

**Meeting of Experts on New Phase of AJP Programme
for Model NFE Materials Development and Utilization in Asia and the Pacific
Tokyo, 26-30 July 2004**

Country Report

Thailand

Mr. Suchin Petcharugsa

Instructor

Northern Region Non-Formal Education Centre (NRNFEC), Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission (ONFEC), Ministry of Education

PART I. AJP Programme

A. Strength and weakness of AJP local production and utilization in Thailand at present

a) Strength:

- use as templates or exemplars for production of other local materials
- useful for reading promotion projects designed for neo-literates
- useful for personnel training in the area of materials development

b) Weakness:

- in order to safeguard more relevancy of the AJP materials, contents and illustrations needed to be adapted or even reproduced
- passive participation of target learners
- knowledge on materials development and example of diverse ways of local knowledge management are more useful for learner-generated materials development than the real prototypes of learning materials

B. Strength and weakness of AJP programme as Asia-Pacific regional co-operation (from English prototype version, production to utilization of the prototype, local version production with adaptation, distribution, monitoring and evaluation)

a) Strength:

- useful for empowering NFE personnel by involving them in the process of mutual material development
- having well editing and artful works which are very useful for material development workshop
- having opportunity of sharing perceptions and experiences on materials development among NFE personnel in Asia-Pacific

b) Weakness:

- need much time and resources to adapt and reproduce for safeguarding relevancy of the materials
- it is still centralized system, local wisdom and participation of target learners are not adequately taken into consideration in the process of adaptation and reproduction
- having high cost of reproduction and delay in material dissemination so that there are normally inadequate materials at CLCs or public libraries
- having no sense of ownership among end users so that they do not provide deep information on material use in the process of monitoring and evaluation and they do not participate actively in the following process of material adaptation and dissemination

C. Whether and how AJP programme/materials influenced the NFE production in Thailand (impact of AJP in your country)

- Material developers, users, learners gain more ideas, knowledge and experiences
- Having diverse materials and uses for support of neo-literates
- Capacity of NFE personnel in the areas of theme identification, material design, material production and evaluation are improved and distributed more and more to local level
- Having guidelines and useful framework for training of local NFE facilitators for generating together with learners their own learning materials

D. Suggestions for New Phase of AJP Programme

- Contents should be relevant to current international issues, i.e. drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, environment protection, gender quality, peace, early childhood education for parents, care of disable children for parents, etc.
- Presenting bilingual e-book developed by member states in the web site of ACCU, for the benefit of sharing experience and open opportunity for selecting materials to be adapted in each country
- Developing "how to" manuals such as drawing illustrations, improving photography skills, etc which can be used in accordance with the ACCU's manual on material development at local level
- Providing support of learner-generated materials development for specific target groups and providing training in the area of material editing
- Providing practical guidelines for organizing writer workshops
- Providing practical guidelines for bilingual materials development
- Each learning resource center can be a focal point in developing prototypes of materials on the topics in great demand for teaching/learning: health & sanitation, HIV/AIDS, law & human rights, culture, life skills, agriculture, women's empowerment, environment, population education, income generation, drug abuse, science, advocacy/promotion of literacy, etc
- Through Internet, material developers from various countries can joint producing an electronic magazine, i.e. they can vote for the name of magazine, scope of contents which would be interested for target users, individual content under responsible of each member, and assignment of an editor. This modern platform of materials development will be opened lately to rural people for exchanging of their valuable life experiences. It is also not expensive as the other ways of material production.
- In Thailand, learning materials on English language, mathematics and scientific knowledge for school students and out-of-school adults are needed
- Establishing linkages of NFE learners/school students with researchers and academia in higher education and private sectors though Internet will be very useful for extending opportunity of learning with experts and creating "moving" learning environment which cannot be found in traditional learning environment
- Emphasis on materials on early childhood education for parents should be made, due to the fact that in Thailand one out of six children have inappropriate development with respect to their age levels, because of lacking appropriate care in the families

PART II. Part II. Non Formal Education (NFE)

A. Legal definition of NFE in your country, and working definition of NFE in Thailand

a) Literacy:

- Literacy is regarded as one of the key criterions in moving forward to a knowledge-based economy and learning society. Additionally, literacy definition and concept varied from the classical approach (3Rs) to new initiatives for the future trend in coping with the rapid socio-economic, scientific and technological changes in this global world.
- In the late of 1930's, the definition of literacy focused on reading, writing and numeric skills, as

well as civil education in order to be a literate citizen in accordance with the Thai Constitution.

