staff to spend up to one semester abroad. From 1995 - 2003, more than 700 university staff and students were supported to join the exchange arrangements with their overseas partners through a number of academic activities, i.e. cross-enrolment, teaching and research. Since 1999, the Commission on Higher Education has joined the Pilot *UMAP* Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS) to ensure that credits are received by students for study undertaken when on exchange with other universities. It is anticipated that participation of Thai universities in the UCTS will lay the groundwork for our universities to be recognised regionally and internationally for the standardised quality of education in the future.

10.2 International Cooperation and Exchange Programmes

1) International Cooperation Programmes

1.1) Cooperation with UNICEF: Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) Project

As embodied in the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the project actively works to achieve the 4 fundamental rights of children: survival, protection, development and participation. Regardless of their cultural/social/ethnic backgrounds and/or physical/mental disabilities, the CFS encourages all children's right to: 1) feel safe and secure; 2) be developed to their full potential; 3) participate in religious and social activities; and 4) take part in making important decisions that affect their lives. Supported by the *UNICEF*, the *OBEC* in collaboration with Rajabhat Universities, Save the Children (USA), Mahidol University (Institute of Nutrition), The Life Skills Development Foundation, Art and Cultural Institute for Development (MAYA) implemented the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) or Child-Friendly Learning Environments (CFLE) project in *Thailand* in 1999. The major goal of the CFS is to promote a quality learning environment by encouraging student participation in various school activities to ensure hands-on learning experience. The approach brings together students, teachers, parents or guardians and communities to jointly develop a common vision, strategies and implementation plan. The school's academic benchmarks and the child's academic and behavioural progress are shared with stakeholder groups.

Activities in the CFS focus on issues relating to children's rights, schools' internal assessment, the development of a child as an individual, active learning, child-centred learning, hygiene and nutrition, and development of life skills. With continuous teacher training, development of personnel and materials, financial support, exchange of information, and study visits in *Thailand* and in other countries, the CFS in *Thailand* are quite successful. Consequently, they are being used as learning sources and training venues for personnel working in the CFS in other countries in Asia. At present, there are 395 CFS implemented in 95 educational service areas in *Thailand*. Among these, 70 percent, or 274 schools,

are schools in rural areas in the North and Northeastern regions where there are a large number of disadvantaged children.

In the CFS, child-centred, family-focused and community-based learning environments are offered. According to a paper namely “Child-Friendly School Administration and Student-Centred Learning”, the CFS administration can bring about achievable results on a national scale. In this regard, schools wishing to pursue this approach may study a toolkit developed by *UNESCO* to facilitate the process of making school environments more inclusive and of better quality.

1.2) Bilateral Collaboration in Higher Education

(1) The Thai-French Cooperation Project

The Thai-French Cooperation Project was executed by the Thai-French Committee (TFC) and sponsored by the *Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC)* of Thailand and the Ministries of National Education, Research and Foreign Affairs of France. The TFC launched seven projects in order to stimulate exchanges between higher education institutes and French and Thai research organisations. In this regard, four projects were implemented by *KMITNB* while the rest were implemented by *TFIC*. The total duration of this cooperation will be five years, during which time, joint researches, Masters and Ph.D. will be provided in the areas of manufacturing systems; powers electronic and electronic drive; corrosion science and engineering; and human resources development in materials science and engineering.

(2) Cooperation with Other Partner Countries

Apart from the Thai-French Cooperation Project, the *OHEC* has agreed to enhance the capacity of Thai higher education and to develop Thai human resources with several partner countries such as with the *Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of Austria* on the cooperation in science, art and music; with the *Department of Education, Science and Training of Australia* on the development of Thai higher education qualifications framework and Cooperative Research Networks among Thai universities; with the *Ministry of Youth, Education and Research of France* on collaborative research and exchange of students and staff; with the *Ministry of*

Education of China on joint research and exchange of students and staff in Chinese studies, Chinese traditional medicine, computational mathematics, agro-industry; with the *University of Utrecht, the Netherlands*, on the cooperation in veterinary human resources development; with the *Department of Education and Labour of Nova Scotia* and the *Department of Advanced Education and Labour of New Brunswick, Canada* on human resources development and exchange of students and staff; with the New Jersey Institute of Technology, the *United States of America* on human resources development; with the *Ministry of Education, Peru* on collaborative study and training programme and exchange of students and staff; with the *Higher Education Funding Council of England*, the *United Kingdom* on the cooperation in human resources development and development of *Thai Cooperative Research Networks*.

1.3) Bilateral Collaboration in Higher Education

(1) A 3-year Framework (2003-2006) for Collaboration Supported by the MOE and the British Council

Conducted according to the principles of mutual respect, open exchanges, win-win partnerships, joint resource mobilisation, shared ownership, and pro-active review, the educational collaboration under this Framework will include the following priority areas: 1) School leadership (including curricula and programmes for the professional development and certification of school leaders and national/local educational administrators); 2) English language teaching (including teacher training and professional development; curriculum development; textbook selection; teaching materials development; and innovative delivery models such as eLearning, supported open learning, and bilingual programmes); and 3) Information and communications technology (ICT) for effective teaching, learning, professional development and educational networking.

Further areas to be explored are: 1) Creative student-centred learning in subjects including science, cultural studies, sports and good citizenship, examining the role of learning and learning sources (e.g. museums, sports, etc.) to support the development of after-school teaching and learning support

programmes to enhance educational attainment; 2) Professional networking between educational policymakers, administrators and practitioners in and between *Thailand* and the *UK*, to strengthen collaborative initiatives in the above and related areas; and 3) Schools links (electronic and person-to-person) involving students, teachers and leaders/administrators in and between both countries, to strengthen collaborative initiatives in related areas.

(2) Dreams and Teams Project

In collaboration with the British Council in Bangkok, the Bureau for Innovative Development in Education under the supervision of *OBEC, MOE* has carried out the Dreams and Teams Pilot Project. Being an international network consisting of education, sport and non-governmental organisations, this project focuses on developing young people aged 15 to 20 as active global citizens through emphasis on their leadership, citizenship and international awareness. At the beginning of the training, a tutor trainer from the *United Kingdom* came to *Thailand* to train Local Tutors (teachers); they then worked together in training Thai students as Young Leaders.

At a later stage, these Young Leaders were challenged to demonstrate leadership, be active citizens in their community and value and promote cross-cultural understanding. With the assistance of the Local Tutors, these Young Leaders have organised the Dreams and Teams Sports Festivals to share their new skills, knowledge and experience with other students. So far, around 260 students from schools in Bangkok and in Chiang Mai have participated in 3 Sport Festivals held by these Young Leaders. In addition to the emphasis on school leadership; English language teaching; and information and communication technologies (ICTs), further areas to be explored include creative student-centred learning; professional networking; and school link. Between the implementation period (2003-2006), it is expected that 150 Local Tutors, 500 Young Leaders, and 30-50 partner schools will participate in the project. The names of current Link Schools are presented in the following table:

Table 10.1 Link Schools between Thailand and the U.K.

Partner Schools in Thailand	Link Schools in the U.K.
Nonriwittaya School	Anglely School
Mahanaparam School	Herne Bay Community High School
Yothinburana School	Ivybridge Community College
Chajk Kham Khanathon School	Haysbrook School, Cumberland School
Satriwitthaya School	South Dartmoor Community College
Matthayom Watnairong School	Carshalton High School
Ratwinit Bangkaeo School	William Parker School, Chessington Community College
Sattha Samut School	Beacon Community College, Sawadlands School
Woranari Chaloem School	The Canterbury High School, Hurstmere School

Source: Bureau for Innovative Development in Education, OBEC.

Additional information relating to this project can be accessed through <http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/dreams> and <http://:inno.obec.go.th>.

(3) Project on Provision of Creative Education

The provision of creative education focuses on the learning process that focuses on accumulation of thinking skills, imagination, initiatives and creativity as well as the application of knowledge and skills to real life. The “Project on Supporting Educational Institutions and Lifelong Learning Sources (Museums) in Provision of Creative Education” was conducted by the *OEC* in collaboration with the British Council. From the pilot study of the project conducted in 2003, it was found that creative education was beneficial to learners because it generated creative thinking skills, confidence, an acquisitive mind and problem-solving skills. In creative education, learners were encouraged to seek for in-depth information from teachers as well as other sources and to create innovations for their own use as well as others. So as to apply creative education as a mechanism in moving towards educational

reform, the project has been further conducted in Educational Service Areas and lifelong learning sources in 2004.

