Chapter 1

General Background

The general background of *Thailand* presented in this chapter includes the following aspects : government and administrative structure ; society and economy ; and past development of Thai education.

1.1 Government and Administrative Structure

The governmental structure of Thailand has undergone gradual and practical evolution in response to the changing environment.   After the bloodless coup in June 1932 demanding a change from absolute to a constitutional monarchy, *His Majesty King Prajadhipok* signed *Thailand's* first constitution on 10 December 1932. Despite the number of successive constitutions that followed over half a century, the basic concepts of constitutional government and monarchy laid down in the 1932 constitution have remained unaltered as follows :

The first and foremost concept is the status of the monarch as Head of Armed Forces and Upholder of the Buddhist Religion and all other religions. The King, as Head of State, exercises his legislative power through the *House of Parliament*, executive power through the *Council of Ministers* headed by the Prime Minister, and judicial power through the courts.

The second concept concerns the legislative branch. A bicameral *National Assembly* has been created with two categories of members; *Members of Parliament* and *Senators*.

The third concept concerns the executive branch. Every constitution holds that the Prime Minister is head of the government and chief executive. The *Council of Ministers* is responsible for the administration of 14 ministries, as well as the *Office of the Prime Minister*. A number of cabinet committees have been set up consisting of relevant ministers, such as the *Cabinet Economics Committee* and the *Cabinet Social Affairs Committee*, to coordinate major policies concerned.

Besides the ministers responsible for each ministry, there are a number of ministers holding the portfolio of "Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office." They take charge of various responsibilities undertaken by this office which in itself ranks as a ministry and is largely concerned with formulating national policy.
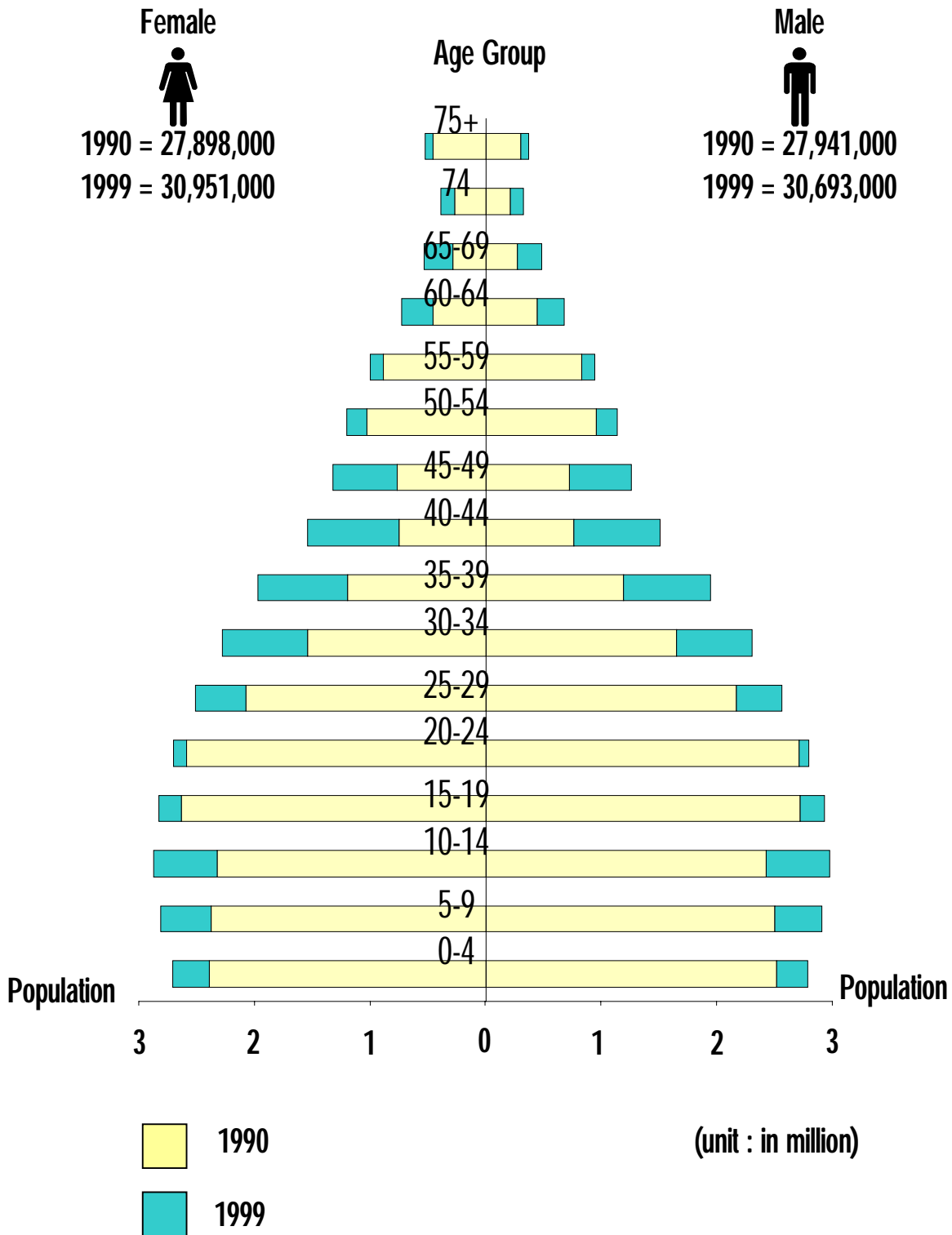
The country is divided into 75 provinces, excluding *Bangkok Metropolis*. Each province, which is administered by an appointed governor, is sub-divided into districts, sub-districts or tambons (groups of villages) and villages.The *Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)* is administered by an elected governor and is divided into 50 districts.

1.2 Society and Economy

Population and Employment

The total population of *Thailand* increased from 55.8 million in 1990 to 61.4 million in 1998 and it was estimated to be 61.6 million in 1999. The number of   females is slightly higher than that of males (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2   Population Pyramid of Thailand : 1990 and 1999

Female

Male

Age Group

1990 = 27,898,000

1999 = 30,951,000

1990 = 27,941,000

1999 = 30,693,000

75+

74

65-69

60-64

55-59

50-54

45-49

40-44

35-39

30-34

25-29

20-24

15-19

10-14

5-9

0-4

Population

Population

3   2   1   0   1   2   3

1990

(unit : in million)

1999

Source :   1990 : National Economic and Social Development Board.
1999 : Thailand Population Projection, 1999 – 2016.

In February 1999, 53.3 percent of the total population were in the labour force while about 24.2 percent were those over 13 years old but not in the labour force, which was about 2.4 percent higher than the year 1997. The rest of population or about 22.4 percent were still under 13 years old (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1   Percentage of Population by Labour Force Status : 1997-1999

	Aug. 1997	Nov. 1998	Feb.1999
Total Population	100.0	100.0	100.0
A. Total labour force	55.3	53.3	53.3
1. Current labour force	99.7	99.1	96.7
1.1 Employed	99.1	95.5	94.6
1) At work	98.6	95.2	92.2
2) with job but not at work	1.4	4.9	7.8
1.2 Unemployed	0.9	4.5	5.4
1) Looking for work	33.0	31.4	27.7
2) Available/ not looking for work	67.0	68.6	72.3
2. Seasonnally inactive labour force	0.3	0.9	3.3
B. Not in the labour force>13 years of age	21.8	23.9	24.2
1. Household work	26.1	24.5	28.3
2. Studies	42.2	41.2	41.9
3. Too young/old or incapable of work	26.5	24.4	24.8
4. Others	5.2	9.9	5.0
C. Persons under 13 years of age	22.9	22.8	22.5

Source :   National Statistical Office.

Among the total number of employed persons in February 1999, about 42.9 percent were employees of which 4 in 5 were employed in the private sector where there was an increase, while those in the government sector increased from 7.3 percent in 1997 to 8.8 percent in 1999 (Table 1.2). The highest percentage of the total employed was the own-account workers which rose from 29.9 percent in 1997 to 32.1 percent in 1998 and 33.6 percent in 1999. The unpaid family workers lowered from 30.3 percent in 1997 to 20.4 percent in 1999.

Table 1.2 Percentage of Employed Persons by Work Status : 1997-1999

|	Aug. 1997	Nov. 1998	Feb.1999
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employers	2.2	2.2	3.1
Government employees	7.3	8.9	8.8
Private employees	30.3	30.2	34.1
Own-account workers	29.9	32.1	33.6
Unpaid family workers	30.3	26.6	20.4

Source :   National Statistical Office.

Economic Performance

In 1998, the Thai economic and financial system underwent a significant adjustment and restructuring, resulting in an economic contraction of 8 percent. Concurrently, however, the progress in pursuance of the macro-stabilization programme and implementation of financial reform measures have reaped significant benefits,namely: (1) Notable improvement in macroeconomic stability, (2) Strengthened market confidence, and (3) The recent movements in the indicators of economic activities in the second half of the year were providing growing evidence of a levelling-out in activities, though still at levels below those in the corresponding period of the previous year.

As a result of the progress made in resolving economic and financial problems, the Thai economy showed recovery signs in 1999 as GDP expanded a by 3.5 percent in the second quarter compared to 0.8 percent in the first quarter on a yearly basis. The positive growth can be seen in both supply and demand.

On the supply side, contribution to growth stemmed from the manufacturing sector with a 7.7 percent growth rate for both exported goods and domestic consumption sectors, while agriculture slowed down towards the end of the cropping season. On the demand side, it was evident that household consumption, mainly in durable goods such as automobile and electrical appliances, grew by 0.9 percent as compared to negative growth of 0.4 percent in the first quarter. Government expenditure for both current and capital consumption also showed a strong positive growth owing to the implementation of various economic stimulus plans.

Figure 1.3   Real GDP Growth, 1990-1999
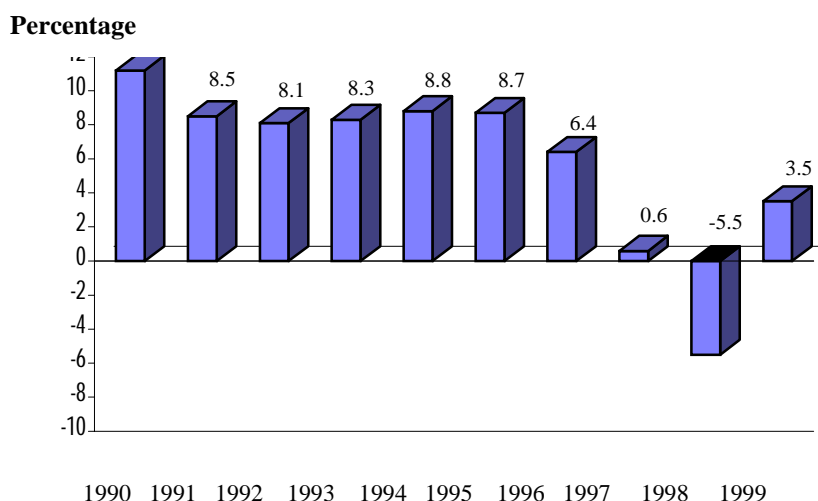
Source : Bank of Thailand and National Economic and Social Development Board.

1.3 Past Development of Thai Education

The development of education in *Thailand* has stretched back along her history for nearly eight hundred years. It can be now divided into four main periods : traditional education, foundation of formal education, modernized education for national development, and the new era of national education.

1) Traditional Education (about 1220-1868)

During this period, there was no formal education in the modern concept. Education was offered in the temple, the King's palace and the family. Children were offered non-formal learning of agricultural and social skills in the context of the extended family social norms. The temple provided for boys a broader framework of socialization and intellectual quality highly valued by the society. The aims of the monastic education were essentially ethical and religious, with literacy as a preparation for the monastic life. Education later became both ecclesiastical and secular. It was organized in the temples for commoners and in individual scholars'houses for princes, princesses and the children of nobles and courtiers. In those days, the monastic schools served well as community schools preparing their pupils for life in society at large.

As for girls, they were given no formal education at that time. In the ordinary households, girls were taught by their mothers and relatives the arts of handicraft, weaving, sewing, cooking and helping in the fields. In royal circles, the Inner Palace became a school for women and girls, usually of the middle class, and many people sent their daughters to live in the palace so that they could gain some kind of education in craft and etiquette.

2) Foundation of Formal Education (1868-1932)

In the 19th century, religious tolerarce enabled the missionaries to appeal to Thai people extensively through various forms of missions from medical work to education. The missionary impact on Thai education increased enormously in the late 19th century with their introduction of the composition of the first Thai dictionary, the foundation of public education and an attempt to stimulate the monarchy to establish a state education system, which had influence on *King Chulalongkorn's* determination to launch educational reform.

However, the ideal of modernization and reform was based upon the threat of western imperialism and the pressure of internal political movements. Education was to assume a functional role as the major means of modernization. It was to help produce a new generation of qualified leaders and administrators in order to anticipate and keep pace with the momentum of the reforming process.

Being threatened by western military power, *King Chulalongkorn* gave the first priority to military education by founding a school within the palace for young princes and nobles which represented a major improvement toward systematic schooling. The King and his advisers also realized that they had to go beyond the palace walls and initiate educational innovations in order to produce competent officials so urgently needed for the reform of the government and administration. In 1884, the first public school for commoners was established and after that a large number of public schools for commoners were operated in Bangkok and other provinces.

In 1898, a reorganization of the school system took place with the proclamation of the first early form of "national education plan". In the reign of *King Rama VI*, a new educational system was formulated pursuant to the new "education plan" of 1913 and in 1918 the *Private School Act* was promulgated, drawing private schools, including the mission schools, under the supervision of the government. During this period, a law on compulsory primary

education was issued in 1921 requiring every 7-year old child to receive free primary education until the age of 14, and the first university in *Thailand* was also established in 1917.

3) Modernized Education for National Development (1932-1997)

In 1932, educational policies and plans were revised and the 1932 *National Scheme of Education* was promulgated extending compulsory education from five to six years. The 1936 *National Scheme of Education* divided the educational system into general and vocational streams and reduced compulsory education to four years. Higher education was promoted and adult education as well as special education was initiated. In 1951, the new *National Scheme of Education* was promulgated in which educational development was stated as prime concern of the government.

During the 1950's, the governments became much more concerned with the development of education as a part of national reconstruction and modernization in the post-war period. A reorganization of government administrative system at national, regional, and local levels took place in 1952 resulting in the establishment of many new educational units, including the *Office of the National Education Council*, which was later renamed as the *Office of the National Education Commission*. In 1960, another *National Scheme of Education* was promulgated as the long-term policy framework and the *First National Education Development Plan (1961-1966)* was formulated accordingly as a five-year plan which was an integral part of the *First National Economic and Social Development Plan.* Since then, education has been assigned to assume a full functional role as an instrument for development. Under *the 1960 National Scheme of Education* (1960-1976), three five-year education development plans were formulated. During this period, the main objectives of the policy were directly linked to economic development and focused on providing medium-and high-level manpower needed for the growing economy.

In the interim of the Third Plan, a student uprising took place in mid October 1973. After the success of the uprising, there were demands for changes of bureaucratic administrative systems, particularly in the area of education. The *1977 National Scheme of Education* encompassed three five-year educational development plans : the Fourth, the Fifth and the Sixth National Education Development Plans. The policy agenda began to widen its scope to address poverty and inequality issues. Educational policies were introduced to increase rural access to schooling, improve the administrative system, and strengthen curricula and the learning process. Priority was also given to issues of quality in education. In addition, science, technology, and non-formal education were strongly emphasized and the role of private education was encouraged.

The present *National Scheme of Education* has been promulgated since 1992 followed by the introduction of the *Seventh National Education Development Plan (1992-1996).* The education system was then expected to provide equilibrium between development in the economic, social and cultural aspects. It should also facilitate linkages between these aspects as well as creating harmony and mutual benefit between urban and rural sectors. During this period, policies for the development of an educational information system were also introduced. At present, the development of education is under the *Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001)* aiming at preparing the Thai people to cope with a rapidly changing world in the 21st century. This plan strongly emphasizes that the education system should facilitate the country's development process towards self-reliance, sustainability and enhance global competitiveness.

4) New Era of National Education (1997-)

Despite putting much more effort into keeping up with globalization movements, *Thailand* is now confronting the most drastic social changes from within and from its interconnectedness with the complex and rapidly changing world. Such changes are too overwhelming for both individuals and society to cope with, thus causing imbalances in various aspects of development. The present social institutions have failed to adapt themselves to cope with the formidable changes. The result is organizational weaknesses, confusion, conflicts and suffering. Social reform is thus indispensable in order to strengthen all sectors of society. Reform of the education system is one of the most important areas of social reform, since it is believed that education is a very important process to enhance individual development which will contribute to the social and economic development of the country. It will enable *Thailand* to move through the current crisis.

During the past few years, there has been a growing demand in Thai society for a new radical reform in education. There have been continuous movements to push educational reforms by both public and private sectors. The first successful attempt was the inclusion of various provisions relating to education in the 1997 Constitution. Among these provisions, two have had paramount impact on education in *Thailand,* namely: Equity for All in receiving at least 12-year basic education of quality; and, the enactment of the *National Education Act* which is the first in the history of Thai education and will allow educational improvements on all aspects.

Since the promulgation of the new Constitution in October 1997, *Thailand* has started to look at the dawn of a new era of national education. Urgent steps were taken by agencies concerned to make preparations for the enactment of the *National Education Act* in order to meet many requirements stated in various provisions, especially in the universalization of 12-year basic education.

The drafting of the National Education Act was made on a number of significant bases, notably :

1. **Basis of academic information** With the most gratifying collaboration of academics, researchers, faculty staff and legal specialists, the ONEC conducted a detailed research on 42 major issues on education. It also played an instrumental role in synthesizing concepts and research results including relevant information from various sources, in particular documentary research based on sources available within the country and abroad.

2. **Scrutiny by scholars** At all drafting stages, the Bill was considered, examined, amended and scrutinized by specialists on education, and experts in economic, social and legal affairs, the first step being the scrutiny by the Educational Legislation Drafting Committee under the chairmanship of Professor Dr.Sippanondha Ketudat, Chairman of the National Economic and Social Development Board. The Bill was subsequently submitted to the National Education Commission, Council of Ministers, Juridical Council, House of Representatives and Senate respectively. The House of Representatives established a 45-member Extraordinary Committee under the chairmanship of Mr.Abhisit Vejjajiva, Minister to the Prime Minister's Office. Having been approved by the House Extraordinary Committee, the Bill was accordingly transmitted to the Senate, which appointed a 30-member panel of its own, under the chairmanship of Professor Dr.Kasem Suwanagul, to scrutinize the Bill. It was gratifying to note that members of all committees and panels devoted so much time and efforts to ensure that the Bill benefitted from their vision, wisdom and knowledge to the fullest extent possible.

3. **Participation of all stakeholders** Meetings, seminars and public hearings were organized on a continuous basis for the benefit of government offices, educational institutions, private sector and the general public both in Bangkok and in the provinces. A total of 254, 318 persons participated in these activities. At the House Committee stage, a total of 8 public hearings in all regions were conducted in order to listen to the opinions of 38, 942 persons - both individuals and representatives of various organizations.

4. **Public relations** The services of a variety of media - radio, television, newspapers and publications - were availed of in order to disseminate information on the Bill to teachers, educational administrators, parents, students and the general public.

5. **Public polls** The ONEC, in collaboration with the Suan Dusit and ABAC Polls*, sounded public opinion on major issues on education in order to arrive at conclusions and consensus. During the polls, conducted between January 1997 and October 1998, a total of 105, 376 persons provided their views and relevant recommendations. In other words, the public was given the maximun opportunity to voice its opinion; in fact almost to the same extent as that given for the drafting of the Constitution itself.

On July 1, 1999, the Bill received the final approval of the House of Representatives. Altogether a period of one year and 11 months was devoted to its drafting. On August 14 of the same year, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej graciously granted His Royal assent for the promulgation of the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 (1999), which was subsequently published on August 19, 1999 in the Government Gazette.

In sum, education in Thailand has developed from traditional education offered in the temple, the palace and the family to modernized education for national development in accordance with the National Scheme of Education and the National Education Development Plan. From the year 1997 which is the beginning of the new era of Thailand's national education, the development of Thai education has started to move forward based on the provisions of the 1997 Constitution relating to education. The successful efforts of the Thai people for the enactment of the first National Education Act as provided in the Constitution is paving the way for a truely comprehensive reform of education in Thailand to meet the challenges of the next century.

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* Public polls conducted by the Rajabhat Institute Suan Dusit and Assumption University respectively.

Chapter 2

Framework for Educational Development

Before the full implementation of the first *National Education Act* which will take at least three years, Thai education will still be provided in accordance with the *1992 National Scheme of Education* and the *Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001)* which reflect the principles and concepts of education as presented below.

2.1 The 1992 National Scheme of Education

The present *National Scheme of Education*, the long – range plan, has been promulgated since 1992 to direct the nation's educational provision so as to render the education system efficiently responsive to emerging needs and rapid changes in Thai society. Principles and goals of education including the policy directives as well as guidelines and measures stated are summarized as follows :

Principles Education under this *National Scheme of Education* is based on four fundamental principles :

1. The flourishing of individual wisdom, thinking, minds and morality is a necessary and essential goal.
2. Human beings must realize the importance of judicious utilization and conservation of natural resources.
3. An understanding of the language and culture of Thai society must be ascertained.
4. The proper balance between dependency and self-reliance is an essential basis for cooperation at individual, community and national levels.

Goals Education is the process enabling human beings to develop their quality of life, lead a peaceful social life, and make a proper contribution to national development in accordance with contextual changes of the nation. As such, the goals of education emphasize balanced and harmonious development of the individual in four aspects : wisdom, spiritual, physical and social development.

Policy Directives In order to achieve the stated principles and goals, the following policy directives are formulated:

1. To establish a system of learning networks.
2. To provide and promote prenatal care, rearing practices and education necessary for child development.
3. To promote readiness preparation for every child before entry to primary school.
4. To ensure a comprehensive, quality and convenient compulsory education service.
5. To designate secondary education as the basic education for all.

6. To reform teacher pre-service and in-service education.
7. To promote academic excellence in higher education.
8. To improve curriculum content and teaching-learning processes at all levels and types of education.
9. To enhance the capability of students and the population in using Thai language.
10. To promote extensive instruction of foreign languages.
11. To promote research and development activities.
12. To promote and support applications of modern technologies for the purpose of expanding educational services.
13. To promote and support the participation of family, community, other social institutions and mass media in the educational process.
14. To support models and methods of education that allow that the talented or gifted to develop their potential.
15. To support rapid and extensive expansion of educational services for the disadvantaged and the handicapped.
16. To promote education for ecclesiastical personnel and spiritual leaders.
17. To improve the educational administration system.
18. To promote the private sector's increased involvement in providing educational services at all levels.
19. To mobilize, allocate and utilize educational resources efficiently and equitably.

Guidelines and Measures   Education in Thailand is   currently organized according to the stated policy directives through the following guidelines and measures :

Learning Network and Education for All
- Expand services for pre-school children.
- Expand basic education services in various forms. Secondary education must be extensively provided for learners in all areas.
- Improve the admission system for primary and secondary education.
- Promote community learning processes.
- Employ various methods to promote and support the coordination of efforts and resources of educational agencies.
- Utilize communication and information technologies and mass media to provide knowledge for the people and the community.

Curriculum Content and Instructional Process
- Design the curriculum content to provide basic learning experiences for individual and social development.
- Integrate knowledge from studies, investigation and research into curriculum content and instructional processes.

- Emphasize the importance of the Thai language.
- Develop the content of science and technology.
- Enhance morality, proper attitudes and the behaviour of learners.
- Enhance scientific thinking and understanding, inquisitiveness, creativity, and the analytical and synthesis- making ability of learners.
- Promote vocational knowledge and skills of learners and thus produce quality manpower.
- Enhance flexibility in developing curriculum content and instructional processes.
- Encourage educational institutions to provide instruction in foreign languages.
- Promote an application of formal, non-formal, and informal modes of learning suitable to learners abilities.
- Promote cooperation in the family, educational, religious and other institutions including mass media in inculcating moral virtues and appropriate values.
- Develop counselling and guidance service systems.
- Develop systems of supervision, monitoring and evaluation in all educational institutions.
- Promote and allow transfer of credits and the accreditation of work experience.
- Provide certification of professional competency.

Teacher and Educational Personnel

- Improve the teacher student admission system and encourage able personnel in other professions to join the teaching profession.
- Improve the process of training, educating, and developing teachers and educational personnel.
- Promote the role of teachers as academic leaders and coordinators of community development.
- Ensure efficient deployment of teachers and educational personnel.
- Develop the teacher personnel administration system.
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring the quality standard and professional practices of teachers.

Administration and Management

- Entrust the central authority to the public. Authority concerning educational administration, planning and implementation are to be transferred from the central authority to provincial agencies and schools.
- Establish a provincial educational board.
- Strengthen systems and mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Promote the use of a non-grade system in certifying

individual's knowledge.
- Improve laws, regulations and rules to enhance coordination in resources utilization and cooperation among various organizations.

Educational Resources and Investment

- Direct educational agencies to coordinate their plans and operations concerning resource mobilization.
- Allocate budget for public education, giving priorities to the provision of compulsory education, basic education expansion, education for the disadvantaged, community learning, special education, quality improvement, and research and development.
- Encourage extensive role of private sector and community in educational provision.
- Call upon educational institutions to adjust educational tuition and fees to correspond with the private rate of return for each level, type and field of education.
- Promote or support business enterprises in providing education and vocational skill training.
- Promote local administration's revenue for use in organizing education.

Structure of Educational System

The educational system according to the *1992 National Scheme of Education* covers both education in a school-related system and from a way-of-life learning process.

A. Education in a school-related system is provided by educational institutions, characterized by a class/grading system, and the use of curriculum specified for the level and type of education so as to develop learners in accordance with curriculum objectives.

Level of Education   Education in a school – related system is divided into 4 levels: pre-school education, primary education, secondary education and higher education.

1. Pre-primary education is in the form of childcare and readiness development in physical, psychological, mental, emotional, personality, and social aspects of children between 3-5 years of age. It can be organized in the form of day-care centres.

2. Primary education , which is compulsory for children between 6-11 years old, requires 6 years of study.

3. Secondary education   is divided into two parts: lower secondary education and upper secondary education. Each requires 3 years of study.

3.1 Lower secondary education aims to enable children around 12-14 years old to identify their needs and interests and to be aware of their aptitude both in general and vocational education ; and to develop their ability for work and occupational practices relevant to their age.

3.2 Upper secondary education aims to enable learners who are about 15-17 years old to acquire the basis either for going further to higher education or for working and pursuing a career suitable for their aptitude.

4. Higher education is divided into 3 levels : lower than bachelor's degree level, bachelor's degree level, and graduate level.

4.1 Lower than bachelor's degree level aims to promote learners' knowledge and vocational skills at middle level.

4.2 Bachelor's degree level aims to promote learners' higher level of knowledge and skills in various disciplines.

4.3 Graduate level aims to promote learners' specialized knowledge and skills ; to strive for academic progress and excellence, especially in studies, research and development of knowledge and technology.

Type of Education   The organization of education in a school-related system can be of various types depending on the *characteristics and needs of target groups* as follows :

1. Teacher education aims to train and develop prospective as well as practicing teachers to acquire morality, knowledge, ability and skills in teaching and motivating learners to learn.

2. Vocational education aims to enable learners to develop vocational knowledge and skills useful for working both as entrepreneurs and as paid workers. Vocational education in the formal school system is a development of occupational knowledge and skills relevant to each level of education from primary to higher levels. Vocational education in the non-formal system is short-course training in specific occupations for those needing to upgrade their knowledge and skills.

3. Special vocational education aims to enable learners to train and develop specific vocational skills and expertise such as dancing, music and sports. It may be provided in special institutes or incorporated in the general curricula.

4. Vocational education for specific purposes provides knowledge and skills in accordance with the specific needs of certain agencies, or characteristics and needs of specific groups. It must comply with the State's national policy directives.

5. Special education aims to enable the handicapped to undertake learning suitable for their condition and capability. It enables talented learners to develop their aptitude to the fullest potential. Special education can be provided in special institutes or in general educational institutions from pre- school to higher education levels.

6. Education for ecclesiastical personnel and spiritual leaders aims to enable monks, novices and spiritual leaders to assume leadership in wisdom, spiritual and moral development.

B. Education from a way-of-life learning process is self-learning from various sources of knowledge and environment related to way of life naturally existing or modified to enhance and facilitate learning. It is not only to complement formal education but also to correct any overdependence on formal education and to offer opportunities for lifelong learning.

2.2 The Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001)

Being challenged by the rapid changes in the world of advanced technologies, especially information technology, education in *Thailand* is required to play a more challenging and developmental role in preparing the Thai people to cope with globalization movements. Accordingly, the *Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001)*, the medium – range plan, has been introduced with the following objectives, policies and major programmes for educational development.

Objectives

● To expand an extensive and equal provision of basic education for all people ; and to extend basic education to secondary education level.
● To improve the equality of education and its relevance to the needs of individuals, communities and the nation, and to enable learners to achieve their full potential for self-development.
● To enhance Thai education in strengthening the national potential for self-reliance, and to contribute to national economic stabilization and the role of *Thailand* in the global economy.

Policies on Educational Development

● To accelerate an extensive and equal expansion and further extension of high-quality basic education services for all.
● To reform the teaching and learning system.
● To reform the teacher education system.
● To accelerate the production and development of middle-level skilled and higher-level skilled manpower.
● To reform education administration and management.

Major Programmes for Educational Development

The targets for educational development to guide the implementation have been grouped into 9 major programmes :

1. Promotion of Basic Education for All.
2. Improvement of Education Quality.
3. Development of the Teacher Education System and Process, and the Development of In-service Teacher Education.
4. Production and Development of manpower in the Areas of Science and Technology and Social Sciences.
5. Research and Development.
6. Improvement of Administration and Management.
7. Development of Higher Education.
8. Educational Resource Mobilization.

9. Development of an Educational Information System.

Thai education is currently provided on the basis of the 1992 National Scheme of Education and the Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001). The Eighth Plan, which is consistent with the National Scheme of Education, contains educational objectives and policies to be implemented by operational units during the period of the Plan. To ensure implementation according to the National Scheme of Education and the National Education Development Plan, the agencies concerned are required to formulate corresponding action plans. Mechanisms must also be established to direct, monitor and evaluate the provision of education on a continuous basis.

However, the economic crisis in Thailand since mid-1997 directly affected the implementation of the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan, the master plan for national development. It is accepted that the crisis has exposed serious weaknesses in the nation's economy, such as declining export competitiveness and the quality of the human resources required to advance the process of economic transformation. The Eighth Plan was therefore revised to enable it to better respond to the crisis through the introduction of three new guidelines aimed at : (1) minimising the effects arising from unemployment ; (2) assisting the underprivileged groups and those affected by the crisis through assistance measures in the areas of social welfare, education and health; and (3) preventing and alleviating social problems as well as promoting desirable social values.

The education sector, an integral part of the national and social planning system, has also experienced the impacts of the crisis. The government has, therefore, taken several measures to mitigate its impact on educational development. It is expected that the National Education Act promulgated in August 1999 would bring about changes and new initiatives in the management of education as it will be used as the framework and guidelines for educational development in Thailand in place of the 1992 National Scheme of Education.

Chapter 3
Educational Administration and Planning

The present educational administrative system in *Thailand* is parallel to all other sectors of public administration characterized by the three-level structure : the central or national level, provincial level, and local level. The administrative and planning system of education including educational personnel administration thus follows this structure as presented below.

3.1 Administrative and Planning Structure of Education

The responsibility for educational management in *Thailand* is under the mandate of four main ministries : *Office of the Prime Minister*, *Ministry of Education (MOE)*, *Ministry of University Affairs (MUA)* and *Ministry of Interior (MOI)*. In addition, other ministries also take charge of the management of education in specialized fields or for specific purposes. Their responsibilities and functions can be classified as follows :

A. Administration and Planning at the Central or National Level

Educational administration and planning at the central or national level can be divided into two sub-levels: national policy and planning level and ministerial or central level.

❶ **National policy and planning level**

The government organizations concerned with educational policy and planning are *Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (ONESDB)* , *Office of the National Education Commission (ONEC),* and *Budget Bureau*. They are all under the *Office of the Prime Minister*, a ministerial organization.

