

Part IV: INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS IN DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Chapter 4.1: The Problem

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1. INTRODUCTION: SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF PART IV

This part attempts to analyze institutional dimensions of development management. Major questions are development administrative system of the government functions at central, provincial, and local levels, and the ways by which non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play their role, complementing the functions of the government in providing various forms of development assistance to the people. Needless to say, the institutional arrangements for identifying basic needs of the people and for incorporating these needs into the government policies, plans, programmes, and projects is the fundamental concern of the entire analysis.

After Chapter 4.1 which summarizes all other following chapters, Chapter 4.2 deals with the development administration system of the government with focus on 1) the relation between key six central government agencies and the provincial government, and 2) financial resource allocation from the view point of fair distribution of the fruit of development in Thailand today.

Chapter 4.3 is a case analysis of development administration system dealing with the most vital resource in the Northeast Thailand, namely, water supply and irrigation. In this chapter, the analysis highlights the strengths and weaknesses of Thai administration system, particularly what may be called "multi-agency involvement" in one single function and the coordinative function of Changwad Governor, the gap between his statutory authority and actual function to be called upon him for promoting integrated development at the changwad level.

Chapter 4.4 analyzes the way NGOs are functioning in Roi-Et. There are two major types of NGOs. One is well-established business associations and other "Rich men's club" type organizations, as it were, working cohesively with government agencies. The other is what may be termed "Grass Root" type organizations working closely with people in the rural communities, organizing development activities based on needs and aspirations of the rural poor. One basic difference in the stance of these latter NGOs from that of government agencies is that, while government agencies emphasize the provision of new knowledge and skills to the target group, the NGOs always attempt to elicit the knowledge and skills which the poor people already have, in organizing development activities.

The Fifth and the last chapter, while putting forward summary statement and the key points analyzed in the whole report, an effort is made to come up with certain proposals for the reaction of government officials, NGO workers as well as people in Roi-Et. The proposals deal with policies and strategies related to the strengthening of institutional arrangements for promoting viable and sustainable development in Roi-Et.

2. PROBLEM STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

The most essential point of departure for development analysis is the identification of key problems. The Problem Structure Diagram (Fig. 1) presented here summarizes the cause and effect relationship among those key problems as we have perceived through intensive fieldwork of one month in Thailand. It is briefly explained as follows;

One problem almost unanimously pointed out by many government officials in Roi-Et is the shortage of budget (Box No. 1; The number given in bracket corresponds with the number attached to each box in the Diagram). The shortage of budget results in the delay in the provision of key infrastructures for

development (2). This means Roi-Et cannot provide attractive opportunities for business activities (3). Naturally, the amount of investment in Roi-Et is progressing very slowly (4). This means that the alleviation of poverty cannot move very fast. As a result, many people still remain poor (5).

For poor people, out-migration of seasonal migration to Bangkok serves as immediate solution for additional income (6). As it is easy and convenient, the solution leads to the fact that people's desire to solve their problem in Roi-Et itself is rather low (7).

This low level of desire may have something to do with the traditional culture of people, namely, tendency to be satisfied with low level of material well-being. In a way, it is certainly a virtue, particularly in the present era of diminishing natural resources. It can be described as "sense of resignation" (8, 9). As a result, there is no effective pressure from the people's side to political representatives (10). The overall situation briefly described above results in low level of concerns for administrative reform, without which the budget shortage problem may not be solved (11).

In the meanwhile, highly centralized administrative system of Thailand already draws international attention (12) (There are a few insightful reports on it already published by the World Bank, etc.). The most remarkable feature of the Thai system is vertical compartmentalization of government functions, meaning coordination among powerful ministries and departments extremely difficult (13). One direct consequence of that is the gap between the authority statutorily given to changwad governor and the necessity of his role as focal *integrator* of development activities at provincial level. His formal power to coordinate is virtually non-existent. Nonetheless, he makes every effort to coordinate informally through his personal leadership qualities (14).

The poor coordination among sectoral agencies bothers changwad governor at two junctures. First, at the stage of plan formulation at changwad level; He has to muster cooperation of all other agencies through his *informal* capacity mentioned above. The second stage is that, no matter how the provincial development plan formulated under his leadership is well integrated, the final decision on budgetary resource allocation with regard to each sector is made by the respective central agencies in Bangkok. Here again, needless to say, the capacity of changwad governor to coordinate among these central agencies is even more limited (15). As a result, the development budget tends to be fragmented, reflecting "multi-agency administrative style" of Thailand mentioned earlier (16). This process causes serious consequences unfavourable to rural changwad such as Roi-Et. Owing to the fact that the resource allocation decision is made largely in Bangkok, the resource allocation cannot take full note of local problems and needs in rural changwad (17, 18). At the same time, Bangkok region tends to receive unduly high attention in the resource allocation process (19). All these flow into unduly low resource allocation in rural changwads (20), causing inadequate budget for all agencies in Roi-Et (1). Under the circumstances extensively dominated by highly centralized bureaucratic system, voluntary (i.e. "informal") effort of government cadres in respective sectoral agencies, although no more than incremental in nature, would be rather important in introducing innovative changes in various corners of the government system. As we see, the emergence of such informal initiative is limited to very few top leaders such as changwad governor and mayor of municipality in Roi-Et (25).

