



# SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT





## SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION

Thai education reforms have aimed to transform the teaching and learning process and their success will depend greatly on the support given to, and response by, teachers and education personnel. They are the key agents for change across formal, informal, and non-formal education.

At the heart of teaching and learning reform has been an emphasis on moving from instructor to student-centred approaches in the classroom. This focus has been coupled with specific efforts at improving learning outcomes to enable learners to become better thinkers, enquirers, problem-solvers, innovators and teamworkers whilst developing a strong set of moral values.

The realisation of these educational aspirations requires substantial training efforts on new teaching approaches, curriculum, standards and ICT proficiency. However, the imperatives placed on teachers are only one side of the challenge. The Ministry of Education also recognises the need to have a complementary set of measures to equip educational leaders, middle management and administrators with the skills to lead, manage and embed change.

Thailand's learning society aspirations will involve developing a new culture for professional development and support for teachers and education personnel. This culture will embrace lifelong learning, professional networking and the value of non-teaching skills and professions as effective leadership of change becomes as critical as developing new teaching skills.



### Quick Facts

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| ◆ There were over 614,000 teachers of basic education under the Ministry of Education's administration in 2005 - a 5% rise from 2001.   | ◆ 70% of all teachers in basic education have a bachelor degree and 13% hold a masters qualification whilst 10% do not have a degree.  |
| ◆ There were over 60,000 faculty across all higher education institutions under the administration of the Ministry of Education in 2005 - a 50% rise from 2001.   | ◆ Between 2005-2006, 300 million baht was allocated to projects focused on improving training for teachers of English including a project reaching 15,000 primary and secondary schools teachers in 80 Educational Service Areas across 30 Provinces.      |
| ◆ Despite an increase in the number of teachers in basic education between 2001-2004, significant shortages remain in key subject areas such as Mathematics, Biology, Physics and Chemistry.  | ◆ 586 Master or Model Teachers have been identified as agents of expertise and change to disseminate learner-centred teaching practices to over 8,000 teachers nationwide.   |
| ◆ Approximately 60 million baht will be spent by the National Institute for Development of Teachers and Education Personnel (NIDTEP) between 2006-2010 to create a nationwide network to develop over 600,000 teachers and educational personnel. | ◆ Since 2002, over 280 community experts have been given "Teachers of Thai Wisdom" status supporting their local schools with their expertise as well as reaching over 117,000 community learners through a nationwide network of 82 local wisdom centres. |



## OVERALL STRATEGY AND KEY ACTIVITIES

The overall strategy adopted by the Ministry of Education and its Commissions, executing agencies and institutes is focused on enabling teachers to improve their ability to manage and facilitate teaching and learning activities in the classroom in line with the new curriculum, approaches and standards. The table below illustrates three specific key initiatives but in general the following elements are common to all activities that support the realisation of the overall strategy:

- ◆ Implement assessment processes and standards for teacher competence linked to learner outcomes;
- ◆ Reduce teacher workloads;
- ◆ Introduce academic vouchers for professional development activities;
- ◆ Establish NIDTEP;
- ◆ Develop new teacher education curriculum that reviews pre-service curriculum and in-service programmes for ongoing qualifications;
- ◆ Develop solutions to address teacher shortages;
- ◆ Alleviate problems of teacher indebtedness;
- ◆ Issue enabling laws.

Some of the key supporting legislation include the National Education Act and the Teacher and Education Personnel Act. These acts have helped redefine standards, incentives, entitlement and detail the required knowledge, skills and attitudes for teachers and administrators.



### Strategic focus and key themes for teacher and education personnel reform 2004-2013

#### Change perceptions on a career in education

(Executing agencies: Teachers' Council/ Office of Teacher Committee and Education Personnel)

- ◆ improving occupational standards for teachers.
- ◆ developing personnel management systems and career paths.
- ◆ create and develop new salary schemes, allowances, and benefits for teachers.

#### Produce new trend teachers in teacher training institutions

(Executing agency: Commission on Higher Education)

- ◆ urgently develop curriculum for new trend teachers.
- ◆ urgently develop teacher training institutes.
- ◆ develop instructors in education faculties.