Box 3.1 : Government Organizations Responsible for Educational Policy and Planning

The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (ONESDB) takes the responsibility of formulating the national economic and social development plan, appraising ministerial and departmental development plans and projects, as well as monitoring, evaluating and giving recommendations on the annual budget of governmental offices. In other words, the ONESDB oversees the overall economic and social development of which education is a sector.
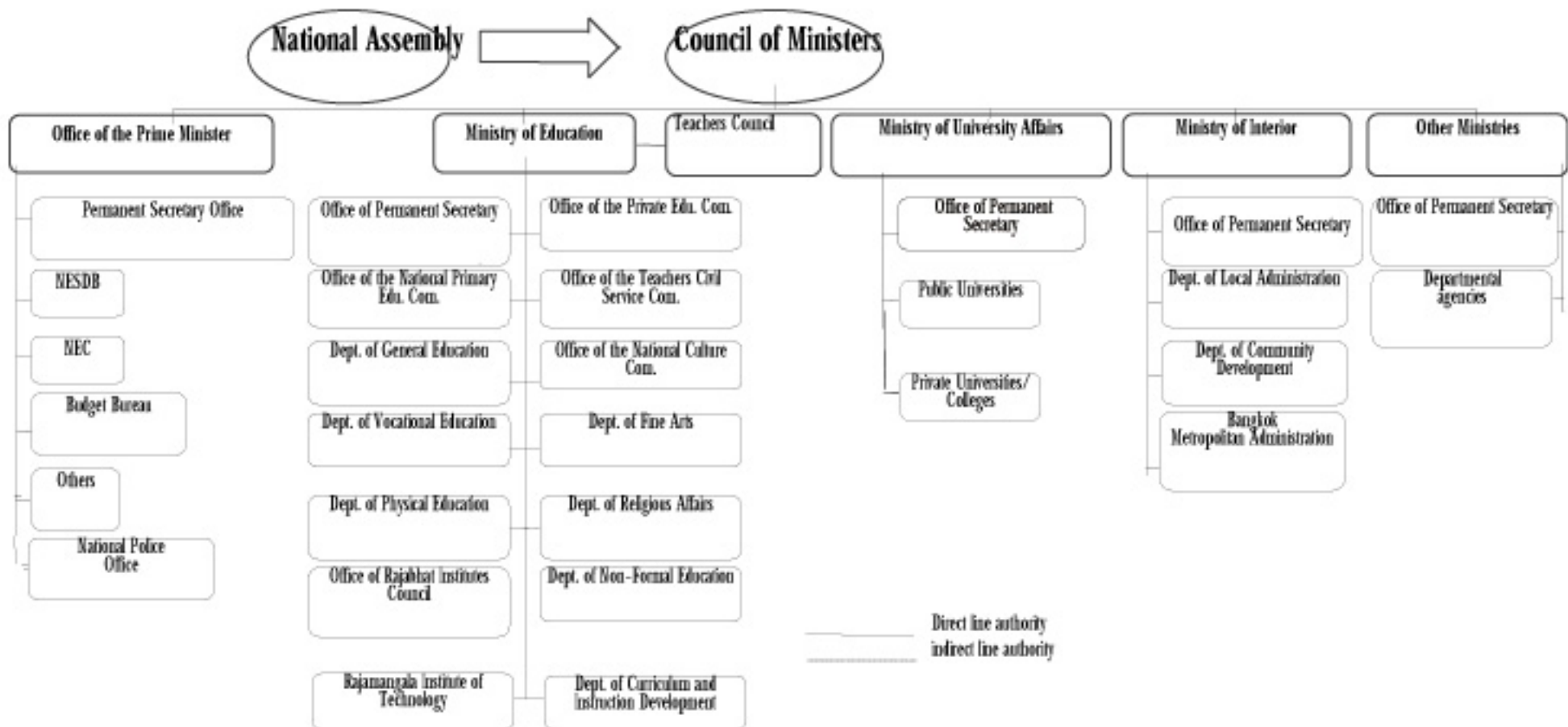
The Office of the National Education Commission (ONEC) is responsible for policy making and planning of education at all levels. Its major task is to formulate the National Scheme of Education, the National Education Development Plan, policy guidelines and recommendations for educational development. It serves as an advisory body to the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers concerning all matters of education in Thailand. ONEC is also responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of educational development plans of the agencies involved.

The Budget Bureau is responsible for allocation of the government budget in accordance with the National Economic and Social Development Plan and government policies.

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❷ **Ministerial or Central Level**

At this level, the ministries concerned and the operational implementing organizations may set their ministries' policies which have to be in accordance with the national policy. The major ministries responsible for the management of education are : *Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of University Affairs (MUA), and Ministry of Interior (MOI),* Other ministries that provide education in specialized fields or for specific purposes, both in the formal and non-formal systems, are *Ministry of Defence*, *Ministry of Public Health*, *Ministry of Transport and Communications*, *Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives*, *Ministry of Justice*, and *Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (Figure1 3.1).*

Figure 3.1 Educational Administration at the Central Level

National Assembly ⟹ Council of Ministers

| Office of the Prime Minister | Ministry of Education | Teachers Council | Ministry of University Affairs | Ministry of Interior | Other Ministries |

Office of the Prime Minister
- Permanent Secretary Office
- NESDB
- NEC
- Budget Bureau
- Others
- National Police Office

Ministry of Education
- Office of Permanent Secretary
- Office of the National Primary Edu. Com.
- Dept. of General Education
- Dept. of Vocational Education
- Dept. of Physical Education
- Office of Rajabhat Institutes Council
- Rajamangala Institute of Technology
- Office of the Private Edu. Com.
- Office of the Teachers Civil Service Com.
- Office of the National Culture Com.
- Dept. of Fine Arts
- Dept. of Religious Affairs
- Dept. of Non-Formal Education
- Dept. of Curriculum and Instruction Development

Ministry of University Affairs
- Office of Permanent Secretary
- Public Universities
- Private Universities/Colleges

Ministry of Interior
- Office of Permanent Secretary
- Dept. of Local Administration
- Dept. of Community Development
- Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

Other Ministries
- Office of Permanent Secretary
- Departmental agencies

Direct line authority
indirect line authority

Box 3.2 : The Three Main Ministries Responsible for Provision of Educational Services

1. Ministry of Education (MOE)

The scope of responsibility of the MOE covers a wide range of work dealing with educational, religious and cultural affairs. It is composed of 14 departments/offices responsible for educational policies and plans as well as provision and monitoring of educational services.

1) Office of the Permanent Secretary of Education : To be responsible for the policy and plan formulation, supervision and monitoring as well as other tasks of the Ministry.

2) Office of the National Primary Education Commission (ONPEC) : To take responsibility of pre-primary education, primary education, and secondary education provided in primary schools for the expansion of educational opportunities.

3) Department of General Education : To provide secondary education including special and welfare education as well as some vocational education programmes.

4) Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) : To take charge of non-formal education services as well as informal education.

5) Department of Vocational Education (DOVE) : To provide vocational education at certificate, diploma, and higher diploma levels as well as vocational training.

6) Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC) : To oversee private schools from the pre-primary level up to the technical education level, including private special, welfare and non-formal education, as well as to supervise and mobilize financial, staffing, technical and material support to these schools.

7) Rajamangala Institute of Technology : To provide technological education at three levels : Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's degree.

8) Office of Rajabhat Institute Council : To oversee 36 Rajabhat Institutes (former teachers colleges) responsible for providing higher education and production of teachers in 3 areas : education, science and liberal arts.

9) Department of Physical Education : To train physical education teachers at primary and secondary school levels and run sport schools; to offer bachelor's degree in sport science and health promotion; and to provide in-service training in physical education, health education including recreation for personnel of various departments.

10) Department of Religious Affairs : To uphold and promote Buddhism; to give support and patronage to all religious organizations in Thailand; and to provide ethical and religious education as well as to promote ethical standards :

11) Department of Fine Arts : To preserve, promote, and disseminate national arts and culture, including fine arts, literature, art education, archaeological and historical research, archives, and the maintenance of historical monuments,
objects of art and antiquities.

12) Office of the National Culture Commission : To preserve Thai heritage in arts and culture as well as to promote cultural exchange with other countries and non-governmental agencies.

13) Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development : To take charge of curriculum development; preparation of textbooks; educational guidance, assessment and testing; and educational research.

14) Office of the Teachers Civil Service Commission (OTCSC) : To undertake the personnel administration of teachers and educational personnel.

2. Ministry of University Affairs (MUA)

The major role of the MUA is to supervise and coordinate public and private higher education institutions with the exception of some specialized professional training which falls under the jurisdiction of other ministries. It is also responsible for formulating educational policy within the framework of the national education development plan. Other tasks include standardization of curricula, personnel management and recommending areas for budget allocations.

3. Ministry of Interior (MOI)

The Department of Local Administration under the MOI is entrusted with the tasks of administering and managing primary education in the municipality of each province through the Bureau of Local Education Administration. In Bangkok Metropolitan Areas, the management of local education is under the responsibility of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA). Besides, some departments of the MOI are responsible for the management of education in specialized fields.

Coordination at a Central or National Level

The formal coordination of educational units at a central or national level is through the committees with representatives from agencies involved as members. An example can be seen in the composition of the *National Education Commission* in Box 3.3.

Box 3.3 : Composition of the National Education Comission (NEC)	
• Prime Minister or Deputy PM designated by the PM	Chairman
• Minister of the PM's Office designated by the PM	Vice-Chairman
• Minister of Education	Member
• Minister of University Affairs	Member
• Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister	Member
• Permanent Secretary for Defence	Member
• Permanent Secretary for Interior	Member
• Permanent Secretary for Science, Technology and Environment	Member
• Permanent Secretary for Education	Member
• Permanent Secretary for Public Health	Member
• Permanent Secretary for University Affairs	Member
• Director of the Budget Bureau	Member
• Secretary-General of the National Economic and Social Development Board	Member
• 12 Qualified members appointed by the Council of Ministers (at least 5 from private organizations)	Member
• Secretary-General of NEC	Member and Secretary
• Deputy Secretary-General designated by the Secretary-General of NEC	Assistant Secretary

B. Administration and Planning at Regional and Provincial Levels

At regional level, there is no administrative authority for education. However, in order to lighten the burden of the *MOE* at the central level, the country is divided into 12 educational regions. In each region, which consists of 4-8 provinces, there is a *Bureau of Regional Education, Religion and Culture Development* to oversee academic matters such as quality of education, provision of in-service training to teachers, monitoring and evaluation of educational projects as well as providing advice on educational policy and related matters to education officers in the region. The Regional Bureaus are directly under the control of the *Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education.*

At provincial level, the administration of education can be classified into 2 types :

❶ *Delegation of authority from the MOE to the Provincial Education Superintendent Offices and the District Education Offices* which are under the Office of the Permanent Secretary. These offices take charge of private education and all matters relating to religion and culture in the provinces. The *Provincial Education Superintendent* reports to the *Provincial Governor* and the *District Education Officer* reports to the *District Officer.*

❷ *Educational agencies situated in the provinces* which report directly to the central departments under the *MOE.*

Recently, there has been a tendency for each department in the *MOE* to set up its own coordinating offices at provincial and even at district levels as shown on Figure 3.2.

Coordination at Provincial Level

At provincial level, the *Committee on Education*, *Religion and Culture* has been set up in each province chaired by the *Governor*, with the *Provincial Education Superintendent* as Secretary of the Committee. Other members are the representatives from various departments within the province and 5 scholars. This committee is responsible for the approval of educational development plans at provincial level in line with the *MOE*'s plan, preparation of annual budget proposals for the allocation of funds, coordination of common utilization of resources including monitoring and evaluation of provincial plans/projects.

C. Educational Administration at the Local Level

The local authorities responsible for the provision of education in their own jurisdiction are the *Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)* and the municipalities including Pattaya City, with financial support from, and under the supervision of, the *MOI* (Figure 3.3).
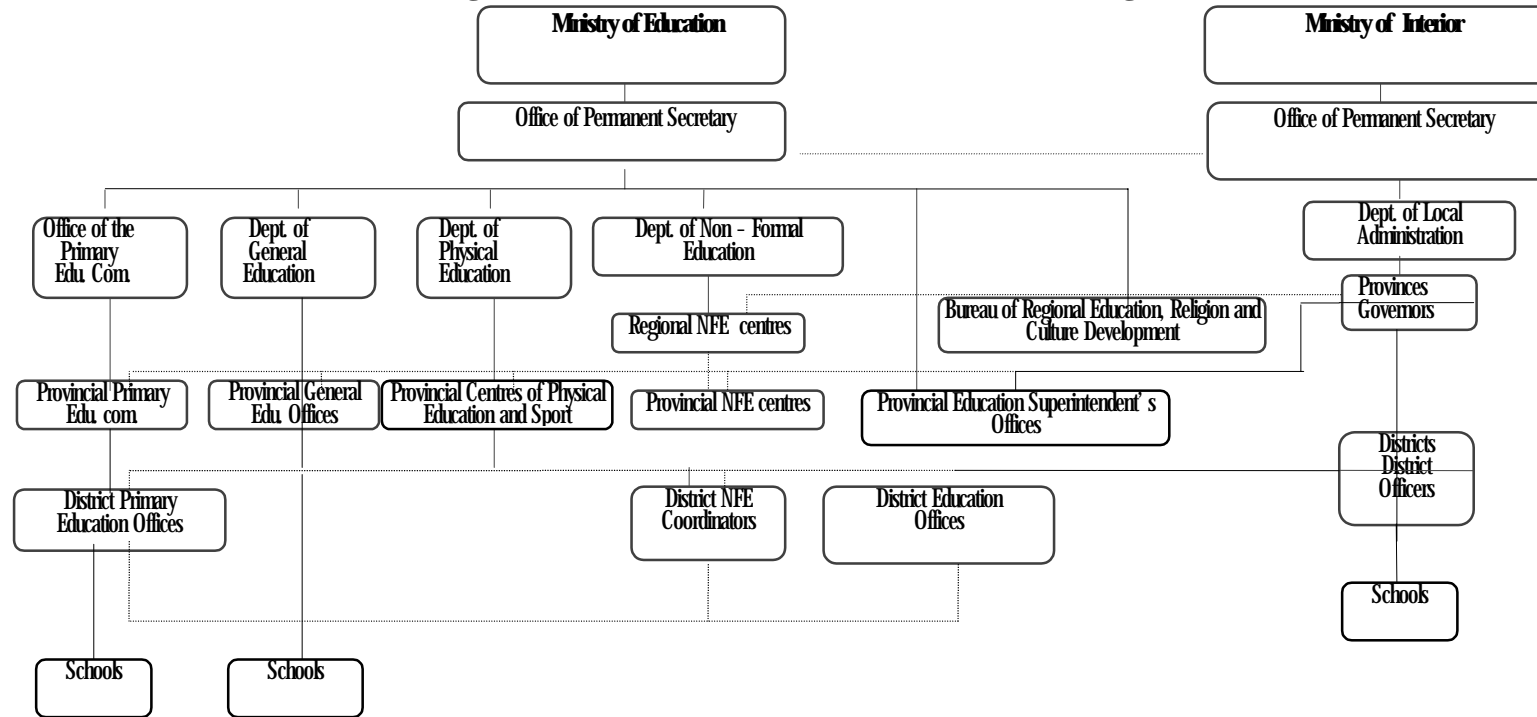
Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)

The *BMA* is responsible for the provision of local education at several levels and in various types. Apart from providing primary education, it also provides pre-primary education, higher education and non-formal education. In addition, some primary schools have also organized classes at secondary school level since 1992 according to the Project on the Expansion of Educational Opportunities.
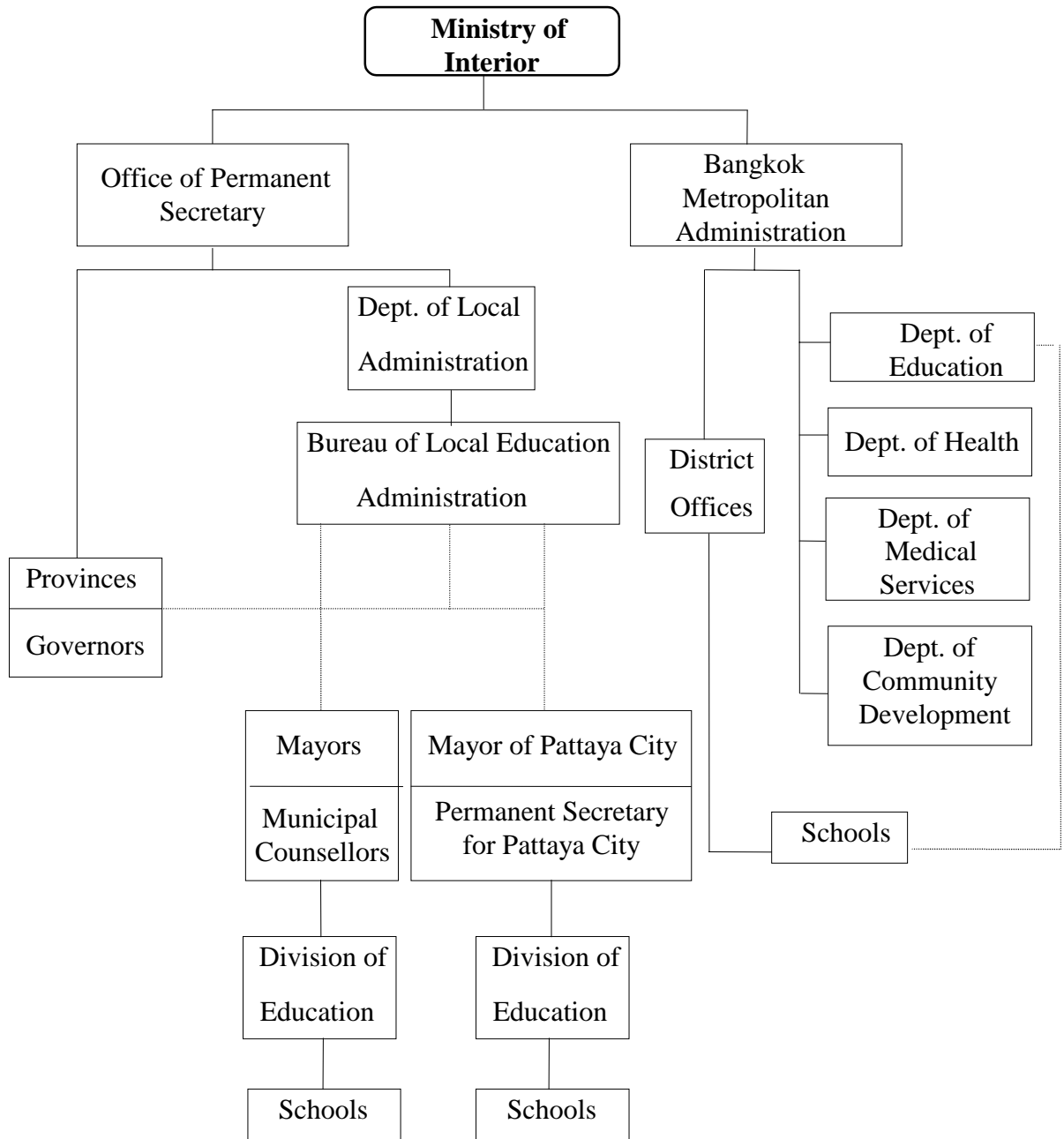
Bureau of Local Education Administration

The *Bureau of Local Education Administration* is the central unit responsible for local education of the *Department of Local Education*, *MOI*, while the municipalities are in charge of local educational provision in those areas. The responsibilities of local authorities include the provision of formal, non-formal and informal education.

37

Figure 3.2 Educational Administration at the Regional and Provincial Level

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┌─────────────────────┐                        ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Ministry of Education│                        │ Ministry of Interior │
└─────────────────────┘                        └─────────────────────┘
         │                                               │
┌─────────────────────┐                        ┌─────────────────────┐
│Office of Permanent   │                        │Office of Permanent   │
│Secretary             │                        │Secretary             │
└─────────────────────┘                        └─────────────────────┘
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| Office of the Primary Edu. Com. | Dept. of General Education | Dept. of Physical Education | Dept. of Non – Formal Education | | Dept. of Local Administration |

Regional NFE centres

Bureau of Regional Education, Religion and Culture Development

Provinces Governors

Provincial Primary Edu. com.

Provincial General Edu. Offices

Provincial Centres of Physical Education and Sport

Provincial NFE centres

Provincial Education Superintendent's Offices

District Primary Education Offices

District NFE Coordinators

District Education Offices

Districts District Officers

Schools

Schools

Schools

Schools

_____ direct line of authority
.... indirect line of authority

Figure 3.3   Local Education Administration

direct line of authority
indirect line of authority

3.2 Educational Personnel Administration

Educational Personnel Administration in *Thailand* involves various agencies at central, regional/provincial, and local levels. It is administered through different commissions, departmental sub-committees, and provincial sub-committees as follows :

A. Personnel Administration at Central Level

The central organizations responsible for educational personnel administration are the *Office of the Civil Service Commission* under the *Office of the Prime Minister*, *Office of the Teachers Civil Service Commission* under the *MOE*, and the *MUA*.

● **Civil Service Commission** takes responsibility of personnel administration for civil servants under the *ONEC*, *Office of the Permanent Secretary for University Affairs*, *Bureau of Local Education Administration*, and those who are non- teachers in the *MOE*.

● **Teachers Civil Service Commission** takes charge of the issuance and amendment of laws, regulations, criteria and procedures for civil service teachers' administration of the *MOE*.

● **University Civil Service Commission** is responsible for personnel administration of civil servants in all public universities, each of which has its own sub-committee for personnel administration (Figure 3.4) Currently, the majority of personnel administration has been delegated to the universities or institutions.
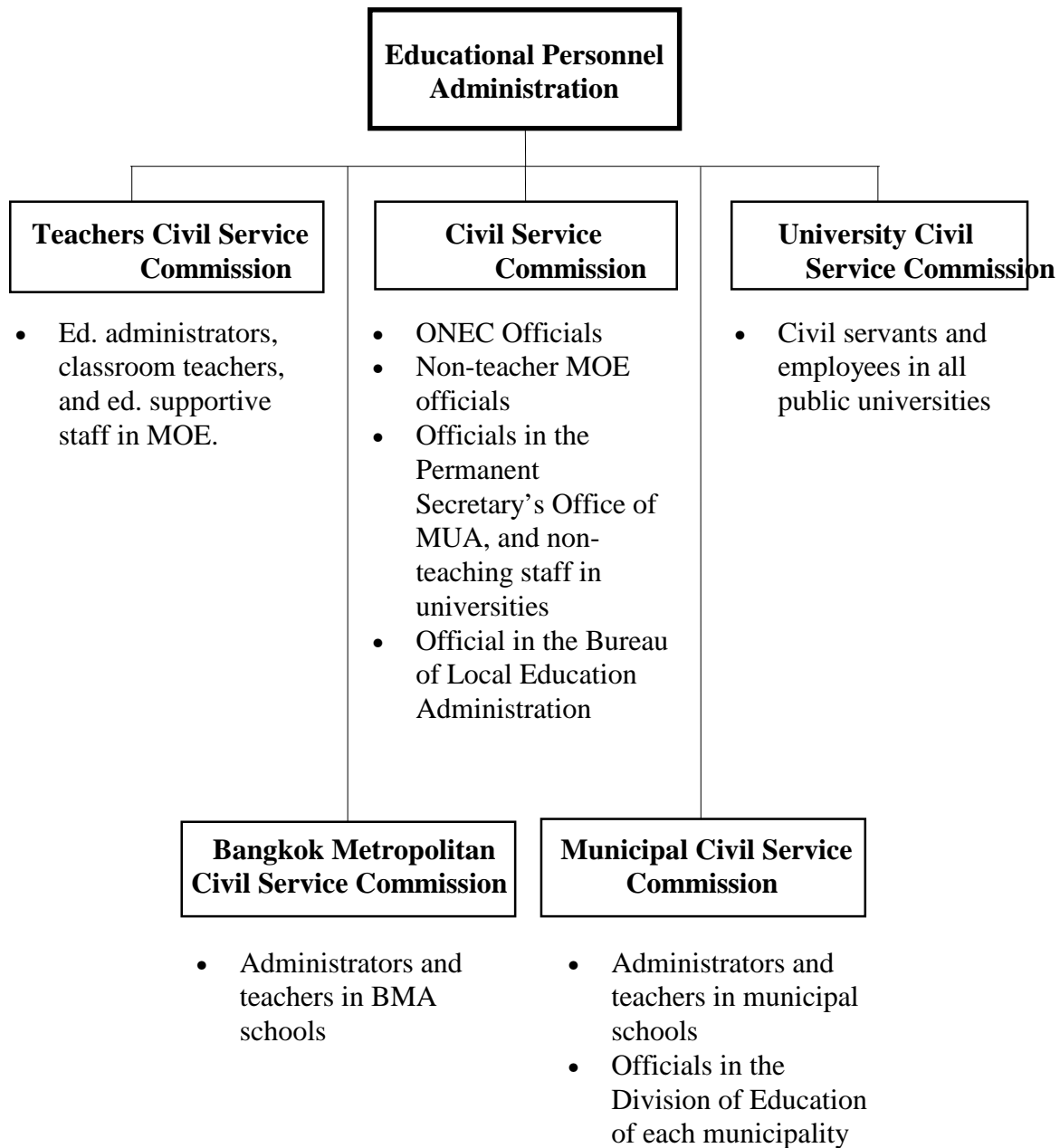
B. Personnel Administration at Regional/Provincial Level

Personnel administration of educational organizations at the regional /provincial level follows the laws and regulations of civil service and teachers civil service.

● **Provincial Civil Service Sub-committee** is authorized to take charge of personnel administration of non-teaching officials with the supervision of the provincial governor.

● **Provincial Teachers Civil Service Sub-committee** is responsible for personnel administration of *MOE* teachers in each province.

Figure 3.4   Structure of Educational Personnel Administration

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  Educational Personnel  │
                    │     Administration      │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
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Teachers Civil Service Commission

- Ed. administrators, classroom teachers, and ed. supportive staff in MOE.

Civil Service Commission

- ONEC Officials
- Non-teacher MOE officials
- Officials in the Permanent Secretary's Office of MUA, and non-teaching staff in universities
- Official in the Bureau of Local Education Administration

University Civil Service Commission

- Civil servants and employees in all public universities

Bangkok Metropolitan Civil Service Commission

- Administrators and teachers in BMA schools

Municipal Civil Service Commission

- Administrators and teachers in municipal schools
- Officials in the Division of Education of each municipality

C. Personnel Administration of Local Organizations

● **Bangkok Metropolitan Civil Service Commission** takes responsibility for administration of administrators and teachers in *BMA* schools with the *Department of Education* as the coordinating agency. *BMA* teachers are under the supervision of the *District Offices* and the *Directors of the District Offices* are delegated to work for the *Commission* on certain issues.

● **Municipal Civil Service Commission** is responsible for personnel administration of municipal officials including administrators and teachers in municipal schools and officials in the *Division of Education* in each municipality. The *Provincial Sub-committee* chaired by the *Provincial Governor* and the *Municipal Sub-committee* chaired by the Mayor is authorized to look after the administration of personnel in provincial and municipal areas.

3.3 Administration at Institutional Level

A. Primary School Administration

School administration is divided into six main tasks namely, academic affairs, clerical and financial management, personnel management, school building and facilities, student affairs and community relations. To control the quality of schools, the administrators have to perform all of these functions putting the greatest emphasis on academic affairs. The other five tasks will supplement and strengthen the academic performance of the schools (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5   Primary School Administration
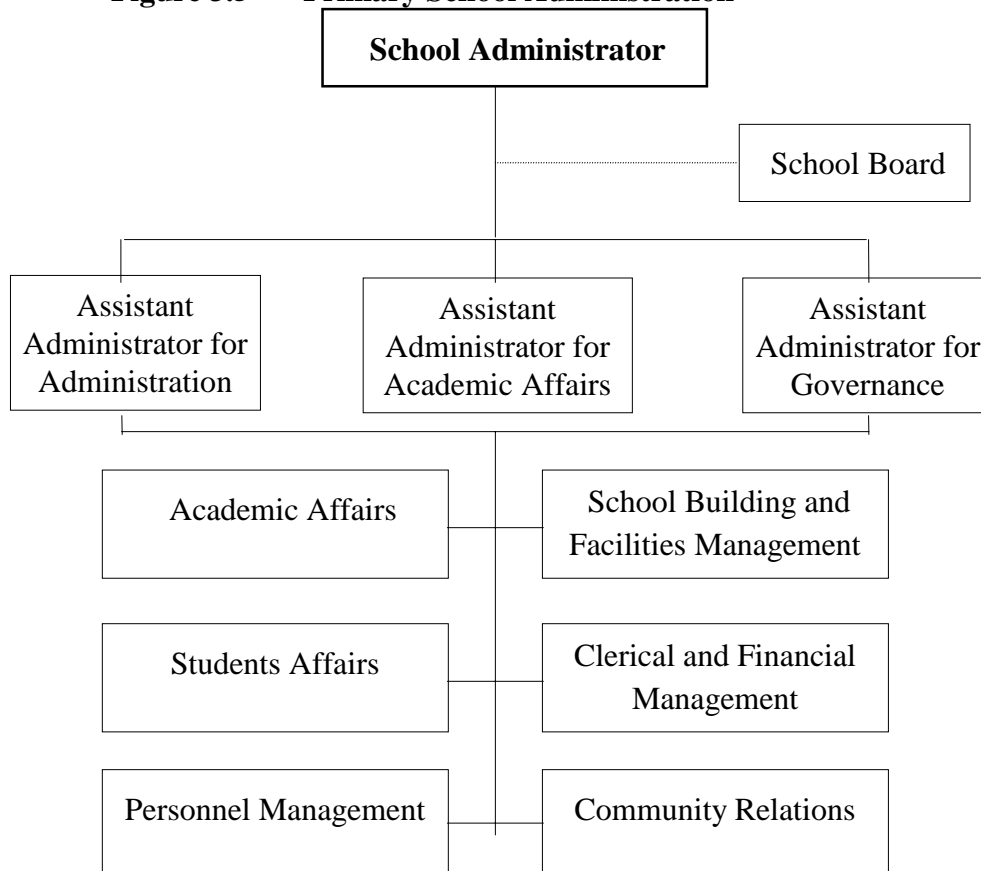
B. Secondary School Administration

The director of a school (for a large school) or the principal of a school, is assisted by 3-4 assistant directors, or assistant principals, in the management and administration of the school. Normally the administrative functions are subdivided into four sections : academic, students governance, services and administration (Figure 3.6).

C. Administration of Higher Education Institutions

Major higher education institutions include *vocational colleges, Rajamangala Institute of Technology (RIT), Rajabhat Institutes (RIs)* or former teachers colleges, and universities. Each public university has its own Act empowering the *University Council* to function as the governing body. The Rector or the President operates the university according to the policy laid down by the *University Council* (Figure 3.7). At present, an innovative type of university administration has been introduced as a government-supervised public university. Such a university has its own administrative structure and budgeting system for self-governance and full autonomy. The administration of a vocational college, *RIT,* and each *RI* is similar to that of public universities.

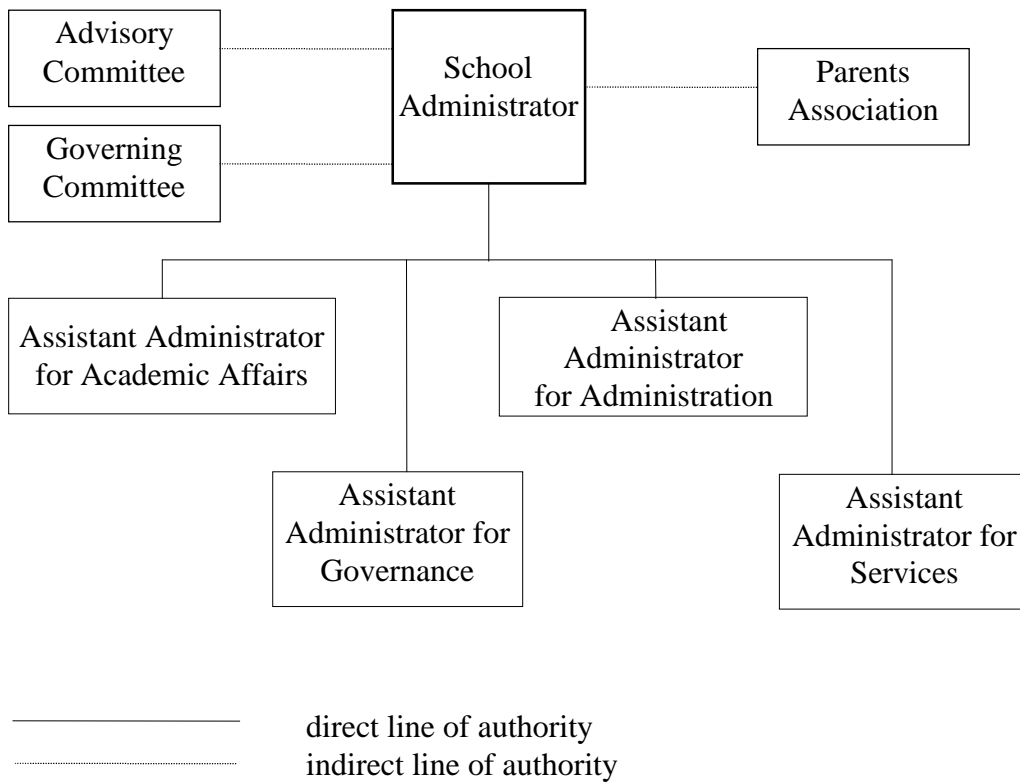**Figure 3.6   Secondary School Administration**

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┌──────────────┐        ┌──────────────┐        ┌──────────────┐
│   Advisory   │········│    School    │········│   Parents    │
│  Committee   │        │ Administrator│        │  Association │
└──────────────┘        │              │        └──────────────┘
┌──────────────┐········│              │
│  Governing   │        └──────┬───────┘
│  Committee   │               │
└──────────────┘               │
        ┌──────────────────────┼──────────────────────┐
        │                      │                      │
┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐            │
│    Assistant     │  │    Assistant     │            │
│  Administrator   │  │  Administrator   │            │
│ for Academic     │  │ for Governance   │            │
│    Affairs       │  └──────────────────┘            │
└──────────────────┘                                  │
              ┌──────────────────┐       ┌──────────────────┐
              │    Assistant     │       │    Assistant     │
              │  Administrator   │       │ Administrator for│
              │for Administration│       │    Services      │
              └──────────────────┘       └──────────────────┘
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───────────────   direct line of authority
·················   indirect line of authority

Figure 3.7   Administrative Structure of Public Universities/ Institutions
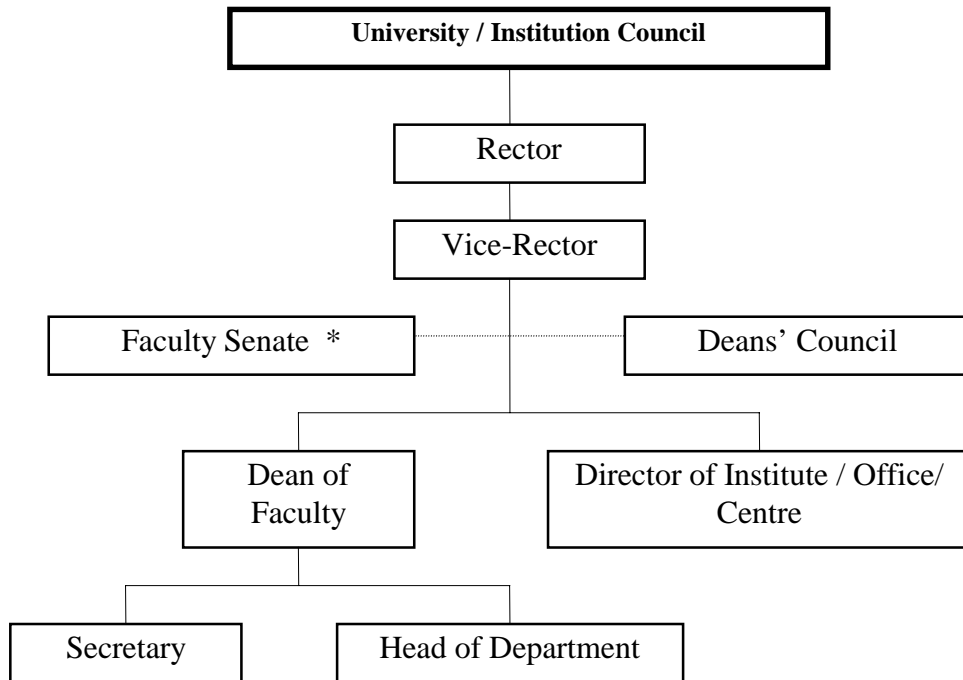
* Only those universities/institutions allowed to have Faculty Staff Councils in accordance with their Acts.