Another important consequence of highly centralized administration should also be pointed out. Under the present system, all the compilation of essential statistical information required for evaluating the performance of development activities in one changwad, particularly those related to the amount of investment made by key development agencies is not published in easily available form, therefore inaccessible to almost all (21). This certainly hinders people's interest in learning what are actually being done for them, whether the poor majority are getting fair share of the fruit of development (22).

Thailand is known of its high level of literacy relative to the level of economic income. However, given absence of basic information, the high level of literacy is underutilized (23). Difficult access to development performance information might also have discouraged researchers in academic circles to take up relevant analysis and provide useful information for both provincial government officials and people at large (24).

The absence of essential information on development performance may have something to do with the relatively inactive role played by the mass media in Thai society. In fact, we are highly impressed by very frank and intellectual undertones of TVs and newspapers broadcast/published in Thailand in *English*. However, according to our Thai friends, it has been pointed out that the mass media in Thai language do not have comparable levels of frankness and intellectual depth in critically reviewing the policies and

development performance in the country. If this observation is true, the contents of mass media may also be an important agenda for accelerating changes towards desired directions (26).

People's indifference and inability to know whether they are getting fair share of development (22) might have caused the degree of involvement of NGOs rather low; if people are not so keen to change their situation, it is impossible for external NGOs to participate in their endeavours (27). Inadequate involvement of NGOs could have resulted in poor opportunities of innovative experiments in rural development (28). Besides, the advanced-country-based NGOs are being plagued by financial difficulties in current years (29).