- Functional literacy has been adopted since 1971, it combines literacy skills with vocational skills and problem-solving skills as well as critical thinking abilities through “Khitpen” process which consisted of 3 areas namely: academic, self and environmental knowledge. The future trend of literacy definition will not focus on functional literacy, but will meet the learning needs of various target groups in harmony with lifelong learning concept. Therefore, computer literacy, bilingual literacy (mother tongue and national languages) and other literacy skills, such as global thinking, are needed for keeping up with changes and increasing the quality of life in the new century.
- Currently, the operational definition of literacy can be reflected from concept of illiterate, i.e. those who cannot read and write Thai language, they cannot use the skills for vocational practices in everyday life, they are on the list of poverty community records and community minimum basic need survey.

b) Non -Formal Education:

- Currently, a broader concept of non-formal education has evolved in terms of lifelong learning and its role in providing education in terms of lifelong education for all people which consists of main tasks concerning basic education, skill training and up-to-date information. Therefore, non-formal education is considered to be fundamental education, continuing education and informal education services for illiterates, disadvantaged groups, women, ethnic groups, etc. who have missed the chance to pursue their learning in formal schooling in order to gain knowledge, vocational skills training, and quality of life improvement. The non-formal education concept not only defines in line with the National Education Act, but also the National Education Plan as well as the Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan. Non-formal education is provided by both public and private bodies in various types of programmes.
- It could be said that literacy and non-formal education are involved in providing education more flexibility than formal education in determining aims, modalities, management procedures, duration, assessment and evaluation conditional to its completion. The contents and curricula for non-formal education can be adjusted to meet the needs of individual groups of learners. The Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission extends its services to cover the unreached groups of people by undertaking various kinds of literacy and non-formal education activities and programmes to serve the needs of different target groups.
- As specified in the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), Chapter 3 Education System, section 15, there are three types of education: formal, non-formal and informal education. Non-formal education and informal education are defined in the second and third clauses as following: (1) Non-formal education shall have flexibility in determining the aims, modalities, management procedures, duration, assessment and evaluation conditional to its completion. The contents and curricula for non-formal education shall be appropriate, respond to the requirements, and meet the needs of individual groups of learners; (2) Informal education shall enable learners to learn by themselves according to their interests, potentialities, readiness and opportunities available from individuals, society, environment, media, or other sources of knowledge.
- Identified in the draft of Non-formal Education Act which is still in the process of submitting to the Cabinet, non-formal education is "education for out-of-school population and the disadvantaged people based on NFE and informal ways of delivery for extending opportunity of life-long education.

B. Overview of NFE material development and utilization in your organization and in your country, which includes material development process, adaptation, dissemination, review and evaluation process:

Curriculum-related materials, i.e. learning materials for basic education, both general and vocational basic education. The central office will provide guideline of format and presentation of the materials and allocate budget for materials development agencies, such as NFE regional centers, based on levels

and subject matters of the materials. Then, for each material a group of responsible working team, normally compose of content experts and experienced NFE personnel will be assigned for doing the following tasks:

- Doing curriculum analysis, i.e. identifying objectives and contents of the materials
- Identify structure of contents, format and presentation
- Preparing the first draft
- Editing
- Revising and limited publishing for field test
- Distributing through the existing NFE channel
- Monitoring the field test
- Second revising
- Large-scale publishing
- Some audio-visual supplementary materials are also developed as needed, based on the content of the developed materials.
- Non-curriculum related materials, such as materials for reading promotion, materials needed for some specific NFE projects, or materials for support of informal education.