2) International Exchange Programmes

2.1) Student Exchange Programmes in Basic Education

To encourage understanding of other cultures through first-hand experience, the *MOE* promotes student exchange programmes in cooperation with many foreign governments and international agencies. The major programmes include Rotary, American Field Service (AFS) and *Thailand* Fellowships, Scholarships and Junior Scholarships.

2.2) Student Exchange Programmes in Higher Education and OHEC Staff Exchange Programmes

The *OHEC* has been providing financial support for the exchange of students and staff with foreign countries with emphasis on exchange with countries in Asia and other parts of the world. Students participating in the exchange programmes are encouraged to take courses in foreign countries and to transfer credits back to *Thailand* and foreign partners are also urged vice versa to accept credits transferred from higher education institution in *Thailand*. The objectives of the exchange programmes are to provide Thai students and staff to exposure in the outside world in order to improve their competency and to promote mobility of students and staff. The ultimate goal of the exchange programmes is to enhance the quality of higher education in *Thailand* so that qualifications earned from *Thailand* will be recognised and acceptable at an international level. Under such cooperation, Thai university administrators have also been sent for training in partner countries under 'Thai University Administrators Shadowing Programme' based on a mentoring basis that allows Thai university administrators to have direct experience on managing higher education institutes from foreign partners such as the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and Canadian universities.

2.3 Cooperation with countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS)

The *OHEC* plays a significant role in promoting the mobility of students and staff among countries in the *GMS* by providing grants to member countries namely *Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam* and Yunnan Province of *China* to participate in the Exchange of Students and Staff between *Thailand* and Neighbouring Countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. The exchange programmes were initiated in 1999 to encourage mobility of students and staff and the facilitation of credit transfer among higher education institutions in the *GMS*. In 2004, a total of 251 grants have been provided for 78 students and 86 faculty members from *Thailand* in exchange with five countries in the *GMS*. In addition, 21 students and 66 faculty members from institutions of higher learning from these member countries will come to exchange with higher education institutions in Thailand. It is expected that the exchange programmes will facilitate closer academic cooperation among institutions of higher learning in the *GMS* and allow opportunities for student and faculty from the *GMS* to learn from each other and to strengthen people-to-people contacts.

10.3 International Cooperation for Educational Reform

To enhance international cooperation for educational reform, *OEC* and several international organisations have amicably reached mutual agreements on education policy development. The Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) of the *Republic of Korea*, the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region, the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER), the Curriculum Corporation (CC), and Victoria Department of Education, Employment and Training of *Australia* are examples of well-connected agencies that share lessons learnt in teacher education and training, school-based management, curriculum development and learning evaluation, etc. The Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between *OEC* and the five mentioned organisations covers various programmes, ranging from exchange of resource personnel and information training and



Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, the Honorary Chair of the U.S.-Thailand Education Policy Roundtable, pictured with Thai delegates participating in the Second U.S.-Thailand Education Policy Roundtable on Maths and Science Education and Higher Education Finance and Management.

seminars, to research projects. It is hoped that the *MOU* will technically substantiate concurring plans and programmes of education reform in *Thailand* as well as in the respective countries.

Examples of *Thailand*'s cooperation with international and regional organisations can be seen below.

1) The Fourth International Forum on Educational Reform

Between 6 and 10 September 2004, *OEC* with the collaboration of many international organisations and embassies will organise in Bangkok the Fourth International Forum on Educational Reform. Its main theme will be "Learner-centred Approach towards Education for Sustainable Development." This Forum will focus on identifying current developments, strategies, and performances in related issues as conducted by policymakers and practitioners in participating countries. Further information regarding this Forum can be accessed through <http://www.worldedreform.com>.

2) The Second U.S.-Thai Education Policy Roundtable on Maths and Science Education and Higher Education Finance and Management

As inspired by the guiding light of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, the *OEC*, Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST), and Council of the University Presidents of *Thailand* have continued to support the Second U.S.-Thai Education Policy Roundtable. Cited as the policy forum for scholars in both countries to pursue better understanding and cooperation in uplifting educational quality through comparative research and training, the foundation of this forum has been even further fortified by a private royal visit to the University of Pennsylvania in October 1998. This bilateral partnership has anticipated a great opportunity for educational policymakers, academics, and researchers to exchange information on policy research on science education as well as current developments, perspectives, strategies, and lessons learnt from the higher education reform in both countries.

A Thai Steering Committee operates under the leadership of Professor Dr. Sipanondha Ketudat, the Former Minister of Education, while Professor Dr. Susan Fuhrman, the Dean of Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, heads the U.S. counterparts. Over four years, both parties have worked together to identify concurrent issues of interest in these areas and follow-up actions in the work plan. Between 7 and 10 April 2004, the University of Pennsylvania hosted the Second U.S.-Thailand Education Policy Roundtable on Maths and Science Education and Higher Education Finance and Management, under the sponsorship of the Stars Foundation, to review previous topics and explore new areas including: 1) Mathematics and Science Education: Thai and U.S. Comparison; 2) Financing in Higher Education; 3) Roadmap for Higher Education in *Thailand*; 4) U.S. Community Colleges: Perspectives from Federal and Institutional levels; 5) Curricular Standards And Classroom Implementation; and 6) Faculty Development in Higher Education.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn as the Honorary Chairperson of this project graciously presided over the opening ceremony of this event organised on April 8 2004 in the U.S.A., and received an International Merit Award for Education Excellence from the University in recognition of her 23-years of

service to educational improvement in *Thailand* and around the world. In the acceptance speech, Her Royal Highness voiced caution against economic globalisation that aggravates unequal opportunity. This circumstance therefore would affect the differences in education and professional achievements between the haves and have-nots.

As a core concept of pedagogy revisited, Her Royal Highness Princess highlighted the traditional concept of Thai education that focused on total development of the human person by equally nurturing 4 domains of learning, consisting of Buddhisuksa (creating learners' useful knowledge and information), Hatthasuksa (hand-on activities which coordinate the eyes, hands and brains), Balasuksa (Physical education and working dexterity including gardening), and Chariyasuksa (moral education). Her Royal Highness Princess believes that modern education tends to over-emphasise and use up most of the educational resources and time in the first domain that has occasionally and falsely been perceived as the only gist of learning and concluded that if we left the other three domains behind, education might in time lead to persons that are selfish and aggressive competitors in a materialist world.

With such encouragement, both the U.S. and Thai Steering Committee members have agreed to further explore new research areas such as total development of the human person, standards in teaching mathematics and science, learning reform in higher education: from explicit to tacit knowledge, and leadership in higher education. The new roundtable will be hosted by *Thailand* in 2005 to commemorate the Princess's 50th birthday anniversary. Activities at this event will include research presentation by experts in both countries as well as announcement of the Thai-U.S. fellowship awards.

3) The International Seminar on Indigenous Wisdom and Education: Strategies for Preservation, Integration, Transfer and Promotion

In response to the *1999 National Education Act* which specified that indigenous wisdom should be promoted and education should play a key role in so doing, this International Seminar was organised between 12 and 14 February 2004 in Chiangrai. The

event was hosted by the *OEC, Thailand*, Burapha University's International Education Programme, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO-SPAFA), SEAMEO *RIHED* (Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development), *UNESCO's* Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development and Yunan University.

In this International Seminar, 4 related sub-themes were focused. These included 1) Integration of indigenous wisdom into education: Local responses to global challenges; 2) The transmission of indigenous wisdom in education; 3) The preservation of indigenous wisdom in education; and 4) The conduct of future research into indigenous wisdom. The expected outcomes of this Seminar include: the exchange of information on the role of indigenous wisdom; the exploration of possible strategies to encourage Asian people to appreciate existing indigenous knowledge; and recommendations on policy making for the establishment and promotion of indigenous wisdom in and through the educational system.

Participants in the Seminar mentioned that participating countries should agree upon the definition and scope of "indigenous wisdom" and the strategies in preservation and revitalisation of indigenous wisdom, integrating indigenous wisdom into formal education, non-formal education and informal education and application of indigenous wisdom in current situations. In this regard, 3 issues that should be urgently implemented are: 1) The establishment of the network for indigenous wisdom in the Asia-Pacific Region. In this regard, it was proposed that Thailand be the Centre of such network; 2) The collaboration in multi-disciplinary research among member countries; and 3) The collaboration in organising such International Seminar on a yearly basis. In this regard, China proposed to host the Second International Seminar on Indigenous Wisdom and Education.