Source :   Office of the National Education Commission.

————————   direct line of authority
·························   indirect line of authority

The present educational administrative system is highly centralized and lacks unity with many overlapping jurisdictions and redundancies. The complexity of the system resulting in many administrative problems is expected to be improved through the reform of educational administrative structure as provided by the National Education Act promulgated in August 1999.

Chapter 4

Curriculum and Learning Process

School curricula in *Thailand* have often been modified and revised in order to be responsive to the changing socio-economic conditions as well as to advanced technologies. The development of primary and secondary school curricula is mainly under the responsibility of the *Ministry of Education* while the university curricula are designed by individual departments with an approval from the university/institutional councils before submission to the *Ministry of University Affairs* for information and examination.

4.1 Formal Education

The curriculum and learning process of formal education is presented here according to level and type of education as follows :

A. Level of Formal Education

1 . Pre-primary Education

The curriculum for pre-primary education is developed by each agency in accordance with the principles and guidelines stated in the *National Scheme of Education*. Normally, the provision of learning experience is organized for the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of children through everyday activities.

Characteristics of Pre-primary Schools

Pre-primary education is organized by various agencies, both public and private. The courses offered can be classified into 3 types : child development centre, kindergarten and pre-school class (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1   Characteristics of Pre-primary Education Provided by Different Ministries and Departments

Responsible Bodies (Ministry / Department)	Type of School or Course		
	Child Dev. Centre	Pre-school Class	Kindergarten
1. Ministry of Education			
1.1 Office of the National Primary Education Commission		✔	✔
1.2 Office of Private Education Commission		✔	✔
1.3 Rajabhat Institutes		✔	✔
1.4 Dept. of General Ed.		✔	✔
1.5 Dept. of Religious Affairs	✔		
1.6 Dept.of Non-formal Ed.	✔		
2. Ministry of University Affairs			
- Demonstration Schools		✔	✔
3. Ministry of Interior			
3.1 Dept. of Community Development	✔		
3.2 Dept. of Local Admin.		✔	✔
3.3 Border Patrol Police General Headquarters	✔	✔	
3.4 BMA			
- Dept. of Education		✔	✔
- Dept. of Health	✔		
- Dept. of Community Development	✔		
4. Ministry of Public Health			
4.1 Dept. of Health	✔		
4.2 Dept. of Mental Health	✔		
4.3 Dept. of Communicable Disease Control	✔		
4.4 Dept. of Medical Services	✔		
5. Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare			
5.1 Dept. of Public Welfare	✔	✔	✔
5.2 Dept. of Labour Protection and Welfare	✔		

2. Primary Education

The primary school curriculum was revised in 1990 and was first implemented in primary school grade 1 in 1991 and came went into full effect in all grades in 1996.

Table 4.2 Curriculum Standard of Primary Education

Duration of Course (years)	Qualifications for Admission	Attendance			Requirements for Graduation
		Week per Year	Hour/ Period per Week	Period per Year	
6	Age of 6	40	25 hours	3,000 (1,000 hours)	Completion of six-year course with achievement in four experience groups at least "1" out of "4"

Structure of Primary School Curriculum (Revised Version 1990)

The primary school curriculum does not single out subjects into fragmented courses, but it is made up of 5 learning experience groupings as follows:

1) Basic Skills Group, comprising Thai language and mathmatics as the tool subjects.

2) Life Experiences, dealing with the process of solving social and daily life problems with an emphasis on scientific process skills for better living.

3) Character Development, dealing with activities necessary for developing desirable habits, values, attitudes and behaviour, which will lead to a desirable character.

4) Work-Oriented Experiences, dealing with general practical work experiences and basic knowledge for career preparation.

5) Special Experience, dealing with activities based on learners' interests provided for those in grades 5-6 only. The learning activities in the area of special experiences can be organized by each school according to learners' needs and interests and may include knowledge and skills selected from the other four groups such as English for everyday life.

Table 4.3 Approximate School Hours of Primary Schools

Group of Subject Contents	Grade 1-2		Grade 3-4		Grade 5-6	
	%	Period /Year	%	Period /Year	%	Period /Year
1. Basic Skills Group providing tool subjects	50	1,500	35	1,050	25	750
2. Life Experiences	15	450	20	600	25	750
3. Character Development	25	750	25	750	20	600
4. Work - Oriented Education	10	300	20	600	30	900
Total	100	3,000	100	3,000	100	3,000
5. Special Experiences (For Grade 5-6)	-	-	-	-	-	600

Note : One period is a class of 20 minutes. One school hour consists of 3 periods.

Characteristics of Primary Schools

Public primary schools are mainly organized by the *MOE* through the *Office of the National Primary Education Commission (ONPEC)* for nearly 80 percent of the total of primary school age students. Other departments in the *MOE* also provide special types of educational services, i.e. special schools and welfare schools for children with special educational needs, and sports schools. In addition, approximately 12 percent of the total enrolment at this level of education are in private schools. Under the *MOI*, the *Bureau of Local Education Administration* and the *BMA* look after municipal schools while *Border Patrol Police* organize primary schools in remote rural areas. A number of demonstration schools are organized in various universities and *Rajabhat Institutes (RIs).*

3. Secondary Education

The structure of lower and upper secondary school curricula includes 4 components :

1. Core subjects : basic subjects that correspond to life and society in general and must be taken by all students. All of these subjects are prepared by the *Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development, MOE.*

2. Prescribed elective subjects : basic subjects which are different according to local conditions and needs. The local authorities are given an opportunity to choose the subjects offered according to the number of credits, or the local authorities can prepare the subjects offered by themselves in addition to those prescribed by the *Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development.*

3. Free elective subjects : subjects that are open for learners to choose according to their interests, aptitude and needs. Students can choose either the subjects prepared by the *Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development* or those created by the local authorities.

Table 4.4   Characteristics of Schools Providing Primary and Secondary Education

Responsible Bodies (Ministry/Department)	Type of Schools	Courses Offered		
		Primary	**Lower Secondary**	**Upper Secondary**
Ministry of Education 1. ONPEC	● Public	✓	✓	
2. Dept. of General Ed.	● Public :			
	- General Ed. School	✓	✓	✓
	- Special Ed. School	✓	✓	✓
	- Welfare Ed. school	✓	✓	✓
3. Office of Rajabhat Institutes Council	● Public : Demonstration School	✓	✓	✓
4. Office of the Private Ed. Commission	● Private : - General Ed. School - Special Ed. School - Welfare Ed. school	✓	✓	✓
5. Dept. of Physical Ed.	● Public : Sports School	✓	✓	
6. Dept. of Fine Arts	● Public :			
	- Dramatic Arts College		✓	✓
	- Fine Arts College		✓	✓
7. Dept. of Vocational Ed.	● Public :			
	- Technical College			✓
	- Vocational College			✓
	- Agricultural College			✓
8. Rajamangala Institute of Technology	● Public			✓
Ministry of University Affairs	● Public : Demonstration School	✓	✓	✓
Ministry of Interior 1. Bureau of Local Ed. Administration	● Public (local)	✓	✓	
2. Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	● Public (local)	✓	✓	
3. National Police Office	● Public : Border Patrol Police Primary School	✓		
Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare ● Department of Public Welfare	● Public : - Hilltribe Welfare School (Temporary Seasonal)	✓		
	- Child and Youth Welfare School	✓		

Table 4.5   Curriculum Standard of Secondary Education

| | Duration of Course (years) | Qualifi-cations for Admission | Attendance | | | Requirements for Graduation |
			Week per Year	Hour/ Period per Week	Period per Year	
● Lower Secondary	3	Graduate from primary school (Grade 6)	40	35 periods (1 period = 50 minutes)	1,400	◆ Completion of 90 units of compulsory and free elective subjects. ◆ Acquisition of core subjects in Thai and Social Studies. ◆ Acquisition of at least 80 units. ◆ Having participated in activities specified with at least 80% of attendance and having passed required objectives of such activities.
● Upper Secondary	3	Graduate from lower secondary school (Grade 3)	40	35 periods (1 period = 50 minutes)	1,400	◆ Completion of at least 75 units of compulsory and free elective subjects. ◆ Acquisition of all compulsory subjects. ◆ Acquisition of at least 75 units. ◆ Having participated in activities specified with at least 80% of attendance and having passed all objectives required of such activities.

4. Activities : All schools are required to organize three types of activities for learners : those organized in accordance with the regulations of the *MOE*; guidance, remedial teaching or academic development activities; and independent activities of learners.

Characteristics of Secondary Schools

● **Lower Secondary Education**

Education at lower secondary level is mainly provided by the *Department of General Education (DGE)*, the *Office of the National Primary Education Commission (ONPEC)* and private schools under supervision of the *Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC).* There are also demonstration schools of various universities and *RIs* which are outside the control of the *MOE*, but they follow the national standard curriculum. Primary schools under the *ONPEC* and *MOI* have offered lower secondary classes in accordance with the government policy on the expansion of educational opportunities at lower secondary education levels. Besides this, special and welfare schools also provide lower secondary education for the handicapped and disadvantaged.

● **Upper Secondary Education**

The upper secondary schooling system is divided into two parallel tracks : general or academic, and vocational tracks. Public upper secondary education in general or academic stream is mainly under the responsibility of the *DGE* ; the rest of the students are in private schools and demonstration schools of the *RIs* and universities. Special and welfare education is also provided in general upper secondary schools.

Public vocational education at upper secondary level is provided by the *Department of Vocational Education (DOVE)*, *Department of Fine Arts (DFA), Rajamangala Institute of Technology (RIT).* In addition, *King Mongkut's Institute of Technology North Bangkok* under the *MUA* also offers courses at upper secondary level in industrial technology. Upper secondary education is also provided in both general and vocational streams by other ministries which will be presented later.

In addition, specialized schools have been organized such as science schools and sports schools. The first science high school in *Thailand* has been established since 1991, emphasizing the teaching of science and mathematics at upper secondary level. Since 1993, a science secondary school has been organized in each of the 12 educational regions to promote the teaching and learning of science, technology and environment at lower and upper secondary education. As regards sports schools, special training in sports is offered at primary and secondary school level.

4. Higher Education

Higher education is mainly under the responsibility of the *MOE* and the *MUA*. In addition, other ministries and agencies also provide education at this level for their specific needs which will be mentioned later in this chapter. It is offered at three major levels : lower than bachelor's degree or diploma, undergraduate, and graduate levels (Table 4.6).

▲ **Ministry of Education**

Higher education under the *MOE* is currently provided at diploma and undergraduate levels by Rajabhat Institutes, Rajamangala Institute of Technology, public 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 will be presented later.

▲ Ministry of University Affairs

The major role of the *MUA* is to supervise and coordinate public and private higher education institutions except some specialized professional training which falls under the jurisdiction of other ministries. Its major responsibilities are the formulation of educational policy within the framework of the *National Education Development Plan* and standardization of curricula.

Degrees and Qualifications

Within the higher education system, the first professional qualification is that of a bachelor's degree which is obtained after four years of higher study. In the fields of architecture, painting, sculpture, graphic arts and pharmacy, five years of higher study are required for a bachelor's degree; medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, require six years of study. In some fields, an associate degree is available after the first three years of a bachelor course. The professional, first degree in medicine, veterinary science and dentistry is that of doctor. In some of these professions, additional post-degree study is required before professional qualifications allowing the candidate to practice 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 an 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 intended for students who already possess a degree or professional qualification .

Table 4.6   Levels of Higher Education Courses Offered by Ministry of Education and Ministry of University Affairs

Responsible Bodies	Type of Institution	Level of Courses Offered		
		Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Post-Graduate Degree
Ministry of Education				
❶ Office of Rajabhat Institutes Council	Public	✓	✓	
❷ Dept. of Physical Ed.	Public	✓	✓	
❸ Dept. of Vocational Ed.	Public	✓	✓	
❹ Rajamangala Institute of Technology	Public	✓	✓	
❺ Dept. of Fine Arts	Public	✓	✓	
❻ Office of the Private Ed. Commission	Private	✓		
Ministry of University Affairs				
❶ State Institutions of Higher Education	Public :			
	● Open University	✓	✓	✓
	● Limited Admission University	✓	✓	✓
❷ Private Institutions of Higher Education	Private		✓	✓

Grading and Examination

Grading at all universities is based on the course unit system/semester of credit. In most universities, generally, course evaluation is done by grades and grade points for one credit.

Private universities use the same grading system as the public universities. This is in addition to the specific graduation requirements of each institution.

Quota System and University Special Programmes

Provincial universities and provincial campuses of Bangkok universities retain their quota system to fill 50 percent of seats available each academic year from all secondary schools in their respective regions.

A number of students are also admitted through university special programmes such as the Promotion of Medical Science Education for Rural Areas Project, the Development and Promotion of Science and Technology Talents Project, and the Sports Promotion Programme and the Arts Promotion Programme.

B. Type of Formal Education

1. Teacher Education

At present, 114 institutions of post – secondary education are involved in preparing future teachers. Major institutions offering teacher training courses are university faculties of education and Rajabhat Institutes or formerly teaching training colleges. In addition, Rajamangala Institutes of Technology, vocational education colleges, physical education colleges, as well as dramatic arts and fine arts colleges also train vocational teachers.

● **University Faculties of Education**

Currently, dergraduate teacher training courses are offered in 16 public universities both in Bangkok and in other regions. Master's degrees in education are offered in 14 public universities and 2 private universities, while doctorate degree courses are available only in Bangkok in 4 public universities.

● **Rajabhat Institutes (RIs)**

Rajabhat Institutes or former teachers colleges began to offer a four-year programme leading to a bachelor's degree in education in 1957. Since 1984, teachers colleges have diversified their curricula to train manpower in fields other than education. The curricula are classified into 3 areas : education, science and liberal arts.

All RIs provide courses at undergraduate level to match the local and national needs. If any of the institutes wishes to provide courses at postgraduate level, they should receive approval from the *Academic Council* and the *Council of Rajabhat Institutes* respectively. At present, master's degree courses are offered in 23 Institutes.

2. Vocational Education

In the general education stream, work–oriented education is offered to primary school children as one area of gaining experience in order to provide them with work experiences and basic knowledge for career preparation. Work–oriented education and

vocational education are offered as elective, compulsory and free elective courses respectively at both lower and upper secondary levels.

In the vocational stream, formal vocational education is provided at three levels : upper secondary, leading to a certificate equivalent to that given to graduates of general secondary schools; post – secondary, generally for two years, leading to a diploma; and university level, leading to a degree.

Vocational colleges under *DOVE,* Rajamangala Institutes of Technology, and private vocational schools and colleges offer courses in five areas : industrial technology, business and commerce, agriculture, home economics, and arts and crafts (Table 4.7). The *DOVE* and *RIT* use different curricula to prepare students for the same certificate and diploma. Private vocational schools and colleges may follow either the curriculum of the *DOVE* or *RIT*.

● **Vocational Education Colleges**

Public and private vocational education colleges offer 3 year courses for lower secondary graduates leading to the Certificate in Vocational Education. A two – year programme is offered for those who have completed the Certificate in Vocational Education, leading to the Diploma in Vocational Education.

For those who have completed their general upper secondary education and wish to further their studies in a vocational stream, a two – year programme is provided, leading to the Diploma in Technician Education.

Some public vocational colleges also offer a two – year programme for those who have completed Diploma in Vocational Education wishing to be vocational teachers, leading to Higher Diploma in Technology.

● **Rajamangala Institute of Technology (RIT)**

RIT operates as a department of the *MOE.* It administers 13 faculties in different disciplines, which offer bachelor's degree courses at different campuses located throughout the Kingdom. A separate teaching force offers certificate and diploma courses in varying combinations on the same campuses. In addition, *RIT* trains teachers for certificate and diploma programmes, and bachelor's degree programmes have been developed as well since 1981 in response to the needs for higher – level technical manpower.

3. Special Vocational Education

Special institutions offering courses for learners to train and develop specific vocational skills and expertise are sports schools, physical education colleges, and dramatic arts and fine arts colleges.

● **Sports Schools**

In 1998, there were six sports schools organized by the *Department of Physical Education* offering special training for students who have sporting skills. Admission is provided to students with capabilities in sports from all over the country who are given full financial support from the government until they finish school.

Suphan Buri Sports School in the central region offers classes starting from Grade 4 at primary level to secondary level until Grade 12. The other five schools in the north, the northeast and the south offer classes only at secondary level, Grades 7-12.

● **Physical Education Colleges**

The *Colleges of Physical Education* under the *Department of Physical Education (DPE)* are responsible for producing teachers and personnel in physical education, health, recreation, sport science, health science, and safety education. Courses offered are at secondary and higher education levels as follows :

① Certificate in Vocational Education (Cert. Voc.)

There are three-year programmes offering a certificate in Sport and Health and a certificate in Commerce. Admission through competitive entrance examinations is provided to students who have completed lower secondary education.

② Diploma in Vocational Education (Dip.Voc.)

This is a two-year programme offered in seven fields of study : Health Centre Administration, Business Computer, Business Management, Tourism Business and Hotel Management, Business English, Journalism and Public Relations, Accounting, Environmental Technology, Marketing, and Human Resource Management. Admission is made through competitive entrance examinations for those who have completed the Certificate in Vocational Education and upper secondary education, or the equivalent.

Table 4.7 **Courses in Vocational Education Offered in Secondary and Higher Education Institutions under the Ministry of Education**

	Type of Course				
	Industrial Technology	**Business and Commerce**	**Agriculture**	**Home Economics**	**Arts and Crafts**
Department of Vocational Ed.					
• **Secondary Education**					
- Certificate in Vocational Ed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• **Higher Education**					
- Diploma in Technical Ed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Diploma in Vocational Ed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Higher Diploma in Technology	✓				
Rajamangala Institute of Technology					
• **Secondary Education**					
- Certificate in Vocational Ed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• **Higher Education**					
- Diploma in Vocational Ed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Bachelor's Degree	✓ (Engineering)	✓ (Business Administration)	✓	✓	✓ (Fine Arts)
Office of Private Ed. Commission					
• **Secondary Education**					
- Certificate in Vocational Ed.	✓	✓			✓
• **Higher Education**					
- Diploma in Technical Ed.	✓	✓			✓
- Diploma in Vocational Ed.	✓	✓			✓

③ **Higher Certificate in Education**

It is a two-year programme offering the higher certificate in Physical Education and Health Education for those who have completed the Certificate in Vocational Education and upper secondary education.

④ **Bachelor's Degree** (two-year programme)

The *Colleges of Physical Education* affiliate with the *RIs* in providing a two-year course leading to a Bachelor's Degree in Sport Science and Health Science for those holding the Higher Certificate in Physical Education and Health Education.

⑤ **Bachelor's Degree** (four-year programme)

The *Colleges of Physical Education* also affiliate with the *RIs* for a four-year undergraduate course in Public Relations (Sport Communication) and Health Science for those who have completed the Certificate in Vocational Education and upper secondary education.

● **Dramatic Arts and Fine Arts Colleges**

The *Dramatic Arts Colleges* and *Fine Arts Colleges* are run by the *Department of Fine Arts.* Two fine arts colleges also exist; one in Bangkok and the other in Supanburi Province in the central region. Courses are offered both at secondary and higher education levels. At secondary level, the Lower Dramatic Arts Certificate, the Intermediate Dramatic Arts Certificate and the Intermediate Fine Arts Certificate require three years of study. At higher education level, the Higher Certificates in Dramatic Arts and Fine Arts require two years of study. The *Bangkok Dramatic Arts College* is also affiliated to the *RIT* for a two-year bachelor's degree course for graduates of the Higher Dramatic Arts Certificate (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8 Courses Offered by the Dramatic Arts and Fine Arts Colleges

Institution	Secondary Education	Higher Education
● **Dramatic Arts College**	● Lower Dramatic Arts Certificate, equivalent to general lower secondary education ● Intermediate Dramatic Arts Certificate, equivalent to general upper secondary education	● Higher Dramatic Arts Certificate ● Bachelor's Degree
● **Fine Arts Colleges**	● Intermediate Fine Arts Certificate	● Higher Fine Arts Certificate

4. Education Provided by Other Agencies for Specific Purposes

Education is also organized by various agencies according to their specific needs at secondary and higher education levels (Table 4.9). 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 which can be classified into 4 groups:

      1) Curricula for the production of professional soldiers and police include the curriculum of Preparatory School for the Armed Forces Academies which requires 2 years of study after graduation from secondary school Grade 4, curricula of the military, naval, and air forces academies as well as the police cadet requiring 4 years of study, and curricula for preparing warrant officers for graduates from lower and upper secondary schools.

Table 4.9   Education Provided by Other Agencies for Specific Purposes

Responsible Bodies	Type of Institution	Upper Secondary	Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Specific Certificate	Short Courses
● **Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives**	• Irrigation College • Veterinary School • Cooperatives School	✓	✓	✓ ✓		
● **Ministry of Transport and Communications**	• Merchant Marine Training Centre • Meteorological School • Postal School • Railway Technical School • Civil Aviation Training Centre		✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓
● **Ministry of Defence**	• Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School • Military, Naval, Air Forces Academies • Medical Colleges • Nursing Colleges • Technical Training School • Survey School	✓		✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
● **Ministry of Interior**	• Police Cadet Academy • Nursing College • Police School			✓ ✓	✓	
● **Ministry of Public Health**	• Nursing Colleges • Public Health Colleges • College of Medical Technology and Public Health		✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	
● **Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment**	• Chemical Practice Institute		✓			
● **Ministry of Justice**	• Law Training Institute				✓	
● **Bangkok Metropolitan Administration**	• Medical College • Nursing Colleges			✓ ✓	✓ ✓	

2) 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.

3) Medical sciences curricula are organized for secondary school graduates requiring 1-4 years of study in the institutions of the *Ministry of Public Health*, *BMA* and the *Thai Red Cross Society.*

4) Curricula for other specific purposes are organized 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.

5. Special Education

Education for persons with special needs is mainly provided by the *Department of General Education* and the *Office of the National Primary Education Commission.* Other agencies providing special education services include *DNFE*, *DOVE*, some demonstration schools, hospitals, *Department of Public Welfare,* municipal schools, and private foundations.

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

The teaching and learning of special education is organized 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 ; 2) regular curricula used in inclusive schools which may be adjusted to meet special needs of children.

Welfare education is also provided for those who are socially and culturally disadvantaged. It is provided for children who are deprived of the opportunity to attend compulsory primary classes in regular schools covering a wide range of culturally and socially disadvantaged groups.

Welfare students are not only provided with free education, but also accommodation, food , clothing, equipment, textbooks and other necessities. Students are given special vocational training relevant to the locality of a particular school for future employment.

6. Education for the Ecclesiastics

Both a study of Buddhism and a general education are provided in Buddhist temples to monks and novices as well as to householders.

● **The Study of Buddhism**   is divided into 2 sections : Dharma and Pali teachings. In the Dharma section, the teaching of Dharma is provided to the ecclesiastics and also to householders or laymen. The curriculum offered is at three grades : third grade, second grade, and first grade. The Pali teaching is at 8 grades, provided only to the ecclesiastics.

● **General Ecclesiastical School**
General ecclesiastical schools offer lower and upper secondary education curricula equivalent to those provided by the *Department of General Education.* Apart from general subjects, the curricula include learning units related to religious practice, the Buddha's doctrine, and Pali language.

● **Buddhist Universities**

There are two Buddhist universities situated in Bangkok with various campuses in the regions providing higher education for monks, novices and also householders. Mahamakutrajaviddhayalaya University offers undergraduate courses in 4 faculties : Faculty of Religion and Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Social Sciences, and Faculty of Education. At Mahachulalongkornrajaviddhayalaya University, courses at bachelor's degree level are offered in the Faculty of Buddhism, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Humanities, and Faculty of Social Sciences. In addition, master's degrees are also provided in Buddhism and Philosophy.

4.2 Lifelong Learning

Apart from formal education, lifelong learning is organized to provide an opportunity for those who have missed formal schooling to have a second chance in education. Non - formal education and vocational training as well as informal education services are provided to those outside the school system by both public and private bodies.

In addition to the *Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE)*, there are other government departments and ministries which have been carrying out non-formal and informal education activities. Private voluntary agencies and various foundations have also been involved in the provision of non-formal education. Besides, industrial factories have organized non-formal education programmes for their employees.

Types of Non-Formal Education Activities

At present, non-formal education activities can be classified into three categories:
1) General Education

In this category, the programme has been designed for those who wish to obtain a school equivalency certificate comparable to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education.

2) Vocational Education Programmes

These programmes are conducted by the *DNFE* and other agencies, both public and private, using different courses of training prepared by those agencies. The *DNFE* accepts credits earned outside as part of the requirements for completion of the certificate of general education as specified in the above category.

3) Education for Quality of Life Improvement

Training programmes other than those in the first two categories are offered in different fields. Such programmes are conducted by various agencies, both public and private. The *DNFE* accepts credits earned from such training courses as part of the requirements for completion of the certificate as specified in the first category.

Activities Promoting Lifelong Learning

A. Public Agencies

The *DNFE* provides educational services to promote lifelong learning as follows :
❶ **Basic Education**

The responsibility of the *DNFE* is to organize non-formal education programmes for adults who have missed the opportunity for formal schooling or have dropped out. The programmes offered are   1) Literacy Campaign Project, 2) Functional Literacy Programmes, 3) Hill Areas Education, and 4) Continuing Education.
❷ **Vocational Education Services**

The short-term vocational courses are divided into 4 types:

1) Stationary Vocational Training is conducted in existing educational institutions fully equipped with teachers and instructional materials. The courses are provided in accordance with local needs and the conditions of different seasons. The whole course normally does not exceed 300 hours and the daily schedule is between 09.00-20.00 hrs.

2) Mobile Vocational Training The procedure is similar to that provided in stationary training. Mobile units have been established to travel to rural areas where they visit remote villages. Once there, learning-teaching sites are set up and resource persons in the locality are recruited to provide training for groups of not less than 15 persons each. These courses are normally less than 300 hours in duration.

3) Interest Group Programme This programme is arranged to provide education in accordance with individual needs and interests of the people. Those having the same interest form a group of not less than 15 persons, and will receive training of not more than 30 hours per week.

4) Lower Certificate Vocational Education Programme is provided for employed workers in private enterprises to continue their vocational education. This three-year programme is organized through distance learning.

❸ **Provision of Information Services**

Various facilities are available for providing information services to the general public such as public libraries, village reading centres, the *Bangkok Planetarium*, *the Educational Science Centre*, the *Mobile Exhibition Units*, etc. In addition, the *Centre for Educational Technology* also provides educational services through radio and television network as well as various kinds of media. The services provided include school broadcast programmes for formal education, distance education radio and television programmes for non-formal education, radio and television programmes for informal education purpose.

**Table 4.10   Educational Services Provided by the Department of
Non-Formal Education, Ministry of Education**

	Services Provided	Target Groups
1. Basic Education	1. Literacy education 2. Sixth grade primary education equivalency programmes 3. Secondary education programmes	• Those who are illiterate including the Thai muslims in five border provinces, Thai children in foreign countries and hilltribes. • The disadvantaged such as women, detainees, in - service military personnel, workers and farmers. • Women, local leaders, detainees, religious preachers, workers and primary school graduates who do not continue schooling at secondary level.
2. Vocational Education	Vocational education and training programmes 1. Interest groups 2. Short course vocational training 3. Lower Certificate Vocational Education	• Women, detainees, in-sevice military personnel, employed workers in private enterprises, farmers and primary school graduates who are not studying in school including those in deprived areas or crippled persons.
3. Information Services	1. public libraries 2. village reading centres 3. educational science centres 4. Radio and television programmes	• General public

Apart form the *DNFE*, other departments and ministries also offer non-formal vocational training, for instance, the *DOVE*, and the *Department of Skill Development* of the *Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare* through the *National Institute of Skill Development (NISD)* and its six regional institutes.

Despite differences among the institutions in the design of their training programmes to suit local needs, the overall training activities of these institutes follow the same guidelines and have the same objectives. Training programmes provided are:

● **Pre-employment Training** for unemployed out-of-school youths with at least primary schooling. Skill training courses are provided in short duration ranging from three to eleven months followed by two to four months of on-the-job training.

● **Upgrading Training** for skilled workers who need training to keep up with the continual technological changes and to have increased mobility in the labour market.

● **Non-Technical Training** courses are offered by internal and experienced external instructors. The institutes conduct courses in entrepreneurship and for such occupations as secretary, receptionist, salesman, and waiter or waitress. The programme has been designed to be flexible, and new courses are offered as new occupational needs develop. In addition, *the NISD* offers training for foremen, instructors, officers, and promotes inplant training as well.

B. Private Agencies

Private institutions under the supervision of *OPEC* which also provide non-formal education can be classified into 2 categories :
1) Schools offering courses following the curricula of the *MOE*:
● Adult schools offering general education, and
● Vocational schools offering vocational training courses.
2) Schools offering non-formal education curricula approved by the *MOE* such as religious schools, tutorial schools, correspondence schools, art schools, etc.

In summary, education in Thailand is provided in the form of formal, non-formal and informal education. With regard to formal education, curriculum and the learning process of pre-primary education is organized as teaching units through everyday activities of children. At primary level, the curriculum is made up of 5 groups of learning experiences : basic skills, life experience, character development, work-oriented experiences, and special experiences. The curriculum and learning process at secondary education is diversified and comprehensive and is composed of 4 components : core subjects, prescribed elective subjects, free elective subjects, and activities. At higher level, education is organized at lower than bachelor's degree or diploma, undergraduate and graduate levels by different kinds of institutions. Special schools are organized for the handicapped while welfare schools are run for those who are socially and culturally disadvantaged at primary and secondary levels. In addition, education is also provided by other ministries and agencies for their own specific purposes at secondary and higher levels. Besides this, various types of non-formal and informal activities are organized by both public and private agencies in order to promote lifelong learning.

Chapter 5
Cost and Finance in Education

In *Thailand*, the fiscal year begins on the 1st of October and ends on the 30th of September of the following year. The sources of educational finance can be classified into 5 categories : central government budget, local funding, non-governmental budget, foreign loans and technical assistance, and provision of education by the private sector.

5.1 Central Government Budget

Government funding has been the main source of financial resources for educational development in *Thailand*. The education sector has received the largest share of total public expenditure since 1991. In 1998, due to the impact of the economic crisis, the total Government budget for education was reduced to 201,707 million Baht or about 3.9 percent of GDP. However, the share of public expenditure for education in fiscal year 1998 and 1999 was about 25 percent of the total expenditure which was larger than ever before. Similarly, the budget appropriation for education approved by Parliament for the fiscal year 2000 is about 221,051 million Baht or about 25.7 percent of the total budget (Figure 5.1). This reflects the Government's concern about the importance of education for the economic rehabilitation of the country.

Nearly half of educational funding in 1999 was allocated to pre-primary and primary education, amounting to 43.9 percent. At secondary education level, with 24.0 percent of the total public expenditure for education, general education received a larger share while vocational education was provided with the smaller portion of the budget. The shares of higher education and non-formal education in 1999 remained at nearly the same rates as in 1998.

As in previous years, the highest percentage distribution of educational budget proposed in the budget bill for the fiscal year 2000 is for pre-primary and primary education as shown in figure 5.2.

Figure 5.1   Comparison of Gross Domestic Product, National Budget and Educational Budget : Fiscal Year 1990-2000
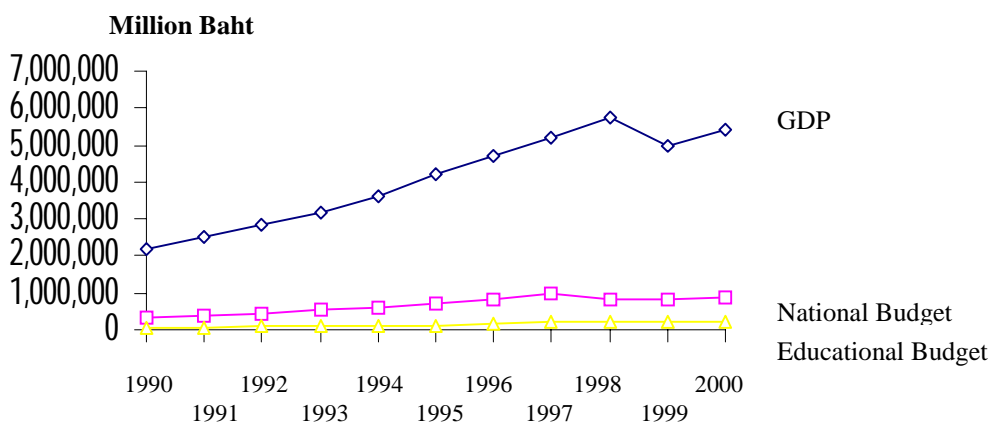
Source :   Budget Bureau, Office of the National and Social Development Board, Office of the National Education Commission, Bank of Thailand.