These materials can be done through efforts of NFE personnel as the following steps: (1) identifying target learners and their learning needs; (2) Identifying structure of contents, objectives, presentation mode and formats; (3) preparing the first draft; (4) editing; (5) revising and publishing; (6) distributing through the existing NFE channel; (7) monitoring of the field uses; (8) revising as needed. Electronic materials are also produced, based on contents of some printed materials, and are available off-line and on-line, examples can be seen at (1) <http://www.nfe.go.th>; (2) <http://www.crnfe.ac.th>

Teacher- & learner-generated materials for local curriculum identified in the basic education curriculum and non-curriculum related materials. These materials can be developed through "writer workshop" as following:

- Teachers and learners together analyze learning needs within the context of their community
- Identifying structure of local curriculum
- Identifying format and presentation of needed materials
- Preparing the materials
- Use the materials and revise by themselves
- Collecting the materials at local CLCs
- Exchange the materials with others as needed

C. Scope and format of NFE materials in Thailand (theme, topics, field, target users, major language, format (e.g. booklet, poster, audio cassette etc.), teaching/learning process

Scope of themes, topics, and format of NFE materials vary in accordance with objectives, main tasks and target learners as following. The ultimate objective of NFE provision is for promoting of life-long learning. The main tasks of the Department of Non-formal Education can be categorized into 3 areas as follows: (1) Organization of non-formal education: Under this task, The Office of Non-formal Education (ONFEC) provides basic education for the disadvantaged in order to make them literate, as well as provides general non-formal education programmes of primary level, lower and upper secondary levels, and also various vocational education and skills training programmes according to a variety of non-formal education curricula; (2) Rendering support and cooperation to the formal schooling system by providing learning and teaching activities for those attending the formal schools in terms of educational technologies, such as educational radio and television programmes, satellite distance education programmes as well as exhibitions of science and technology to enable them to gain more knowledge and to achieve their learning goals effectively; (3) Organization and promotion of informal education: Under this task, the Department aims to provide people with up-to-date knowledge and information necessary for earning their living and improving their quality of

life, as well as to enable them to catch up with current news and to adapt themselves in rapidly changing technological society in the age of globalization. In this regard, they have to be able to learn by themselves through their whole lives from various sources, such as public library, village reading centre, community learning centre, science centre for education, as well as educational radio and television programmes.

a) Target groups of NFE:

- The main target group at the first stage period of the establishment of the Department of Non-formal Education was the out-of-school population in rural areas all over the country, who missed the opportunity in formal schooling system.
- Currently, the Department has expanded NFE services to cover more target groups in all parts of the country as follows: (1) Children; (2) Women; (3) Inmates; (4) Labour force; (5) Disabled persons; (6) Conscripts; (7) Farmers; (8) Senior citizen; (9) Hill tribes; (10) Community leaders; (11) Slum dwellers; (12) Thai Muslims; (13) Religious practitioners; (14) People with compulsory education having no chance to further their studies in formal schools; (15) Thai people in foreign countries; (16) Students in formal schools; (17) Other special groups.

b) Activities of ONFEC:

- NFE programmes and activities provided by DNFE can be categorized into three main areas: basic education, vocational education and skills training, as well as information service.

D. Basic Education

Basic education programmes are provided for those who have missed the opportunity of formal schooling or have dropped out and would like to come back or further their education. The programmes in this area are as follows:

a) Functional Literacy Programme:

- This programme has been implemented since 1971 to help adult learners learn basic skills in reading, writing, calculating, as well as problem-solving through “Khit-pen” process, which consists of information on academic knowledge, self knowledge, and environmental knowledge. Adult learners can make decision to solve their problems by considering those three areas of information. The curriculum of this programme is designed to be responsive to the needs and conditions of the target learners. There still are specific curricula for various NFE target groups, such as for the southern Thai Muslims, northern hill tribes, etc. The functional literacy programme has curriculum equivalent to grade four of formal schooling system.

b) Hill Area Education Project:

- This project is specifically designed for another major group of the illiterate population, who live along the mountain ranges in the northern and western parts of the country. The Department intends to extend the educational services, which are responsive to the needs and problems of the hill tribe community. This project can make a number of hill people become literate.

c) Continuing Education Programme:

- The programme provides out-of-school people who have no chance to study in formal schools with an opportunity to increase their knowledge and obtain certificates equivalent to those offered upon completion of grade 6, 9 and 12 of general formal schools. There are three types of learning approaches in this programme namely classroom type, distance education type, and self-learning type.