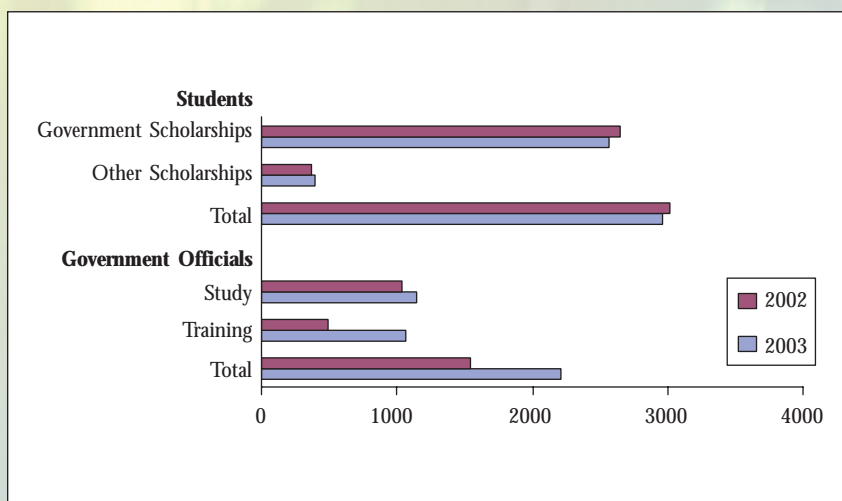
10.4 Overseas Studies and Training

For the first time, the *Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC)* has initiated a scholarship scheme exclusively for Thai students with physical disabilities such as hearing problems, visual impairment and mobility problems. Intended to motivate the

physically disabled to realise their full potential, this scholarship scheme will award five scholarships to those wishing to study overseas from undergraduate to doctoral level. After graduation, the recipients of the scholarships are expected to take a leading role in helping other physically disabled students in *Thailand*.

In the year 2003, the number of students going to study and train overseas under the supervision of the *Office of the Civil Service Commission* increased slightly from the year 2002 but was lower than 2001. As a whole, the total number of government officials going overseas to study and train in 2003 was higher than the two previous years (Figure 10.1).

Figure 10.1 The Number of Students under the Office of the Civil Service Commission and Government Officials Studying Abroad (as of 31 July 2002 and 29 February 2003)



Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission.

As of 31 December 2003, there were 2,568 government scholarship students studying abroad, among whom 61.50 percent were in doctorate degree programmes, 16.86 percent were in master degree programmes, 20.17 percent were in undergraduate programmes, and 1.44 percent were studying in other programmes

such as Advanced Certificate and American Board. The top ten fields of study are: engineering, biology, computer science, chemistry, law, economics, linguistics, mathematics, medicine and physics.

10.5 International Education in Thailand

1) International Schools

The policies, rules, regulations, and standards for the establishment of international schools or colleges are stipulated by the *MOE* in accordance with a resolution of the *Council of Ministers*.

Some of the main education systems being offered at international schools in *Thailand* are: The American School System, Advanced Placement Programme (AP), The British National Curriculum, The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), and The International Baccalaureate (IB).

In 2003, the International Schools Association of *Thailand* (ISAT) reported that its members included 89 international schools and colleges in *Thailand*; 24 of which were in other provinces and the rest in Bangkok. Interestingly, the total number of international schools and colleges in Bangkok increased by 48 per cent, from 46 in 1999 to 89 in 2003. The mentioned figures represented members of the ISAT but did not include all international schools and colleges in *Thailand*.

2) International Programmes

In 2003, both Thai public and private universities offered a total of 521 international programmes using English as the medium of instruction both at undergraduate and graduate levels, i.e. 175 undergraduate programmes; 217 master degree programmes; and 129 doctoral degree programmes. Foreign and Thai students can take courses for credits from such programmes.

3) Foreign Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions

In 2003, the *OHEC* in cooperation with the *National Statistical Office* conducted a survey on the enrolment of foreign students in higher education institutions in *Thailand*. The result of the survey showed that 4,170 foreign students enrolled in 49 Thai higher education institutions. The top ten Thai higher education institutions having the highest number of foreign students are:

Assumption University (2,046 students), *Webster University* (Thailand) (238 students), *Chulalongkorn University* (188 students), *Madidol University* (184 students), *Mission College* (149 students), *Kasetsart University* (136 students), *Rajapark College* (123 students) and *Sukhothai Thammatirat Open university* (114 students). The popular fields of study among foreign students are Business Administration, Medic Science, Information Technology, International Business and Business English successively.

Table 10.2 International Schools and Programmes in Thailand

	1999	2002	2003
International Schools			
Bangkok	26	45	65
Other provinces	20	22	24
Total	46	67	89
Students			
Foreign : Thai	70 : 30	57 : 43	NA
International Programmes			
Undergraduate	122	153	175
Master's degree	176	203	217
Doctoral	58	109	129
Total	356	465	521

Source: International Schools Association of Thailand, Office of Higher Education Commission, Office of the Private Education Commission and Department of Export Promotion.

Through international cooperation and exchange in education and for educational reform efforts, it is expected that all concerned will be dedicated to the important issues of equity and quality in education, reform of learning and lifelong learning so as to improve overall achievements in education.

Chapter 11

Overall Achievements



Following the promulgation of the *1999 National Education Act*, all agencies concerned have carried out educational reform along the lines stipulated by the act. Major reform initiatives have been undertaken at both policy and planning levels as well as at institutional or grassroots level and have resulted in significant changes in the system and management of education as mentioned earlier. The overall achievements of Thai education will be presented here in terms of access to education, participation and progression as well as the outcomes of education and learning.

11.1 Access to Education, Participation and Progression

This report examines access to education, participation and progression through student enrolments, transition rates and enrolment rates from pre-primary to higher education levels as well as numbers of participants in education for children with special educational needs and non-formal education.

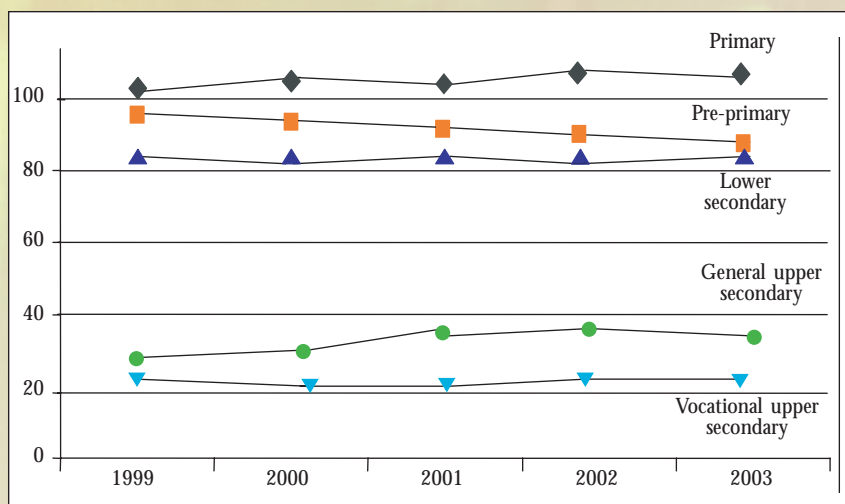
11.1.1 Access to Basic Education

Twelve-year free basic education was granted to students throughout the country for the first time in the history of Thai education in October 2002. Pre-primary education or early childhood education is also included in basic education. The

enrolment rates at pre-primary level, however, have continuously decreased since 1999. In order to facilitate higher access to education for this age-group, government subsidies have been granted to state and private schools that provide pre-primary education or early childhood education since the academic year 2004.

At other levels, the percentage of children having access to basic education in 2003 was higher than in 1999, except at vocational upper secondary level where enrolment rates slightly decreased (Figure 11.1).

Figure 11.1 Enrolment Rates in Basic Education: Academic Years 1999-2003



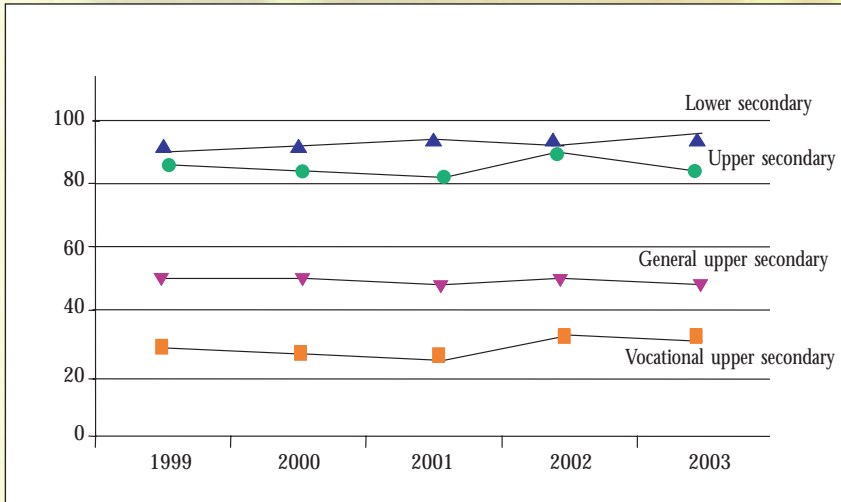
Source: OEC, Thailand Education Statistics Reports, 1999-2003.