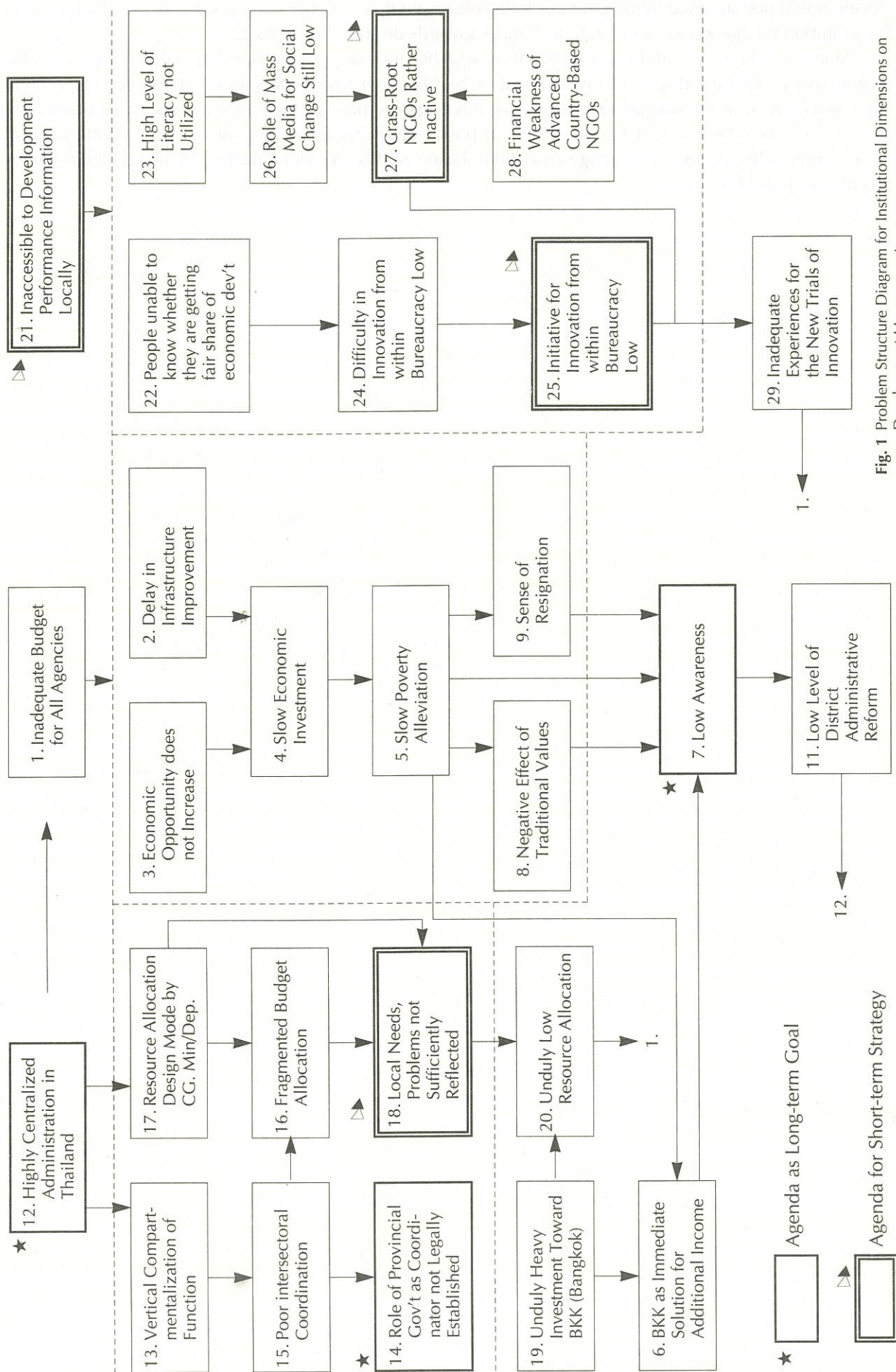


Fig. 1 Problem Structure Diagram for Institutional Dimensions on Development Management

Chapter 4.2: Institutional Aspects with Focus on Rural Development

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1. Introduction

The development planning in Thailand already has a history of three decades since the government started to draw out the economic and social development policies. In the past, the emphasis was mainly on "Economic Growth", setting the goal in terms of GNP growth, further broken down to sectoral targets of income and production by sector. It was not until the fifth national plan (1982–1986) that the rural development, rather than mere growth of agricultural production, was highlighted. In earlier development plans, "Rural development was considered as a second priority matter or "the least" of development. The aspect of rural development before 1982 was concentrated on public welfare or giving the national level".¹ It would be fair, therefore, to say that the emphasis made on rural development came to the fore not so long ago.

Nonetheless, we appreciate the new emphasis on rural development thus laid in the recent national development plans, for it is a reflection of the concerns of Thai government with the improvement of quality of life of majority of the population who still live in the rural areas. In view of the fact that rural development should involve social, economic, educational and cultural dimensions, the planning and implementation of the rural development cannot be dealt with by one single administrative agency. Coordination and collaboration amongst several ministries and related organizations, both public and private, particularly at the local level would be essential for the successful management of rural development.

However, we found out that one of serious weaknesses of Thai development administration is the inadequate coordination amongst those agencies concerned, during the intensive course on Thai development held at Nagoya University in July 1992. In the meanwhile, we concluded that the current government structure has a heavy "Top-Down" structure, which is one of the primary reasons that the current government system is ineffective to help people in the rural area. It would be difficult for rural development projects worked out by central government to satisfy local needs. In other words, the development policy of the central government will not be able to meet the real needs of people at the local level, unless and until the present highly centralized administrative system is transformed in favour of decentralization.

Presumably, it is in view of such a concern that the government has set the following five major objectives as the guidelines of rural development in the current Seventh National Plan (1992–1996):

- (1) Strengthen decentralization to provincial level
- (2) Strengthen the unity of National Rural Development Committee (NRDC)
- (3) Increase income and occupation opportunities
- (4) Enhance quality of life
- (5) Conserve national resource and environment²

Accordingly, one of the principal analyses in this chapter attempts to examine the extent to which the decentralization has been carried out, and the ways by which it is performed particularly at the provincial and lower levels.

Needless to say, the highly centralized allocation and administration of financial resources are caused by heavy top down structure of the government. It is explained by the fact that the bulk of the

financial resources of the provincial governments consist of subsidies from the central government. Without establishing substantial degree of financial autonomy, the policies of decentralization would remain no more than a lip service. Keeping these facts in view, we attempt to examine institutional dimensions of local and regional development management with focus on rural development.

2. Planning Administration

2.1. Central Government

(a) NESDB

"Historically, Thailand's development plan started in 1950 when the National Economic Council (NEC) was established to undertake economic studies, and give advice to Thai government on general financial and economic matters."³ Then, following the World Bank recommendation that Thai government should have the central planning agency responsible for drawing up the economic development plan, the National Economic Development Board (NEDB) was established in 1959. Later it was renamed as National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) in 1972 in accordance with the growing awareness of social development.