E. Vocational Education and Skills Training:

This area of service is designed to promote the public welfare and upgrade their quality of life through vocational development by providing four types of vocational

education and skills training as follows:

a) Interest Group:

- The interest group programme is provided to serve specific vocational skills needs and interest of various groups of people. A minimum of 15 persons can request for specific skills training as needed. The course duration is not more than 30 hours. The group members have to pay for learning materials, while the government pays for the remuneration of the resource person. In 2001, throughout the country, there were 157,117 learners participated in this programme.

b) Short-term Vocational Course:

- This short-course training ranges from 100 to 300 hours. People who are interested in this area can register for any kinds of skills training they need with minimum expense for training materials. Most of the training is conducted at the provincial and district NFE centres, as well as at the community learning centres. In 2001, throughout the country, there were 294,956 learners participated in this programme.

c) Vocational Certificate Curriculum:

- **This 3-year-vocational certificate curriculum programme is provided for those who completed primary education or grade 6 and would like to seek for knowledge and understanding about the world of work, knowing themselves and society, the way to achieve and make decision to choose the occupation suitable to the needs of individuals and communities. The students who completed this programme will obtain the certificate equivalent to grade 9 or lower secondary education in formal schooling system.**

d) NFE Occupational Certificate Curriculum:

- This 3-year-NFE occupational certificate curriculum programme is provided for those who completed lower secondary education and are working in business sectors or are being self-employed for 3 years at least. This curriculum is particularly designed to upgrade vocational skills of the learners who have already been in workplace or have skills experiences. The learners who completed this programme will be offered a vocational certificate equivalent to grade 12 or upper secondary education in formal schools.

F. Information Service

Information services are provided in terms of informal education or life-long learning through various kinds of media to give people access to educational opportunities at any time they need. The main activities organized in this area of services are as follows:

a) Public Library:

- The public libraries are regarded as the academic resource centre for people to search for knowledge and information they require. There are 850 public libraries throughout the country.

b) Village Reading Centre:

- The village reading centres are located in the village, which are built and taken care of by the local inhabitants. Two daily newspapers are provided per day for each centre by the government. Currently, there are more than village reading centres all nationwide.

c) Community Learning Centre:

- The community learning centres provide various kinds of knowledge in terms of life-long learning for people in communities, which are located in and taken care of by communities. The activities being undertaken at the centres are basic education, vocational education, and skills training, information services as well as activities for promotion of quality of life. Currently, there are more than 6,000 community learning centres established through out the country.

d) Educational Radio and Television Programme:

- The educational radio and television programmes are mostly produced by the Centre for Educational Technology and Regional Non-formal Education Centres. In addition, the Department, through Thai COM Foundation, has initiated a satellite education project to improve quality and standard of the distance education programme with the aim to provide an opportunity for all population to acquire knowledge equally, as well as up-to-date information. Currently, the center produces more than 100 radio learning packages, 10,000 education radio programmes, 500 education television programmes, CAI, learning materials for the disables, and more than 100,000 of printed materials.

e) National Science Centre for Education:

- The National Science Centre for Education is established to provide knowledge and exhibition of science and technology for the public.

Non-formal education is regarded as a vital tool of people utilized to improve their quality of life. Thus, another important mission of ONFEC is to provide various models of non-formal education responsive to the individual needs and open up opportunities to acquire knowledge at any time of their lives by emphasizing the principles of freedom, justice and equal opportunity to learn. Especially, for those who missed educational opportunity in formal schooling system can acquire both technical knowledge and skills essential for improving their quality of life.