The numbers of primary students have been higher than 100 percent for several years as a result of increasing numbers of 6-11 years old children participating in school education as well as the under-age and over-age population of students. At secondary level, the number of students in general education has been greater than in vocational education.

The transition rates in basic education during the academic years 1999-2003 are presented in Figure 11.2. When compared to the year 1999, the transition rate at lower secondary

level increased from 87.8 percent in 1999 to 92.5 percent in 2003. On the other hand, the percentage of upper secondary students decreased from 84.7 percent in 1999 to 82.0 percent in 2003, with 50.3 percent in general education and 31.7 percent in vocational education.

**Figure 11.2 Transition Rates in Basic Education:
Academic Years 1999-2003**



Source: OEC, Thailand Education Statistics Reports, 1999-2003.

11.1.2 Participation in Basic Education of Children with Special Educational Needs

Since the promulgation of the 1999 *National Education Act*, more attention has been given to children with special educational needs.

So far, the provision of education for the disabled and the disadvantaged has expanded at a steady pace. Greater efforts have also been given to the development of education for the gifted, for example, the *National Centre for the Promotion of the Gifted* was established.

To support the provision of education for the disabled and the disadvantaged, the *MOE* has announced ministerial regulations indicating criteria and procedures for providing facilities,

media, services and other forms of educational aid as well as ministerial regulations indicating criteria and procedures for allocating educational budget for the disabled.

The number of disabled students with access to basic education provided by the *OBEC* rose from 151,919 in 2002 to 157,113 in 2003. The statistics indicated that, among the disabled groups, more males had access to education than females (Table 11.1).

Table 11.1 Number of Disabled Students by Type and Gender: Academic Years 2002-2003

Types of Disabled Students	2002			2003		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Visually-impaired	6,872	3,590	10,462	5,518	5,093	10,611
2. Hearing-impaired	6,679	4,678	11,357	2,436	2,249	4,685
3. Mentally-impaired	18,642	10,210	28,852	14,206	13,114	27,321
4. Physically/health-impaired	9,491	5,004	14,495	8,118	7,494	15,612
5. Learning-disabled	37,144	19,242	56,386	34,036	31,417	65,453
6. Verbally-impaired	6,393	3,430	9,823	5,812	5,365	11,176
7. Autistic	2,303	1,158	3,461	4,729	4,365	9,094
8. Behaviourally/emotionally disordered	5,380	2,844	8,224	1,834	1,692	3,526
9. Multiple disabled	5,800	3,059	8,859	5,010	4,625	9,635
Total	98,704	53,215	151,919	81,699	75,414	157,113

Source: Educational Research and Development Bureau, OEC.

With regard to education for the disadvantaged, difficulties have been found in presenting the actual numbers of disadvantaged children having access to basic education provided by all agencies due to the different terms used to define different groups of these children.

According to the *OBEC*, disadvantaged children are divided into 10 types: children forced to enter the labour market,

children who are sex workers, deserted children, children in the Observation and Protection Centres, street children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children of the minorities, physically-abused children, impoverished children and children affected by narcotic drugs. The numbers of these groups of children having access to basic education revealed by the *OBEC* are shown in Table 11.2.

Table 11.2 Number of Disadvantaged Students in OBEC Schools by Type and Gender: Academic Years 2002-2003

Types of Disadvantaged Students	2002			2003		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Children forced to enter the labour market	212	182	394	426	407	833
2. Children who are sex workers	88	147	235	200	176	376
3. Deserted Children	19,837	17,075	36,912	23,833	20,033	43,866
4. Children in the Observation and Protection Centres	232	89	321	224	159	383
5. Street Children	566	447	1,013	742	613	1,355
6. Children affected by HIV/AIDS	7,732	7,154	14,886	9,468	8,733	18,201
7. Children of the Minorities	13,414	12,543	25,957	17,440	16,281	33,721
8. Physically-abused children	1,165	1,176	2,341	1,389	1,253	2,642
9. Impoverished children	543,014	505,682	1,048,696	654,540	606,847	1,261,387
10. Children affected by narcotic drugs	4,388	3,288	7,676	6,170	5,402	11,572
11. Others	4,417	4,139	8,556	1,968	1,662	3,630
Total	595,065	551,922	1,146,987	716,400	661,566	1,377,966

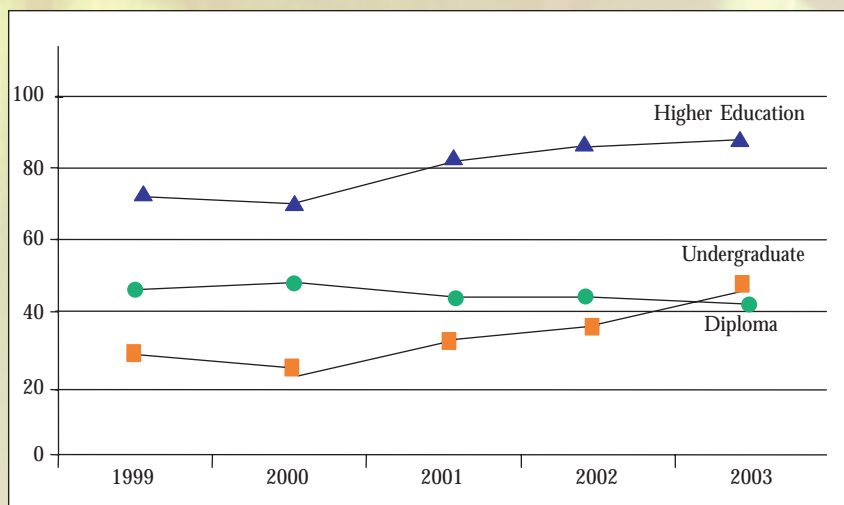
Source: Educational Research and Development Bureau, OEC.

It can be seen that, in 2003, more disadvantaged children had access to basic education than in 2002. However, the numbers of female students were less than males in most of the disadvantaged groups.

11.1.3 Access to Higher Education

The transition rate of students from upper secondary education to higher education rose from 75.9 percent in 1999 to 80.8 percent in 2002 and it was estimated to be 83.0 percent in 2003, with 44.7 percent at diploma level and 41.3 percent at undergraduate level (Figure 11.3).

Figure 11.3 Transition Rates in Higher Education: Academic Years 1999-2003



Source: OEC, Thailand Education Statistics Reports, 1999-2003.

Note: * Excluding new entrants in open universities

Student enrolments in higher education institutions, including those in open universities, rose continuously from 1,643,447 in 1999 to 1,928,608 students in 2003 (Table 11.3). It is thus expected that a higher percentage of secondary school students will have access to higher education in the following years as a result of the expansion of 12-year basic education.

Table 11.3 Student Enrolments in Higher Education Institutions: Academic Years 1999-2003

Levels of Education	Academic Years				
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Diploma	455,080	470,002	462,187	439,363	400,071
Undergraduate	1,099,219	1,232,215	1,294,561	1,371,058	1,396,242
Certificate	2,864	2,615	2,324	2,138	4,139
Master's Degree	83,936	89,818	108,055	108,774	120,116
Doctorate	2,348	3,190	5,080	5,120	8,040
Total	1,643,447	1,797,840	1,872,207	1,926,453	1,928,608

Source: OEC, Thailand Education Statistics Reports, 1999-2003.

11.1.4 Participation in Non-Formal Education

A large number of the out-of-school population in *Thailand* can gain access to non-formal education provided by both public and private organisations. The total number of participants in non-formal education rose from 3.5 million in 2001 to 4 million in 2002. About 51 percent of participants were in continuing education programmes, particularly in secondary education, and 49 percent were in vocational education and training (Table 11.4).



Table 11.4 Number and Percentage of Participants in Non-Formal Education by Level and Type of Education: Academic Years 2001 and 2002

Types of Education	2001		2002	
	Number	%	Number	%
Functional Literacy	134,782	3.8	-	-
Continuing Education	1,803,714	50.9	2,057,136	51.05
● Primary	228,502	6.4	284,982	7.07
● Secondary	1,575,212	44.5	1,772,154	43.98
Lower Secondary	914,865	25.8	982,612	24.38
Upper Secondary	660,347	18.7	789,542	19.59
- General	650,530	18.4	777,854	19.30
- Vocational	9,817	0.3	11,688	0.29
Vocational Education and Training	1,602,324	45.3	1,972,619	48.95
Total	3,540,820	100.0	4,029,755	100.0

Source: OEC, Thailand Education Statistics Reports, 2001-2002, and Department of Non-Formal Education.