Figure 5.2   Percentage Distribution of Educational Budget
by Function : Fiscal Year 2000

Pre-primary/
Primary Ed.
43%

Other Ed.
3%

Support in
Education
13%

Non-Formal
Education
1%

Higher Education
16%

Secondary Ed.
24%
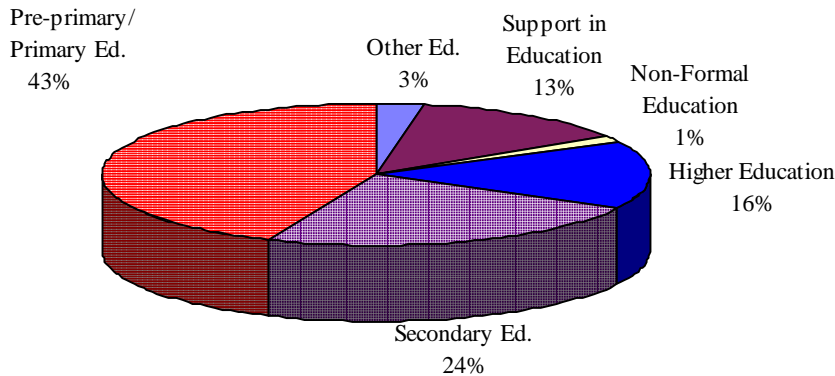
Source :   Budget Bureau and Office of the National Education
Commission.

5.2 Local Funding

The local administrative authorities have allocated their own budget to finance local education. Besides, the central government has also provided an educational budget to subsidize the provision of education by the local authorities.

As for the *BMA*, the total educational budget has increased from 1,875.6 million Baht in 1991 to 4,377.2 million Baht in 1999. However, it should be noted that this budget is subsidized by the central government which is the major source of educational expenditure of *BMA*. From 1991 to 1999, the share of central government subsidies has been fluctuating between 73.7 and 77.0 percent. In 1999, the share of local budget for education amounted to 1,230 million Baht or about 28.1 percent of the total educational budget of BMA (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3   Educational Budget Distribution of the Department of Education of
BMA : Fiscal Year

■ Central government   ■ Local government
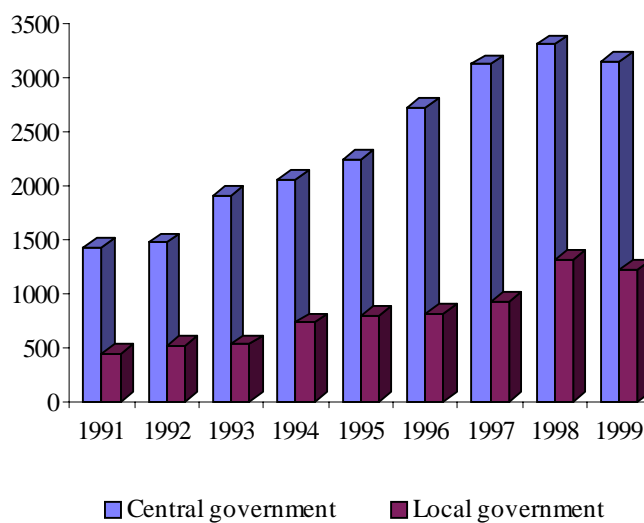
1991-1999

Source :   Department of Education, BMA.

With respect to local funding of all municipalities, the major source of educational expenditure also comes from central government subsidies which increased remarkably from 2,926 million Baht in 1995 to 4,168 million Baht in 1998. In 1999, the central government subsidies for local education in all municipalities were reduced to 4,008 million Baht due to the financial and economic crisis. The largest proportion of the central government subsidies was allocated to the primary education programme as shown on Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4   Central Government Subsidies for Local Education of the Municipalities and Pattaya City : Fiscal Year 1995-1999
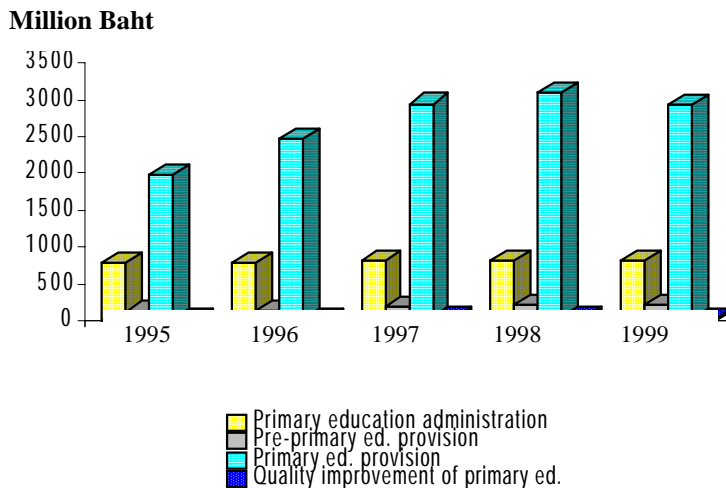
Source :   Budget Bureau, Office of the Prime Minister.

5.3 Non-Governmental Budget

1) Household Contribution

● Tuition Fees

Another source of income for education comes from tuition fees paid by students' families. They become the revenue of educational institutions which can be used to supplement the government budget revenue. However, there is a considerable difference between tuition fees of public and private schools, and among various levels and types of education in public schools. The proportion of tuition fees currently paid by public university students is relatively less than those of students at other levels. As a result, tuition fees, especially for higher education, should be increased to reflect the true cost of education.

In a study on the *Demand – Side Analysis and the Financing of Education*, private household expenditure as well as corporate and non – government contributions are estimated. Based on the data from Household Socio – Economic Surveys, household expenditure on education for 1996 was around 86,650.2 million Baht, representing about 34 percent of the total expenditure on education. Estimates of corporate and non – governmental contributions are made from data on corporate/non – governmental contributions and scholarships obtained from the *MOE* and *MUA*, which is an underestimation (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1   Public and Private Sector Expenditure on Education, 1996

	Million Baht	**Percent of Total Expenditure**
Total Expenditure	257,067.20	100.00
● Public	169,561.00	65.96
● Private household	86,650.20	33.71
● Private corporate / non – government	856.00	0.33

Source :   Dr. Sirilaksana Khoman, **Demand – Side Analysis and the Financing of Education,** UNESCO – Bangkok, July 1999.

● **Donations**

Donations made by individuals and communities to the educational sector vary in terms of both cash and kind. The value of donations varies from year to year and is relatively lower than other sources of educational resources.

2) Other Revenues of Educational Institutions

Apart from the government budgetary revenue and the non-government budgetary revenue such as tuition fees and donations, educational institutions' resources also include other revenues of the institutions, for instance, those from academic services, students' products, and property.

5.4 Foreign Loans and Technical Assistance

Foreign loans for educational development in *Thailand* have come from the *World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Overseas Economic Cooperative Fund (OECF)* and some countries such as Austria and Denmark. Technical assistance has been in various forms, for example, services of experts and volunteers, scholarships, equipment and grants.

The current loan projects for education are as presented in the table below.

Table 5.2   Current Loan Projects for Education

Loan Projects	Responsible Body	Source of Funding	Duration
1. Science Education Improvement	RIs	The World Bank	1997-2001
2. Technical Education	RIT	The World Bank	1997-2002
3. University Science and Engineering Education	MUA	The World Bank	1996-2000
4. Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project I	ONPEC	The World Bank	1997-2001
5. Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project II	DGE	The World Bank	1997-2001
6. Vocational Training	DVE	The World Bank	1997-2001
7. Thai-Japanese Technology Transfer	Chula-longkorn University	OECF	1995-2001
8. Postgraduate and Scientific and Technological Research Development	MUA	ADB	1997-2001
9. Manpower Development for Production Industry	RIT	Austria	1993-1999
10. Non-Formal Education At Secondary Level	DNFE	ADB	1998-2000
11. Structural Improvement of Agricultural Education Institutions	DVE	Denmark	1999-2002
12. Development of Industrial and Agricultural Industry Education	RIT	Germany	1999-2004

5.5 Provision of Education by the Private Sector

At present most private institutions are proprietorial schools, with a few prestigious schools still associated with Christian denominations. The *OPEC* is given authority to supervise and subsidize private schools in *Thailand*.

There are two categories of private institutions : 1) general education private schools which range from kindergartens to primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities, and 2) vocational education private schools or colleges.

The *MOE* also classifies private schools into two categories :

1) Non-subsidized schools are private schools that are more prosperous and can be self-supporting including those set up after 1974 excluded from the benefit of government subsidies by *Cabinet* decision, and consequently the government does not control the ceiling of the school fees that the school may charge.

2) Subsidized schools are private schools established before 1974 and still dependent on financial support from the government. These schools can be divided into 2 sub-categories

: those receiving 100 percent of the per student recurrent costs and those receiving 40 percent of the per student recurrent costs.

The subsidized schools predominate in the country at present. Those private schools which receive 100 percent of the per student recurrent costs are usually connected with charity and religious foundations, whereas the 40 percent of subsidized schools are proprietorial.

The total annual subsidy which the government grants to private schools increased from 366.7 million Baht in 1977 to 4,353.4 million Baht in 1999.

Private education used to play a significant role in the provision of pre-primary, lower and upper secondary education, and relieved the government burden on educational financial resources. But the number of private students in pre-primary and secondary education has considerably decreased while the number of higher education students (Diploma in Vocational Education and Bachelor's Degree) is increasing substantially. A reduction in the role of private education is due to the control on tuition fees, and the expansion of public schools in both urban and rural areas.

As for higher education, a rapid expansion of private higher education under the *MUA* is due to an increase in the social demand for this level of education while public higher educational institutions can absorb only a small number of students. However, financial resources of private higher institutions only come from tuition fees which are much higher than those of public institutions. It is thus essential for the government to provide additional support for private institutions to promote the role of the private sector in educational provision and to relieve the government's burden on educational financial resources.

To sum up, the major financial resource for education in Thailand comes from government funding which is still the largest share of the total public expenditure. As regards local funding, local authorities have provided only a small percentage of the educational budget. Other sources of educational expenditure are tuition fees, donations, revenues of educational institutions, foreign loans and technical assistance. Besides this, the private sector has also participated in and contributed to the provision of education in Thailand.

Chapter 6

International Cooperation in Education

Thailand has been enriched through experience gained from cooperation with other countries for many decades. Apart from cooperation at the bilateral level, *Thailand* has benefited greatly from the interactions and interchanges through active participation in many international and regional organizations and associations in the fields of education, science and culture, as well as other related areas.

6.1 Thailand and International/Regional Organizations in Education

Thailand has cooperated with various international and regional organizations in order to enhance educational development in a more innovative way to keep pace with the advancement of technology. Various projects have been launched with cooperation from renowned international organizations agencies and units such as *UNESCO, UNDP, USAID, ASEAN, UNICEF*, the *World Bank*, *International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)), International Bureau of Education (IBE), International Community Education Association (ICEA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Asia- Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the British Council,* and *the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT).* The cooperation between *Thailand* and some organizations is presented below.

A. The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO)

Thailand has been a member of *UNESCO* since January 1, 1949. The *Thai National Commission for UNESCO* has been established since 1950 by a resolution of the *Council of Ministers*, having the *Minister of Education* as its chairman and with its permanent secretariat attached to the *External Relations Division* of the *Office of the Permanent Secretary, MOE.*

UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the *World Bank* jointly organized the World conference on Education for All at Jomtien, Chonburi, *Thailand* in March 1990. For the end of the decade following the World Declaration on Education for All : Meeting Basic Learning Needs adopted at the World Conference on Education for All, *UNESCO* has invited its Member States and agencies involved to participate in the Education for All Year 2000 Assessment (EFA 2000) to be convened in Brazil.

The EFA 2000 Assessment aims to enable the participating countries to follow up and monitor the progress of EFA, to identify priorities and promising strategies for overcoming obstacles and accelerating progress, and to revise the national plans of action accordingly. For the *Royal Thai Government,* the *MOE* has carried out the following activities :

● Establishment of a national EFA assessment group and a technical sub-group as well as designation of a national assessment coordinator.

● Arrangement of in-country workshops for the national assessment group. A preliminary draft of the national EFA assessment report for discussion at sub-regional

workshops was prepared by the *MOE*. Workshops at the regional level to evaluate the provision of Education for All in other provinces of *Thailand* were also organized.

● The EFA secretarial group, a technical group, used the nine goals of Education for All in *Thailand* and the 18 core EFA indicators set by *UNESCO* as the framework for assessing the progress of the EFA 2000 programme in *Thailand.* The draft of the national report underlining both quantitative and qualitative achievement was completed in May 1999.

B. International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)

Thailand has cooperated with *IEA* since the 1970s with the *ONEC* as the participating centre representing at the IEA General Assembly. Through different research institutions, *Thailand* has participated in various important international research projects, e.g. the *First and Second Science Studies*, *English Study*, *Second International Mathematics Study*, *Classroom Environment Study*, *Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)*, *Written Composition*, and *Pre-primary* Project.

 In 1998, *Thailand* finished the report of the Phase 2 Study of the IEA Pre-primary Project undertaken by the School of Educational Studies, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University. The School of Educational Studies will continue to participate in the last phase of the Project.

At present, *Thailand* is participating in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study-Repeat (TIMSS-R) through the *Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST)* which is the national research centre responsible for managing the conduct of this research in *Thailand*. The activities undertaken by the IPST in 1999 were as follows :

1) Translating and running a trial of test items for students and questionnaires for administrators and teaching staff,
2) Organizing an examination of 5,431 students from 150 schools and having 450 administrators, teaching staff and the people involved complete the questionnaires,
3) Marking the test items and answer sheets,
4) Finishing the data entry to be delivered to IEA in July 1999.
5) Making an analysis of the data from questionnaires before making a conclusion for dissemination.

C. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

Thailand has been the coordinator of the *Education Forum (EdFor)* for the *Human Resource Development Working Group of APEC* since 1994. It has participated in such major activities as the *University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP)*, School Education Statistics in the Asia-Pacific Region, Improving the Understanding of Cultures in *APEC*, and *APEC* Study Centres.

In May 1999, *Thailand*'s initiative to implement the *APEC*-wide project on "*APEC* Youth Networking : Youth Preparation for the *APEC* Society in the Next Millennium" has been supported and endorsed for central funding by the 20th *APEC HRD* Working Group Meeting. This project aims to establish *APEC* Youth core group, prepare their readiness for the world of trade liberalization and facilitation and promote their contribution to the *APEC* society.

During their presentation, *Thai APEC* kids highlighted the outcome of the project as well as the follow-up activities, namely the construction of a Thai language homepage and the directory of e-mail addresses and the development of English language web site. The presentation captured the meeting's attention and appreciation for the excellent work of youth.

D. The Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)

AIT originated in 1959 to help meet the growing need for advanced engineering education in Asia. In November 1967, under its present name of the *Asian Institute of Technology,* the Institute became an autonomous international institution empowered to award degrees and diplomas. Presently *AIT* offers advanced education in engineering, science, planning and management through a range of activities at levels and intensities from doctoral research to short – term training.

AIT offers academic programmes leading to the award of master or doctoral degrees, the diploma or certificates; research work by students, faculty, and professional staff; outreach activities in partnership with private and public sector institutions; and special programmes, conferences, seminars, and short courses.

Completion of the doctoral degree programme normally takes ten or eleven terms (three years or so), the master's degree five terms, and the diploma two or three terms. A certificate programme normally lasts one term.

The Institute is supported by donor governments, international agencies, foundations, business organizations and individuals, Asian and non – Asian. This support acknowledges *AIT'* s successful academic endeavour, an endeavour recognized in several international awards, including, in its thirtieth anniversary year, 1989, the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Understanding, and in 1995, the Asian Institute of Management Award for Development Management.

AIT has received continuing support from the *Royal Thai Government (RTG)* since the inception of the Institute. The Sixth Five-Year Cooperation Programme amounting to 386.9 million Baht came to an end in October 1999. The Seventh Financial Support Programme for FY 2000-2004 requesting 615.2 million Baht has been presented for consideration of the *RTG* through the *ONEC*. The cooperation programme comprises the following components:

1. Regular Subsidies in Cash :
1.1 Scholarships
1) *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 1999, the total number of *H.M.King's scholarships* master's awardees is 328.
2) *H.M. Queen Sirikit's Scholarships* are provided to qualified students interested in the environment and related fields in the School of Environment, Resources, and Development. Up to 1999, 45 scholars have benefited from this.
3) The *RTG-HRD Scholarship* programme functions in addition to the above programmes.

1.2 Operating Budget

The budget covers *AIT* operational support, including the regular maintenance of existing facilities and equipment, updating of library materials, and an allocation for an *AIT* staff member to act as a coordinator between *RTG* and *AIT*.

2. Contribution in Kind :

The *Royal Thai Government* has granted a special privilege of tax and duty reimbursements to the Institute in accordance with the resolution of the *Council of Ministers* passed on 7 May 1968.

The *Secretary-General of the NEC* represents the *Royal Thai Government* for the implementation of the cooperation programme.

E. Thailand ASEAN Sub-Committee on Education (ASCOE)

Thailand ASEAN Sub-Committee on Education (ASCOE) has been established under the umbrella of the *ASEAN Committee on Social Development (COSD). ASCOE*, which is composed of representatives from the *Ministries of Education* and agencies concerned of the *ASEAN* member countries, takes the responsibility of enhancing a fruitful collaboration on education as well as for formulating, examining and recommending to the *COSD*, objectives and strategies on collaborative programmes in the field of education. The major agencies involved in the *Thailand ASEAN Sub-Committee on Education* are the *MOE*, the *MUA* and the *ONEC*.

F. The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)

SEAMEO is an international intergovernmental organization established in November 1965. The purpose of the organization is to promote cooperation among the Southeast Asian nations through education, science and culture in order to further respect for justice, for the rule of law and the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are the birthright of the peoples of the world (SEAMEO Charter, Article 1).

SEAMEO's vision is to become a dynamic, self-reliant, strategic-policy driven and internationally-recognized organization for strengthening regional understanding and cooperation in education, science and culture for a better quality of life. Its mission is to enhance regional understanding and cooperation and unity of purpose among Member Countries and achieve a better quality of life through : the establishment of network and partnerships; provision of an intellectual forum for policy-makers and experts; and the development of Regional Centres of Excellence for the promotion of sustainable human resource development.

SEAMEO has ten Member Countries in Southeast Asia, namely, *Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam*; and also has six Associate Member Countries, namely, *Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand*. In addition, *SEAMEO* has one Affiliate Member, the International Council of Open and Distance Education (ICDE).

The Organization is governed by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Council which is the policy-making body comprising of the Ministers of Education of the Member Countries. The Council meets once a year to give direction to the Organization and define its objectives.

Prior to the *SEAMEO* Council Conference, the High Officials from the Ministries of Education also meet once a year to endorse directions, programmes and activities for the

Council's approval. In *Thailand* , the High Officials are represented by the Permanent Secretary and the Deputy Permanent Secretary as well as officials from the Office of External Relations Division.

The *SEAMEO* Secretariat located in Bangkok, *Thailand* serves as the executive arm of the Council and the Headquarters of the Organization as well. It is hosted by the Government of Thailand. The Secretariat holds office at Darakarn Building 920 Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok 10110, Thailand. (Tel – 662- 3910144. Fax 3812587. Email : Secretariat@seameo.org)

SEAMEO has 14 specialist institutions scattered throughout the region and closely linked to the educational environment of the country which hosts them. Each Centre has its own Governing Board with a representative from each Member Country. The fourteen regional centres are as follows:

1. *SEAMEO* Regional Centre for Tropical Biology (SEAMEO BIOTROP)

2. *SEAMEO* Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO INNOTECH)

3. *SEAMEO* Regional Centre for Science and Mathematics Education (SEAMEO RECSAM)

4. *SEAMEO* Regional Language Centre (SEAMEO RELC)

5. *SEAMEO* Regional Training Centre (SEAMEO RETRAC)

6. *SEAMEO* Regional Centre for Higher Education (SEAMEO RIHED)

7. *SEAMEO* Regional Centre for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture

8. *SEAMEO* Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO SPAFA)

9. *SEAMEO* TROPMED Regional Centre for Community Nutrition (SEAMEO TROPMED/Indonesia)

10. *SEAMEO* TROPMED Regional Centre for Microbiology, parasitology and Entomology (SEAMEO TROPMED/Malaysia)

11. *SEAMEO* TROPMED Regional Centre for Public Health (SEAMEO TROPMED/Philippines)

12. *SEAMEO* TROPMED Regional Centre for Tropical Medicine (SEAMEO TROPMED/Thailand)

Aside from the *SEAMEO* Secretariat, the Government of Thailand hosts three SEAMEO Regional Centres : a) SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education (SEAMEO RIHED); SEAMEO Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO SPAFA) ; and the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Tropical Medicine (SEAMEO TROPMED) including the TROPMED Central Office. *Thailand* underwrites the Centres' Operational Budget, capital and annually recurring cost.

G. ASEAN University Network (AUN)

The *ASEAN University Network* which is under the supervision of *ASEAN* is composed of seventeen leading universities in *ASEAN* Member countries. It aims to strengthen *ASEAN* awareness and cooperation through the promotion of the exchange of students, faculty members and resources among the participating universities. From 1997-1999 the *Thai Permanent Secretary for University Affairs* has been *Chairman of the AUN Board of Trustees* and the *MUA* is hosting the temporary office of the *AUN* Secretariat.

The permanent office of *AUN* will be set up in the year 2000 at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, *Thailand,* with support from the *Royal Thai Government*. The *RTG* will also provide an annual operational fund amounting to US$ 180,000 for the period from 2000-2005 to ensure the smooth starting up and implementation of *AUN*.

Major *AUN* programmes and activities are : Student and Faculty Exchange Programme; scholarships for studies at *ASEAN* universities; information networking among *ASEAN* universities; collaborative research; *ASEAN* Studies Programme; and projects with dialogue partners.

6.2 International Cooperation and Exchange

A. MOE Student Exchange Programmmes

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, AFS and Thailand Fellowships, Scholarships and Junior Scholarships.

Thailand Fellowships, Scholarships and Junior Scholarships within the UNESCO Programme

Fourteen scholarships have been granted annually by the Thai government, through the *Thai National Commission for UNESCO*, to students from foreign countries since 1952. The scholarships are divided into 3 categories as follow :

1. Fellowship : six fellowships are given to those who wish to undertake research work at Thai universities/educational institutes. Candidates must hold at least a Bachelor's Degree except when the research is in fine arts, in which case candidates must have a recommendation from a recognized art institute.

2. Scholarship : four scholarships are granted to those who wish to undertake studies at undergraduate level

3. Junior Scholarship : four junior scholarships are given to those who wish to undertake studies in *Thailand* at post-secondary level.

The *MOE* also promotes exchange of students' art works, through international painting and art competitions, organized by many organizations in other countries.

B. MUA International and Exchange Programmes

- **Student / Faculty Exchange Programme**

    The *MUA* has encouraged its higher education institutions to exchange their students and staff with countries in different regions of the world, for example, *Australia*, *Belgium*, *Canada* and the *United States of America*. The programme will lead to the strengthening of academic standards and the improvement of human resources with widened vision and international competence.

- **Thai University Administrators Shadowing (TUAS) Programme**

    It is designed for university administrators from Thai universities to join other universities abroad in order to gain academic experiences in foreign environments. Countries cooperating with the *MUA* under this project are *England* and *Australia*.

C. Foreign Loans for Educational Development

To support the process of educational development, the *Government* has obtained foreign loans and credits and technical assistance for infrastructure development and other purposes since 1960. These loans and credits have been provided by various sources such as the *World Bank,* the *Asian Development Bank (ADB), Overseas Economic Cooperative Fund (OECF), and* the *Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).* In addition, technical assistance grant aid has been received from a number of countries, including the *Federal Republic of Germany, Canada, Australia and Japan.*

The *ONEC* is responsible for making recommendations to the *Council of Ministers* on whether to approve the loan projects for educational development. The *Education Loan Committee* has been appointed by the *Council of Ministers* to review the proposed loan projects before submitting to the *Council of Ministers* for approval, and to evaluate the implementation of those projects. The *Committee is* chaired by the Deputy Chairman of the *National Education Commission* with the Secretary-General of *ONEC* as secretary of the *Committee.*

D. Regional and International Conferences

In November 1998, the *Fourth UNESCO-ACEID International Conference* on "Secondary Education and Youth at the Crossroads" was held in Bangkok. It was organized by *UNESCO-ACEID* in collaboration with the *ONEC* of *Thailand, UNICEF(EAPRO),* and the *Save the Children Fund (U.K.) (SEAPRO).* The objective of the conference was to undertake an indepth study into what education needs to become to empower young people for adolescence and adulthood into the 21st century.

The *Fifth UNESCO-ACEID International Conference* on "Reforming Learning, Curriculum and Pedagogy : Innovative Visions for the New Century" is scheduled to be held in *Thailand from* 13-16 December 1999. It will be organized by *UNESCO-ACEID* in collaboration with the *ONEC,* with the *Hong Kong Institute of Education* and *Education Victoria, Australia* as sponsors. The purpose of this Conference is to undertake an indepth analysis into what reformation is required in learning, curriculum and pedagogy in all sectors of education, at all levels and in particular branches of knowledge to promote a learning, outcomes-based educational future. Such a study will involve networking and exchanging ideas on major innovations and best practices being undertaken and contemplated, especially in this region.

E. Overseas Studies and Training

In *Thailand*, both students and government officials enjoy the good opportunity of obtaining overseas studies and training. Some of them go to study abroad at their own expense while others receive scholarships from various sources. Secondary school and university graduates with outstanding academic records are granted the King's and government scholarships to finance their studies overseas. On the completion of the programmes, the scholarships require the grantees to serve at designated institutions for at least a certain period of time.

However, the current economic crisis has an impact on the number of students and government officials going for study and training overseas under the supervision of the *Office of the Civil Service Commission*. The number of students decreased from 5,288 in 1998 to 3,504 in 1999 or about 33.7 percent. The decrease was very high in other scholarships at 80.9 percent due to the abolition of the *Office of Education Affairs* in many foreign countries. With respect to the government officials going for study and training overseas in 1999, there was a decrease from 1998 at 2 percent (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1   Number of Students under the Office of the Civil Service Commission and Government Officials Studying Abroad as of 30 June 1998 and 1999
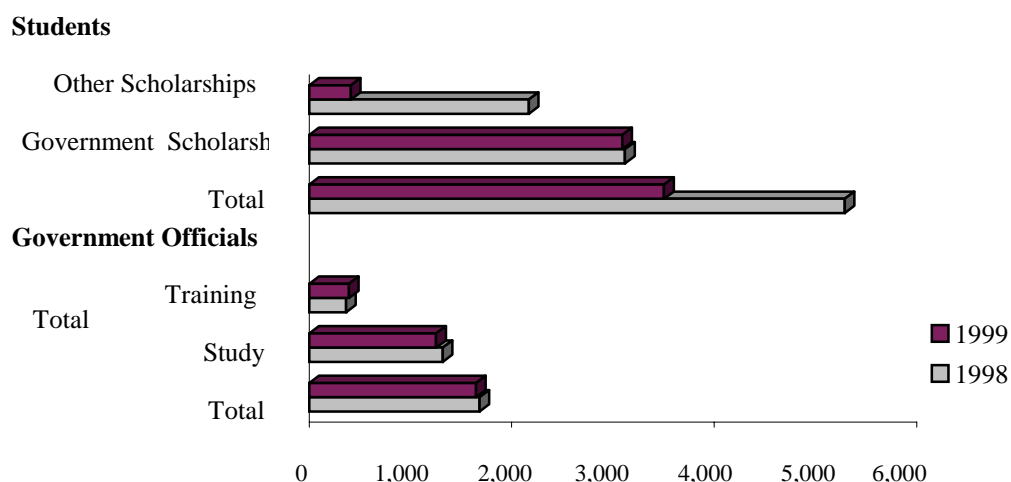
As of 31 March 1999, there were 3,223 government scholarship students still studying abroad, of which 54.4 percent were in doctorate degree programmes, 30.1 percent were in master' s degree programmes, and 14.9 percent were in undergraduate programmes. The majority   of all the students (80.7 percent) were studying in the fields of science and technology (Table 6.1).

About 53.8 percent of government officials going for overseas studies in 1998 under the supervision of the *Office of the Civil Service Commission*, both at their own expenses and by receiving scholarships were in doctorate degree programmes and 39.7 percent were in master's degree programmes. The majority of them (68.1 percent) were in the fields of science and technology while the rest were in social sciences (Table 6.2).

Table 6.1   **Number and Percentage of Government Scholarship Grantees Studying Abroad as of 31 March 1999**

	Total		Ph.D.		AB		Master's Degree		Bachelor's Degree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Science & Technology	2,717	84.3	1,563	89.1	18	100.0	783	80.7	353	73.4
Social Sciences	506	15.7	191	10.9	-	-	187	19.3	128	26.6
Total (%)	3,223 (100.0)	100.0	1,754 (54.4)	100.0	13 (0.6)	100.0	1,170 (30.1)	100.0	481 (14.9)	100.0

Note AB = AMERICAN BOARD

Source :   Office of the Civil Service Commission

Table 6.2   Number and Percentage of Government Officials Going for Study and Training Overseas as of 31 March 1999

	Total		Ph.D.		AB		PD		Master's Degree	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Science & Technology	857	68.1	481	71.0	18	100.0	25	39.7	333	66.6
Social Sciences	401	31.9	196	29.0	-	-	38	60.3	167	33.4
Total (%)	1,258 (100.0)	100.0	677 (53.8)	100.0	18 (1.4)	100.0	63 (5.0)	100.0	500 (39.7)	100.0

Note   AB = AMERICAN BOARD
PD = Postgraduate Diploma

Source :   Office of the Civil Service Commission

The Royal Golden Jubilee Ph. D.Programme

In order to compensate for the decreasing number of scholarships for overseas studies as a result of the economic crisis, the *Thailand* research Fund, in cooperation with the *MUA* and the *National Science and Technology Development Agency,* has initiated the Royal Golden Jubilee Ph.D. Programme to mark the 50th anniversary of His Majesty the King's accession to the throne. The Programme aims to produce 5,000 Ph.D. graduates of international standards in the next 15 years. Grants are awarded to Ph.D.advisers with a good research record and having co-advisors or colloborators in recognized universities abroad. Support for students to gain foreign research experience is also provided. Students are required to apply for doctorate study and scholarships as research assistant to the advisers granted fellowships from the Royal Golden Jubilee Ph.D. Programme. Scholarships include salaries, research expenses, and travel costs to do part of research in co-sponsoring institutions in foreign countries. Up to 30 September 1999, 226 and 113 scholarshipss have been granted for the year 1998 and 1999 from a total of 262 and 210 respectively. For the year 2000, the Ph.D. advisers have approved a total of 250 fellowships.

F. International Schools and Programmes in Thailand

1) International Schools

An international school provides education for students without any restriction or limitation on nationality, religion and form of government. It adopts an international curriculum and media from which students from various countries can participate. English is used as the medium of instruction.

For the establishment of international schools or colleges, their policies, rules, regulations, and standards are stipulated by the *MOE* in accordance with the Cabinet's resolution. Some of the important regulations and standards are as follows:

● **Curriculum :** The applicant has to propose the curriculum for the *MOE's* consideration and approval. Thai culture and language must be a compulsory course for all levels of education.

● **Headmaster and teacher :** They have to possess the following qualifications:
   Headmaster:
   - Thai nationality with at least B.A. degree.
   - At least 3 years of teaching experiences.
   - Other qualifications as stipulated in the Private Schools Act of 1982 and the *MOE's* regulations.

   Teacher:
   - Thai nationality possessing the qualifications as stipulated in the *Private Schools Act of 1982* and the *MOE's* regulations.
   - Exception of Thai language at Primary school Grade VI is granted for foreign teachers.

   Students :
   Foreign and Thai students are admitted. The number of Thai students must not exceed 50 percent of the total enrolment.
   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)
   ● The International Baccalaureate (IB)

In 1998, there are 42 international schools and colleges in *Thailand* of which 24 are in Bangkok and the rest are in other provinces. The proportion of foreign and Thai student in 1997 was 60 : 40 and foreign and Thai teachers was 81: 19.

2) International Programmes

At present, both Thai public and private universities offer altogether 356 international programmes using English as the medium of instruction both at undergraduate and graduate levels, i.e. 122 undergraduate programmes in 70 areas of study in 24 universities; 176 master's degree programmes in 112 areas of study in 21 universities; and 58 doctoral degree programmes in 32 areas of study in 12 universities. Foreign and Thai students can take courses for credits from such programmes.

G. Education for Thai Residents Overseas

The provision of education for Thai residents overseas has been initiated by the *Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University*, since 1984 in the *U.S.A.* at the Thai Temple in Los Angeles. The policy on the provision of education, religion and culture for Thai children and youth overseas was approved by the *Council of Ministers* in December 1993. The *Department of Non-Formal Education* has been authorized to organize supplementary schools and summer schools primarily in countries that are ready and have a large number of

Thai children such as the *U.S.A., Australia* and *France.* In addition, officials from public agencies and state enterprises are allowed to teach in those schools. With regard to the operating budget, the *MOE* has to submit the detailed plan together with the budget expenditure to the *Council of Ministers* for approval.

In 1998, there were 8 Thai temples in the *U.S.A.* with 503 students and one in *Australia with 91 students enrolled in* non-formal education courses at primary and secondary levels. The teaching and learning process follows the Thai Language and Culture Programme for Thai Students Overseas prepared by the *Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University*, in cooperation with the *DNFE*. The curriculum is open and flexible, focusing on the development of language skills for students using Thai as a second language, knowledge about *Thailand* and Thai culture. Special activities are also organized according to the interests of students and important events of *Thailand.*

Thailand has played an active role in international cooperation and exchange in education to keep up with changes in the world community. Major activities include an inter-governmental programme, foreign loans for educational development, overseas studies and training, and regional and international conferences. In addition, international schools and colleges in Thailand as well as education for Thai residents overseas have been promoted.

Chapter 7
Access and Participation

Since education is seen as a mechanism for instilling democratic values, as well as the means for developing the productive and social capacity of the people, an increase in access to and participation in all types of educational activities has been a major goal of the Thai Government for the past four decades. Despite achievements in expanding educational opportunities at all levels, *Thailand* is facing major challenges in terms of access to and participation in education, particularly the issue of equity.