In 1999 the government launched National Education Act for serving as references of educational reform which would yield radical changes in all aspects of educational system throughout the Kingdom. According to the law, learners will become more important and take more active roles in constructing of their own knowledge. Free education will be provided for 12 years. The administration and management of education will be decentralized to the educational areas and local administration. Also, information and communication technology will be used extensively for providing higher level of learning access and improving quality of education. In compliance of enforcement of such education reform law, ONFEC is now creating a variety of non-formal and informal education programmes for deriving of higher level of responsiveness to needs of individual learners and communities in particular areas and also connectable to globalization trends.

ONFEC will put more emphasis on life-long education through the use of various education media, especially for distance learning through information and communication technology. For improving quality of non-formal education, ONFEC has used new approaches for evaluation, such as competency-based and authentic assessment, and portfolio.

Concerning vocational education service, the Department has been trying to organize NFE occupational certificate programme for those who completed lower secondary education in more various fields. Currently, there are 17 occupational courses being provided.

Through the information service programme, various kinds of educational technology will be used to facilitate those interested to learn. These include the use of interactive learning approach, the upgrade of ordinary public libraries to electronic libraries in order to expand services globally by Internet system, through which worldwide information can be retrieved, as well as the establishment of community learning centres at the village level, which will lead to the life-long learning societies in the future. As a result, all population can have opportunities to learn by themselves continuously through their whole lives.

G. Name and short description of outstanding manuals, teaching handbooks in the filed of NFE

My personal opinion is that if the materials can be used for generating other materials or providing measures for building better learning environment, they should be counted as the outstanding materials. These materials are: (1) CLC management handbooks; (2) Manual for NFE facilitators. Both

manuals are from UNESCO APPEAL, translated into Thai Language, and used for training NFE facilitators. The feedback was very positive: (1) Material development at local level of ACCU, translated into Thai language and used for training of NFE facilitators. The feedback was very positive. Facilitators and their learners can use for generating some printed materials by themselves; (2) Manual of writer workshops of SIL, translated into Thai language and used for training of NFE facilitators. The feedback was very positive. Facilitators and their learners can use for generating some printed materials by themselves.

H. Innovative examples of NFE materials development, dissemination and utilization in your country

a) Bilingual materials development:

- Even though the Office of Non-formal Education Commission had long experiences in running literacy programmes for ethnic minorities, especially the hill tribes, it still lacked body of knowledge in bilingual approach. It therefore piloted a research project to develop bilingual literacy materials to promote literacy for Pwo Karen (one of ethnic minority of Thailand) in Omkoi district, Chiangmai province supported by UNESCO APPEAL. The purposes of the project were to study conditions and learning needs of the people in the target area, develop curriculum framework and content for materials development, develop the bilingual materials with the cooperation of Pwo Karens, pre-test the materials produce and disseminate to the learners. It was anticipated to be an effective educational model for the ethnic minorities in other areas.
- The action research was employed to cooperate the administrators, academics, Pwo Karen teachers from non-formal education learning centres, Pwo students, young Pwo Karens and adults from the village site of Nong Ung Tai, Omkoi district. They learned and shared experiences and worked with the expert of SIL to invent Pwo Karen Pwo Karen writing system. The project therefore could create sense of belongings among the Pwo teachers and community.
- The research findings were the development of Pwo Karen writing system for the target area based on the research of Pwo writing system of SIL's experts. The process of inventing comprised of the examination and analysis of the Pwo sound system of Payap University and word list checking with Pwo people at the village site and workshop for alphabet design of the Pwo alphabets and vowels. The Pwo Karens continued to test the writing system by producing materials, including a draft alphabet chart, picture dictionary, spelling guide and "The Rabbit and Snail" booklet. The teachers were assigned to study the cultural theme of the village to make cultural calendar for curriculum development. They produced six big books for teaching and these big books were also duplicated into small booklets for individual learner and word cards. The teachers were encouraged to produce more big books and other materials for literacy class in order to use the alphabets they invented. They had shown that they can, together with their learners, could produce more learning materials and organize bilingual education classes.

b) Photo journalism practice as a long-term career development:

- In May 2004, 25 children and youth from Ban Samkha and nearby villages of Lampang province had travelled to Chainat, Lopburi, Bangkok and Samut-songkram. On the way, they had practiced interviewing and photographing, video shooting and video editing on PC with a professional in this media. We called this activity as "mobile photo journalism workshop. They enjoyed this learning experience so much and their new technology skills could be improved very rapidly. Parents provided enormous support. Consequently, in every weekend, from June to December 2004, there is continuous training for this group so that they can gain deeper skills in this technology area. It is hopeful that they can make better simple or multimedia presentation for their schools and communities. They can have better photographs for making their web sites, electronic magazines, electronic newspapers, village posters and research papers. For those who are deeply interested in this technical skill development, they will be encouraged to pursue this career through continuous capacity building and exposure to its business world.