11.2 The Outcomes of Education and Learning

The outcomes of education and learning are presented here in terms of graduation from school education, the quality of learners, educational attainment of the Thai population and labour force participation.

11.2.1 Graduation from School Education

When compared to the year 2000, there was an increase in numbers of graduates at nearly all levels of education in 2003, except at lower secondary, vocational upper secondary and at doctorate degree levels (Table 11.5).

**Table 11.5 Number of Graduates by Level of Education:
Academic Years 2000-2002**

Levels of Education	Academic Years		
	2000	2001	2002
Primary	890,735	935,269	980,297
Lower Secondary	787,851	706,020	736,391
Upper Secondary	508,082	483,568	522,428
- General	318,450	335,194	352,324
- Vocational	189,632	148,374	170,104
Higher Education	383,539	401,502	414,045
Lower-than-Degree	193,109	197,995	204,395
Bachelor's Degree	164,828	167,911	169,604
Certificate	1,423	1,813	8,819
Master's Degree	23,615	33,081	30,810
Doctorate Degree	564	702	417

Source: OEC, Thailand Education Statistics Reports, 2000-2002.

Thailand's demand for an increase in the number of qualified workers with appropriate skills and basic knowledge indicates an urgent need to enhance the quality of vocational education and training as well as the number of students in vocational education. Nevertheless, the number of students in vocational education declined from 585,166 in 1999 to 571,267 in 2003. If considered at only diploma level, however, a greater number of students has been observed (Table 11.6).



Table 11.6 Number of Students in Vocational Stream by Level of Education: Academic Years 1999-2003

Levels of Education	Academic Years				
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Certificate Level	420,223	404,206	395,199	406,067	392,246
Diploma Level	163,773	188,605	196,541	189,097	178,057
Higher Diploma in Technical Education	1,170	233	1,017	1,545	964
Total	585,166	593,044	592,757	596,709	571,267

Source: Bureau of Policy and Planning, OVEC.

Similarly, the number of graduates in vocational education at the other two levels decreased while those at diploma level increased from 53,738 in 1998 to 72,676 in 2002 (Table 11.7).

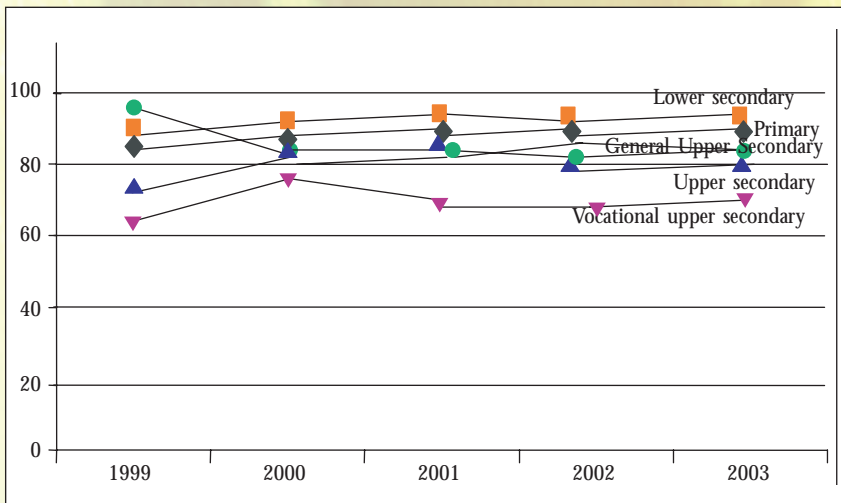
Table 11.7 Number of Graduates in Vocational Stream by Level of Education: Academic Years 1998-2002

Levels of Education	Academic Years				
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Certificate Level	92,952	113,174	99,390	85,609	86,702
Diploma Level	53,738	61,193	65,908	76,865	72,676
Higher Diploma in Technical Education	790	1,097	0	164	485
Total	147,480	175,464	165,298	162,638	159,863

Source: Bureau of Policy and Planning, OVEC.

In 2003, the retention rates at all levels of education, except for general upper secondary, were higher than in 1999. The retention rates in primary education, in particular, gradually increased while those in other levels of education faced a decline when compared to the year 2000 (Figure 11.4). This may have been caused by higher drop-outs as a result of the impact of the economic crisis.

**Figure 11.4 Retention Rates in Basic Education:
Academic Years 1999-2003**



Source: *OEC, Thailand Education Statistics Report 2000-2003 Thailand Education Data 2001 and Bureau of Educational Research and Development.*

11.2.2 The Quality of Learners

The main objective of learning reform is to improve the quality of learners. The *OEC* published the Report on Evaluation of Learning Reform at Basic Education Level in which desirable qualities of students in Grades 6 and 9 were evaluated in terms of academic achievements, academic qualities and other desirable qualities. The evaluation findings were as follows: 1) Except for Social Sciences, academic achievements in 4 other subjects (Thai language, English language, Mathematics and Science) were not satisfactory; 2) Evaluation of thinking skills, knowledge-seeking

skills, and working skills, such as teamwork, utilisation of learning sources and planning, also revealed unsatisfactory results; 3) Evaluation of learners' qualities of good citizenship, such as discipline, honesty and etiquette, yielded satisfactory results.

As shown in the following table, desirable qualities in terms of good citizenship were higher than the set criteria (50 percent) while other desirable qualities were lower than 50 percent.

Table 11.8 Percentage of Average Scores Obtained from Evaluation of Learners' Desirable Qualities

Learners' Desirable Qualities	Grade 6	Grade 9
Academic Knowledge	44.36	39.14
Thinking Skills and Knowledge-Seeking Skills	42.66	48.82
Working Skills	49.67	47.66
Good Citizenship	58.75	58.02

Source: OEC, The Report on Evaluation of Learning Reform at Basic Education Level, 2004.

Nevertheless, the students' self-assessment report revealed satisfactory results in terms of Grade Point Average (GPA), contentment in learning, academic qualities, morality and health.

11.2.3 Educational Attainment of the Thai People

The average years of education received by Thai people aged 15 and over have increased gradually as a result of greater efforts to provide both formal and non-formal education to all people (Table 11.9).

Table 11.9 Average Years of Educational Attainment of the Thai Population: 1999-2003

Age Group	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
15 and over	7.1	7.2	7.4	7.6	7.8
15-21	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.8
15-59	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.8	7.9
60 and over	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9

Source: Bureau of Educational Research and Development, OEC.

Although the figures reflect that the educational attainment of the Thai population is relatively low, the trend has shown that the Thai labour force has received a higher level of education. The distribution of employed persons by level of educational attainment illustrated that the percentage of employed persons with secondary education and higher education in 2003 was higher than that in the previous year. This situation indicates that there is higher supply of well educated workers to further economic development and to raise the competitiveness of the country since skill levels tend to rise with educational attainment (Table 11.10).

Table 11.10 Percentage of Employed Persons by Level of Educational Attainment and Area: 2002-2003

Levels of Educational Attainment	Total		Municipal Areas		Non-Municipal Areas	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
None	3.7	3.5	2.2	2.1	4.4	4.1
Less than primary	39.0	37.2	27.3	25.6	44.8	43.0
Primary	22.3	22.1	17.4	17.2	24.7	24.6
Lower secondary	13.0	13.8	15.3	15.6	11.9	12.9
Upper secondary	10.3	11.1	14.4	15.4	8.2	8.9
General	7.1	7.7	8.7	9.5	6.2	6.7
Vocational	3.2	3.3	5.7	5.8	2.0	2.1
Teacher training	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
Higher education	11.5	12.0	22.7	23.6	5.9	6.3
Academic	5.6	5.9	13.0	13.6	1.9	2.0
Higher Technical Ed.	3.6	3.8	6.2	6.5	2.3	2.5
Teacher training	2.3	2.3	3.6	3.5	1.7	1.8
Others ¹	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
Unknown	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.1

*Source: Report of the Labour Force Survey, Whole Kingdom
Quarter 2: April-June 2002.*

*Report of the Labour Force Survey, Whole Kingdom
Quarter 2: April-June 2003.*

¹ Including vocational short courses.

11.2.4 Labour Force Participation

The labour force participation rates by educational attainment can be used to indicate the extent to which the education system succeeds in meeting the minimum requirements of the labour market.

In *Thailand*, skilled agricultural and fishery workers as well as service workers and shop and market sales workers constitute around half of the employed labour force. In 2003, the percentage of the population in the total labour force to the population aged 15 years and over was 73.0. The labour force participation rates of those who completed teacher training in non-municipal areas in 2003 were noticeably higher than the previous year (Table 11.11).