#### Develop teacher's potential through ongoing professional development

(Executing agencies: NIDTEP with the Office of Teacher Committee and Education Personnel)

- ◆ create leadership for change programmes.
- ◆ develop the potential of teachers and education personnel
- ◆ set up alliances and develop networks.
- ◆ support continuing education.
- ◆ create new management systems.
- ◆ drive the development strategy.



## STRATEGIES IN BASIC EDUCATION

Complementing the overall strategy for professional development to support teaching and learning reform is Office of the Basic Education Commission's (OBEC) Roadmap.

This Roadmap focuses on developing individual teacher profiles to support their professional development. This approach has helped group teachers according to their ability, needs and subject area allowing for specific professional support. On-site training is provided to teachers by the school's senior management team, local inspectors as well as Model teachers in each subject area. Such support has been provided on an ongoing basis as well as through distance learning enabling new pedagogies to be adopted directly into the classroom.

The draft strategic Teacher and Education Personnel Plan 2006-2009 by OBEC has the following core elements:

- ◆ Developing standards to ensure the quality of teacher and education personnel;
- ◆ Implementing an effective professional development system and supporting a network of trained trainers;
- ◆ Supporting research and development for effective training;
- ◆ Implementing effective information systems for individual teachers and education personnel.



## IN-SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In-service training has been a key area of change where the aim has been to upgrade all in-service teachers and administrators to raise professional standards. Part-time study for a bachelor's degree is required for all those in-service without a degree as this will become the standard for the teaching licence detailed in the 1999 Education Act.

Teachers and personnel with degrees have been encouraged to undertake master's programmes. In-service certificate and master's programmes are offered by Universities and Rajabhat Universities for part-time study. Whilst scholarships for overseas training and study are provided for professional development and administered by the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC).

NIDTEP was established in 2006 to rationalise existing programmes of in-service training and extend new ways of professional development delivery nationally through new programmes such as leadership development for school directors.





## PRE-SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The development of a 5 year pre-service programme for teacher development has been one of the key reforms introduced affecting the teacher training curriculum in mainstream Universities and Rajabhat Universities. The aim has been to improve the overall quality of education graduates through a review of curriculum as well as the promotion of specialist knowledge across all subject areas with a particular focus on the shortage of specialists in science-based subjects.

### Teacher Training at Higher Education Institutions.

As of 2003, Rajabhat Universities have reoriented Bachelor's of Education Programmes to become 5 year programmes of study in line with the 1999 National Education Act and the teaching and learning focus of reforms. Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University was selected by the Rajabhat University Council to initiate content development for new curriculum rollout in over 50 Rajabhat Universities from the 2004 academic year. In the new curriculum, the first four years are dedicated to coursework with the final year devoted to teaching practice at an approved school.



## SPECIALIST SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

### The development of Mathematics and Science teachers.

The Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPTST) has been a key supporter and partner with the Ministry of Education in the development of Science and Mathematics Teachers. Initiatives have aimed to raise professional standards, teaching approaches and define new standards for science and mathematics teaching. Bachelor's degree scholarships are provided to encourage high school students to study Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Mathematics or Computer science in 23 higher education institutes nationwide. After graduation, these students complete a one year graduate certificate programme in education before being certified as teachers. The aim is to produce over 580 new trend science teachers per year. In addition, 20 scholarships are also provided for master's and PhD study.

**Understanding the needs of Teachers.** Teacher Watch is a research project to study the status, quality of life and career path of teachers. NIDTEP and the Ramjitti Institute of Chulalongkorn University lead this initiative which covers the 175 Local Education Service Areas in Thailand. The aim is to create a teacher development model that helps set up strategic action plans to develop the teaching profession. The study, initiated in 2006, examines 8 different dimensions: teacher workload; relationship with communities; teachers' debt; attitudes toward their career; teaching issues and challenges i.e. curriculum, technology, and school administration; learner related issues; and career development problems. The initiative will complement wider teacher training projects and specific subject development training to enhance specialist knowledge amongst teachers.



## INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



### UNESCO Next Generation of Teachers Project.

The project is designed to assist Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Thailand and the Asia-Pacific region to prepare the next generation of teachers to judiciously use technologies for teaching and learning. Through the Next Generation project, trainee-teachers in TEIs will learn a variety of instructional approaches utilising ICT and will gain the flexibility required to bring the benefits of ICT into classrooms and improve the quality and reach of education.



