

THAILAND CLCs

Lifelong Learning for All through CLCs

1. Efficient Literacy Programme in Thailand

1.1 Developing the Curriculum for Thai Language Literacy Promotion B.E. 2555 (2012)

Basic Information of the Programme

The survey conducted by ONIE of Thailand's workforce population reveals that illiteracy accounts for over 200,000 of the total population aged between 15 and 59 years. This fact therefore prompts the agencies concerned to develop the Thai Language Literacy Curriculum as a core curriculum for all three target groups: 1) the illiterates; 2) people with limited literacy due to the lack of continuous practice and then resulting in literacy collapse; and 3) people interested in learning Thai language for communicative purposes.

1.2 Innovative Points of the Programme, Linking to Lifelong Learning

Development Principles

- Focusing on Thai language learning that is integrated with social needs and problems and is in harmony with present-day lifestyles
- Allowing flexibility in terms of contents, study time and methods, materials, learning resources, and measurement and evaluation methodology, with an emphasis on personalised development for each individual learner
- Offering learners an opportunity to share their knowledge and experience, in accordance with "Khit-pen"

Philosophy (literally, appropriate thinking) and encouraging active participation from learners, families, communities and societies to exchange and provide valuable knowledge and information in terms of lifelong learning

Curriculum Design

The contents of Thai language literacy curriculum comprise 800 words of basic vocabulary in everyday situations - integrating spoken and written language skills with the use of consonants, vowels, tones, syllables, words and sentences; as well as basic calculation. These contents, contained in at least 12 lessons, reflect the learning scenarios that suit learners' way of life. Whereas Lesson 1, revolving around the Monarchy, is compulsory for every learner, Lessons 2 – 12 lie at the discretion of the educational establishments either to choose from the pre-determined contents or to introduce the newly-developed ones as appropriate to their learners. Learners are also required to acquire Thai language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and basic vocabulary for everyday life) through at least 200 hours of study.

Indicators

- Being able to listen, speak, read and write (words and sentences) with full understanding as well as to explain and to express ideas and feelings in various situations
- Being able to read and write Thai and Arabic numbers, to count and to perform basic calculation (adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing) for daily use

1.3 Challenge Lesson Learnt from the Programme

Under the National Education Reform, Thailand offers lifelong learning opportunities to her people through the non-formal and informal education processes. In this light, the country has determinedly and continuously developed the following methods and guidelines for promoting lifelong learning for all to keep pace with the changing scenario of today's societies.

Given that, CLC facilitators and NFE volunteers are therefore very important to all sub-district NIE centres and CLCs, we then try our best to select them from highly skilled and public-spirited persons, with a strong will to work for the social cause of education. Following pre-employment training, these paid volunteers are appointed and tasked with the following responsibilities: 1) Reporting the learning needs of people in the community to the government agencies concerned; 2) Publicising state news and information to ensure people's access to useful information and education, particularly under the role of resource person; 3) Co-organising NIE activities; 4) Assisting CLC facilitators in monitoring and supervising community learning activities; and 5) Collecting basic data on education of people in their respective communities. These rather hard assignments are still their tough responsibilities and still need improvement and determined will to do their work to achieve the ultimate goals as set by ONIE.

2. New Trends and Innovations to Reduce Poverty in Thailand

2.1 Sub-District NIE Centre Project

In the light of ONIE's vision statement, it is envisaged that "The people of Thailand will enjoy universal and equitable access to life-long education and employment-oriented vocational

education, anywhere and anytime, so as to achieve a knowledge-based society as well as sustainable employment.”