Table 11.11 Labour Force Participation Rates by Level of Educational Attainment and Area: 2002-2003

Levels of Educational Attainment	Total		Municipal Areas		Non-Municipal Areas	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Total	73.2	73.0	69.7	69.7	75.0	74.7
None	47.7	48.3	38.0	38.1	50.7	51.4
Less than primary	76.3	75.4	68.4	67.4	78.8	78.0
Primary	82.1	82.8	80.0	80.6	82.9	83.6
Lower secondary	58.9	59.7	58.8	58.9	58.9	60.2
General upper secondary	65.9	64.9	57.4	57.7	74.1	71.5
Vocational upper secondary	69.2	68.9	70.9	71.6	67.1	65.4
Teacher training	60.2	61.3	51.1	39.7	70.8	82.3
Academic higher education	89.0	89.0	88.0	88.6	92.4	90.3
Higher technical education	87.1	85.8	86.1	86.3	88.3	85.1
Higher teacher education	88.9	87.9	86.1	86.1	92.0	90.1
Others ¹	83.3	85.1	81.1	88.2	85.3	82.5
Unknown	65.3	68.1	63.8	62.9	69.9	76.7

Source: Report of the Labour Force Survey, Whole Kingdom Quarter 3: July-September 2002.

Report of the Labour Force Survey, Whole Kingdom Quarter 3: July-September 2003.

¹ Including vocational short courses.



The labour force participation rates were highest among those who had completed higher education. The underlying causes found by *OECD* were that the monetary incentive to participate is greater for individuals with higher qualifications since earnings tend to increase with educational attainment. In addition, those individuals often work at more interesting and stimulating tasks, and hold positions of higher responsibility, which increases their motivation to remain in the labour force.

However, in *Thailand* where agriculture is an important sector of employment, the participation rates are also high among those who completed primary or lower than primary education since job opportunities for unskilled workers can be easily found. Those who completed lower secondary and upper secondary education as well as teacher training seem to be more interested in continuing education rather than entering the labour market.

Five years after the enactment of the 1999 National Education Act, significant progress in educational reform in many areas can be observed. Overall, the implementation of all chapters of the Act by responsible agencies moves forward at a steady pace. Nevertheless, further dedication and effort in educational reform are still needed so as to improve the overall achievements in education.

Chapter 12

Future Perspectives



The *1997 Constitution* and the *1999 National Education Act* have paved the way for major educational reform. In this regard, several laws, rules and regulations have been issued and amended; the *Ministry of Education* and the administrative structure have been reorganised; the teaching-learning process has been improved; new concepts and approaches including educational standards and quality assurance have been conducted. In summary, educational administration and management; teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel; resources and investment for education and technologies for education system have been and will be further reformed as a continuous process. In so doing, crucial factors in education need to be reviewed along with the formulation of future tasks in Thai education and strategies and plans for educational reform.

12.1 A Review of Crucial Factors in Education

The era of globalisation has been characterised by the tremendous breakthroughs such as nanotechnology, genetics, robotics and artificial intelligence. In the field of education, the advantages of utilising technologies for education have driven several countries on the threshold of fundamentally and holistically reforming its

education system. Web-based instructions in online courses have been delivered through the distance learning system and a vast collection of citations, articles and full text from journals, books, conference proceedings and etc. have been provided in the digital libraries operated by world-renowned universities and organisations. The utilisation of technologies in education, in particular, the information and communication technologies, has enhanced lifelong learning opportunities by making learning accessible anywhere and at anytime. Technology also encourages increasing participation in education of the disadvantaged and the disabled. Through the facilitation of certain devices, people in remote areas will be able to have access to learning while those with disabilities will be able to learn in the way that most suits them.

So as to function effectively in a complex and interdependent world in which spectacular and expeditious scientific and technological innovations are prevalent, it is imperative that individuals be equipped with versatile knowledge and skills. On the other hand, the phenomena of political and cultural turbulence that have caused terrifying effects throughout the world immediately requires the capability to resolve the conflicts that have occurred within a country as well as between countries on an everyday basis.

Taking all those circumstances into account, it is extremely difficult to narrow down the list of what should be taught. In his paper "An Education for the Future: The Foundation of Science and Values", Howard Gardner, who is best known in educational circles for his theory of multiple intelligences, brilliantly suggested two spheres: the science of learning, and our own values as human beings living in communities. Through the science of learning, disciplinary understanding, creativity and critical thinking should be inculcated and nurtured in a manner that enables students to make rational decisions amidst the driving forces of modern sciences and technologies and innumerable information in a wide range of issues available in the cyberspace. In the sphere of values, the importance of the sense of responsibility and a respect for humanity was focused on. It is expected that through both spheres, students will be able to acquire knowledge about the trends and realities of the global society as well as learn how to deal with individuals from

diverse backgrounds and value systems. In the Report to *UNESCO* of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century namely “Learning: The Treasure Within”, contradictory tensions between the driving forces of globalisation and the endeavor to preserve the identity of local communities were also mentioned. Along with several important roles of education focused therein, a vital role of education in helping people to understand the world and others as well as in nurturing individuals as the world citizens was also focused on.

Regarding the widespread and upward trends in education such as the utilisation of technologies in education and the promotion of education for the development of revolutionary sciences and technologies, *Thailand* has already jumped on the bandwagon. Recently established under the supervision of the *National Science, Technology and Development Agency (NSTDA)*, the *National Nanotechnology Centre* has received the government’s support to develop nanomaterials, nanobiotechnology and nanoelectronics and apply them in seven key areas: food and agriculture, automobile, electronics, garments and petro-chemical, OTOP (One Tambon, One Product) which are selected products from sub-districts, energy and environment, and medical and health. In the future, it is critical that *Thailand* be more actively involved in innovations in education as well as development in science and technology in order to thrive in a knowledge-based economy and society or run the risk of being left behind. At the same time, it is also essential that education in *Thailand* focus on making Thai people fully aware of their own history and culture as well as learn to show respect for different ethnic groups and appreciate the diversity of other cultures. Further efforts in educational reform should also take into account the equilibrium between global standards and local relevance as well as the balance between equity and quality.

12.2 Future Tasks of Thai Education

Thailand has always attached great importance to education and has consistently set apart an enormous proportion of the government’s budget for educational tasks. During the past decade, however, the quality of the country’s education when compared to

the sizable resources and investments made for education has been questioned as never before. In their quest for the causes of the several economic and social problems that emerged in the aftermath of the 1997 economic crisis, analysts declared that inefficiency in the provision of education was one of its causes. The devastating economic crisis together with the new sense of *Thailand's* educational disadvantage in comparison with several countries has spotlighted the quality of Thai education in terms of its accomplishment in alleviating the economic and social problems of the country. Gradually, more and more people seem to agree that it is high time for *Thailand* to push forward educational reform. If the educational reform initiatives are not achieved, not only will Thai people be educationally disadvantaged and thus unable to achieve a competitive edge but also the country may be subject to another round of economic crisis.

Following the *1999 National Education Act*, which has been the spearhead of major educational reform, quality improvement has become the ultimate goal in the provision of education in addition to maintenance of equity and social justice. The issues of quality in education for ordinary students as well as the gifted and the disadvantaged require more attention since success in terms of equity in education without quality will not enable the Thai people to thrive in a knowledge-based economy and society.

As a result of the dedication and efforts of responsible agencies in moving forward the extensive and radical reforms as stipulated in the *Constitution* and the *National Education Act*, significant improvement can be seen in many aspects of education in *Thailand*. Laws, rules and regulations are fundamental in educational reform; however, measures and strategies to bring about understanding and support as well as encourage participation from all parties concerned and the general public are also crucial to further improve on the success of educational reform for sustainable development of the country.

Of all the future tasks in educational reform, creating a desirable mind-set of those in the various levels of educational management as well as the public is consequently the most challenging but essential task. The success of educational reform in

the era of a knowledge-based economy and society also requires that policy-makers and decision-makers take a proactive attitude towards setting up educational strategies and plans for educational reform in several aspects and at various levels.

12.3 Strategies and Plans for Educational Reform

In order to accelerate educational reform and to clarify the direction of the functioning of the Ministry, the *MOE's* Strategic Action Plan, which has been announced in 2004, aims to carry out the following missions: to strengthen access to education for all; to establish an efficient system of quality education; and to raise educational standards and enhance *Thailand's* competitiveness at an international level.