7.1 Access to Formal Education

During the past several decades, greater access to education at all levels has been provided to the school – age population. The efforts of all agencies in the expansion of educational services in *Thailand* have resulted in a higher level of educational attainment of the people. It was found that the average years of educational attainment of Thai people aged 15 years and over rose from 6.6 years in 1996 to 7 years in 1998 (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1   Average Educational Attainment of the Thai Population, 1996 – 1998

Unit : Year

Age – Group	1996	1997	1998
15 and over	6.6	6.8	7.0
15 – 21	8.8	9.0	9.3
15 – 59	7.2	7.4	7.6
60 and over	3.2	3.3	3.4

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

However, the total student enrolment in formal education faced a slight decrease from 13.8 million in 1997 to 13.7 million in 1998, resulting from a decline in student intake from 4.9 million in 1997 to 4.7 million in 1998 due to the impact of the economic crisis. In 1999, the total number of students participating in formal schooling was about 14.1 million, with an increase from 13.7 million in 1998 (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2   Number and Increasing / Decreasing Rate of Students by Level of Education : Academic Year 1998 – 1999

Level of Education	1998	1999	Increasing/ Decreasing Rate
Pre-primary	2,745,139	2,801,457	2.1
Primary	5,936,174	6,027,721	1.5
Secondary	4,103,879	4,207,201	2.5
● Lower Secondary	2,426,905	2,388,561	- 1.6
● Upper Secondary	1,676,974	1,818,640	8.4
- General Education	963,299	1,035,919	7.5
- Vocational Education	713,675	782,721	9.7
Higher Education	961,420	1,151,934	19.8
Total	13,746,612	14,188,313	3.2

Note   The number of students in this table does not include those participating in non-formal basic education, education provided by other ministries and agencies for specific purposes, education for ecclesiastics, and higher education above bachelor's degree level.

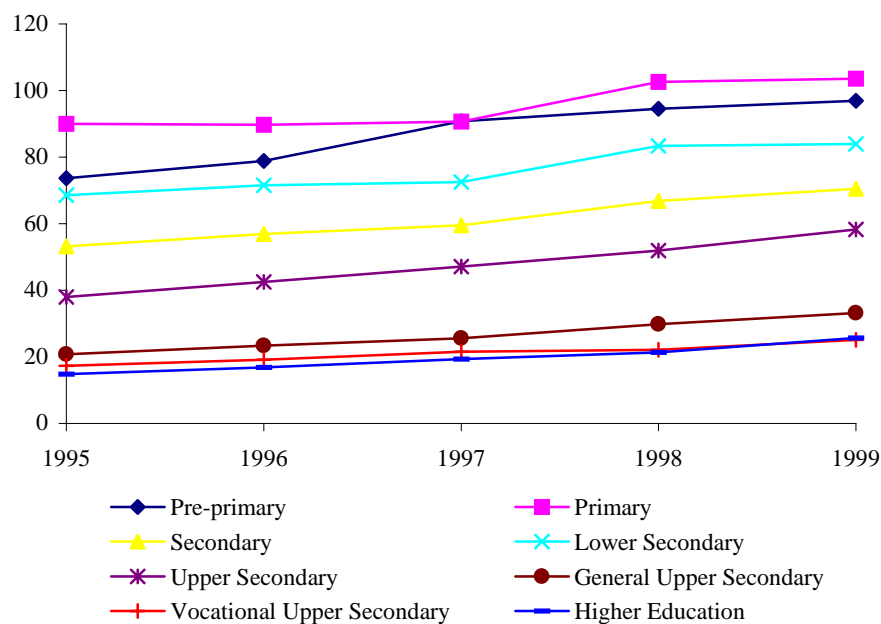Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

The number of students at lower secondary level in 1999 was less than the previous year due to the decrease in student enrolment under the responsibility of the *Department of General Education.* At upper secondary level, less students participated in the general stream while there was a significant increase in the number of students having access to the vocational stream.

In 1999, the **Thailand Population Projection, 1998 - 2016** was conducted by a committee comprising representatives from the *Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Public Health, ONESDB, National Statistical Office,* and the *Institute of Population Studies of Chulalongkorn University,* with the *Institute for Population and Social Research of Mahidol University* acting as coordinating unit and responsible for the projection. The number of population in 1998 was adjusted and used as the baseline data for the projection. As a result, since the year 1998, educational indicators in *Thailand* relating to population data have been based on the adjusted number of population in 1998 and the projection in 1999.

Pre-Primary Education

In *Thailand,* children are normally enrolled in one type of pre-primary programme at 3 years of age. The proportion of the 3-5 years age group in pre-schooling increased continuously from 73.7 percent in 1995 to 90.8 percent in 1997. Based on a new set of population data, the pre-primary enrolment ratio was 94.5 percent in 1998 and rose to 96.9 percent in 1999 (Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1   Enrolment Ratio by Level of Education :
Academic Year 1995 – 1999

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

Primary Education

The enrolment rate in six-year primary education for the 6-11 years age group was 102.6 percent in 1998 and increased to 103.6 percent in 1999. The enrolment ratio at primary level is more than 100 percent as a result of repetition rate as well as the under – age and over

– age population of students. However, there are still a lot of children who are not in primary school, particularly those who live in remote areas or who are handicapped. Therefore, greater efforts would be made to draw these children to school in order to achieve universal primary education.
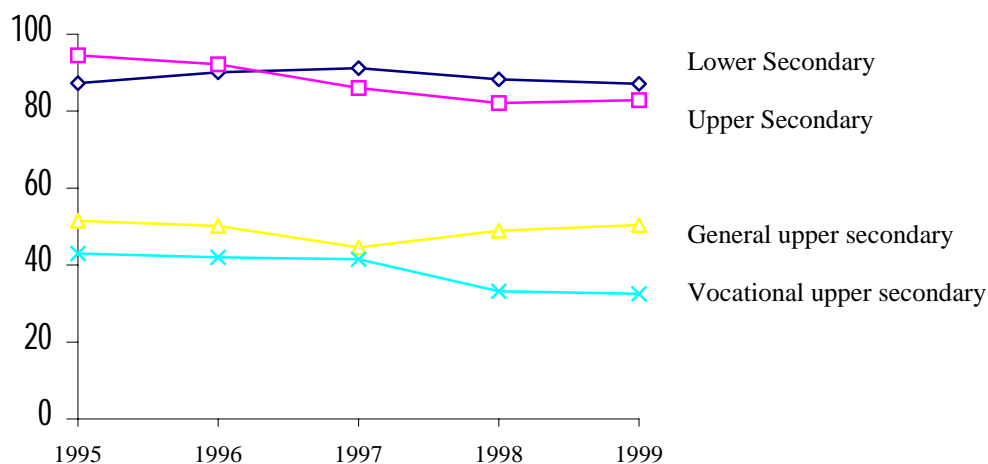
Secondary Education

The enrolment in secondary education has gradually risen from 53.2 percent in 1995 to 70.5 percent in 1999 as a result of the expansion of educational opportunities in rural areas. However, there remains 30 percent of 12-17 year olds who have no chance to participate in secondary education.

Although greater efforts have been made to extend participation in secondary education, there was only a slight increase in the transition rate of students completing primary education who proceeded to lower secondary education, from 87.3 percent in 1995 to 88.3 percent in 1998 and this fell to 87.1 in 1999.

At upper secondary level, only 58.3 percent of the age-group participated in formal education in 1999 while about 1.3 million had no access to education at this level. It is noticeable that there was a decline in the transition rate from lower secondary to upper secondary level from 94.5 percent in 1995 to 82.9 percent in 1999 due to the increasing number of lower secondary students resulting from the expansion of educational opportunities at this level, while nearly half of the school-age population still had no access to upper secondary education. In the vocational stream, in particular, there was a significant decrease of the transition rate from 43.0 percent in 1995 to 32.5 percent in 1999 as a result of the economic crisis.

**Figure 7.2   Transition Rate by Level of Education :
Academic Year 1995 - 1999**

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

Higher Education

In 1998, around 82 percent of secondary school graduates had access to higher education, with only 21.3 percent of the 18 – 21 year – age – group participating in formal education. However, this did not include the number of students in open universities. The enrolment ratio in higher education showed a slight increase to 25.7 percent in 1999, with about 3.3 million of the age – group having no access to higher education.

7.2 Participation in Non – Formal Education

Non – formal education has increasingly provided a second chance to a large number of the out – of – school population in *Thailand*. Starting with the first national campaign in 1938, it has now become a diversified further education programme encompassing general and vocational education. With the current literacy rate around 95 percent, the *Department of Non – Formal Education* was awarded the 1998 Escap Human Resources Development Award for its efforts to combat illiteracy in *Thailand*, its success in promoting non – formal education at the grass – roots level and its efforts in incorporating learner – centred changes in adult education.

However, In 1999, the total number of participants in non – formal education faced a decline of 20.8 percent from the year 1996. The decreasing number of participants were under the responsibility of the *Department of Non – Formal Education* and the *Department of Vocational Education.* There was an increase in the number of participants only in the *Office of the Private Education Commission*, the *Bureau of Community Development* and the *Department of Skill Development. DNFE* and *OPEC* offer both general education programmes equivalent to primary and secondary school certificate and vocational training courses. Other departments provide only short – course skill training services to the out – of – school population.

Table 7.3   Number and Increasing Rate of Participants in Non – Formal Education by Department, 1996 and 1999

|	1996	1999	Increasing Rate (1996/1999)
Ministry of Education			
● DNFE	3,592,264	2,379,249	-33.8
● DOVE	246,631	204,065	-17.3
● OPEC	807,880	1,044,410	29.3
Ministry of Interior ● Bureau of Community Development	34,369	37,273	8.4
Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare ● Dept. of Skill Development	135,409	148,680	9.8
Total	4,816,553	3,813,677	-20.8

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

7.3 Access to Special and Welfare Education

Both public and private sectors have made greater efforts to expand educational opportunities and services to the handicapped and the disadvantaged such as the poor and those living in remote rural areas, in slums or in the streets as well as children without a birth certificate.

In 1998, more children had access to special and welfare education provided by the *Department of General Education* and the *Office of the Private Education Commission.* Nevertheless, there was a decline in the number of students in special schools under the *OPEC* from 1,301 in 1997 to 1,190 in 1998 (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3   **Number of Students in Special and Welfare Education : Academic Years 1997 and 1998**
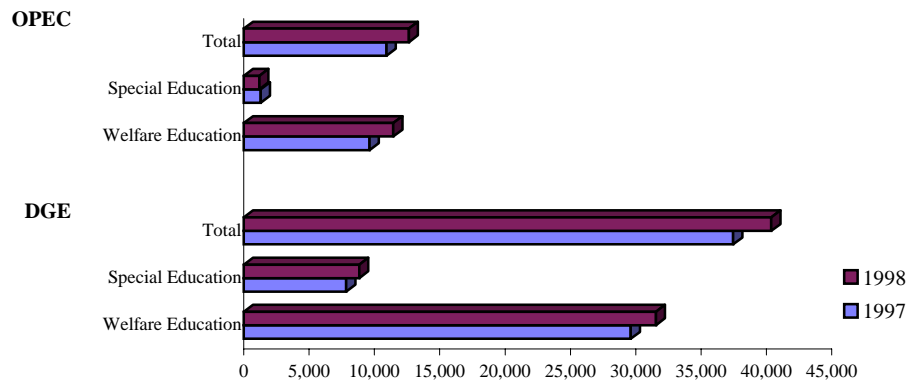
Source :   Department of General Education, MOE.

7.4 Participation in Education for Ecclesiastics and Laymen

The disadvantaged, especially boys from poor families in rural areas, have benefitted greatly from education provided for ecclesiastics by going into the monkhood. Formal general education for monks and novices is organized at lower and upper secondary levels. The number of monk and novice students at both levels increased from 55,528 in 1995 to 78,555 in 1999; an increase of 41.5 percent. Apart from the study of Buddhism on Dharma and Pali provided for monks and novices, the teaching of Dharma was also offered to an increasing number of laymen.

At higher education level, the number of monk students at bachelor's and master's degree levels increased sharply from 4,669 in 1995 to 9,786 in 1999, an increase of over 100 percent. The highest increase rate was at master's degree level at approximately 600 percent.

Table 7.4   Number of Participants in Education for Ecclesiastics and Teaching of Dharma for Laymen, 1995 and 1999.

	1995	1999	Increasing Rate (1995/1999)
General Education	55,528	78,555	41.5
Lower Secondary	41,220	56,097	36.1
Upper Secondary	14,308	22,458	57.0
Study of Buddhism	453,566	590,492	30.2
Dharma	169,646	207,483	22.3
Pali	36,575	32,029	-12.4
Teaching of Dharma*	247,345	350,980	41.9
Higher Education	4,669	9,786	110.0
Bachelor's degree	4,620	9,435	104.2
Master's degree	49	351	616.3
Total	513,763	678,833	32.1

*Provided for laymen.
Source : Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

7.5 Equity of Access to Education

In terms of quantitative development, there have been considerable achievements at all levels of education. Efforts have been made to provide greater educational opportunities for all people. However, there are still disparities and inequalities, particularly in access of the provincial and low – income population to educational services and infrastructure. Inequities have been found among different types of schools. The extension of lower secondary education in primary schools in rural areas has been essential to increasing access. However, rural schools in remote areas are less well equipped and have fewer well qualified teachers than urban schools. Graduates of rural schools are more likely to enter the vocational stream at the upper secondary level and less likely to proceed to higher education. Urban children have access to better quality schools with more opportunities to continue to post – secondary education.

There are also inequalities in higher education among different types of institutions. Public universities are fairly well funded and largely free to those who gain admittance. Tuition fees at university level amount to less than 3 percent of unit expenditure, while secondary school student tuition is more than 7 percent of the cost of education. Moreover, access to closed universities remains highly inequitable, with a high proportion of students coming from relatively advantaged families.

In an attempt to provide equal educational opportunities for all people, more educational institutions have been established at all levels, except primary schools. However, the majority of educational institutions are situated in urban areas, particularly at higher levels. Pre-primary, primary, and lower – secondary schools are distributed both in Bangkok and other provinces. At upper and post – secondary levels, the greater number of educational institutions are in Bangkok, and those in other provinces are usually in urban areas (Table 7.5).

Enrolment rates at all levels of education reflect disparities in access to educational services. In 1997 there were greater differences between the regions with highest and lowest enrolment rates at all levels of education, except in vocational upper secondary education (Table 7.6). The lowest rates were usually in the northeast, the poorest region, particularly at higher level.

Table 7.5   Number and Percentage of Educational Institutions in Bangkok and other Provinces by Level of Education : Academic Year 1997

Level of Education	Total		Bangkok		Other Provinces	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
• **Pre – primary**	44,903	100.0	1,393	3.0	43,510	97.0
• **Primary**	34,002	100.0	890	2.6	33,112	97.4
• **Lower secondary**	9,678	100.0	332	3.4	9,346	96.6
• **Upper Secondary**	3,017	100.0	290	9.6	2,727	90.4
General	2,286	100.0	160	7.0	2,126	93.0
Vocational	731	100.0	130	17.8	601	82.2
• **Higher**	780	100.0	116	14.8	571	73.2
Diploma	557	100.0	112	20.1	445	79.9
Bachelor's Degree	149	100.0	48	32.2	101	67.8
Master's degree	41	100.0	22	53.7	19	46.3
Doctorate	17	100.0	11	64.7	6	35.3

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

Table 7.6   Enrolment Ratio by Region and Level of Education : Academic Year 1996 – 1997

| Region | Pre-primary | | Primary | | Lower Secondary | | Upper Secondary | | | | Higher | |
| | | | | | | | General | | Vocational | | | |
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
National Average	**78.7**	**90.0**	**90.0**	**90.8**	**72.5**	**74.2**	**23.8**	**25.9**	**18.7**	**21.5**	**16.4**	**19.4**
Central	73.7	81.4	90.0	92.0	75.7	74.4	24.9	25.8	31.3	32.3	39.1	45.1
Eastern	89.3	101.0	106.7	108.6	80.7	83.9	21.8	22.1	22.8	27.2	12.1	15.0
Northeastern	75.6	92.0	83.3	83.6	69.2	71.7	23.5	27.0	9.9	11.9	7.5	9.4
Northern	91.6	105.7	93.3	95.0	74.5	75.0	25.2	26.7	18.2	22.0	14.5	17.1
Western	79.9	88.6	99.3	100.3	74.7	77.0	20.8	21.5	20.5	24.7	9.6	10.4
Southern	72.9	79.8	92.0	91.3	70.1	73.9	23.9	25.6	23.2	27.4	12.7	15.7
Differences between regions with highest and lowest rates	18.7	25.9	16.7	25.0	11.5	12.2	4.4	5.5	21.4	20.4	31.6	35.7

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

As regards the transition from primary to lower secondary level, the disparities between the central region and others in 1997 were less than in 1996, but the transition rate in the central area was still higher than other regions. In 1997, a higher number of students had access to upper secondary education in all regions; however, disparities among regions still

existed, as in 1996, with the highest transition rate in the central region and the lowest in the northeastern area (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7   Transition Rate by Level of Education and Region : Academic Year 1996 – 1997

Region	Lower Secondary		Upper Secondary					
			General		Vocational		Total	
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
Whole Kingdom	**91.4**	**92.8**	**46.9**	**44.4**	**37.1**	**40.9**	**84.0**	**85.3**
Central	124.6	98.0	44.2	43.1	53.5	55.3	97.8	98.4
Eastern	89.3	93.7	39.5	35.3	42.7	50.0	82.1	85.3
Northeastern	86.0	91.7	51.9	49.4	22.3	25.6	74.2	75.0
Northern	87.9	91.3	48.1	43.5	36.1	42.6	85.4	86.1
Western	85.0	90.0	42.3	38.4	43.0	49.6	85.4	88.0
Southern	85.0	92.5	43.0	42.2	44.4	49.1	88.6	91.3

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

Although there is an inherent gender bias in *Thailand,* girls and women have had greater access to education at all levels. In 1998, the proportion of male and female students in formal education was almost equal (50.1 : 49.9). The numbers of female students were less than those of males only at pre-primary, primary and vocational upper secondary levels. The participation of female students was significantly higher than males at general upper secondary and bachelor's degree levels.

Figure 7.4   Proportion of Male and Female Students   by Level of Education : 1998
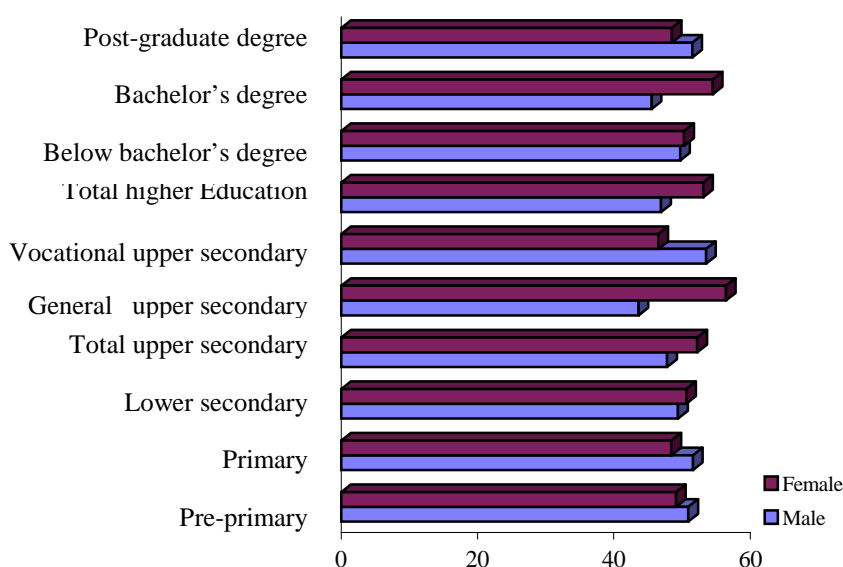
Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

Despite the impressive achievements in expanding access to education in the past decades, Thailand is still facing major challenges in the attempt to gain higher participation in educational services and to support the less privileged in gaining equal benefits from the educational system.

Chapter 8

Quality and Efficiency of Education

Thailand has made substantial progress in expanding access to education at all levels. However, much remains to be done concerning the quality and efficiency of education in order to achieve the stated objectives and principles of education.

8.1 Quality of Education

The quality of education can be reflected through major elements such as qualified teaching staff, effective teaching – learning processes, as well as flexible curricula supported by appropriate learning materials and educational technology as presented below.

8.1.1 Teachers and Teaching Staff

A. Qualifications of Teaching Staff

The quality of teachers or teaching staff is the most important element in raising the standards of education. However, the qualifications of teaching staff and the quality of their teaching are currently issues of concern in *Thailand.*

A nation – wide survey conducted in 1998 shows that primary schools have 84.7 percent of teachers with a Bachelor's degree or higher while there are 95.9 percent in secondary schools. However, disparities in the qualifications of teachers exist both at primary and secondary levels. *ONPEC* has roughly 50 percent more teachers with less than 14 years of formal schooling in the North and Northeast than in the central region (Table 8.1). The Northeast also has the lowest percentage of teachers with a Bachelor's degree or higher. Compared to the central region, the Northeast has almost 50 percent more teachers with only diploma level qualifications.

As regards secondary school teachers of the *Department of General Education,* the central region has the advantage in terms of qualified teachers. The South has the lowest percentage of teachers with a Bachelor's or higher level of qualifications. The Northeast has nearly double the percentage of the central region with respect to teachers who have only a diploma.

Disparities in the qualifications of teaching staff have been found particularly among higher education institutions under the *MOE. Rajabhat Institutes* and *Rajamangala Institutes of Technology* which offer both B.A. and M.A. programmes have a higher percentage of teaching staff with Master's degrees than vocational colleges under the Department of Vocational Education which offer courses only at undergraduate level. The numbers of teaching staff at physical education colleges are equal in terms of Bachelor's and Master's degrees. All types of educational institutions have only a small number of teaching staff with a Ph.D. (Table 8.2).

Table 8.1   Relationship between Educational Qualifications and Region where Teaching, ONPEC and DGE , 1998

	Less than 14 years of education	Diploma, equivalent to 14 years of schooling	B . A . or higher educational level
ONPEC			
Central	3.96	8.01	88.03
South	4.10	10.45	84.45
North	6.03	8.51	85.46
Northeast	6.06	11.63	82.31
DGE			
Central	0.32	2.52	97.16
South	0.60	5.35	94.05
North	0.40	3.99	95.61
Northeast	0.26	4.34	95.40

Source :   Fry, Gerald. **Teaching Personnel Strategy in Thailand : A Review and Recommendations,** Prepared for UNESCO-Bangkok, 1999.

Table 8.2   Percentage of Teaching Staff in Higher Education Institutions under MOE by Qualification, 1998.

	Lower than Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree	Higher Education Certificate	Master's degree	Ph.D.	Total
Rajabhat Institutes	0.49	29.76	0.55	64.87	4.33	100.00
RIT	1.51	61.65	-	34.54	2.30	100.00
Vocational colleges	13.32	76.91	-	9.62	0.15	100.00
Physical education colleges	-	49.46	-	49.46	1.08	100.00

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

With respect to the qualifications of teaching staff in higher institutions under the *Ministry of University Affairs,* public and private universities have nearly the same percentage of teaching staff with Master's degrees (53.72 and 55.55 percent respectively). However, public universities have about three times as many teaching staff with a Ph.D. than private universities, while private universities have a much higher percentage of those with Bachelor's degree than public universities (Table 8.3).

Table 8.3   Percentage of Teaching Staff in Public and Private
Universities under MUA by Qualification, 1998

	Public	**Private**
Lower than Bachelor's degree	13.72	0.15
Bachelor's degree	11.00	36.50
Certificate of Higher Education	0.04	-
Master's degree	53.72	55.55
Ph.D.	21.52	7.80
Total	100.00	100.00

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

B. Workload of Teachers

According to the standard criteria, the total workload of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school teachers is 35 hours per week which includes teaching load and other tasks. The *Survey on Workload of Teachers* conducted by ONEC in the first semester of the academic year 1999 revealed that the average workload of teachers at all levels was 28.7 hours per week which was below the standard criteria.

However, the amount of time teachers at all levels actually spent teaching was less than half of their total workload. The rest of their time was spent preparing lessons, support teaching and others as shown in Table 8.4.

**Table 8.4   Workload of Teachers by Level of Education
                and Activities, Academic Year 1999.**

(Hours per Week)

Level of Education	Teaching	Preparing Lessons	Teaching Support	Others	Total
Primary	13.3	5.5	5.0	3.5	27.3
Lower Secondary	13.9	5.5	5.5	4.0	28.9
Upper Secondary	12.5	7.0	5.8	4.8	30.1

Source :   Educational Survey and Research Centre, ONEC.

The amount of time spent by teachers varied in terms of subject areas. Mathematics teachers spent the highest amount of time, on average 31.4 hours per week while Thai language teachers had only 21.4 hours of workload per week as shown in Table 8.5. However, one teacher may teach in more than one subject area.

**Table 8.5   Workload of Teachers by Subject Areas and
                Activities, Academic Year 1999.**

(Hours per Week)

Subject Areas	Teaching	Preparing Lessons	Teaching Support	Others	Total
Mathematics	17.2	5.8	4.9	3.5	31.4
Science	11.0	6.3	5.1	4.1	26.5
Social Sciences	10.9	5.8	4.9	3.4	25.0
Foreign Languages	10.0	5.8	4.9	3.4	24.1
Thai Language	6.9	5.9	4.9	3.7	21.4

Source :   Educational Survey and Research Centre, ONEC.

8.1.2 Teaching – Learning Process

According to a poll on educational quality commissioned by the *ONEC,* about 57 percent of those surveyed note a decline in the quality of teaching. An over emphasis on memorization and teacher – centred learning have been persisting problems in Thai education resulting in a relative weakness in the teaching – learning process, particularly in the critical fields of science, mathematics and foreign languages.

As regards the teaching – learning of science and mathematics, international comparisons of student achievement have become an essential tool for assessing the performance of education systems. The Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) undertaken by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) revealed that the performance of Thai students in mathematics and science was lower than those of many countries, for example, *Australia, Austria, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom,* as well as some countries in Asia like *Singapore, Japan, Korea* and *Hong Kong* as shown on figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1   Mathematics and Science Achievement for students in the 8th Grade
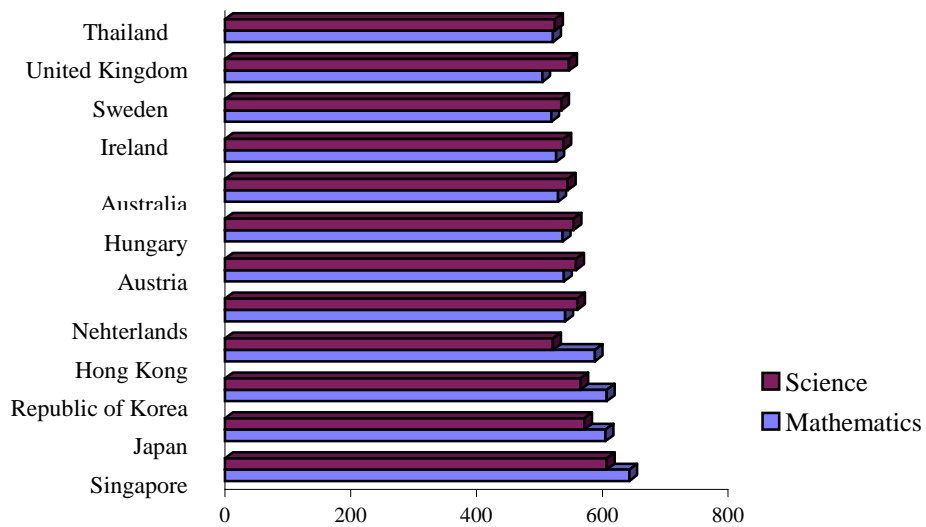
Source :   IMD, the World Competitiveness Yearbook 1999.

One international indicator has suggested that the curriculum design in *Thailand* be improved. Table 8.7 shows that the amount of intended instruction time in mathematics and science for 14 year – olds in *Thailand* is significantly less than those of all countries with higher performance in these two subjects as shown on Table 8.6. As knowledge of and skills in mathematics and science are central to the ability to compete in the global marketplace, the proportion of the curriculum that is devoted to the instruction of these subjects must be increased in order to achieve higher performance by Thai students.

Table 8.6   Intended instruction time for mathematics and science in hours per year for students 12 to 14 years of age (1996)

	12 years	13 years	14 years	Average 12 to 14 years
Australia	251	251	251	251
Austria	260	325	390	325
Hungary	184	236	236	219
Ireland	200	200	200	200
Netherlands	200	200	200	200
Sweden	189	189	189	189
United Kingdom	215	219	228	221
Republic of Korea	204	204	204	204
Thailand	200	200	100	167

Source :   Education at a Glance – OECD Indicators, 1998.

Special attention is currently being given to the issues of teaching science, mathematics and foreign languages, especially English. The report on *Teaching Personnel Strategy in Thailand : A Review and Recommendations* revealed major problems found in the teaching – learning process in science, mathematics and foreign languages as summarized below.

1) Teaching of Science
- Many teachers do not like teaching mathematics and science, and lack the ability to foster scientific thinking and skills.
- At all levels of education, but especially at primary school level, teachers lack a speciality in science.
- At the secondary level, there is an over – emphasis on preparing students for the University Entrance Examination.
- There is a lack of quality science learning materials, particularly at primary school level.

2) Teaching of Mathematics
- Mathematics is frequently taught as an isolated subject, unrelated to other subjects in the curriculum.
- Overly westernized approaches to mathematics education have led to an emphasis on rote teaching and learning of mathematics.

3) Teaching of Foreign languages
- Excessively large classes for language learning, particularly at the upper – secondary and post – secondary levels.
- Continued over – reliance on the grammar – translation method.

● Inadequate training of teachers and lack of highly

qualified teachers.

In terms of learning materials for primary and secondary schools, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development is responsible for the development and publishing of textbooks and support materials, including instructional materials for teachers and educators. At the lower and upper secondary levels, however, private publishers are permitted, with the *MOE*'s approval, to provide textbooks, teachers' guides and other learning materials for the elective subjects and foreign languages.

However, there is still a lack of quality learning materials in all subjects, particularly in science, mathematics and languages. A major problem found in language teaching and learning is the inadequate utilization of modern language learning equipment and materials such as computers, videos, language – learning software, etc.

8.1.3 Technologies for Education

The role of educational and information technology has been recognized in raising the quality of education in *Thailand*. Although the introduction of information technology to improve the quality of learning is still limited, greater efforts have been made to initiate new technologies in education.

A. Library Network

While textbooks and access to libraries are key determinants of effective learning, particularly at secondary and higher levels, many schools are still limited to a textbook loan system and inadequate well stocked school libraries. Moreover, the high cost of library resources as well as the effects of information explosion have made it very difficult for any library to be self-sufficient in meeting its growing user demand. Therefore, library network has been initiated in *Thailand* for library cooperation by employing advanced information and networking technologies to achieve resource sharing among libraries. The libraries that are developing their networks are classified into 5 groups :

1)   **National Library** is situated in Bangkok with its 16 regional branches.

2) University and College Library
 • **University Library** , the most advanced networking of libraries in *Thailand* with 24 public and 36 private university libraries. The famous networks are   Chulalinet (Chulalongkorn University), Nontrinet (Kasetsart University),   PULINET (Provincial University Library and Information Network), and   ThaiLINET-Thai Academic Library Network: Metropolitan).

 • **Rajabhat Institute Library** , an effective and successful library network of all 36 Rajabhat Institutes.

• **Rajamangala Institute of Technology Library** , with RIT LIBNET being developed for 50 RIT libraries.

3) School Library , consisting of secondary and primary school libraries with different size according to the school size.

4) Public Library , consisting of libraries under the responsibility of *Bangkok Metropolitan Administration* and the *Department of Non-Formal Education.* All public libraries of *BMA* will be linked through the Internet by 1999. Among 808 public Libraries of *DNFE*, fifty of them have been developed as electronic libraries since 1998.

5) Special Library, e.g. the library network of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment consisting of 7 libraries of its departments.

However, the development of library network has still been limited to only some types of libraries and some areas. Limitations exist in terms of the use of computers in the libraries, number of personnel and their IT literacy as well as management of information technology. Some library networks have not yet been linked through information technology and telecommunications.

B. Radio Broadcasting and Television for Education

Radio broadcasting, in general, has been used for education mainly as teaching instrument and learning sources. At present, educational services have been provided through the following radio broadcasting :

1). Radio Thailand for Education

Educational programmes have been provided through Radio Thailand for Education to support learning in schools and teacher training for the expansion of educational opportunities in order to achieve equity in educational quality. At present, there are 11 stations of Radio Thailand for Education throughout the country, one is in Bangkok and the rest are in the provinces. The broadcasting time is allocated by a committee to different target groups and agencies as shown in Table 8.8.

Table 8.8   Allocation of Time to Target Groups

Target Group/ Responsible Body	No. of Hours	%
1. Students : open university	49	37.4
2. Pupils : School Radio Programmes of MOE	25.5	19.5
3. Youth : NFE Correspondence Programmes	20	15.3
4. Teachers : Office of Rajabhat Institutes	10.5	8
5. Farmers : Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	7	2.6
6. General Public : News and Health Programmes	18.9	17.2

2) MOE Education Radio Station , operated by the *Department of Non-Formal Education,* provides two different programmes : Education Ratio for the General Public and School Radio.

3) University Radio Broadcasting provides educational services through 23 radio stations both in Bangkok and regional areas.

However, limitations exist in the utilization of radio broadcasting in teaching-learning process to improve the quality of education. A research conducted by the *Department of Public Relations* indicated that those listening to Radio Thailand for Education regularly for educational purposes accounted for only 11.4 percent. Besides, there were only 10.3 percent of teachers using educational radio programmes for teaching and learning.

As regards educational television, it has been used for providing formal, non-formal and informal education services. The agencies responsible for educational television programmes are as follows :

1)   Educational Technology Centre of *DNFE* provides educational television programmes on Channel 5, 7, 9 and 11.

