

# 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 merger 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 Administrators,
  - 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**

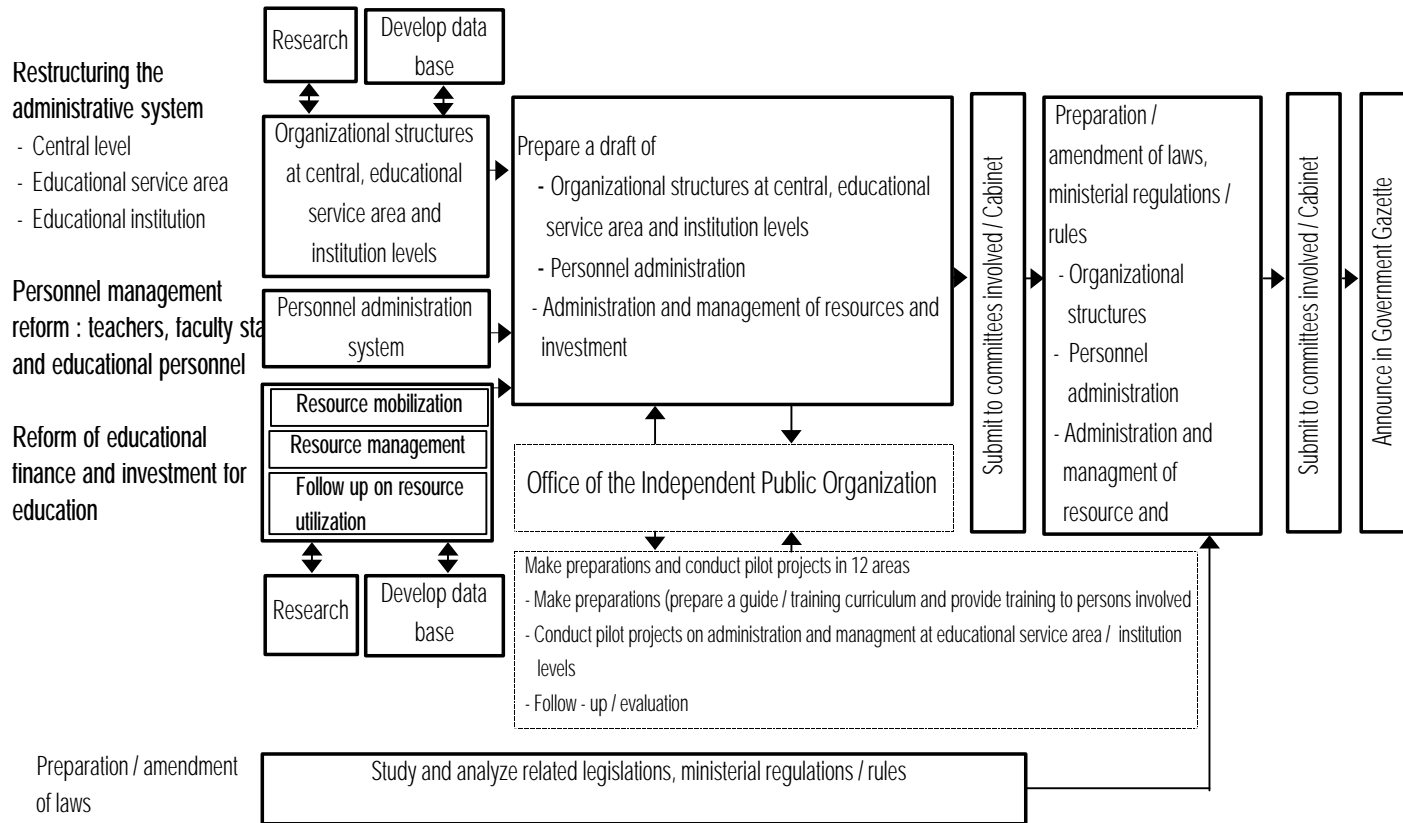
The concept of learning and the desirable characteristics of future learners has been designed. When learning vision involving the roles of teachers, media and the whole context of learning is available, the master plan of learning process reform will have been formulated. After that, consultation will 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**



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.