- In addition, they will become community presenters gradually, i.e. able to tell the whole learning stories of a community from inside, which will be more meaningful and up-to-date than any presentations made by outside experts.

c) Leaning about family financial management:

- Many housewives of Ban Samkha village had ever done family bookkeeping. However, they could only monitor the family expenditure and income structure and try to adjust some short-term activities, even though long-term family financial planning is much more important. Thus, with technical support of Lampang Siam Cement company, the first workshop on application of balance scorecard (BSC) technique, i.e. making 'life plan' had been organized at Constructionism Lab in March 2004. After seeing example of a family life plan of the trainer, some housewives and their children participated in this workshop decided to go on with such idea. The second BSC workshop had been organized again at Constructionism Lab in April 2004. The same group of participants came back to workshop with their own mind maps and some basic financial calculations in order to discuss with the trainers. Their financial life plans had been elaborated by having advices from trainers and sharing experiences among themselves. Consequently, they can bring the life plans to discuss with family members and make some adjustment of expenditure behavior for safeguarding the future of their families. Children and youth can take part in the process of family financial planning and take written records of daily bookkeeping done by their mothers to school for filling in the bookkeeping software. At the end of each month, they can bring the print-outs back to homes so that they can have solid data for discussing in the families. Group meeting of these housewives can be done as needed and whenever they feel that they need some more inputs another workshop can be organized again at Constructionism Lab.
- With technical support from Thailand Securities Market, there will be a workshop on practicing financial management for school children at the Northern Region Non-formal Education Center. It is hopeful that teachers and students will have more ideas how to organize suitable learning activities in schools and apply for improving their family financial situations.
- It is also hopeful that, by having such concrete family life plans, parents can be in a better position to negotiate with Ban Samkha School with regards to designing more suitable education programme for each student. In addition, when they need to draw a loan from Ban Samkha-Krung Thai community bank they can submit their life plans and family bookkeeping to the bank committee for showing their "intangible assets" and "financial discipline". This favorable consideration will yield considerable effect on financial management learning of the whole community.

d) E-learning:

- Some contents of NFE printed materials had been converted into e-book and presented on-line through the existing URL of ONFEC and distributed off-line through public library and CLCs. Some public libraries has set up their own e-library system for providing extensive services to local communities

I. Process of capacity building of personnel and institutions for strengthening NFE material development and utilization activities in Thailand.

- Identifying training needs of personnel working in various projects
- Providing pre-service and on-the-job training of NFE personnel at national, regional, provincial and district levels
- Developing guidelines for materials development for local personnel
- Offering training of local facilitators for local-generated material development
- Doing field monitoring and evaluation

J. Cases of Utilization of NFE materials for formal education or vice versa

- Materials for NFE basic education, especially on vocational development, life skill development and social and community development can be used for school students as well
- Interchange of use of e-learning materials currently available through the Internet
- Various radio and television programmes produced by ONFEC can be used in schools and NFE
- Use of materials for informal education as supplementary materials for school-based curriculum. As mentioned in the progress report of Thailand basic education reform in June 2004, all schools had developed school-based curricula. Schools had increasingly explored use of community learning resources and gained more support from communities. Communities participated more in learners' development. Teachers developed their own more learning materials. They spent more times to use Internet. There were not so much changes in learning materials but learning by doing became more emphasized. Small schools which are normally located in remote areas should have special support due to limitation of teachers and learning materials. Students of these schools need self-study materials and practice on creative thinking, language skills (English) mathematics and scientific process. This situation calls for collaboration among school teachers and NFE facilitators in local curriculum learning material development.