2)   Mahidol University provides child care programme to parents and the public on Channel 7.

3)   Ramkamhaeng Open University broadcasts teaching and learning programmes through radio and television for about 22 hours a week on Channel 7 and 11.

4)   Sukhothaithammathirat Open University broadcasts teaching and learning programmes on Channel 11 for 21 hours a week.

5)   Walailak University provides educational programmes to the public on television in Nakornsithammarat Province.

However, educational television in *Thailand* has still made little contribution to learning process due to the problems of area coverage as well as quality and diversity of the programmes provided.

C. Information Technology for Education

Information Technology has been increasingly used to improve the quality of education in *Thailand.* New technologies, particularly the Internet, have changed the concept of learning and emphasized the idea of student – centred learning. The introduction of information technology for education in *Thailand* is presented below.

1) Distance Learning via Satellite provides 3 types of educational   services : formal, non-formal and informal education. The distance – education programmes via satellite have been provided for the first time by DNFE in 1996 after Thai Com's satellite is in use. The Minister of Education had signed a contract with the Thai Com Foundation who would bear the expenditure of one channel for five years while the *MOE* agreed to invest in the satellite receiver.

From 1997 to 1998, the *MOE* increased the number of stations nationwide to children who were in schools as well as those who were deprived of education. In 1999, there were plans to increase the number of stations around the country to cover those in remote areas in the form of community educational centres.

Unfortunately, the Thai Com Foundation has decided to discontinue the joint project because the *MOE* targeted the wrong group. According to the agreement, the targeted group were students who had no access to education, rather than students who were already in schools.

At present, there are a total of 15,590 integrated sets of receiver and decoder in schools nationwide. Once Thai Com discontinues its supports, DNFE will have to rent a satellite channel on Thai Com.

2) General Education Programme through Distance Learning System via Satellite provided by the *Department of General Education.* The teaching and learning has been broadcast through Digital DTH television system to schools participating in the project across the country.

3) Thai Social / Scientific, Academic and Research Network : ThaiSARN

ThaiSARN has been created to support education, research and development since 1992. It provides linkages among universities and other public educational institutions.

4) The SchoolNet Thailand

The SchoolNet *Thailand* project started as a small network in 1995 and served only schools in Bangkok. In 1996, another nationwide network called the Kanchanapisek (Golden Jubilee) Network was established to celebrate the 50th anniversary of His Majesty the King's accession to the throne. It consisted of an electronic library containing information related to His Majesty the King of *Thailand.*

The SchoolNet and the Kanchanapisek Network were merged in February, 1998 in order to create a large-scale nationwide network for schools. This was the first nationwide, free-access network for education in the *ASEAN* region. The project was called SchoolNet@1509 to signify the special telephone number-1509, which could be used anywhere in *Thailand* to access the network. In April 1999, there were altogether 923 schools and 1,757 registered users of SchoolNet @ 1509.

Box 1 :   Contents Creation and Other Activities in SchoolNet Thailand

After spending the first few years developing the network infrastructure, we have gradually come to realize the importance of content – especially Thai – language content on the Internet. The first serious attempt to tackle this problem was undertaken in the Kanchanapisek project where we worked with eleven organizations which had served the country through many successful projects initiated by His Majesty the King. Thousands of Thai-language web pages were created that document the vast amount of information concerning the royally initiated project : such as rural development, agriculture, irrigation and a junior encyclopaedia.

In a similar manner, SchoolNet@1509 needs good local content to attract teachers and students online. If left alone in the Cyberspace dominated by English content, the language barrier will discourage most teachers and students from using the Internet. Therefore, it is essential that we have Thai-language content with good educational value that is designed to help the children do better in school.

The SchoolNet Content Development project was therefore started in September 1998. We commissioned Kasetsart University to carry out the project in conjunction with the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST) and some selected schools. The Objective is to create educational web sites in the Thai language for secondary – school students featuring 7 major academic subjects, namely : Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Engineering and Environment. These web sites are scheduled to be launched by December 5, 1999 to celebrate the 72nd birthday anniversary of His Majesty the King. Moreover, we hope that this effort will demonstrate and induce other schools to create their own educational web sites and thus contribute to the overall content for school children in *Thailand.*

Apart from content creation, we feel that it is also important to have activities organized such that teachers and students learn how to get the most from the vast educational potential of the Internet. Held once a year since 1996, Seagate Technology (*Thailand)* has joined us in organizing the Internet Training Camp for secondary school children. Students who sign up are trained in web development; they then compete against each other by building their own web pages centering on each year's theme (for example, environment protection, the solar system, etc.).

Source Kiattananan, Paisal and Koanantakool, Thaweesak.

"SchoolNet Thailand : An Information Infrastructure for the

future of Thailand". [Online]. Available :

http://www.school.net.th/articles/schoolnet_paper.html 1999.

The implementation of SchoolNet@1509 has been achieved through the cooperation of four government agencies. The *Telephone Organization of Thailand (TOT)* sponsors domestic Internet bandwidth while the *Communication Authority of Thailand (CAT)* donates international Internet bandwidth. The *National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre (NECTEC)* designs, maintains and operates the network and central computer systems. The *MOE* selects schools as well as coordinates, promotes and supports the use of Internet in these schools.

During the early phase of SchoolNet, introductory training courses for the internet were provided for participating schools at NECTEC's facilities in Bangkok. However, as the project advanced, the number of member schools increased rapidly all over the country. It soon became obvious that the model of centralized training was no longer practical.

At present, eight Rajabhat Institutes serve as regional training centres to offer Internet training courses for schools in those areas. With the help of *Rajabhat Institutes,* more schools have received training. Since there are only 36 campuses of *Rajabhat Institutes,* other partners and community involvement are needed to promote the use of Internet in schools.

Box 2 Community Support : SchoolNet Volunteer Programme

Normally after the Internet training courses, quite a number of teachers often encounter technical problems when they go back to their schools and really start getting online. These problems for new users are more difficult when the only place that they can get help is NECTEC. A phone call to NECTEC's helpdesk can cost 18 baht per minute for some areas in the country. This is certainly not affordable for most schools.

One possible solution is to develop local community involvement. Since all of us should take responsibility for the education of our children, why not sacrifice some of our time to help our schools get online? We believe that this spirit is what drives NetDay activities in the United States and the rest of the world. So we proposed a volunteer programme for SchoolNet@1509. When the SchoolNet Volunteer Programme was made public in early 1999, many people signed up and we selected 60 of the most qualified people from 23 provinces.

With a partial funding support from the Kenan Institute Asia, a volunteer conference is taking place in June 1999. In the event, the volunteers are to be briefed about the project, NECTEC's expectation of their support and the working code of practice. Each volunteer will be responsible for a few schools in his/her area. The volunteers are expected to provide first-level support to the schools. This may include answering technical questions, giving advice or even visiting schools to provide on-site support in some cases. We hope that these volunteers will not only make the lives easier for most teachers but will also help convey accurate information about SchoolNet@1509 so that schools better understand our project.

Source Kiattananan, Paisal and Koanantakool, Thaweesak.
 "SchoolNet Thailand : An Information Infrastructure for
 the future of Thailand". [Online]. Available :
 http://www.school.net.th/articles/schoolnet_paper.html
 1999.

5) University Network (UniNet)

High – speed information technology system has been created to link all universities across the country to support the expansion of higher education to regional areas. UniNet is aimed to promote the quality of learning process in higher education institutions and campus particularly the IT Campus initiated by the *MUA*. IT Campus introduces information technologies into the instructional process, allowing remote campuses to have improved system of virtual instruction environment to improve quality and maximize effectiveness.

In addition, the Campus Network in each university has been linked to available systems of information technology such as electronic libraries, the Internet, multimedia, Video on Demand, self-study courseware, CD-Rom, and Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI).

8.2 Educational Efficiency

In order to improve the quality of education, the issue of educational efficiency has been addressed both in terms of internal and external efficiency.

8.2.1 Internal Efficiency

In *Thailand* , major indicators that can be used to reflect the internal efficiency of the educational system are teacher – student ratio / teacher – classroom ratio, retention rates and dropout rates.

A. Teacher – Student Ratio and Teacher – Classroom Ratio

As specified in the Social Sector Programme Policy Matrix negotiated with the *Asian Development Bank,* the student – teacher ratio at the primary level must be raised to 25: 1 by fiscal year 2002 by strictly controlling the hiring of new primary teachers beginning FY1998. However, the study on *Teaching Personnel Strategy in Thailand* confirms that increasing the student – teacher ratio to 25: 1 should not significantly affect educational quality, based on research in many countries that the student – teacher ratio at the margin is only weakly related to educational outcome measures.

Teacher – classroom ratio, however, is extremely important in terms of educational quality. If the teacher – classroom ratio is less than one, then there are not enough teachers to cover every classroom, which can adversely affect the quality of learning. The total teacher – classroom ratios in primary and secondary schools as well as in vocational colleges in *Thailand* from 1996-1998 were more than one indicating adequate teaching staff (Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2   Teacher – Classroom Ratio at Primary and Secondary Levels and in Vocational Colleges : 1996-1998
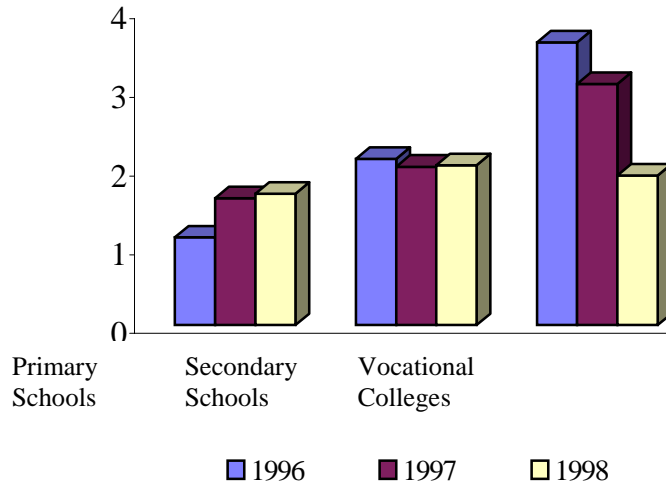

B. Retention Rates

At primary and general upper secondary level, the retention rates have been improving slightly for the past few years. In primary schools, it decreased from 72.2 percent in 1995 to 69.4 percent in 1996, but increased to 85.0 percent in 1999. The retention rate of upper secondary school students in the general stream increased from 81.2 percent in 1995 to 86.5 percent in 1999.

However, there is a decline in the efficiency of education at lower secondary and vocational upper secondary levels. The retention rate of lower secondary students decreased from 93.5 percent in 1995 to 91.5 percent in 1999. Similarly, that of upper secondary students in the vocational stream continued to decline from 80.2 percent in 1995 to 75.9 percent in 1998 but rose to 82.2 percent in 1999 (Figure 8.3).

Figure 8.3   **Retention Rate by Level of Education : Academic Year 1995-1999**
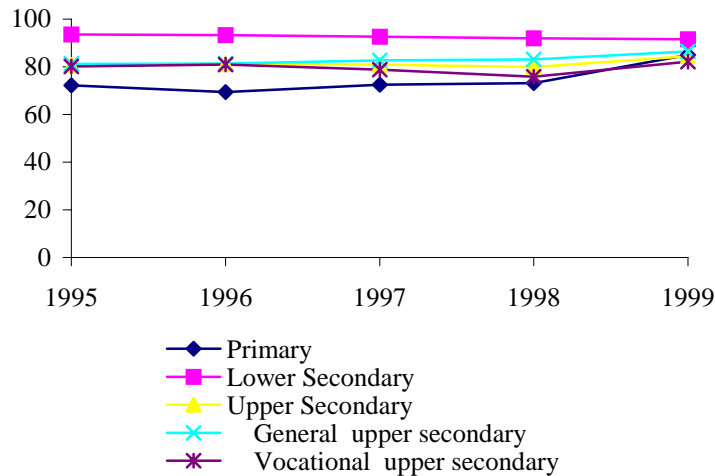
Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

C. Dropout Rates

Statistics on dropouts is a controversial subject for debate due to poor database setup and management. Caution should be taken when identifying causes and interpreting dropout rates because students leave school for a variety of reasons.

Before the economic crisis in 1997, dropouts in primary education accounted for 2.4%. In 1998, one year after the crisis, dropout figures equaled 148,819 persons or 2.5 percent. At lower secondary education level, the dropouts rose from 3.5 percent in 1997 to 3.6 percent in 1998 or an equivalent number of 89,523. There were also higher dropouts in upper secondary schools, both general and vocational, reaching 9 percent in 1998 (Table 8.7).

Table 8.7   Number and Percentage of School Dropouts, 1997 and 1998

Type of Education	1997			1998		
	students	Dropouts		students	Dropouts	
		Number	%		Number	%
Primary	5,927,940	144,185	2.4	5,936,174	148,819	2.5
Lower Secondary	2,462,631	77,536	3.5	2,426,905	89,523	3.6
Secondary & Vocational	1,620,434	121,862	8.2	1,676,974	146,214	9.0
Total	**10,011,005**	**343,583**		**10,010,053**	**384,556**	

Source :   Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

8.2.2 External Efficiency : Education and Employment

External efficiency of the educational system can be realized through relevance of education to the socio-economic conditions of the country. The ability of graduates to enter the labour market following the completion of education can be seen as an indicator of educational efficiency.

Recently, the transition from education to work has become more difficult, despite the fact that young people entering the labour market are better educated than those in the last decade. In the present world of globalization, there is evidence which suggests that the ability to use English, which is the internet language, and modern technologies may facilitate entry into the labour market.

The *1998 Survey of Thai Youth* was conducted to examine the characteristics of male and female youth through multi – stage sampling to select 4,376 young people from 4,000 households. It was found that less than half of the 2,306 youngsters   15-24 years of age interviewed by structured – interview schedule could speak more than one language. The situation is even worse in rural areas. Among those able to use one other language, about 73.6 percent of the urban population and 58.5 percent of the rural population have an ability to use English (Table 8.8).

Table 8.8 Language Ability of Thai Youth 15-24 Years of
Age by Area of Residence and Gender

	Urban			Rural		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
● Able to speak only Thai	52.1	56.3	48.3	62.1	68.8	56.6
● Able to speak at least one other language	47.9	43.7	51.7	37.9	31.2	43.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Ability to use other languages ● English ● Chinese ● Native ● Others	 73.6 13.3 2.3 11.0	 79.1 11.7 0.8 8.5	 70.1 14.3 3.2 12.4	 58.5 1.5 29.5 10.6	 50.0 1.5 33.7 14.8	 63.4 1.5 27.1 8.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source :   The 1998 Survey of Thai Youth, Institute for Population and
Social Research, Mahidol University.

Access to and use of computers while in education can provide students with an important knowledge base that can increase their opportunities for employment and success in the job market.   In *Thailand,* only 62.9 percent of youth 15-24 years of age in urban areas can use a computer. It was much worse for those in rural areas with 34 percent of youth having an ability to use a computer as shown in Table 8.9. Moreover, the computer programmes used by most Thai youth are games which are not relevant to employment. From the survey, only 8.6 percent of youngsters had access to the internet.

**Table 8.9   Computer Skills of Thai Youth 15-24 Years of
                Age by Area of Residence and Gender**

	Urban			Rural		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
Ability to use a computer						
● Able to use a computer	62.9	59.1	66.4	34.0	26.0	40.5
● Unable to use a computer	37.1	40.9	33.6	66.0	74.0	59.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Computer programmes used by Thai youth						
● Games	27.6	30.2	25.6	30.9	37.5	27.9
● Word Processing	25.0	21.8	27.6	27.7	21.5	30.6
● Other applications	17.6	18.0	17.2	21.4	22.3	21.0
● Internet	8.6	9.5	7.9	3.0	3.2	3.0
● Spreadsheet	8.4	7.1	9.4	8.2	6.4	9.0
● E-mail	5.4	6.3	4.6	1.6	2.0	1.5
● Programme writing	3.9	4.6	3.3	3.3	4.0	3.0
● Database	3.6	2.5	4.5	3.8	3.2	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source :   The 1998 Survey of Thai Youth, Institute for Population and
                Social Research, Mahidol University.

The impacts of economic crisis have affected entry into the labour market of persons who have completed different levels of education. The total unemployment rate more than doubled from 2.2 percent in February 1997 to 5.2 percent in February 1999 (Table 8.10). In August 1997 and 1998, the unemployment rates were lower than those in February because it was traditionally a time of low unemployment due to seasonal demands for labour in agriculture for the planting of the rice crop.

With respect to educational attainment, persons with some primary education or none constituted the highest proportion (64.5 percent) of the total unemployed. Among the persons with middle and high levels of education, vocational and university levels, the rates of unemployment were 12.6 percent. For those with lower primary education (Grade 4) or none, university education in academic stream, and teacher training, more females were employed; whereas males with upper primary, lower and upper secondary, vocational , and technical vocational education at university levels constituted a higher percentage of unemployment (Figure 8.4).

Table 8.10   Unemployment rates by level of educational attainment

	1997		1998		1999
	Feb	**Aug**	**Feb**	**Aug**	**Feb**
● Below Grade 4	1.6	0.6	3.3	1.9	3.6
● Lower Primary (Grade 4)	1.3	0.4	2.8	2.0	3.1
● Upper Primary (Grade 7)	3.5	1.0	7.8	4.1	8.5
● Lower Secondary	3.1	1.3	5.8	4.2	6.6
● Upper Secondary	2.2	1.3	6.0	5.5	7.0
● Vocational Education	2.7	1.7	4.1	6.3	5.7
● University : Academic	1.8	1.7	3.5	6.0	5.4
● University : Technical Vocational	3.0	3.9	5.1	9.2	8.0
● Teacher Training	2.8	1.4	2.7	2.3	3.1
Total	2.2	0.9	4.6	3.4	5.2

Source :   Labour Force Survey, National Statistical Office.

Figure 8.4   Percentage of Unemployed Persons by Level of Educational Attainment and Gender : February 1999.
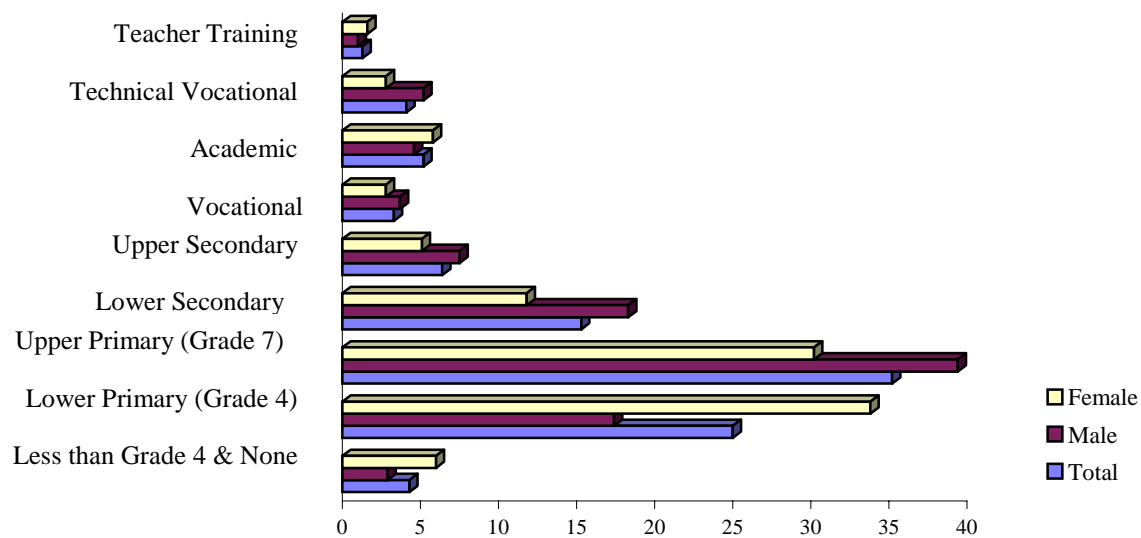
Source :   Labour Force Survey, National Statistical Office.

In terms of the distribution of employed persons by level of education, according to the February 1999 round of the Labour Force Survey, the vast majority had a low level of education, with 70.0 percent having only primary education or none at all, 16.8 percent at secondary level, 10.0 percent at university and 3.1 percent at vocational level (Table 8.11).

As compared to Bangkok Metropolis, the employed persons in regional areas had a much lower level of education. The lowest percentage of employed persons who had some primary level of education or none at all was in the Central Region (67.0 percent). The South showed the second lowest level with 70.7 percent, followed by the North with 77.7 percent and the Northeast with 78.0 percent.

With respect to employed persons with secondary education, Bangkok   shows the highest percentage with 22.0 percent, followed by the Central Region, the South, the North and the Northeast with 19.4, 18.3 14.1 and 13.5 percent respectively.

At a higher level of education, which includes vocational, university and teacher training level, Bangkok also showed the highest percentage with 32.9 percent, followed by the Central Region, the South, the Northeast and the North with only 13.4, 11.0, 8.4 and 8.2 percent respectively.

Table 8.11   **Percentage of Employed Persons by Level of Educational Attainment and Region : February 1999**

Level of Educational Attainment	Whole Kingdom	Bangkok	Central	Northern	North-eastern	Southern
● None	4.1	1.8	3.0	9.0	1.7	6.1
● Less than Grade 4	2.3	1.3	2.3	3.5	1.7	3.0
● Lower Primary (Grade 4)	43.3	24.1	42.1	47.2	50.9	41.5
● Upper Primary (Grade 7)	20.3	17.7	19.6	18.0	23.7	20.1
● Lower Secondary	12.0	15.2	13.9	10.4	9.9	12.8
● Upper Secondary	4.8	6.8	5.5	3.7	3.6	5.5
● Vocational	3.1	6.5	3.7	2.0	1.7	3.2
● University	7.8	24.2	7.7	4.5	4.0	5.6
- Academic	5.2	18.9	4.5	2.9	2.3	2.8
- Technical Vocational	2.7	5.3	3.2	1.6	1.7	2.8
● Teacher Training	2.2	2.2	2.0	1.7	2.7	2.2
● Others	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source :   Labour Force Survey, National Statistical Office.

It can be seen that the current education system is rather irresponsive to the socio – economic conditions of the country. A well – trained and educated labour force is a basic requirement for the development of the knowledge - and information – intensive industries and services in the world of globalization. However, *Thailand* is still poorly equipped to meet the challenges of competition in a globalized world economy. Apart from the relatively poor quality of human resources, with about 70 percent of the workforce possessing only primary school education or less, the majority of graduates, especially of secondary and higher education, lack sufficient skills and knowledge relevant to labour demands such as the ability to use foreign languages and computers. Vocational secondary education, in particular, is inefficient in providing pre – employment training for students. The curricula of vocational schools are comparatively rigid and unresponsive to employment demands. It is thus necessary for *Thailand* to improve the quality of human resources through higher standards of education as a precondition both for moving out of the crisis and into the next development stage in which *Thailand* is able to compete effectively in the world economy.

In sum, greater efforts have been employed to raise the level of quality and efficiency   of education in Thailand. However, the desired improvements in education have not been fully achieved. Consequently, effective policy measures and implementation strategies to improve the quality and efficiency of education must be further emphasized and strengthened.

Chapter 9

Current Efforts and Initiatives

Realizing that the development of education in Thailand needs radical changes to meet both the quantitative and qualitative challenges in human resources development, there have been strong efforts to push through educational reforms by both the public and private sectors since the beginning of the past decade. The Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001), in particular, has initiated the reform of education of the entire educational system and on specific issues such as teacher education, higher education, and teaching and learning systems. Although the economic crisis has affected the proposed educational reform initiatives, all agencies concerned have put greater efforts to improve the provision of educational services to all people.

9.1 Universalization of Basic Education

Following the *World Declaration on Education for All : Meeting Basic Learning Needs*, continuous efforts have been made by several agencies in Thailand to achieve the universalization of basic education. The policy to expand basic education to secondary level was reflected in the 1992 National Scheme of Education, the Seventh National Education Development Plan (1992-1996), and the Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001). First priority has been given to the efforts to universalize basic education to secondary level. The greatest success has been in Section 43 of the 1997 Constitution which stipulates that :

> " Individuals shall enjoy the equal right to receive basic education for the duration of at least twelve years. Such education, provided for all, shall be of quality and free of charge. "

The enactment of the National Education Act 1999 as required by the Constitution will lead to the actual implementation of 12-year basic education in the near future. Existing compulsory laws and regulations are being drafted and amended. However, major activities to promote the universalization of basic education have been undertaken by all agencies involved.

1) Provision of Education for Promoting Literacy

Educational services for the attainment of literacy have been provided to enable illiterates to acquire functional literacy, forming a basis for learning other skills later in life. Extensive policies for expanding basic education services have been created to provide target groups with basic functional adult education. The statistics show that the literacy rate in the population increased over the age of 15 from 93.3 percent in 1994 to 94.7 percent in 1997.

2) Development of Early Childhood Education

The Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001) has stipulated key guidelines for the development of pre-school children as follows:

- Encourage an increased understanding of the responsibilities of family life and raising children among young people, newly married couples and parents, through coordination of the work of relevant social agencies.
- Encourage all forms of readiness preparation for pre-school children, e.g., in child development centres and workplace nurseries as well as within the family through coordination of the public sector, the private sector, communities and family activities.

- Enable all children to have full access to sufficient good-quality nutrition.

As regards the Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001), the following targets have been included in Major Programme 1 : Promotion of Basic Education for All :

- All pre-school children will be provided with a minimum of a one-year school readiness programme before 2001.
- Not less than 90 percent of the children aged 3-5 years will have access to pre-primary education in the year 2001.

In addition, the policy statement of the Council of Ministers delivered to parliament on 20 November 1997 confirms the government's intention to " Educate parents and families on providing the basic foundations of life and preparing children at the pre-primary school level while promoting pre-school education. "

Although educational services are currently provided to pre-school children by around 14 public and private agencies, full coverage has not been achieved, particularly the qualitative aspect. There is thus an initiative to formulate a specific policy and plan for early childhood (0-5 years old). The plan is being drafted, based on research findings, by the National Institute for Early Childhood Education established under ONEC. According to the drafted plan, all people concerned e.g. parents, families, communities and society will be involved in the development of early childhood education.

3) Provision of Education for Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances

Despite the effort to extensively expand primary and lower secondary education to cover the target groups, there remains a large number of children who have no access to basic education. Major groups of these children are the poor living in remote rural areas, in the streets or slums, including the children of construction workers, child labour, children without nationality, and young girls at risk with the threat of exploitative commercial sex.

In order to reach these groups, special attention and efforts are required. There have been many innovative actions in education for children in especially difficult circumstances, for example, educational provision for street children and young girls at risk as well as students affected by the crisis.

- **Education Provision for Street Children**

Apart from providing social welfare, concerned agencies, both public and private, have provided educational services and occupational training programmes for street children :

Public Sector The Department of Public Welfare has established Reception Homes as temporary residences for street children who will be given educational opportunities corresponding to their age. The educational services for these children are provided through a non-school-based approach focusing mainly on short occupational courses.

In addition, the Child and Youth Welfare Promotion Institutions under the Department of Public Welfare have set up schools offering general basic education courses as well as non-formal and vocational programmes to meet the children's needs. In other words, school-age children are given access to primary and secondary education, while non-formal courses equivalent to primary and secondary education are offered to those above school-age group.

Private   Sector   NGO's   staff and volunteer teachers will be given orientations on psychology, counselling, teaching methodology, game and activity organization.   Upon encountering street children, field staff or volunteer teachers will try to gain familiarity with them by means of playful and recreational activities, talks and role playing.   The staff are usually supplied with tool kits comprising writing and painting materials, textbooks, basic musical instruments, sports equipment, stacks of games and first aid.

Besides this, a number of foundations and NGOs have organized " Open Houses " or " Childrens' Homes " for street children, for instance, House for Children of the Foundation for Better Life of Children, House of Shared-love of the Komol Keemthong Foundation, and House Fabricated with Love of the Catholic Youth Council of Thailand. These houses offer educational services to prepare children to return to normal life and a school environment.   Some children receive coaching in the morning to supplement and reinforce their studies.   For afternoon sessions, children undertake other activities based on their interests.

Some houses try to help place the children back into the school system.   Young children will be supported to return to the formal system while older children will be encouraged to take non-formal education.   In order to establish a bridge to transfer children back to school and to link the centre-based approach adopted by the houses and the institution-based technique practised by the formal school system, the house teachers work in partnership with their counterparts, i.e., those in schools in order that the school staff understand these children.   Schools accepting these children include those under ONPEC, OPEC and DGE as well as BMA and the Department of Local Administration.

● **Sema Life Development Project**

The Sema Life Development Project has been initiated by the MOE to expand educational opportunities at secondary education level to girls at risk from the threat of exploitative commercial sex.   Scholarships for 3 year-study at lower secondary education level have been given to two target groups :

(1) Young girls at high risk who have completed primary education are selected to study in special boarding welfare schools, with a scholarship given directly to each school for 12,000 baht per year, which includes meals, clothes, textbooks and stationery. These girls are from very poor or broken families, or whose father and/or mother are dead, handicapped, drug addicts, or in prison.   Other children in especially difficult circumstances such as street children and those from families with HIV/AIDS are also included.

(2)   The girls in the lesser risk group are sent to regular schools with a scholarship for 3,000 Baht per year.   The scholarships for this group of children are widely expanded to cover all provinces including Bangkok.   In 1999, about 24,000 girls nationwide were given those types of scholarships to continue their studies at lower secondary level.

● **A Scholarship Programme for Students Affected by the Crisis**

Due to the economic crisis, more Thais lose their jobs and are less able to send their children to school resulting in a large number of school dropouts. The *MOE* has thus launched a scholarship programme since mid – 1998 to prevent primary and lower secondary school children from dropping from school if their unemployed parents are unable to send them.

The scholarships are part of a one billion Baht programme of the Thai government which is being assisted by the Social Sector Programme Loan financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In the academic year 1999, the ADB loan for the amount of 520 million Baht has been approved for the scholarship programme.

The target students are classified into 4 groups :

1)   All students who have dropped out and come back to school in the academic year 1998,

2)   All students who have dropped out and come back to school in the academic year 1999,

3)   All novices in General Schools for Ecclesiastics at lower secondary level, and

4)   Students whose parents are badly affected by the crisis.

A total of 140,000 students have been selected from all provinces for the scholarship provided as follows :

● 4,000 Baht per year for each of 60,000 primary school students,

● 5,000 Baht per year for each of 40,000 lower secondary school students,

● 2,000 Baht per year for each of 40,000 novices.

These efforts to provide education for children in especially difficult circumstances enable many children to remain at school. With fewer jobs available in the informal sector, more children or child labourers are returning to the streets to survive. NGOs reported a significant rise in the number of street children after the crisis. Since there is a danger these children may be lured into exploitative commercial sex and illegal activities, different measures to provide 12 – year basic education for all children will keep them in school longer.

4) Development of Curriculum Framework for Basic Education

A new school curriculum for 12 – year basic education has been designed by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development of the *MOE*. The new curriculum, which will be implemented in the year 2001, emphasizes student – centred learning and new teaching techniques which will bring about a major reform in classrooms. It revolves around the concept of participatory learning, in which students are encouraged to create their own world of understanding through imagination in relation with the environment. This will result in an individual's complete self – development. Students will decide what they want to study and how they should be evaluated. Of course, teachers still have a central role by giving guidance and advice to students.

The foundation framework for the 12 - year curriculum will cover eight subjects: art, music and dance; foreign languages; mathematics; physical education; science and technology; social studies; Thai language and literature; and vocational skills. The new curriculum will be broken into four levels: grades 1 – 3, 4 – 6, 7 – 9 and 10 – 12.

The curriculum framework for basic education has been developed in accordance with the guidelines stipulated in the National Education Act 1999. The central curriculum office in Bangkok will set the core curriculum for each subject while the provincial offices will prepare supplementary lessons reflecting issues important to each province as part of the decentralization in educational administration and curriculum planning. Such flexibility is a departure from the past. By focusing on local issues in a student – centred classroom, students are expected to learn things important to their lives and take greater interest in their studies.

School administrators must concern themselves with the efficient management of the schools while maintaining their educational standards. Teachers and parents must take a more active role, overseeing educational standards and efficient management.

5) Formulation of Action Plan for the Provision of 12
Year Basic Education

In order to meet the requirements of the 1997 Constitution regarding the provision of 12-year basic education by the year 2002, the ONEC and the MOE have cooperated in formulating policies, guidelines and measures for the implementation of this provision which is also stipulated in the National Education Act 1999. The policy paper was approved by the Council of Ministers in March 1999 with the following clearer guidelines :

- Basic education will be provided for 12 years covering primary education (6 years), lower secondary education (3 years), and upper secondary education in both general and vocational streams (3 years).
- Compulsory education will be extended from 6 to 9 years.
- Government budget will be allocated for the implementation of 12 -year basic education.
- The ONEC and the MOE are the central units responsible for the formulation of the implementation action plan for providing 12-year basic education covering early childhood development.

Consequently, a committee was established in June 1999 comprising representatives from all agencies concerned and distinguished scholars, in order to formulate the implementation plan for the policies endorsed by the Council of Ministers and make preparations for the implementation of the National Education Act 1999 in relation to the provision of 12-year basic education.

9.2 Challenging Initiatives in Higher Education

9.2.1 Implementing Higher Education Policies

Under the Eighth National Higher Education Plan (1997 – 2001), the following six policies have been implemented by the Ministry of University Affairs to ensure that educational provision in public and private universities will be of a higher quality that meets international standards and produces qualified graduates to meet market demands.

1) Quality and Excellence

The MUA strives to encourage universities to offer an international standard of education, bearing in mind that quality is the key to produce qualified students who are capable of competing in the job market and to function fruitfully in an era of globalization. The MUA, accordingly, has launched both short and long-term strategies to upgrade the quality of instruction, an academic pursuit of all the public and private higher education institutions to meet the minimum standard set. Along with these efforts is the role of the MUA in strengthening the academic excellence of universities/colleges in teaching, research and community services.