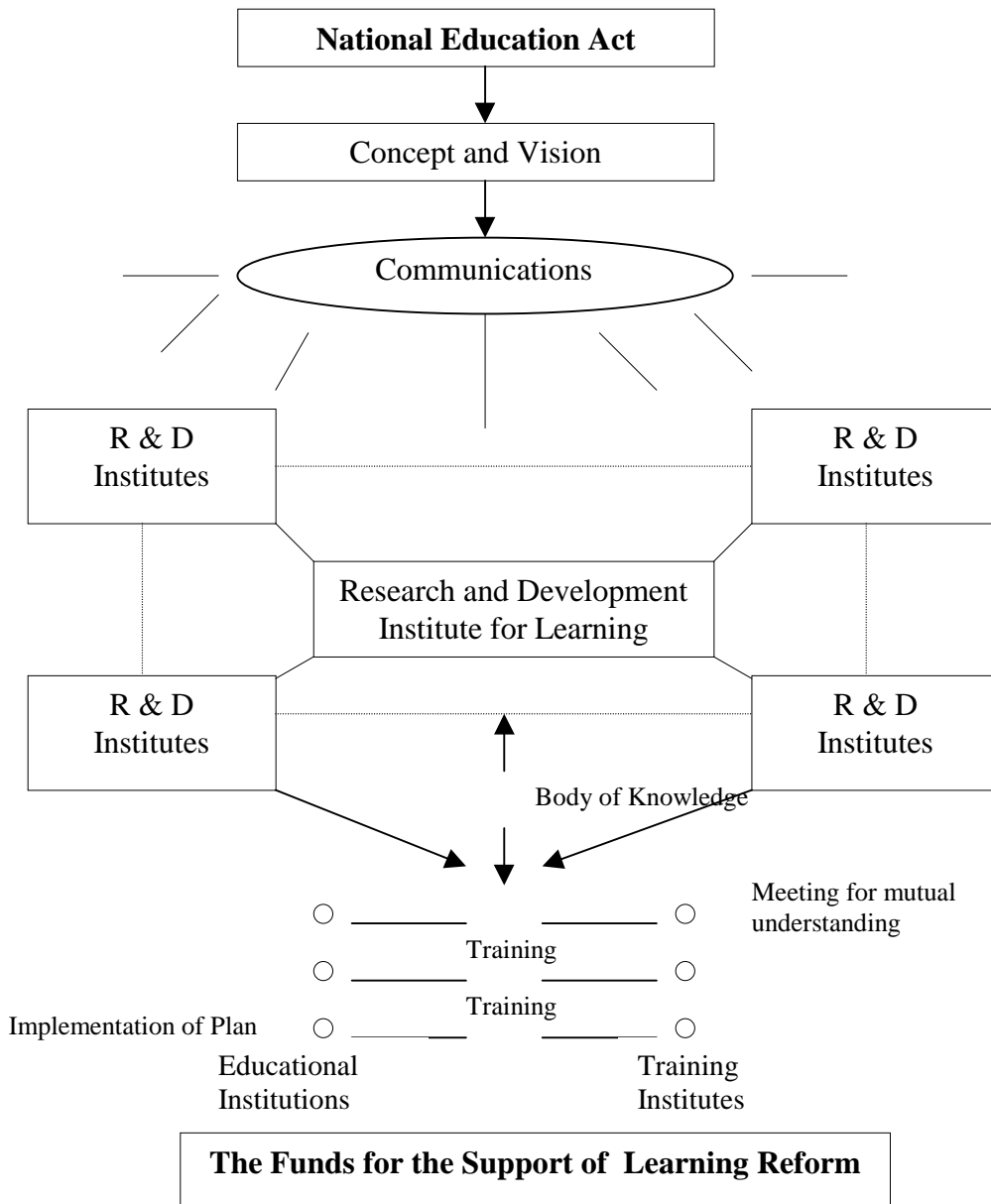


Figure 11.2 A Strategic Model for Learning Reform

**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 Spearhead Teachers 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.