The 3 main strategies in education as stated therein are as follows:

(1) **Creating educational opportunities** through

- Generating equity and increasing access to basic education services by means of rendering assurance of opportunities and generating equal access to education as well as encouraging and supporting all social segments to participate in educational provision;
- Strengthening vocational education by means of creating and promoting appreciation for the values of professional education, providing and expanding opportunities for professional education on an extensive scale and a continual basis as well as encouraging and supporting the private sector to invest in the provision of vocational education and supporting the educational provision at bachelor degree level in technological or vocational fields;
- Strengthening higher education by means of providing opportunities at higher education level, establishing and expanding university campuses in the regions, producing manpower in line with national development, providing health care services for research purposes, and assuring and motivating the private sector to invest in higher education; and
- Promoting access to lifelong learning for the general public by means of developing continuing education and lifelong learning as well as providing the public with academic services.

(2) Developing educational administration and management and quality of learning through

- Conducting learning reform for a knowledge-based livelihood by means of developing curriculum and learning media, improving the provision and standards of learning, promoting moral and ethical values, developing innovations and ICTs for learning;

- Strengthening the potential of teachers, faculty staff and educational personnel by means of improving their professional standards, developing personnel administration systems, supporting their development, establishing and improving the systems relating to remuneration, welfare and other benefits, enhancing their quality of life and solving the problem of teacher shortages;

- Strengthening management systems for quality learning by means of improving laws, rules and regulations, enhancing the efficiency in educational administration and management, strengthening the potential of schools under the aegis of the Royal-initiated Projects, supporting the transition of state universities to state-supervised universities, supporting privatisation of public schools, improving ICT application for educational administration and management, developing the system relating to planning, monitoring and evaluation, and encouraging and supporting all agencies to conduct educational administration and management in accord with the principles and criteria of good governance; and

- Management of resources for education by means of supporting the sharing of resources to enhance educational efficiency and improving/upgrading standards of educational institutions.

(3) Raising educational standards and increasing national competitiveness through

- Developing educational standards equal to those enjoyed by developed countries by means of strengthening cooperation in education with organisations located in the country as well as in other countries; providing scholarships for education, training and study tours overseas, collaborating with other countries in manpower production for niche markets, conducting academic exchanges with educational institutions overseas, supporting

participation in international academic competitions, supporting the provision of international programmes, supporting the publication of bilingual textbooks and production of educational materials, promoting *Thailand* to serve as an educational centre for neighbouring countries, promoting academic excellence and developing talent, promoting education in relation to science and technology, and developing personnel in the fields of Economics and International Relations;

- Increasing capability in research and development by means of promoting research and development at an international level, producing professional researchers and providing resources for research, and enhancing state-private sector joint research for commercial purposes, and creating excellence in centres that focus on development of graduate studies and research; and.

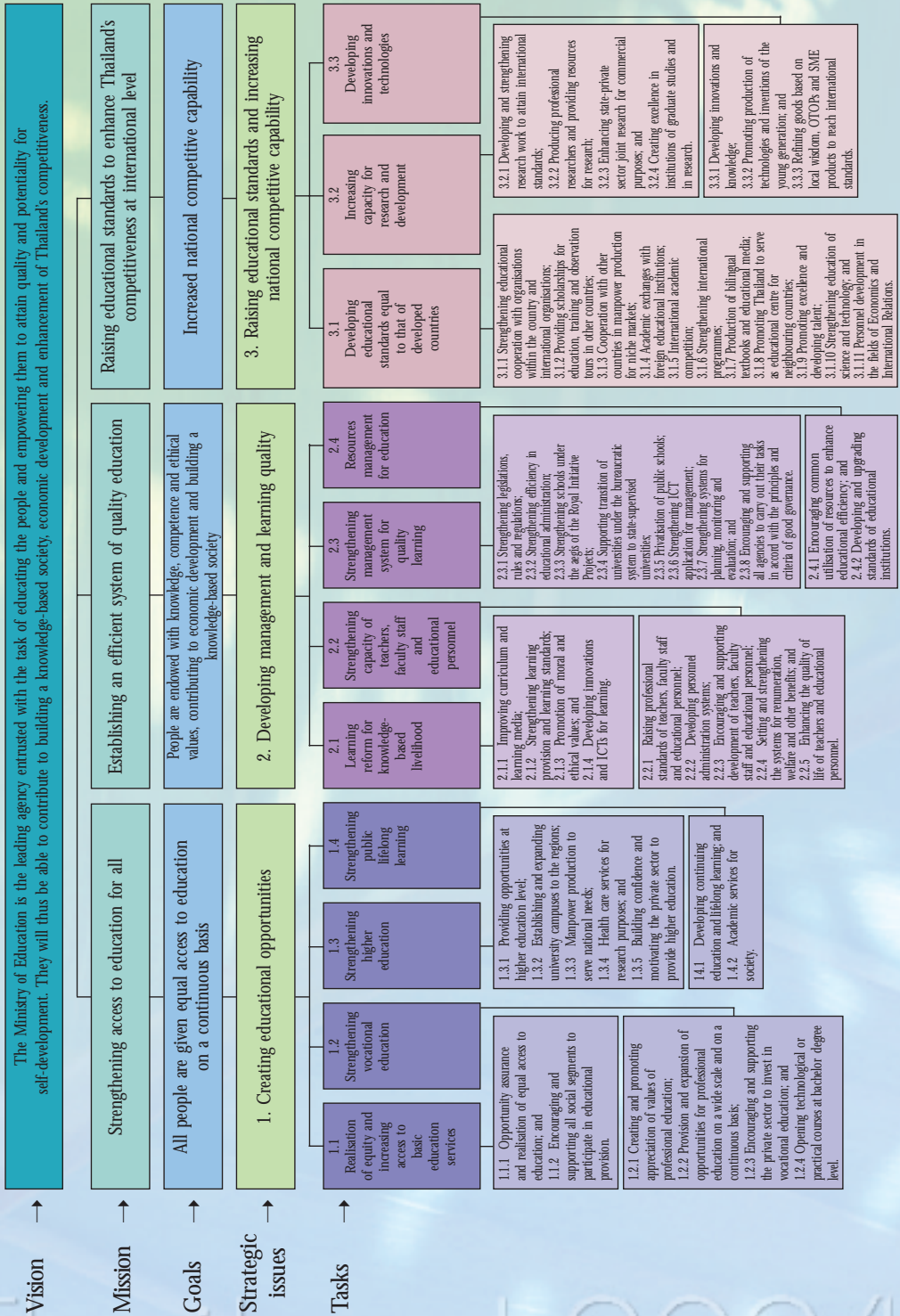
- Developing innovations and technologies by means of developing innovations and bodies of knowledge, promoting and improving technologies and inventions of the young generation, and promoting local wisdom and improving the quality of the OTOP products as well as products from Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (SMEs) so that they attain international standards.

Through the implementation of the *MOE's* Strategic Action Plan, it is expected that all people will have equal and continual access to education; people will be endowed with knowledge, competence and ethical values, contributing to economic development and the building of a knowledge-based society; and the national competitiveness will be enhanced. An overview of the Strategic Action Plan is presented in figure 12.1.

12.4 Beyond Educational Reform

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's speech namely "Beyond Educational Reform" delivered at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre on July 17, 2004 provides future perspectives for Thai education. The main purpose of the speech was to convey the message to all concerned that in educational provision, adherence to substance and flexibility both in terms of thinking processes and practice is more critical than adherence to existing forms such as the legal framework and organisational structures. Stipulation of existing

Figure 12.1 MOE's Strategic Action Plan in Brief



forms together with the concepts of lifelong learning and a student-centred approach in educational law may be compared to providing only the rigid hardware. Doing so is inadequate. To conduct educational reform beyond the *1999 National Education Act*, all concerned have to input the required software, in other words, fully dedicate their spirit.

The spirit of teachers can be shown through their love shown to their students as though they were their own children, as well as through their open-mindedness. Teachers should release the brainpower of students and enjoy learning simultaneously with or from their students. In this regard, understanding through practice should be focused on while memorisation through rote-learning should not be emphasised. If the teachers are able to do so, tutorial studies will not be necessary and overemphasised as they are now. Students should spend more time with their families and actively participate in sports and music.

Relating to the teaching-learning process, educators should work closely with experts in other fields such as psychology, neurology and sociology so as to learn about human brain structure as well as the processes of perception, learning and understanding. The knowledge obtained from these fields can be applied to educational provision. For example, neurologists have found that people make use of parallel learning more than linear learning. This implies that people perceive, learn and understand better when various subjects are integrated into a learning unit than when a single subject is studied separately.

In terms of educational equity, grants and scholarships will be given to provide equal access to basic education while a loan scheme that is called “the Income-Contingent-Loan (ICL) Fund” will provide access to higher education for all students wishing to enrol in universities. Through the implementation of these financial mechanisms, all Thai people will have access to education and there will be no gap in learning between rich and poor.