2) Access and Equity

The MUA has implemented the access and equity policy to provide mass higher education for Thai people of diverse social, economic and geographical characteristics. This policy, moreover, is aimed particularly toward providing high school graduates with greater access to universities. Subsequently, new universities both public and

private have been established in the regional areas. Information technologies have also been employed.

3) Efficiency and Accountability

In promoting efficiency and accountability, the MUA enhances higher education cost-effectiveness and management flexibility by undertaking management reforms emphasizing institutional autonomy and self governance with appropriate accountability measures. The MUA will then be able to take up its role as supervisory and supporting body for educational development in line with the National Plan. All state universities are scheduled to be independent from bureaucracy and become self-administering organizations by 2002.

4) Relevance and Delivery

Under this policy, the MUA aims to produce graduates in fields with high demands, along with some specialized areas of study that are important to industrial growth. The MUA also conducted research studies to determine manpower needs of the country utilizing either a manpower requirement approach or quality approach to suit each particular area of study.

Fields that are currently identified as shortage areas include Sciences, Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Medical Science, Dentistry, Pharmaceutical Science, Allied Health Science, Nursing, Veterinary Science, Agricultural Industry, Industrial Education, Architecture, Accounting, Language and Gems and Jewelry.

5) Internationalization and Regionalization

With the rapid movement of globalization, international collaborative relationships among nations are highly valued. As a result, the MUA has launched internationalization and regionalization projects to meet the expected demand. The underlying strategies are to promote international education programmes and enact staff and student exchange programmes with foreign institutions.

Additionally, the MUA, under this plan, hopes to connect closer to regional and international universities. The MUA also promotes additional links with other regions by means of Memorandums of Understanding, linkage programmes and other specially designed projects.

6) Privatization and Corporatization

Under the privatization and corporatization plan, the Ministry plans to promote the establishment of private universities and integrate corporate management strategies into university administration. This policy, furthermore is aimed to encourage an increased role for the private sector in collaborating with higher education institutions for improved quality of higher education provision.

The inclusion of corporate management strategies, in the same way, is expected to relieve the management burden of the public sector.

9.2.2   Action Plan for Higher Education Improvement

The *MUA* plays a major role in setting up direction and an action plan for higher education improvement in line with the World Declaration on Higher Education and in coping with changes in the twenty – first century. A workshop on "National Brainstorming on Thailand's Action Plan to Follow-up on the World Declaration on Higher Education" was

held on 24 – 25 June 1999. Senior administrators from both public and private higher education institutions and education authorities, as well as international organizations like *UNESCO* and *SEAMEO RIHED* ,participated in the event. The outcome of the World Conference on Higher Education organized by *UNESCO* in Paris in October 1998 was reported on, followed by a discussion on directions and action plans for higher education improvement.

The meeting emphasized that quality assurance systems and relevance are important factors for higher education renewal. Other issues which need to be in focus are as follows : 1) higher education institutions' role in the whole education system, 2) educational opportunities for the community, 3) balance between internationalization and national identity, and 4) cooperation and achievement between higher education institutions and business/industrial sectors.

Results of the meeting will be taken up further by a task force to be set up to ensure that the priorities selected will be put into concrete projects and implemented.

9.2.3 Efforts Towards Higher Education Reform

Since 5 October 1998, a Committee for the Formulation of Higher Education Reform Guidelines has been appointed by *ONEC* to take the responsibility of making proposals for higher education reform. Major tasks undertaken by the Committees are as follows :

1) Analysis of the 1997 Constitution and the draft National Education Act relating to higher education.

2) Studying achievements and problems of higher education development, and analysis of the present status of higher education. It was concluded that the formulation of higher education reform guidelines should focus on 6 important issues:

(1) Efficiency and quality of the higher education system,

(2) Mobilization of resources,

(3) Factors strengthening higher education including internationalization,

(4) Mechanisms for creating interaction between higher education and other social systems,

(5) Equity of access to and relevance of higher education

(6) The role of higher education in creating wisdom for the society.

3) Conducting documentary research on higher education reforms in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia.

4) Conducting comparative research on higher education.

5) Preparing a concept paper on higher education reform guidelines.

6) Organizing academic seminars to welcome comments and recommendations on guidelines for higher education reform.

7) Synthesizing all documents and reports and preparing a proposal for higher education reform to be submitted to the *National Education Commission* and the *Council of Ministers.*

As regards the *Ministry of University Affairs*, its efforts towards the reform of higher education began with the formulation of the First Fifteen – Year Higher Education Development Plan (1990 – 2004). However, the reform initiatives of the *MUA* does not cover higher education under the responsibilities of other ministries. Major issues currently implemented by the *MUA* that also consist with the provisions in the National Education Act 1999 are as follows :

1) Development of administrative efficiency, i.e., delegation of authority in personnel administration from the University Civil Service Commission to the universities or institutions ; the delegation of authority in the approval of curriculum to each university / institution; improvement of management efficiency of private higher education institutions; and development of public universities towards autonomous institutions.

2) Development of higher education quality, i.e., development of quality assurance systems; curriculum development, and the improvement of university entrance systems.

3) Development of resource allocation system, i.e., the analysis of cost per head of students ; development of cost accounting systems; and development of budget allocation models for higher education.

In response to the National Education Act 1999, the *MUA* has made preparation for the implementation of higher education reform in two major aspects:

1) Project Administration

The Higher Education Reform Project has been administered through three levels of organizations :

● **Policy Level** The Ministry of University Affairs Steering Committee is the legal organization responsible for providing advice to the Minister with respect to policy issues as well as the control of quality and standards of both public and private higher education.

● **Administrative Level** The Sub – Committee for Preparation of Administrative System Reform of the Ministry of University Affairs takes charge of planning, coordination, and preparation of resources for the implementation.

● **Implementation Level** Seven working committees have been established to take responsibility for the following issues :

1) Reform of teaching and learning at higher education level;
2) Organization of administrative and management systems for public higher education;
3) Organization of administrative and management systems for private higher education;
4) Organization of standards and quality assurance systems for higher education;
5) Promotion and development of higher education personnel;
6) Organization of Resource and Investment Systems for higher education; and
7) Development of technology for higher education.

2) Preparation and Amendments of legislations

The *MUA* has made preparations for the implementation of the National Education Act 1999 through the organization of structure and system development. Major tasks of the Ministry have been divided into 7 groups. Besides this, a total of 36 laws relating to higher education will be prepared and amended.

9.3 Education for Persons with Special Education Needs

It is recognized that education for persons with special education needs should be increasingly expanded to provide educational access to those with physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, communication, and learning disabilities. Among current efforts and initiatives of various agencies for these groups are the Special Education Programme providing basic education and the establishment of Ratchasuda College of Higher Education and Research Centre for People with Disabilities which offers educational services at a higher level.

A. Special Education Programme

Based on a recent survey conducted by *ONPEC* , more than 600,000 disabled children in *Thailand* still have no chance of education in state – run schools. Among 678,103 disabled children nationwide, only 18,517 could enrol in public primary schools. These

children have joined regular classes managed by *ONPEC* in 3,157 primary schools through the Special Education Programme started in 1998.

To mark the Year of Education for the Disabled in 1999, the programme has guaranteed an opportunity to study. In one school in each *ONPEC* school district all over the country, disabled children are able to study in the same classroom as normal students. Approximately 4,221 schools are participating with around 66,292 disabled students now taking advantage of the programme. The total number of disabled students can be classified as shown in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1   Number of Special Students in Regular Classes Provided by ONPEC by Type of Disabilities, 1999.
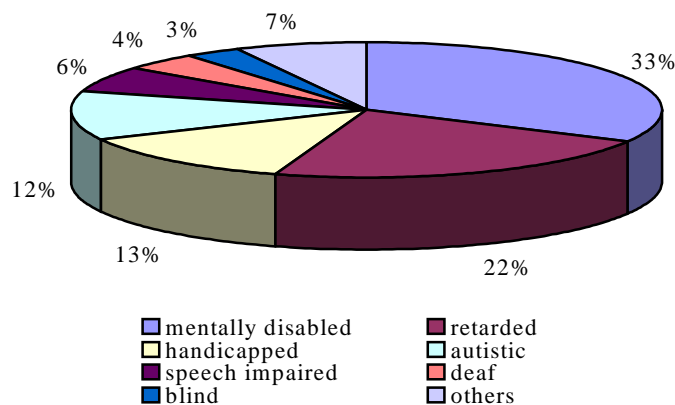
ONPEC has held training for 4,000 teachers who will play a central role in teaching disabled students. Learning materials have been sent to all the school districts. A programme called "Friends Helping Friends" has also been implemented to bring disabled and normal students closer together.

The special education programme has been successful due to the clear policies of the *MOE*, including administrative and budgetary support, particularly from parents. However, some problems still exist, particularly the lack of qualified teachers and supplies such as Braille typewriters earphones and wheelchairs.

To expand educational opportunities for disabled children, *ONPEC* plans to open more schools, train more teachers and procure more special teaching instruments for them.

For the academic year 2000, education centres for disabled students will be built in five provinces including Bangkok under a project approved by the committee on education management for disabled students. The scheme was also planned for 8 other provinces. Once established, they will cooperate with other secondary schools to find suitable schools for disabled students. In addition, the *MOE* plans to ask the *Bangkok Mass Transit Authority* to provide special buses for disabled students.

B. Ratchasuda College : A College of Higher Education and Research Centre for People with Disabilities at Mahidol University

HRH Princess Mahachakri Sirindhorn has graciously consented to give HRH name and patronage to Ratchasuda Foundation established to assist in the building and the

operation of Ratchasuda College of Higher Education and Research Centre for People with Disabilities.

Goals and Objectives

The College goal is to provide a new way of perceiving of disabilities and the needs of people with disabilities.

The College aims to develop technological, counseling , and administrative services for people with disabilities that will assist them in gaining access to higher education. It is currently engaged in exciting research and cooperates with other institutes at international level in order to continue providing *Thailand* with the most up – to – date technology and techniques in services for people with disabilities, and to share experiences with the international community.

Curriculum   Ratchasuda College offers an MA Degree in Rehabilitation Service for Persons with Disabilities, with specialization in Rehabilitation Counseling and Access Technology. The specialization in Rehabilitation Administration is scheduled to begin in 1999.

Since June 1998, the programme for the deaf has proposed an undergraduate programme in Thai Sign Language Instruction in cooperation with Gallaudet University in the United States. Additional academic programmes scheduled for future implementation include training programmes in Thai/Thai Sign Language interpretation; in Braille; and in Orientation and Mobility, and a Disability Studies Programme.

The College Academic Service Units provide an invaluable resource to disabled students all over *Thailand.* The Resource Centre provides computer – assisted educational aids to both its own students and to integrated disabled students. Ratchasuda College also supports several specialized courses in independent living skills for disabled people and intends to open an Educational Material Production Centre if funding can be obtained.

9.4 Improving the Quality of Education

In order to address the issues of educational quality, greater efforts have been made to improve the quality of teaching – learning process and teaching staff. Among current initiatives are changes in teaching – learning processes and recognition or the reward of outstanding teachers.

9.4.1 Changes in Teaching and Learning Process

Changing the teaching – learning process is central in enabling students develop their capacities for independent thinking and problem – solving. The government policy on the reform of teaching and learning has been stated in the *Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001).*

The *Office of the National Education Commission* thus established the *Centre for Teaching-Learning Development* with an aim to introduce educational innovations leading to reform of learning. The Centre, which has been developed to be the National Institute for the Development of Learning, has undertaken a project for teaching – learning development which began in 1997.

Following the implementation of the project, five learning models have been suggested : Happy Learning, Participatory Learning, Thinking Process, Aesthetic Value Development, and Moral Value Development. The principles and teaching – learning process

of these models have been disseminated through various approaches. Training for the administrator, supervisors and teachers has been organized to enable them to apply these learning models in the classroom.

Efforts of the *MOE* to improve the quality of teaching and learning have been reflected through the initiatives of *ONPEC, DGE* and the *Office of the Rajabhat Institutes Council* in undertaking the Secondary Education Quality Improvement Projects. With financial support from the government budget and education loans from the World Bank, these projects focus on the improvement of the teaching – learning of science, mathematics and English.

- **The ONPEC Secondary Education Improvement Project** will be implemented in the fiscal years 2000-2003 in primary schools providing lower secondary education for the expansion of educational opportunities to the disadvantaged. The first phase of the Project, which will be conducted in the fiscal year 2000-2001 starting from October 1999, aims at (1) training teachers of science, mathematics and English, (2) developing school networks, (3) providing computers to schools, and (4) developing computer assisted instruction materials.

- **The DGE Secondary Education Improvement Project** emphasizes the improvement of the teaching-learning of science, mathematics and English in upper secondary schools. The core activities of the Project to be implemented from 1999-2003 are:

(1) improving science laboratories and Student English Access Rooms (SEAR),

(2) providing educational equipment and media,

(3) improving teaching-learning programmes and modern media through development of learning packages and prototypes and the training of teachers in participating schools and those in the institutional network as well as other educational institutions involved, and

(4) developing teaching – learning innovations and technologies, e.g. Student English Access Rooms (SEAR), Instructional Technology (InTech) and Internet Service Provide (ISP).

- **The ORIC Secondary Quality Improvement Project** emphasizes the need to raise the quality of science education. The Project involves the raising of qualifications of teaching staff, modernizing facilities, and expanding the capacity of the *Rajabhat Institutes* to provide in-service training to teachers, as well as research and technical services to the community. The Project comprises the following components :

(1) Construction of new science laboratories and refurbishment of workshops at 17 *Rajabhat Institutes.*

(2) The provision of equipment to modernize laboratories and workshops in the core areas of teaching in physics, chemistry and biology, as well as recently introduced courses such as environmental science and biotechnology.

(3) An institutional development programme will ensure that both pre-service and in-service training for science and maths teachers is effectively carried out in 17 *Rajabhat Institutes.* The teaching staff of these subjects will be strengthened by raising their academic qualifications through local and overseas fellowships for 150 masters and 125 Ph.D. programmes for RI Staff.

(4)   A research and technical service programme will finance 170 research projects in the areas of science and maths education, industrial technology, health environment and agriculture. Another group of 270 projects in similar fields will be financed to improve the capacity of the RI's to provide local technical advisory services. In addition, the existing RI curricula in science and technology will be reviewed for appropriate changes.

9.4.2   Recognition / Rewarding of Outstanding Teachers

Critical to improving the quality of education is the development of teachers and educational personnel. Current strategic programmes initiated to enhance the quality of teachers and teaching – learning process have been conducted through recognition and the reward of outstanding teachers.

(1) National Teacher Awards

In order to recognize the critical importance of attracting quality people to the teaching field and to reward outstanding teachers, a new system of national teacher awards was introduced by *ONEC* in 1998. The award is not just a prize, but a grant to foster innovations to improve the quality of education. There are three levels of awards, and awards consist of three components : 1) a significant salary supplement, 2) a project grant to accomplish proposed innovations, and 3) a grant to the teacher's school to facilitate integration of the teacher's innovation to the school as a whole. Such national teachers will become an important network promoting educational quality improvements. The awards will be renewable for up to three cycles of three years based on annual performance assessments.

Four secondary school teachers were selected in 1998 as national teachers in biology, physics, chemistry, and Thai language. All of them are now conducting research and development projects on teaching-learning development. The first phase of the implementation of each project has already been evaluated by distinguished scholars.

In 1999, 6 teachers were selected as national teachers in Thai language, English, mathematics, physics, general science, and physical science. In addition, through cooperation with all parties concerned, *TERO* has been undertaking a policy development project for the recognition of outstanding teachers in order to raise the teaching profession to a higher status.

(2) Master Teachers

The selection of Master or model teachers has also been initiated by *ONEC* since 1998 as a means to enhance the quality of teachers and teaching – learning.

In 1998, thirty master teachers were selected and duly recognized. Each master teacher is required to disseminate his/her teaching techniques to at least 10 of his/her colleagues for the duration of 4 months. The teaching – learning models of all master teachers have been compiled and published for dissemination as teachers' guidelines for the development of teaching – learning process.

Within 4 months of dissemination of teaching models, all master teachers selected in 1998 succeeded in expanding their networks to 340 of their colleagues from 270 schools in 26 provinces. These teachers, provided with guidelines by master teachers, have been encouraged to effectively improve their teaching quality and further disseminate the master teachers' teaching models. After the required supervision period, all master teachers have continued to be advisors in teaching – learning to their colleagues.

In 1999, there were 578 teachers in both public and private schools from pre-primary to upper – secondary levels applying as candidates to be selected as master teachers. The selection criteria is as follows :

1) Organizing the learning process in accordance with Chapter 4   of the National Education Act of 1999 focusing on :

(1) encouraging students to build a body of knowledge by themselves,

(2) developing knowledge about oneself, nature and environment,

(3) skills in pursuing one's career and leading a happy life,

(4) development of thinking processes and problem-solving,

(5) integration of knowledge, morality, values, and desirable characteristics,

(6) development of democracy,

(7) introduction of wisdom, art and culture to learning processes,

(8) research and development of learning processes,

(9) cooperation with families and communities, and

(10) performance assessment based on student-centred learning.

2) Providing learning activities in accordance with the following indicators:

Students' Indicators

(1) Students have direct experience relating to the natural environment.

(2) Students find their own aptitudes and methods from continuing practice.

(3) Students perform activities of sharing with and learning from groups.

(4) Students practice thinking diversely and imaginatively, as well as expressing themselves clearly and reasonably.

(5) Students are encouraged to find solutions for problems both by themselves and by cooperation.

(6) Students have an opportunity to practise searching for and the gathering of data as well as building up knowledge by themselves.

(7) Students can happily perform learning activities according to their capabilities, aptitudes and interests.

(8) Students are trained to be under discipline and responsible for their work.

(9) Students are trained to conduct self-evaluation and self-improvement as well as listen to others and continuously search for knowledge.

Teaching Indicators of Teachers
(1) Teachers prepare their teaching both in terms of content and method.
(2) Teachers organize an encouraging environment and a climate which stimulates students to learn.
(3) Teachers individually take care of each student.
(4) Teachers organize learning activities and situations for students to think and express themselves creatively.
(5) Teachers encourage students to practise thinking, doing, and improving themselves.
(6) Teachers promote activities of sharing with and learning from groups as well as notice the strengths and improve the weaknesses of students.
(7) Teachers use teaching media for the practice of thinking, problem-solving and searching for knowledge.
(8) Teachers use various learning sources and link experiences to real life.
(9) Teachers provide training of etiquette and discipline following Thai culture and way of life.
(10) Teachers observe continuously and evaluate students' development.

Among 96 outstanding teachers selected as master teachers in 1999, 53 are from *ONPEC* schools, 34 are from secondary schools of the *DGE,* 8 are from municipal schools of the Bureau of Local Education administration, and the last one is from a primary school of *BMA*.

9.5 Promoting Educational Standards and Quality Assurance

Although greater efforts have been made to raise the quality and standards of education, school performance and student achievement are still not satisfactory. Major persisting problems include a lack of understanding of evaluation processes, inadequate

resources, and ineffective utilization of evaluation results for improving the quality of education.

Consequently, the *ONEC* had proposed the policy for the promotion of educational standards and quality assurance which was approved by the *Council of Ministers* in November 1997. Accordingly, the *Office for National Education Standards* has been established as a temporary internal unit under *ONEC* to organize a national system for educational standards and quality assurance. In order to achieve its objectives, the *Office* has so far performed the following tasks.

1) Development of national standards for education

National standards for basic education have been developed through brainstorming of scholars, educators, and the persons involved, and through public hearings as well. The drafted national standards will be used as a framework for external evaluation and as guidelines for the agencies concerned and all educational institutions to develop the quality of education in the same direction. The drafted national standards are composed of 12 standards and 91 indicators which can be categorized into 3 groups as follows :

(1) Standards of Learners, consisting of 12 standards and 38 indicators, focus on the physical, spiritual, intellectual and social development in order that learners will be good, capable and happy people.

(2) Standards of Process, consisting of 6 standards and 29 indicators, emphasis on administrative and teaching – learning processes.

(3) Standards of Inputs specify the characteristics or readiness of administrators, teachers, curriculum, buildings and community, with 9 standards and 24 indicators.

2) Promotion of internal evaluation in educational institutions / agencies

Educational institutions / agencies have been encouraged to conduct internal evaluation to improve the quality of education. Research and development on internal evaluation has been undertaken for the preparation of guidebooks and an internal evaluation model. Guidelines for internal evaluation of educational institutions have been formulated and the trial of the drafted guidebooks for internal evaluation are being carried out in 30 pilot schools. The Office has provided training for school personnel and cooperated with the schools in developing internal evaluation of educational institutions, with cooperation of field researchers in providing supervision and following up the schools' internal evaluation.

3) Promotion of external evaluation

In order to promote external evaluation of educational institutions / agencies, a documentary research has been conducted for the formulation of an external evaluation framework. Guidebooks for school inspection, training curricula for external evaluators and the selection criteria for external evaluators have been prepared for trial before actual implementation.

4) Preparation of the Bill for the establishment of an

independent body for the promotion of educational

standards and quality assurance.

As a preparation for the implementation of the National Education Act 1999, the bill for the establishment of the *Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assurance* as an autonomous body has been drafted and submitted to the *Council of Ministers* and the *Committee for Bureaucratic System Reform* for consideration. The main tasks and responsibilities of the Office are as follows :

(1) Development of an external evaluation system.

(2) Development of criteria for external evaluation.

(3) Supervision of effective external quality assessment of educational institutions.

(4) Development of external evaluators.

(5) Preparation of an annual report on educational quality and standards in order to submit to the *Council of Ministers, Ministry of Education* and the *Budget Bureau.*

With respect to the implementing units responsible for the provision of education, policies and measures to raise the standards of education at all levels have been introduced by all agencies concerned i.e. the *MOE, MOI* and *MUA.*

● **Ministry of Education and Ministry of Interior**

To address the critical issue of educational quality, the *MOE* has developed assessment and evaluation processes in order to improve both the quality and efficiency of education. Its major activities can be classified into three areas : learning assessment and evaluation, educational quality assessment and educational quality assurance.

1) Learning Assessment and Evaluation

(1) Educational institutions are encouraged to assess learning outcomes through authentic assessment and portfolio. Authentic assessment has been introduced to escape the weakness of multiple – choice and paper-pencil tests. By this technique, learning outcomes are assessed through a set of performance tests in which students are required to perform certain tasks representing the learning objectives, for example, demonstrate the whole process of solving mathematics problems or complete the experimentation in science covering data gathering, data analysis, interpretation, and the findings.

The portfolio has been designed to collect students' learning products and records of achievement. Each product is supposed to be evaluated by students to determine a level of satisfaction.

(2) Assessment and evaluation are conducted through academic networks at regional, provincial and district levels focusing on primary and secondary school clusters. Key persons of secondary school clusters are trained to construct standard assessment tools for controlling educational quality of the school clusters.

2) Educational Quality Assessment

The national assessment programme has been undertaken on a 2 – year basis to assess the key learning outcomes of Grade 6, 9 and 12 students in some main subjects with a sample of schools. The *Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development* has reported the overall evaluation result by province, educational region and parent agencies of schools.

3) Educational Quality Assurance

The *Ministry of Education* has launched an initiative through the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development and other departments to improve the quality of education through quality assurance. The processes of educational quality assurance are (1) education quality control, (2) inspection, intervention, and review of educational quality, and (3) quality assessment for accreditation of educational institutions. The activities to be undertaken from 1998 – 2002 are as follows :

(1) Development of quality assurance processes :
- To develop the quality assurance system of the *MOE.*
- To develop the operation of quality assurance in educational institutions.
- To prepare guidebooks for quality assurance of educational institutions.
- To disseminate the concepts and operational guidelines to the key curriculum persons and pilot schools.

(2) Development of quality levels of learners in accordance with the learning content.

(3) Development of the systems for inspection, review and report of educational quality.

(4) Development of an evaluation system for the accreditation of educational institutions.

At present, the *MOE* policies on quality assurance are being implemented by the departments concerned. The *Department of Education of BMA* and the *Bureau of Local Education Administration* under the *Department of Local Administration* in *MOI* have also developed their assessment and evaluation system following the *MOE* 's guidelines for curriculum assessment and evaluation as well as standards for education provision.

Most of the internal evaluation has been conducted by the educational institutions and their parent agencies through quality assurance by using process of input development towards educational standards. Other methods and strategies have also been used. For example, supervision processes have been totally used by *ONPEC* as the core activities of inspection by parent agencies. Other departments such as the *Department of Non-Formal Education*, the *Department of Vocational Education* and *Rajamangala Institute of Technology* are planning to introduce ISO 9000 to the quality control and auditing processes of educational institutions.

However, the operation of most agencies is in a stage of development and conducting pilot projects, or being implemented in master schools. The exceptions are the *Department of Education of BMA* and the *Bureau of Local Education Administration* which indicate that all of their schools have conducted self-evaluation and have been evaluated by parent agencies. In addition, the *Office of the Private Education Commission* has already inspected and evaluated a number of private schools for accreditation for five years.

● **Ministry of University Affairs**

As regards the *Ministry of University Affairs,* the *Eighth Higher Education Development Plan (1997-2001)* has been formulated which includes the policy directives for improving the quality of higher education as follows :

- development of educational quality and standards,

- introduction of educational quality assurance mechanisms,

- development of standard curricula, and

- development of management efficiency and inspection systems.

In response to the Eighth Plan, the policies, principles and guidelines for quality assurance and accreditation in higher education have been announced by the *MUA.* The model for quality assurance of higher education has 3 components:

1) Internal quality control to be undertaken by each higher institution by controlling the quality of factors affecting the quality of graduates.

2) Quality auditing, an external quality assurance mechanism for controlling the quality of education provided by higher education institutions in accordance with the principles and guidelines stipulated by the *MUA.*

3) Quality assessment, with emphasis on assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of quality control system of higher education institutions.

Since the policies and implementation guidelines on quality assurance at higher education level have been introduced, the quality assurance system has been designed and accreditation standards and procedures have been developed through the following activities :

1) Three documents for the development of quality assurance systems for higher education institutions have been prepared to be used as guidelines for the implementation of internal quality assurance systems : 1) performance indicators, 2) self-study report, and 3) Auditing and Assessment of Quality Assurance Mechanism Handbook.

2) Four academic seminars have been organized to ensure higher education institutions are aware of the importance of quality assurance at higher education level.

3) Two sub-committees on quality assurance at higher education level have been established :

(1) Sub-committee on Accreditation of Higher Education

(2) Sub-committee on Development of Quality Assurance of Higher Education

The policies and guidelines on quality assurance and accreditation issued by the *MUA* have been implemented by all public universities. The principles and guidelines of quality assurance have been disseminated to university staff. Most higher education institutions have a clear and effective system for the promotion and follow-up of research and academic administration, continuous promotion and development of staff. Buildings, libraries and learning resources are promoted to be fully utilized with follow up and an evaluation system. The first training for external evaluators was organized in August 1999. The quality assurance and accreditation system initiated by the *MUA* is expected to be fully implemented by the year 2000 and the performance indicators will be used for budget allocation.

9.6 The Student – Loans Scheme

The student loans scheme in *Thailand* was established by the *Council of Ministers* in 1995 and came into effect in the academic year 1996. The major objective of the scheme was to enhance the opportunities of children and youth from low – income families to continue their studies through the upper secondary and higher levels of education. The more immediate aim was to lighten the parental burden of financing education, thus encouraging greater participation of poor children and youth in non-compulsory education. Moreover, the scheme would achieve broader social objectives by leading to greater equality of educational opportunity, improving life chances for the poor and enhancing social and economic equality.

The student loans scheme has been operated under the Student Loans Scheme Act promulgated in March 1998. Central control of the scheme lies with the Student Loans Scheme Committee (SLSC) under the *Ministry of Finance,* while the *Krung Thai Bank (KTB)* is responsible for banking arrangements. The policy and general working of the scheme as well as its overall supervision and monitoring are under the responsibility of SLSC. The *Ministry of Education* and *Ministry of University Affairs* are responsible for loans distribution to students in each educational institution.

According to the proposed technical assistance accompanying the *Asian Development Bank* loan, the student loans scheme is seen as a central policy instrument for reducing the incidence of student dropout resulting from the current economic crisis. In December 1999, after the *Ministry of Finance* decided to reduce educational loans to vocational students because several students who had been given loans failed to repay them, students representatives from private vocational schools across the country submitted a petition to the Prime Minister, calling on the government to recognise that the loan scheme is essential. Finally, the Asian Development Bank loan for the amount of 100 million Baht was set aside as grants for vocational school dropouts to help them further their studies.

In its third academic year of operation, the implementation of the scheme was reviewed by a research team from UNESCO-Bangkok as part of the *Asian Development Bank Social Sector Programme Loan.* Major findings of the report on "The Student Loans Scheme in Thailand : A Review and Recommendations for Efficient and Equitable Functioning of the Scheme" are as follows :

1) Coverage   The 300,000 borrowers target was exceeded in the second year of the scheme. It was planned originally to cover some 9 percent of enrolment at each level of education; the coverage of the scheme is far in excess of this. By 1998, overall coverage exceeded 20 percent of all enrolments, nearly 25 percent for secondary education and 15 percent at the higher level.

Coverage at *MOE* institutions is high compared with universities. The lowest level of coverage at *MOE* institutions is found at public general upper secondary schools, with the highest at Rajabhats. There is also a high level of coverage at private institutions, in comparison with coverage at parallel public institutions : about a third at private upper secondary schools and some 20 percent at private universities.

A central problem with the extensive coverage of the scheme is that growth in the number of borrowers has not been matched by increasing loans budgets. The loans budget for new borrowers is planned to remain fixed at six billion Baht, at least until the year 2001; this implies a declining level of total support in real terms. A fixed loans budget for new

borrowers, together with a growing demand for student loans, resulted in a drastic reduction in the loan size for new recipients in 1998.

2) Targeting The allocation of the loans budget by the Student Loans Scheme Committee (SLSC) to the *MUA* and the *MOE* , and the subsequent allocation of loans budgets down the line is largely arbitrary in terms of targeting needy students.

The *MOE* is stricter than the *MUA* in setting criteria for loans distribution, in terms of the upper limit put on applicants' household income, the maximum size of the loan and the purposes for which loans may be received. This leads to considerable inequalities in treatment, particularly of first degree students across the two ministries.

A Major strength of the present system lies in the successful targeting of the poor at educational institution level. However, the system lacks horizontal equity because of the lack of objective criteria in the allocation of loans budgets to institutions and the widely differing institutional loan distribution practices.

In terms of the reach of the scheme, about 35 percent of poor upper secondary school students were in receipt of loans in 1998; the vast majority of needy students (65 percent) were not. Of the total target population of poor children and youths, loans are received by only about a quarter of the ultimate target population.

As regards the effect on access and dropout prevention, about 30 percent of loan recipients said that they would drop out in the absence of a loan. It suggests that loans are effective in preventing discontinuation of studies among a significant proportion of current borrowers, though they represent a minority.

3) Finance   It was found that current repayment conditions imply that the typical borrower will return only about 20 percent of the loan received. Moreover, the expected burden of repayment is extremely light for the typical student. Annual repayments out of annual income will be in the range of 2 – 3.5 percent only. These calculations point to an overly generous loans scheme reflecting the central objective of the scheme to provide educational opportunities to students from poor families.

4) Proposed Reform of the Student Loans Scheme

A dual recommendation of the research team is that at the upper secondary level, the loans scheme would be replaced by a system of targeted scholarships. In parallel, the loans scheme would be retained for students at higher level institutions, but it would be radically reformed in the direction of improved targeting, the unification of loans conditions across all higher level institutions and improving the financial viability of the scheme through a hardening of repayment conditions.

In Sum, there has been a growing demand for reform of education in Thailand to keep up with the pace of change in the globalization era since the beginning of this decade. Many reform proposals have been initiated by all agencies concerned in the Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001). Although additional efforts have been made by the Government to improve the provision of education in all aspects, necessary educational changes that will facilitate economic and social development are still far from successful in the present education system which has been identified as an obstacle to the achievement of educational policies and programmes. There is, thus, a need for a radical comprehensive reform of education in Thailand.

Chapter 10

The National Education Act 1999 : Towards the New Century of Learning

Despite greater efforts to improve the provision of educational services in terms of both quantitative and qualitative aspects, there remain weaknesses in the education system preventing significant development of education and training in *Thailand.* Fortunately, the 1997 Constitution introduced challenging guidelines for educational development, particularly the enactment of the national education law. 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 in accord with the provisions in the Constitution. New initiatives and reforms outlined in the National Education Act 1999 and the implementation plan of the Act are presented below.

10.1 Essential Features of the National Education Act 1999

10.1.1 Ensuring Access to Basic Education for All
•All individuals will have equal rights and opportunities to receive basic education of quality and free of charge for at least 12 years.

•Special education will be made available to the disabled and the disadvantaged. Education for the disabled will be provided free of charge at birth or at first diagnosis.

•Education for gifted persons will be provided in appropriate forms according to their abilities.

•Education will be compulsory for 9 years form grade 1 to 9. Children aged 7 are required to enrol in basic education institutions until the age of 16, except those who have already completed Grade 9.

10.1.2 Reform of Curriculum and Learning Process
• Three types of education have been recognized : formal, non-formal, and informal. Credits accumulated by learners will be transferable within the same type or between different types of education, including experiences from non-formal or informal education, vocational training, or from work experience.

•Formal education is divided into two levels : basic education and higher education.

•Early childhood and basic education will be provided in early childhood development institutions, schools, and learning centres organized by non-formal education agencies.

•Higher education will be provided in universities, institutes, colleges or those under other names.

•Vocational education and occupational training will be provided in educational institutions belonging to the government or the private sector, enterprises, or those organized through cooperation of educational institutions and enterprises.

- The establishment and running of all types of lifelong learning sources will be promoted.

- Ministries, bureaus, departments, state enterprises, and other state agencies will be authorized to provide specialized education according to their needs and expertise.

- Core curricula for basic education will be prescribed by the Basic Education Commission. Basic education institutions will be responsible for prescribing curricular substance relating to needs of the community and the society, local wisdom and attributes of desirable members of the family, community, society, and nation.