ONIE plays a crucial role in MOE’s Second-Decade Education Reform by expediting the provision of non-formal and informal education to the general public, allowing them an equal opportunity to learn and progress. One of its notable policies is the establishment of Sub-District Non-Formal and Informal Education Centres as a “learning hub” at a sub-district level. With a goal to provide every Thai citizen with quality life-long education, these sub-district NIE centres are equipped with state-of-the-art tools and media as well as the following key features:

- **NFE Facilities.** Sub-district NIE centres can share underutilised facilities owned by other MOE agencies in some villages/sub-districts, and with sufficient budgets in the future may have their own facilities constructed.
- **Trained personnel.** Each sub-district NIE centre is staffed with 1-5 trained CLC facilitators to promote and provide non-formal and informal education.
- **Equipment and Learning Media.** Sub-district NIE centres are equipped with state-of-the-art equipment, such as computers with high-speed Internet and satellite television sets, to facilitate learning through educational technologies. In addition, a small reading corner is available to make the centre an ideal place and a learning source for everybody to learn.
- **Learning Network.** Sub-district NIE centres will form a learning network, together with other institutions in the community, such as local administration organisations, community leaders, schools, community hospitals and

Buddhist temples. Also, to ensure optimum efficiency of its non-formal education activities, the centres form NFE volunteers drawn from public-spirited people in the community.

- **Hub of resource persons.** A resource person hub is founded in each sub-district with cooperation from local experts and local wisdom teachers in the community, who share a role in educating learners.
- **Need-based education.** People in each sub-district receive quality education specifically tailored to suit individuals' needs.
- **Innovative learning activities.** Learning innovations are invented to pave way for the centre's quick and concrete achievement as the sub-district centre for lifelong learning.

2.2 Innovations and New Approaches through CLC to Reduce Poverty

To reach the goal of continued lifelong learning in the community, CLC facilitators will jointly organise learning activities for sub-district NIE centres, with local network parties, including organisations in the public and private sectors, volunteers affiliated with government agencies in the community (e.g. health volunteers, NFE volunteers, reading volunteers), people with local wisdom, retired government officials and local youth leaders. The key activities and roles of Sub-district NIE centres include:

- **Information Centre.** In this role, the centre collects a vast range of information spanning from demographics, geographical features and community history to economic, social and cultural information as well as that involving

politics, education, public health and occupation. In the meantime, it serves as the broadcasting station of state news via public address system or as the community radio station for local news.

- **Service Centre.** This role is defined by its basic services rendered to people in the community. One notable example is the “Fix It Centre”, which offers the people in the community with repair service for electrical appliances, radios and small machines. Equally noteworthy are consumer protection activities and mobile medical care. Thus, these activities in effect open up a meeting opportunity between people and government’s service providing units.
- **Community Centre.** The centre offers a gathering place where people in the community congregate and participate in certain activities, ranging from local and community forums to communal gathering and discussion.
- **Community Learning Centre.** As the centre provides learning activities responsive to the needs of people, the central agencies concerned need to develop a wide range of courses to suit each particular community.
- **Vocational Training Facilities.** Under “**Community Vocational Training Centre Programme**”, the sub-district NIE centres offer vocational training to allow people in the community to increase their income and reduce poverty. This programme is in line with the government’s policy to enable people in rural areas to acquire a stable-income job and practical vocational skills as well as to perform job analysis, investment analysis and career planning.

Community Vocational Training Centre Project

ONIE has laid out the following guidelines for organising learning activities in the Community Vocational Training Centres.

- Providing vocational training to equip learners with practical skills necessary to earn a living with an emphasis on the disadvantaged members of the working-age population (those between 15 and 59 years old)
- Appointing the Provincial Committee for Community Vocational Training Centres with the duties to take part in identifying management policies, and to supervise, follow up and support the performance of the training centres in respective provinces so as to ensure their compliance with the set policies
- Extending the role of Community Vocational Training Centres to include that of Community Vocational Knowledge Management Centres, thus creating the Communities of Practice with a nation-wide linkage of network parties
- Engaging technology and innovations in the management of Community Vocational Training Centres, linking every level of centre operations for enhanced efficiency
- Developing a vast array of vocational training courses to meet people's needs with a focus on Competency-based Curriculum
- Developing OTOP Mini MBA Curriculum, which is the short-term vocational training course on business administration and export management with an aim to

assist learners in raising product quality, adding value to their products and increasing distribution channels. In view of these goals, the curriculum includes the following core subjects: 1) OTOP Business Management; 2) OTOP Export Business; 3) Marketing and Distribution Channels; and 4) Business English