The existing subsidisation system in which the government provides direct subsidies to schools and universities in lump sums will soon be replaced by this loan scheme. In the ICL Fund, financial resources will be provided as a mobility fund and each

educational institute will be supported in accord with the number of students. Currently, educational institutions are more powerful in selecting students but the ICL fund will allow students to select educational institutions based upon their competitiveness. There will be no ceiling for tuition fees collected by educational institutions. To be competitive, however, educational institutions must maintain their image, improve educational quality, have qualified teachers, and adhere to efficient administration and management to minimise their actual costs. In this way, the ICL system will encourage competition among public and private schools and universities. Educational institutions that are able to adapt quickly will reap their rewards; those that are not able to compete and respond to the needs of the students and the country will be punished by this mechanism. The fields of study at higher education level should respond to the country's needs and thus should be specified not only by the supply side or educational institutions but also the demand side including concerned public and private agencies such as the *National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB)*, The *Federation of Thai Industries (FTI)* and the *Chamber of Commerce*.

All concerned agencies should also respond to the so-called "Mass Customisation" concept which requires not only the modification of services to serve the specific needs of a particular group of recipients but also delivery of the modified services to the masses. With this in mind, utilisation of ICT and two-way distance learning in the teaching-learning process and in the training of teachers should be enhanced due to the fact that it is cost-effective and yields timely results.

Thai people should be developed to their fullest potential in terms of physical health, mental health and intellectual health as well as embracing lifelong learning to keep up with the changing environment. Apart from equal access to formal and non-formal education, lifelong learning through lively eLibraries and eBooks will be essential tools in empowering Thai people with the ability to transform data into information, information into knowledge, and knowledge into wisdom. In this regard, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has initiated the establishment of the Knowledge Management and Development Organisation to take charge of

related issues such as the development and promotion of gifted children, ethical and moral values and lifelong learning sources including eLibraries and museums.

Thailand is now at an important juncture in the conduct of major educational reform. A strong political commitment and whole-hearted agreement as well as the full participation of those involved in educational provision, all stakeholders and society, are prerequisites of educational reform for the sustainable development and prosperity of our nation.



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Appendices

THAILAND PROFILE 2004

Area	:	513,115 sq.km.
Capital	:	Bangkok
Climate	:	Monsoon with average temperature between 23.7°C and 32.5°C.
Population	:	64.2 million
Labour force	:	35.3 million
Population growth	:	1.09 %
People	:	The majority are Thai. The rest includes ethnic Chinese, Malays, Lao, Vietnamese, Indians, and others.
Literacy Rate	:	95.7 %
Life expectancy	:	Male 64.9 (2001) Female 73.2 (2001)
Religion	:	Buddhism, the national religion, is the professed faith of 95% of the population, but there is absolute religious freedom.
Language	:	Thai is the national and official language. Dialects are spoken in rural areas. Other languages are Chinese, Malay and English.
Constitution	:	Constitutional Monarchy
Currency	:	Baht (1 US\$ = 40.47 Baht, as of June 2004)
GDP (current price)	:	6,263.7 billion Baht
GDP growth	:	7.0 % (as of March, 2004)
Per Capita GNP	:	84,540 Baht (2002)
Government expenditure as % of GDP	:	1,028,000 billion Baht 16.4 %
Inflation	:	2.2 %
Unemployment rate	:	1.5 %

THAILAND'S EDUCATIONAL PROFILE IN FIGURES

A. School-Age Population

(thousand persons)

Pre-primary
Primary
Secondary
- Lower Secondary
- Upper Secondary
Higher
Total

Age Group	2000	2001	2002	2003
3-5	2,892	2,906	2,961	2,987
6-11	5,838	5,835	5,820	5,808
12-17	5,833	5,750	5,723	5,737
12-14	2,827	2,845	2,881	2,914
15-17	3,006	2,905	2,842	2,823
18-21	4,431	4,344	4,220	4,077
Total	18,994	18,835	18,724	18,609

B. Educational Attainment of Thai Population

Age	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003 ¹
15 and over	7.1	7.2	7.2	7.6	7.8
15-21	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.7	9.8
15-59	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.9
60 and over	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.9

C. Student Enrolment in Formal Education

(thousand persons)

Pre-primary
Primary
Secondary
● Lower secondary
● Upper secondary
- General
- Vocational
Higher ²
Total

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Pre-primary	2,779.7	2,769.8	2,706.4	2,682.8	2,539.2
Primary	5,953.0	6,023.7	6,056.4	6,096.7	6,065.5
Secondary	4,097.8	4,064.3	4,060.6	4,076.0	4,130.5
● Lower secondary	2,372.4	2,340.5	2,338.7	2,368.5	2,464.4
● Upper secondary	1,725.4	1,723.8	1,721.9	1,707.5	1,666.1
- General	1,037.0	1,100.8	1,129.5	1,101.4	1,059.8
- Vocational	668.4	623.0	592.4	606.1	606.3
Higher ²	1,006.5	1,102.6	1,133.3	1,156.7	1,462.4
Total	13,837.0	13,960.4	13,956.7	14,012.2	14,197.6

D. Enrolment Ratio

Pre-primary
Primary
Secondary
● Lower secondary
● Upper secondary
- General
- Vocational
Higher ²

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Pre-primary	96.2	95.7	93.1	90.6	87.7
Primary	102.3	103.2	103.8	104.8	104.4
Secondary	68.7	69.7	70.6	71.2	71.7
● Lower secondary	83.4	82.8	82.2	82.2	84.6
● Upper secondary	55.3	57.4	59.3	60.1	58.5
- General	33.2	36.7	38.9	38.8	37.5
- Vocational	22.1	20.7	20.4	21.3	21.0
Higher ²	22.5	23.7	26.1	42.9	29.5

¹ Estimated figures

² Excluding students in open universities

THAILAND'S EDUCATIONAL PROFILE IN FIGURES

E. Transition Rate

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Lower secondary	87.8	89.9	92.7	89.8	92.5
Upper secondary	84.7	81.9	80.2	88.2	82.0
• General	52.9	52.8	51.3	53.5	50.3
• Vocational	31.9	29.1	28.0	34.7	31.7
Higher ³	75.9	75.0	80.2	91.9	80.8
• Diploma	46.1	49.2	43.4	43.6	40.1
• Undergraduate	29.8	25.8	36.8	48.2	40.7

F. Student - Teacher Ratio

	2002	2003
Pre-primary	1:20	1:20
Primary	1:19	1:19
Lower secondary	1:21	1:21
General upper secondary	1:21	1:21
Vocational upper secondary	1:31	1:31

G. Retention Rate

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Primary	83.2	87.2	87.5	88.4	89.5
Lower secondary	88.2	91.8	92.3	91.5	91.1
Upper secondary	75.4	83.5	83.0	80.9	80.9
- General	84.3	87.2	87.7	80.6	85.7
- Vocational	63.6	78.2	75.1	71.3	72.2

H. Number of Educational Institutions (2003)

	Total	Public	Private
Whole Kingdom⁴	50,089	46,668	3,421
Pre-Primary	44,760	42,075	2,685
Primary	33,043	31,426	1,617
Lower secondary	10,490	9,903	587
Upper secondary (General)	2,837	2,666	171
Upper secondary (Vocational)	889	540	349
Below Bachelor Degree	646	324	322
Bachelor Degree	208	131	77
Postgraduate Degree	66	39	27

I. Educational Budget

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Amount (Billion baht)	220.6	221.6	222.9	235.1	251.2
% of GDP	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.0
% of National Budget	25.7	24.6	21.8	23.5	24.4

³ Excluding new entrants in open universities.

⁴ These figures are higher than actual numbers of institutions because some institutions may provide more than one level of education.

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**For more information about education in Thailand,
Please visit the following web sites:**

Ministry of Education

- <http://www.moe.go.th>

Office of the Education Council

- <http://www.onec.go.th>
- <http://www.worldedreform.org>
- <http://www.edthai.com>
- <http://www.thaiedgov.org>
- <http://www.thailearn.org>
- <http://www.thaiteacher.org>
- <http://www.thaikids.org>
- <http://www.thaigifted.org>
- <http://www.thaiedresearch.org>
- <http://www.thaiwisdom.org>

Office of the Permanent Secretary

- http://www.moe.go.th/OPS_Page

Office of the Basic Education Commission

- <http://www.obec.go.th>

Office of the Higher Education Commission

- <http://www.mua.go.th>

Office of the Vocational Education Commission

- <http://www.vec.go.th>

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