- Curricula at all levels of education will be diversified, aiming at human development with a desirable balance regarding knowledge, critical thinking, capability, virtue and social responsibility. In addition, higher education curricula will emphasize academic development, with priority given to higher professions and research for the development of bodies of knowledge and society.

- The teaching - learning process will aim at enabling learners to develop themselves at their own pace and to the best of their potential.

- The provision of education will emphasize knowledge, morality, learning process and integration of the knowledge about oneself and the relationship between oneself and society; scientific and technological knowledge and skills; knowledge about religion, art, culture, sports, Thai wisdom, and the application of wisdom; knowledge and skills in mathematics and languages as well as in pursuing one's career and the ability of leading a happy life.

- In organizing the learning process, educational institutions and agencies concerned will

(1) provide substance and arrange activities in line with the learners' interest and aptitudes;

(2) provide training in thinking processes, management, and how to face various situations ;

(3) organize activities for learners to draw from actual experience;

(4) achieve a balanced integration of subject matter, integrity, values and desirable attributes;

(5) enable instructors to create the environment for learners to learn, to be able to benefit from research as part of the learning process; and

(6) enable learning to occur at all times and in all places.

- Educational institutions will develop effective learning processes and will assess learners' performance through observation of their development, personal conduct, learning behaviour, participation in activities and results of the tests. Instructors will also be encouraged to carry out research for developing suitable learning.

- A variety of methods will be used for providing opportunities for further education, and learners' performance will be taken into consideration.

10.1.3 Encouraging Participation and Partnership in Education

- Other than the State, private persons and local administration organizations, individuals, families, community organizations, private organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises and other social institutions will have the right to provide basic education. They will be given government support and grants, tax rebates or exemptions in bringing up children and providing basic education.

- Educational institutions in cooperation with all sectors of society will contribute to strengthening the communities by encouraging learning in the communities themselves.

• As providers and partners in educational provision, individuals, families, communities, local administration organizations, private persons, private organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, and other social institutions will mobilize resources, donate properties and other resources to educational institutions and also share educational expenditures.

The Government and local administration organizations will encourage and provide incentives for mobilization of these resources by promoting, providing support and applying tax rebate or tax exemption measures as appropriate and when necessary.

• Private education institutions are allowed to provide education at all levels and of all types. The Government will define clear – cut policies and measures regarding participation of the private sector in the provision of education.

10.1.4 Restructuring of Educational Administrative Structure

A. Public Educational Administration and Management

Public education will be administered and managed at three levels aiming at decentralization of authority to local organizations and educational institutions as follows:

1) At the National level

The Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture will be established within 3 years to oversee all levels and types of education, religion, art and culture; formulate education policies, plans and standards; and mobilize resources for education. It will also take charge of monitoring and performance evaluation of the Ministry.

The new Ministry will consist of four organizations as follows:

(1)National Council for Education, Religion and Culture will be responsible for proposing national education policies, plans and standards; policies and plans for religious , artistic and cultural affairs; mobilization of resources; evaluation of the provision of education; assessment of management of religious, artistic and cultural affairs; as well as scrutinizing various laws and ministerial regulations.

(2)The Commission for Basic Education will be responsible for proposing policies, development plans, standards and core curricula for basic education in line with the National Scheme for Education, Religion, Art and Culture; mobilization of resources; monitoring; inspection; and evaluation of basic education provision.

(3)The Commission for Higher Education will take charge of proposing policies, development plans and standards for higher education in line with the National Scheme of Education, Religion, Art and Culture; mobilization of resources; monitoring; inspection and evaluation of the provision of higher education.

(4)The Commission on Religion and Culture will be responsible for proposing policies and development plans for religion, art and culture in accord with the National Scheme for Education, Religion, Art and Culture; mobilization of resources, monitoring, inspection, and evaluation of work in the fields of religion, art and culture.

2) At the Level of Educational Service Area

• The administration and management of basic education and higher education at lower-than-degree level will be based on the educational service areas, taking

into consideration the number of educational institutions and the size of population as well as other appropriate criteria.

      • In each educational service area, there will be an Area Committee for Education, Religion and Culture and its Office to take charge of overseeing educational institutions at the basic and lower-than-degree levels; establishment, dissolution, amalgamation or discontinuance of educational institutions; promotion and support for local private educational institutions, local administration organizations, education provided by individuals, families, community and private organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises and other social institutions, as well as overseeing the units responsible for religious, artistic and cultural affairs in the area.

      • The Area Committee will be comprised of representatives of community, private and local administration organizations; teacher and educational administrator associations; parent-teacher associations; religious leaders; and scholars in education, religion, art and culture. The director of the Office for Education, Religion and Culture of the educational service area will serve as a member and secretary of the Committee.

3) At the Educational Institution Level

      • In each institution providing basic education and that of lower-than-degree level, there will be a board supervising and supporting the management of the institution. The board will comprise representatives of parents; those of teachers, community and local administration organizations, alumni of the institution and scholars. The administrator of the educational institution will serve as a member and secretary of its board.

      • The Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture will decentralize authority in educational administration and management regarding academic matters, budget, personnel and general administration directly to the Committees and Offices of the educational service areas and the educational institutions in the areas.

B. Educational Administration and Management by Local Administration Organizations

Local administration organizations will have the right to provide education at all levels according to readiness, suitability and requirements of the local areas. The Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture will prescribe the criteria and procedure for assessing the readiness to provide education of the local administration organizations and will coordinate and promote the capability of those organizations to provide education in line with the policies and standard required. It will also advise on the budgetary allocations for education provided by those organizations.

C. Educational Administration and Management by the Private Sector

      • Education by the private sector will be administered and managed independently with the government 's overseeing, monitoring and assessment of educational quality and standards following the same rules for assessment as those for public institutions.

      • Private education institutions will establish their own boards comprising private education administrators, representatives of parents, those of teachers and alumni, and scholars.

      • Effects on private education will be considered in formulating policies and implementing plans of education provided by the government, educational service areas or local administration organizations.

      • Private institutions providing education at degree level will be allowed to function with freedom, develop their own system of administration and management,

flexibility, and academic freedom. They will be under the supervision of their own council according to the Act on Private Higher Education Institutions.

• The government will provide support in terms of grants, tax rebates or exemptions and other benefits as well as academic support to private education institutions.

10.1.5 Enhancing Educational Standards and Quality Assurance

•There will be a system of educational quality assurance to ensure improvement of educational quality and standards at all levels, comprising of both internal and external quality assurance.

•Quality assurance systems will be established in educational institutions as part of educational administration which must be a continuous process. Annual reports of each educational institution must be submitted to parent organizations, agencies concerned and made available to the public and external quality assurance.

•An Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment will be established as a public organization responsible for the development of criteria and methods of external evaluation.

•All educational institutions will receive external quality evaluation at least once every five years. The evaluation results will be submitted to the relevant agencies and made available to the public.

•In cases where the results of the external evaluation reveal that an educational institution has not reached the standards required, the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment will recommend measures for that institution to improve its functions. If those measures are not implemented, the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment will report to the Commission for Basic Education or the Commission for Higher Education so that necessary remedial action can be taken.

10.1.6 Reform of Teachers, Faculty Staff, and Educational Personnel

•The Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture will promote the development of a system, including production and refinement, for teachers and educational personnel so that teaching will become a highly respected profession.

•An Organization for Teachers and Educational Administrators will be established as an independent body administered by a professional council under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture. It will be responsible for setting professional standards; issuing and withdrawal of licenses; overseeing maintenance of professional standards and ethics; and development of the profession of teachers and educational administrators.

•Teachers, administrators of educational institutions, educational administrators and other educational personnel of both the public and private sector, with the exception of faculty staff, educational institution administrators and educational administrators for higher education at degree level, are required to have professional licenses. This will not include those providing informal education and education organized in learning centres, administrators at the educational levels above education service areas, and specialized resource persons.

•There will be a central organization responsible for administering personnel affairs of teachers. All teachers and educational personnel will be civil servants under this

organization. The personnel administration will be decentralized to educational service areas and institutions.

•There will be a law with regard to salaries, remuneration, welfare and other benefits for teachers and educational personnel.

•A Fund for Promotion and Development of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel will be established to be used for grants for innovations, outstanding achievements and rewards to teachers, faculty staff and teaching personnel. Sufficient funds will also be allocated for establishing the Fund for Development of Teachers, Faculty Staff, and Educational Personnel.

10.1.7 Mobilization of Resources and Investment for Education

•Resources and investment for education in terms of budgetary allocation, financial support and properties will be mobilized from the government, local administration organizations, individuals, families, communities, community organizations, private sector, professional bodies, religious institutions, other social institutions, and foreign countries.

•The government and local administration organizations will be authorized to levy educational taxes as appropriate.

•Public educational institutions will be empowered to take charge of, oversee, maintain, utilize and earn interest from their properties, earn income from their services and charge tuition fees.

•The government will be responsible for distribution of general subsidies for per head expenditure of those receiving compulsory and basic education provided by the government and the private sector.

•Grants will be distributed in terms of loans for those from low-income families.

•Budgetary allocations and other special resources will be distributed for educational provision for those with special needs.

•General subsidies will be allocated for public degree-level institutions which are legal entities and are state-supervised or public organizations.

•Low-interest loans will be distributed to private educational institutions.

•The State and Private Education Development Fund will be established.

•Government subsidies will be distributed for education provided by individuals, families, communities, community organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises and other social institutions.

•There will be a system for auditing, following-up and the evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness in utilization of the educational budget.

10.1.8 Utilization of Technologies for Education

•The government must arrange for radio broadcasting, television, telecommunication radio and other media of communication for use in provision of education.

•The government will promote and support the production and refinement of textbooks, other publications, materials and technologies for education by ensuring fair competition.

•Steps will be taken for the development of both producers and users of technologies for education.

•Learners will have the right to develop their technological capabilities for acquiring knowledge.

•The government will promote research and development , production and refinement of technologies for education.

•The Technology for Education Development Fund will be established through mobilization of resources.

•A central unit will be established to take charge of proposing policies, plans, promotion and coordination of research, development and utilization of technologies for education.

10.2 Implementation of the National Education Act 1999

Following the promulgation of the National Education Act 1999, all agencies concerned are required to take the following action as provided by the Act including its transitory provisions.

1. Action to be taken immediately :

1.1 Establishment of an Education Reform Office as an ad hoc public organization by virtue of a royal decree as provided by the Public Organizations Act, with a nine-member Executive Committee of the Education Reform Office.

The Executive Committee is composed of a chairperson and members appointed by the *Council of Ministers* from among those with knowledge, capability, experience and expertise in educational administration; state affairs administration, personnel administration; budgetary, monetary, and financial systems; public laws; and educational laws.

The Secretary - General of the *Education Reform Office* will serve as a member and secretary of the Executive Committee. Both the Executive Committee and the Secretary – General will have a single term of office of three years, at the end of which their tenures will be terminated and the *Education Reform Office* will be dissolved.

The responsibilities of the *Education Reform Office* are to :

• propose the structures, organs and division of responsibilities as provided

   in Chapter 5 of the Act ;

• propose systems of teachers, faculty staff, and educational personnel ;

• propose mobilization of educational resources and investment ;

• submit proposals to the *Council of Ministers* regarding the necessary

   bills ;

• submit to the *Council of Ministers* proposals regarding amendments to

   legislations, rules, regulations, statutes and orders ; and

• carry out other functions as provided by the Public Organizations Act.

1.2   Establishment of a fifteen – member Nominations Committee for the *Executive Committee of the Education Reform Office* to propose twice the number of the chairperson and members of the Executive Committee from among those qualified for submission to the *Council of Ministers* for appointment.

2. Actions to be taken within one year of the enactment date (by 20 August 2000)

2.1 Issuance of the ministerial regulations to differentiate the levels and types of basic education.

2.2 Issuance of the ministerial regulations for differentiation or equivalence of the various levels of non-formal or informal education.

3. Actions to be taken within three years of the enactment date (by 20 August 2002)

3.1 Educational rights and duties :

1) All individuals will have equal rights and opportunities to receive basic education provided by the State free of charge for at least 12 years.

2) Education will be compulsory for 9 years, requiring children aged 7 to enrol in basic education institutions until the age of 16 with the exception of those who have already completed grade 9.

3.2 Educational Administration and Management

1) Mergence of the *Ministry of Education, Ministry of University Affairs,* and the *Office of the National Education Commission* to be established as the *Ministry of Education, Religion, and Culture.*

2) Establishment of an *Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment* as a public organization.

3) Establishment of the *National Council for Education, Religion, and Culture; Commission Basic for Education; Commission for Higher Education; and Commission for Religion and Culture.* Their secretariat offices will be established as legal entities.

4) The state educational institutions providing education at degree level will be legal entities and enjoy the status of government or state-supervised agencies except those providing specialized education.

5) The administration and management of basic education and higher education at lower – than – degree level will be based on the educational service areas.

6) Decentralization of educational administration and management.

7) Educational administration and management by local administration organizations.

8) Educational administration and management by the private sector.

3.3 Development of a system, including production and further refinement, for teachers and educational personnel.

1) Establishment of the *Fund for Development of Teachers, Faculty Staff, and Educational Personnel.*

2) Establishment of an *Organization for Teachers, Educational Institution Administrators, and Educational Administrators* as an independent body administered by a professional council under the supervision of the *Ministry of Education, Religion, and Culture.*

3) Establishment of a central organization responsible for administering personnel affairs of teachers.

4) Provision of a law on salaries, remuneration, welfare and other benefits.

5) Amendments of the Teachers Act 1945 and Teachers Civil Service Act 1978.

4. Actions to be taken within five years of the enactment date (by 20 August 2004)

• Amendments of all legislations, rules, regulations, statutes, announcements, and orders pertaining to education, religion, art, and culture applicable on the enactment date of the National Education Act 1999 to be in line with the Act.

5. Actions to be taken within six years of the enactment date (by 20 August 2005)

• The *Ministry of Education, Religion, and Culture* will have completed the first round of external evaluation of all educational institutions.

In conclusion, the first National Education Act 1999 is paving the way for true comprehensive reform of education in Thailand. The Act has introduced new initiatives and reforms of Thai education which has been moving into a new era of national education in the 21ˢᵗ century. The next important step to be taken is the implementation of educational reform in accord with the National Education Act.

Chapter 11

Strategies and Plans for Educational Reform

The enactment of the National Education Act 1999 to serve as the master legislation on education in *Thailand* has introduced a nationwide comprehensive reform of education. Preparations for the implementation of educational reform have been made by all agencies concerned in parallel to the drafting process and deliberations of the Act.

The *Office of the National Education Commission* which is the main body responsible for the implementation of the National Education Act has made various studies for effective strategies for educational reform through the Committee on Strategic Planning for Education Reform appointed by the National Education Commission. Currently, major strategies used for the implementation of educational reform are : 1)consultations with ad-hoc committees and experts or through surveys and public hearings; 2) communications through various types of media i.e. newspapers, radio and television; and 3) networking of all concerned parties including the general public in order to mobilize cooperation and resources for reform.

The Committee on Reform of Educational Administrative System and the Committee on Learning Reform have also been established to make preparations for the implementation of the National Education Act. Major tasks following the guidelines of the Act are the reform of educational administrative structure, the reform of learning, and legal measures.

11.1 Reform of Educational Administrative Structure and Management

In accordance with the provisions of the National Education Commission Act, various steps will be taken to implement the reform of educational administrative structure on the principle of decentralization of authority to educational service areas, educational institutions, and local administration organizations. In this connection, an *Education Reform Office* will be established as provided in Section 75 to take the responsibility of making the reform proposals of educational administration and management in terms of general administration, budget, personnel and academic decentralization.

In carrying out the mission of the reform of educational administrative structure, the Committee on Reform of the Educational Administrative System, Personnel and Investment for Education has formulated the implementation plan for reform of the educational administrative system, personnel and investment for education as well as the implementation plan for decentralization of educational administration and management to local administration authorities as presented below.

1) Restructuring the administrative system :
- Downsizing the central body through mergence of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of University Affairs, and the Office of the National Education Commission to be established as the Ministry of Education, Religion and Culture.

- Establishment of four bodies under the new Ministry
  of Education, Religion, and Culture :
  - (1) The Office of the National Council for Education, Religion, and Culture ;
  - (2) The Office of the Commission for Basic Education ;
  - (3) The Office of the Commission for Higher Education ; and
  - (4) The Office of the Commission on Religion and Culture.

- Delineation of educational service areas throughout the country.
- Decentralization of administration and management
  authorities to educational service areas and
  educational institutions.

2) Personnel management reform : teachers, faculty staff, and
   other educational personnel :
   - Establishment of a Professional Organization for
     Teachers, Educational Institutions Administrators,
     and Educational Aministrators,
   - Issuing of licenses for teachers and educational
     administrators, Establishment of a central
     organization responsible for administering
     personnel affairs of teachers and system management
     of personnel administration at basic education level,
   - Establishment of a central organization responsible
     for administering personnel affairs and system
     management of personnel administration at higher
     education level,
   - Setting of salaries, remuneration, and welfare for
     teachers and educational personnel, and
   - Establishing a Fund for Development of Teachers,
     Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel.

3) Reform of educational finance and investment for
   education :
   - Develop a new system of financing basic and higher
     education,
   - Provide incentives for mobilization of resources
     through tax rebate or tax exemption measures,
   - Decentralization of fiscal management to educational
     service areas and institutions, and
   - Develop a system for auditing, monitoring and
     evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness in
     utilization of the educational budget : preparation of
     accounting and information systems for educational
     institutions.

Major activities to be conducted for the implementation of the above action plans are :

1) Study of the body of knowledge relating to the reform of educational administrative systems, personnel and investment for education.

2)   Preparation of necessary data base e.g. information on educational personnel at district and provincial levels including administrators and teachers, different organizations in educational service areas with representatives in the composition of the Area Committee for Education, Religion and Culture.

3)   Conducting research and development pilot projects e.g. the pilot project on the decentralization of educational administrative and management authorities of basic education to educational service areas and educational institutions.

The main objective of these activities is to prepare necessary information for the Executive Committee of the Education Reform Office after the Office is completely established.

11.2 Reform of Learning

Central to educational reform in accordance with the National Education Act is the reform of learning which can be implemented immediately without required regulations. In carrying out this task, the Committee on Learning Reform chaired by Professor of Medicine Emeritus Dr. Prawase Wasi, a prominent scholar and member of the *National Education Commission,* has the responsibility to propose the reform strategies and plan to ensure their successful implementation.

A. Learning Reform Strategies

During the first meeting of the Committee on Learning Reform, a strategic model for reform of learning was proposed by Professor Dr. Prawase Wasi. He pointed out that it was primarily necessary to understand the concept and vision of future learning as stipulated in the National Education Act and communicated it to a network of the institutes for research and development on learning. The implementing units would then pass on the body of knowledge acquired from the institutes to educational institutions. Importantly, it would be necessary to have a supporting fund to push the reform ahead.

Based on the model of learning reform proposed by Professor Dr. Prawase Wasi, the strategies of learning reform have been developed   as presented below.

1) Formulation of Conceptual Framework of Learning for the New Century

The concept of learning and the desirable characteristics of future learners has been designed. When learning vision involving the roles of teachers, media and the whole context of learning is available, the master plan of learning process reform will have been formulated. After that, consultation will be undertaken to ask for suggestions and advice from various groups of people through meetings, seminars and public hearings. This will encourage participation from different groups so that acceptable conclusions will be reached.

The vision of learning characteristics agreed by the majority will be made public through posters and publications. The learning vision announced by the National Institute for Learning Reform will provide information regarding desirable characteristics of the Thai people and the learning process.

2) Establishment of the National Institute for Learning Reform

To ensure the successful implementation of learning reform which is an important and complicated issue, the National Institute for Learning Reform has been

Chart 11.1 Mission of Educational Administration Reform

Restructuring the administrative system
- Central level
- Educational service area
- Educational institution

Personnel management reform : teachers, faculty sta and educational personnel

Reform of educational finance and investment for education

Research

Develop data base

Organizational structures at central, educational service area and institution levels

Personnel administration system

Resource mobilization

Resource management

Follow up on resource utilization

Research

Develop data base

Prepare a draft of
- Organizational structures at central, educational service area and institution levels
- Personnel administration
- Administration and management of resources and investment

Office of the Independent Public Organization

Make preparations and conduct pilot projects in 12 areas
- Make preparations (prepare a guide / training curriculum and provide training to persons involved
- Conduct pilot projects on administration and managment at educational service area / institution levels
- Follow - up / evaluation

Submit to committees involved / Cabinet

Preparation / amendment of laws, ministerial regulations / rules
- Organizational structures
- Personnel administration
- Administration and managment of resource and

Submit to committees involved / Cabinet

Announce in Government Gazette

Preparation / amendment of laws

Study and analyze related legislations, ministerial regulations / rules

established to take the responsibility of promoting and supporting research and coordinating reform of learning throughout the country. The Institute has been developed from the National Institute for the Development of Learning under the *ONEC* as mentioned in Chapter 9.

3) Establishment of Research and Development Network

A network of research and development institutes is essential for the success of learning reform. With the support from *ONEC*, the Research and Development Centre will be established in schools, faculties of education and other educational institutes. The research and development institutes will cooperate with schools, teachers and students in developing learning models. Currently, at least three networks for reform of learning have been promoted and supported by *ONEC* :   1) the constructionism learning network of Suksapattana Foundation conducting the Lighthouse Project which adopts a concept of constructionism developed by MIT's Professor Seymour Papert,   2) the network of Srinakharinwirot University Research and Development Institute which includes various types of schools in conducting research and development on their learning models, and 3) the research and development network of Kasetsart University with its learning model being operated in various schools.

1) Establishment of a Network for Reform of Teachers and Educational Institutions

At the school level, each school is regarded as a node that can develop its own learning models. Apart from the responsibility for development of an effective teaching – learning process, the educational institutions must play a role in promoting their teaching staff to be able to conduct research for the development of learning appropriate for learners at each level of education. Being a learning node, each educational institution can provide training, supervision, and assistance to other schools. Announcements will be made to inform all which schools are nodes for learning reform. This learning network will be rapidly expanded throughout the country. It is expected to reach 40,000 schools within 3 years i.e. by 2002.

2) Support for Supervision Training of Research Institutes / Reform Networks

Any school organizing learning activities for members of its network will be granted financial support for school – based training or supervision. The R & D units will cooperate with or provide assistance to the schools.
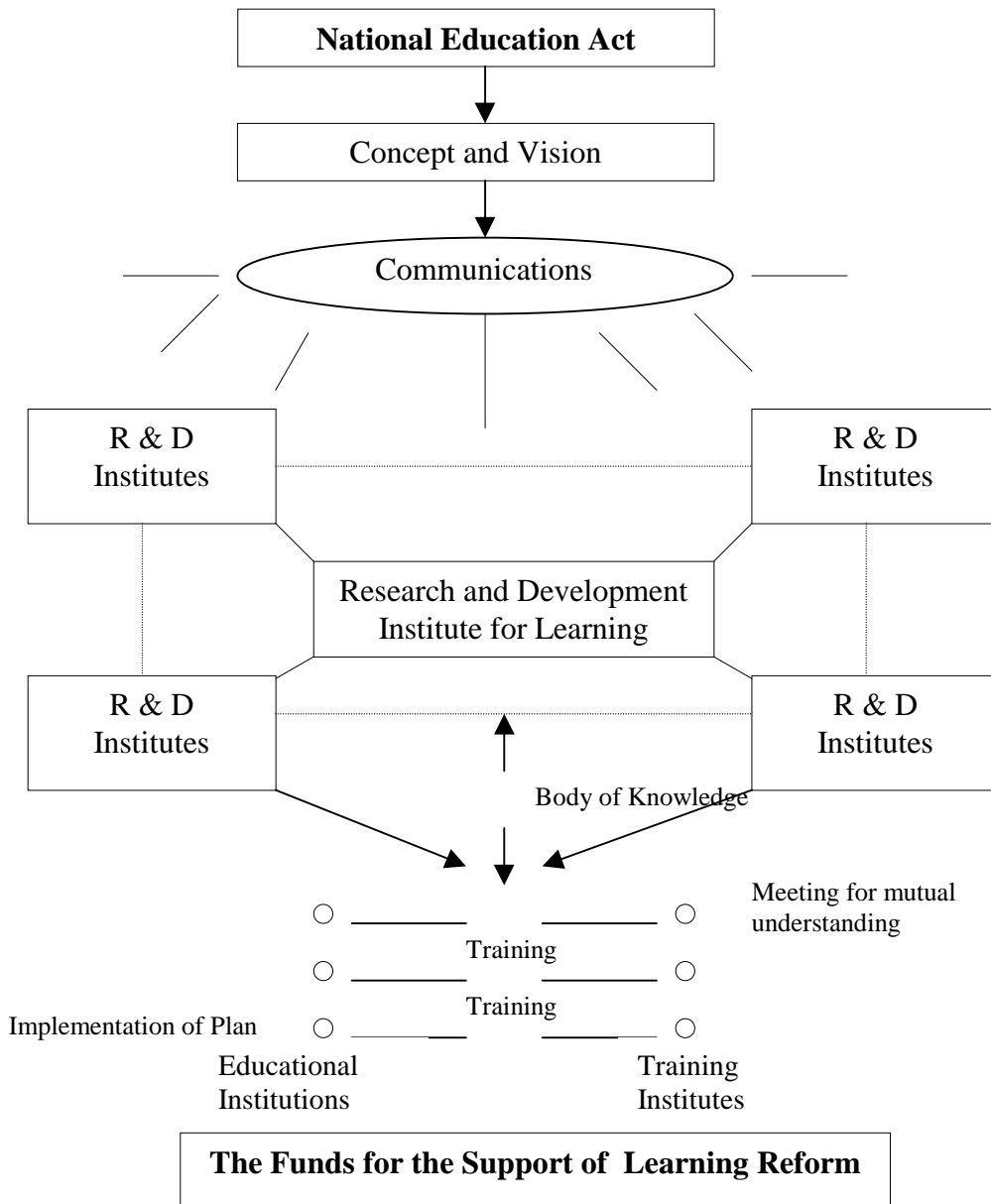
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Research and Development
Institute for Learning

R & D Institutes

R & D Institutes

R & D Institutes

R & D Institutes

Body of Knowledge

Meeting for mutual understanding

Training

Training

Implementation of Plan

Educational Institutions

Training Institutes

The Funds for the Support of Learning Reform

Figure 11.2   A Strategic Model for Learning Reform

6) Seminars / Communications

Central to the success of learning reform is the public relations strategy to inform parents and students about operational guidelines of the National Institute for Learning Reform. The public relations strategy must involve various forms of media, such as publications as well as radio and television for reform of learning, with at least a 1-2 hour programme to communicate with the public everyday.

7) Evaluation and Assessment

Without the reform of assessment, it is rather different to achieve learning reform. All agencies must conduct a complete evaluation of educational quality throughout

four stages : **Plan, Do, Check and Action (PDCA)**. The PDCA process will be followed within one academic year for some issues, while for others it may be done within one semester or one month in order to reflect all stages of implementation.

8) Learning Reform Symposium

A national and several regional symposiums on learning reform will be organized every year to allow researchers to present their findings on learning reform. Prior to a national symposium, those at regional level will be organized in cooperation with educational research and development networks as an attempt to make this issue into a national agenda.

9) Establishment of Funds for Support of Learning Reform

Some of the R & D Centres of Learning Reform have currently been financially supported by *ONEC*. However, a "Learning Reform Fund" will be established by the Committee on Learning Reform in order to encourage teachers to change their teaching behaviour from teacher – centred to student – centred.

In addition, *ONEC* will establish the "Teacher Promotion Fund" to take further responsibility for the selection and rewarding of National Teachers and Master Teachers. The promotion of teachers will be tied with the system of teachers' licenses and the monetary incentives to be provided by the new salary scale especially designed for teachers.

10) Recognition / Rewarding

As mentioned in Chapter 9, the National Teachers and Master Teachers, rewarded through highly selective and competitive screening process, have been highly recognized by scholars, teachers and all concerned. The *Ministry of Education* has accepted the idea of learning reform through the roles of National Teachers and Master Teachers. Teachers who are likely to change their teaching behaviour under the child – centred concept will be selected as the so – called "Spearhead Teachers." They will attend workshops on child – centred learning, under the supervision of national teachers and master teachers. It is expected that about 30,000 teachers will have participated in the workshops by 1999. While implementing their teaching style, these spearhead teachers will also expand their methodology to their network of ten teachers. Thus, within two years, approximately 600,000 teachers will be transformed to be "Teachers of the new Millennium." These teachers will be agents of change for learning reform in schools all over the country.

B. Implementation Plan for Learning Reform

The Committee on Learning Reform has formulated an implementation plan for the reform of learning for the year 1999 – 2000 as presented below.

1. Formulation of conceptual framework and learning vision :
    1.1 Preparation of a draft of conceptual framework and learning   vision ;
    1.2 Organizing a meeting for consultation with distinguished scholars, parents, children and youth; and
    1.3 Conducting a poll.

2. Development and promotion of SpearheadTeachers in cooperation with the MOE :
    2.1 Synthesizing the characteristics of Master Teachers/ National Teachers ;

2.2 Synthesizing the teaching methods of Master Teachers/ National Teachers ;

2.3 Selection of Spearhead Teachers in cooperation with the MOE ;

2.4 Production of teaching media concerning organization of learning process ;

2.5 Encouraging Spearhead Teachers, Master Teachers and National Teachers to exchange their learning ; and

2.6 Multiplication of Spearhead Teachers to all provinces.

3. Communications for public relations :

3.1 Preparation of contents on learning process ;

3.2 Dissemination of contents to various types of media ;

3.3 Production of video tapes on teaching models ; and

3.4 Provision of Learning Clinic on television.

4. Organization of national and regional academic symposiums.

5. Establishment of a Network of Research and Development Institutes :

5.1 Organizing a meeting to clarify the framework/concepts ;

5.2 Submission of proposals by institutes/organizations ; and

5.3 Consideration of proposals.

6. Establishment of a Fund for Support of Learning Reform.

7. Recognition and rewarding of individuals/agencies for their success in learning reform.

8. Follow – up and evaluation.

11.3 Legal Measures for Educational Reform

As stipulated in the National Education Act 1999, a number of legislations and regulations need preparation and / or amendment as follows.

- **Preparation on New Legislations**
  1) Nine-year Compulsory Education Act
  2) Vocational Education and Training Act
  3) The Act on Salaries, Remuneration, Welfare and Benefits for Teachers and Educational Personnel
  4) The Act on Salaries, Remuneration, Welfare and Benefits for Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel
  5) The Act on Bureaucratic Practice of the Ministry of Education, Religion, and Culture.

- **Amendment of Laws**
  1) Private School Act 1982
  2) Private Higher Education Institution Act 1992
  3) Teachers Act 1945
  4) Teachers Civil Service Act 1980, Revised in 1995
  5) University Civil Service Act 1964
  6) Ministerial and Departmental Improvement Act 1991, in order to establish :
     - the Ministry of Education, Religion, and Culture;

● Four Offices for the National Council for Education, Religion, and Culture; the Commission for Basic Education; the Commission for Higher Education; and the Commission on Religion and Culture.

● **Preparation of Royal Decrees**
   1) Royal Decree on Establishment of the Education Reform Office
   2) Royal Decree on Establishment of Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment

● **Preparation of Ministerial regulations**
   1) Ministerial Regulations on Education for the Disabled
   2) Ministerial Regulations on the Rights to Provide Basic Education
   3) Ministerial Regulations on Differentiation of Levels and Types of Basic Education
   4) Ministerial Regulations on Differentiation of Levels or Equivalency of Non-formal or Informal Education
   5) Ministerial Regulations on Criteria and Methods of Calculating Children's Age for Compulsory Education
   6) Ministerial Regulations on Criteria and Conditions for Provision of Specialized Education
   7) Ministerial Regulations on Selection of the Chairperson and Members of the Committee for Area Education, Religion, and Culture
   8) Ministerial Regulations on Decentralization of Educational Administration and Management
   9) Ministerial Regulations on Qualifications, Criteria, Nomination Procedure, Selection of Chairperson and Members of the Boards of Institutions at Basic Education and Lower – than – Degree Levels.
   10) Ministerial Regulations on Boards of Private Education Institutions
   11) Ministerial Regulations on the System of Educational Quality Assurance
   12) Ministerial Regulations on the Fund for Promotion and Development of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel
   13) Ministerial Regulations on Distribution of Budgetary Allocations and Educational Resources for Persons with Special Needs
   14) Ministerial Regulations on the Criteria and Procedures for the Auditing, Follow – up, and Evaluation of Educational Budgetary Allocations
   15) Ministerial Regulations on the Criteria and Procedures for Distribution of the Fund for the Production, Research and Development of Technologies for Education

● **Announcements**
   1) Announcement on Delineation of Educational Service Areas
   2) Announcement on the Criteria and Procedures for Assessing the Readiness of Local Administration Organizations to Provide Education.

● **Preparation of Rules**
   1) Ministry of Finance's rules on granting permission to educational institutions not being legal entities to utilize their income and interest.

- **Preparation of By - Laws**
  1) By – Law on Establishment of the Fund for Development of Teachers, Faculty Staff, and Educational Personnel
  2) By – Law on Establishment of the Fund for Promotion and Development of Teachers, Faculty Staff and Educational Personnel
  3) By – Law on Establishment of Loans for those from Low – Income Families
  4) By – Law on Establishment of Low – Interest Loans for Private Educational Institutions
  5) By – Law on Establishment of the State and Private Education Development Fund
  6) By – Law on Establishment of the Technology for Education Development Fund

- **Submission of Recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Education Reform Office for Amendment of Laws**
  1) The National Education Commission Act 1992 will be amended as the National Council for Education, Religion, and Culuture Act.
  2) The Act on Bureaucratic Practice of the Ministry of University Affairs 1997 (Revised in 1994) will be amended as Commission for Higher Education Act
  3) The National Culture Commission Act 1979 (Revised in 1992) will be amended as the Commission on Religion and Culture Act
  4) The National Primary Education Commission Act 1980 (Revised in 1992) will be amended as the Commission for Basic Education Act.