3. New Contents of Life Skill Development

3.1 Current Contents of Life Skills/ Skill Development

- **Developing “Grade 12 for All in 8-Month Curriculum”**

This curriculum is developed by ONIE for employed learners over 18 years old, so vocational knowledge and experience can count as their credit study. To satisfy the programme’s completion requirements, learners must pass the required courses specified in the National Education Act and score at least 50% on a standardised examination. These courses maintaining a balance between 70% theory and 30% practice, aimed to equip learners with life skills essential for a happy living, are taught by contracted teachers with a bachelor’s degree.

- **Book Coupons to Encourage Reading Habits among Thai Children**

Ministry of Education has launched a policy to distribute book coupons to over 2.5 million underprivileged children to encourage reading habits among elementary school students (Grades 1 to 6). Each child will be entitled to a coupon worth 300 baht for exchanging with books of their choice.

- **Education Coupon for Promotion of Lifelong Learning**

This education coupon scheme represents an effort to improve the allocation of budget (grants-in-aid). To this end, the budget is transferred in the form of **education coupons for promotion of lifelong learning** through the provider (Supply Side) directly to the learners (Demand Side), widening their access to educational services. In other words, the education coupons will constitute an incentive for learners to further their studies, as they can select the educational services of choice with no need to shoulder the costs. This would in effect expand the number of target learners, and allow them equal rights and opportunities to quality education anywhere and anytime.

3.2 New Contents of Life Skills/ Skill Development Required for Future

In the near future, Thailand will step across the threshold of ASEAN Community, scheduled for the year 2015. One of the challenges lying ahead is ensuring that people in the community realise the importance of raising individual and community potentials with an aim to secure their well-being and productivity with the start of ASEAN Community. With this end in view, the skills for future with which CLC facilitators and NFE teachers need to equip themselves are ASEAN skills. These include developing ASEAN Studies Curriculum to be applied at a local level, launching awareness-raising campaigns for ASEAN, enhancing individual and community potentials for successful integration into the ASEAN Community, publicising information on ASEAN in various formats to raise awareness among people in the community, offering training courses in English (the working language of ASEAN) as well as languages of ASEAN or other neighbouring countries to encourage communication among ASEAN member nations, and organising ASEAN language and culture camps. Equally important is the need to equip

learners with vocational skills, such as developing modern packaging for added value to community products, operating a small business (for example, products made from local herbs), marketing and exporting, providing a vast array of services, promoting eco-friendly and culturally-concerned homestay tourism, and enhancing the potentials of Thai local wisdom for optimum benefits to the community in the age of ASEAN Community.

Additional Information

The effort to upgrade Community Learning Centres to Sub-district NIE Centres results from the MOE policy to establish one Sub-district NIE Centre in each sub-district. (Only one CLC in a sub-district will be upgraded to Sub-district NIE Centre while the remainder in that district, if any, still retains the status of CLCs. Currently there are 1,340 CLCs in total.) ONIE therefore upgraded 7,409 former CLCs to Sub-district NIE Centres, and in the fiscal year 2011 earmarked a certain amount of its budget for their equipment and construction costs for 587 computers with Internet connection, 700 sets of educational materials, and 700 buildings. In the future, the remaining CLCs will be upgraded to Sub-district NIE Centres.

The differences between teachers at Sub-district NIE Centres and CLC facilitators

- **Teacher at a Sub-district NIE Centre** is a government employees working as the head of Sub-district NIE Centre. Their responsibilities are to plan, organise and facilitate the non-formal and informal education, to provide educational services in coordination with network parties, and to build and expand the network in their respective sub-districts.

- **CLC facilitator is** a contracted teacher monthly paid on a pro-rata basis according to the number of students under their responsibility. They are responsible for teaching or organising learning activities for students.