### Intel Teach to the Future.

Since 2003, Intel Teach to the Future has trained more than 20,000 teachers from all over the Thailand. The programme is a collaborative effort between Intel and the Ministry of Education to reform Thailand's education by training teachers in student-centred learning. The programme has supported teachers in exploring the development of project and enquiry based learning models to promote teamworking, thinking and enquiry skills.

## LEADERSHIP FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING REFORM

The drive towards School Based Management has highlighted the importance of effective school leadership. Training programmes for local education officials, school directors, senior management teams and heads of department have been developed. The aim has been to develop a culture of leadership that is focused on leading and monitoring learning reform.

**Wachiratamsatit School** is a Lab School in Bangkok that has benefited from leadership training involving the school director, assistant directors, and heads of subject. The programme has drawn on leading edge practice from the National College of School Leadership in the UK with the view to dissemination through the Lab School network of schools. The programme has involved leadership programmes, study tours and pilot programmes to develop indicators to monitor learning reforms in the classroom.





## RECOGNITION OF EXPERTISE AND INNOVATION

The change agenda brought about by the goals of learning reforms are sizeable and the role of teachers and education personnel in this process is clearly critical. The Ministry of Education has developed a suite of incentives to encourage, recognise and support teachers and administrators throughout the country with awards for the acquisition of new skills and dissemination to peer groups. This has been complemented by efforts to encourage local experts in the community to be involved in learning alleviating the workload of teachers as well as enhancing student learning and appreciation of local values.



**Master Teacher Programme.** The programme, led by the Office of the Education Council, has trained over 500 Master or Model teachers. These teachers spend 4 months disseminating student-centred learning techniques to at least 10 peers. To date, over 8,000 teachers have benefited. Expertise is grouped into 15 areas that include thinking skills, utilisation of learning resources and effective administration. The programme has created a knowledge bank of research that is published and disseminated nationwide.

**National Teacher Awards.** The awards recognise and reward innovative teachers who are at the leading edge of practice. The award provides a salary supplement, grant for research to develop an innovative project and a grant to the teacher's school to facilitate the integration of the new concept into the school. Research is conducted over a 3 year period and must be disseminated directly to 50 teachers for further classroom application.

## COMMUNITY EXPERTISE AND LOCAL WISDOM

**Teachers of Thai wisdom.** This initiative has engaged local community experts for the benefit of student learning. It has served to promote lifelong learning and community involvement in teaching and learning as well as providing additional expertise and knowledge to schools. The programme has created a cohort of teachers across the country as well as promoted the establishment of local Centres of Thai wisdom. These Centres have created access to learning for adults and students as well as serving to promote and value traditional skills for the development of local communities. This has reinforced the overall thrust towards a learning society and the importance of self-sufficiency. To date, over 280 teachers of Thai wisdom have been identified along with the establishment of over 80 Centres of Thai Wisdom





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES ONLINE



**National Institute for Development of Teachers and Educational Personnel (NIDTEP):**  
<http://www.nidtep.go.th/>



**Office of Teacher and Personnel Staff Committee:**  
<http://www.moe.go.th/webtcs/>



**Human Resources Development, Office of the Basic Education Commission:**  
<http://hrd.obec.go.th/>



**Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC):**  
<http://www.ocsc.go.th/ocscnew3/index.asp>



**INTEL and Ministry of Education Collaborative Programme - Teach to the Future:**  
<http://www.teachtothefuture.net/>



**English Language Learning Resources in Higher Education:**  
<http://www.eldc.go.th>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

*In-depth information*

Further in-depth detail on the education system can be found inside the excellent "Education in Thailand 2005/2006" booklet produced by the Office of the Education Council available to download from [www.oec.go.th](http://www.oec.go.th).

*Contact Details*

This publication is one of six publications focusing on Thailand's learning society aspirations. Specific information on the work of the Ministry across the different sectors of education is available at:

The Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education  
Ministry of Education  
Ratchadamnoen Nok Road  
Bangkok 10300  
Thailand  
[www.moe.go.th](http://www.moe.go.th)