Up to now, seven long-term development plans were formulated since 1961. During the first decade of the 1960's, the building of basic infrastructure was emphasized. In the second decade (i.e., 1970's), the issue of human resource development (HRD), which in fact means social, rural and manpower development was highlighted. In the meanwhile, economic development was continuously emphasized throughout the decade and a considerable success was achieved in that regard as well. However, at that time, on account of exogenous problems such as oil crisis and political instability, the development process was not always smooth.

80's was the third decade of development planning. The serious concern in this decade was about income disparity between urban and rural sectors of economy. Accordingly, strong effort was put on the rural development. Also several crucial matters such as urban problems, export promotion, industrial development and environmental issues were also under parallel concerns.

Fourth decade of 90's in the Seventh National Plan (1992-96) has set its objectives as follows; 1) stable economic growth, 2) reduction of income disparity, 3) environmental conservation and 4) HRD and quality of life. For the rural development, the Seventh National Plan emphasizes strengthening decentralization.

The main function of NESDB is to draw up the national plan but *not* for planning specific projects. In other words, NESDB only indicates the direction in which the national planning process should move forward.

"There is a committee named National Economic and Social Development Committee (NESDC) which supervises the work of NESDB and recommends the social and economic development strategies to the cabinet. NESDB also has responsibilities of monitoring and screening various plans, projects submitted by NESDB's office."⁴ In the meanwhile, as a means to monitor progress in rural development, NESDB has introduced a periodic questionnaire system called NRD.2C, which collects socio-economic data once in every two years.

(b) NRDC

National Rural Development Committee (NRDC) was established at the central level as a coordinate body, responsible for reviewing projects submitted by relevant line agencies. In other words, NRDC is the only committee where various ministries involved in the rural development meet and communicate each other at the national level. NRDC determines rural development policy and supervises development planning and monitoring. Then NRDC requests the Bureau of Budget (BOB) for the budget for the projects approved by NRDC.

NRDC is chaired by Prime Minister, and consists of the representatives respectively of NESDB as a member and secretary, and Ministers and Permanent Secretary of six key ministries namely, Ministry of Interior, Education, Industry, Public Health, Commerce and Industry.

At the provincial level, the Provincial Development Committee (*Go-Pho-Jo*) is responsible for the functions comparable to NRDC, and similarly the District Development Committee (*Go-Pho-Oh*), at the district level. The functions of these committees will be elaborated later.

(c) Ministries

There are thirteen ministries in Thailand. Most of them have agencies and departments dealing with rural development. Especially, Ministry of Interior (MOI) has strong power to supervise the local administration. This can be seen in the fact that about eight departments of MOI have respective offices at the provincial level, such as Community Development Department (CD), Department of Local Administration (DOLA), Department of Labour and Accelerated Rural Development Department (ARD).

The line of command along DOLA from the central level is the main administrative line over the local government. "The senior representative of DOLA in each province (*changwad*) who is the *changwad* governor, appointed by Under Secretary of the Ministry, occupies a pivotal role in the local administration".⁵ At the district (*amphoe*) level, there is Chief District Officer (*nai amphoe*) sent from DOLA, who manages the district office.

CD deals with the field operation. For example, CD officer is a member of both Tambon Council and Tambon Advisory Working Group (*Go-Po-To*) as development advisor (*Phatthana Khon*). He plays a very important role in the preparation of development plans at the tambon level. However, according to the interview we had with the information officer of CD, CD's advice at Tambon Advisory Working Group and Tambon Council for planning appears to be largely in line with the national policy, which may not always meet the actual needs of people in various local areas. Also in view of the fact that "the educational backgrounds of most of CD officials are social science such as education, economics, politics and sociology,"⁶ their advice may not fully keep in view the technical dimensions such as situation-specific selection of location or certain technology. Therefore, "Bottom-Up" approach or community participation which is recognized as the most essential approach in most Third World countries nowadays, seems as yet to be realized in practice. Nevertheless, some of NGO's activities such as GRID and NET are emerging as new embryonic development approaches in Thailand. NGO's activities are elaborated in Chapter 4.4 of Part IV.

In addition, "departments in the Thai government enjoy a high degree of autonomy and independence compared with most governments organized along similar lines".⁷ This can be explained by the fact that a department of ministries is authorized to enact laws of its own (Information obtained from Achan Snanchit Skontasap, CU, who has a previous career in MOI.)

Further observations can be made as follows: MOI, the largest ministry, has twelve departments which include Department of Public Works, Labour, Land and others. In case of Japan, those matters with regard to each other are managed by independent ministries. Accordingly, we can consider that there exist *de facto* more ministries than thirteen shown in the official administrative organization in Thai government (Fig. 1). However, in spite of serious concerns about environmental issues spelt out in the national policy, there is no ministry nor a department in charge of this question.

2.2. Local Government

(a) Provincial Office

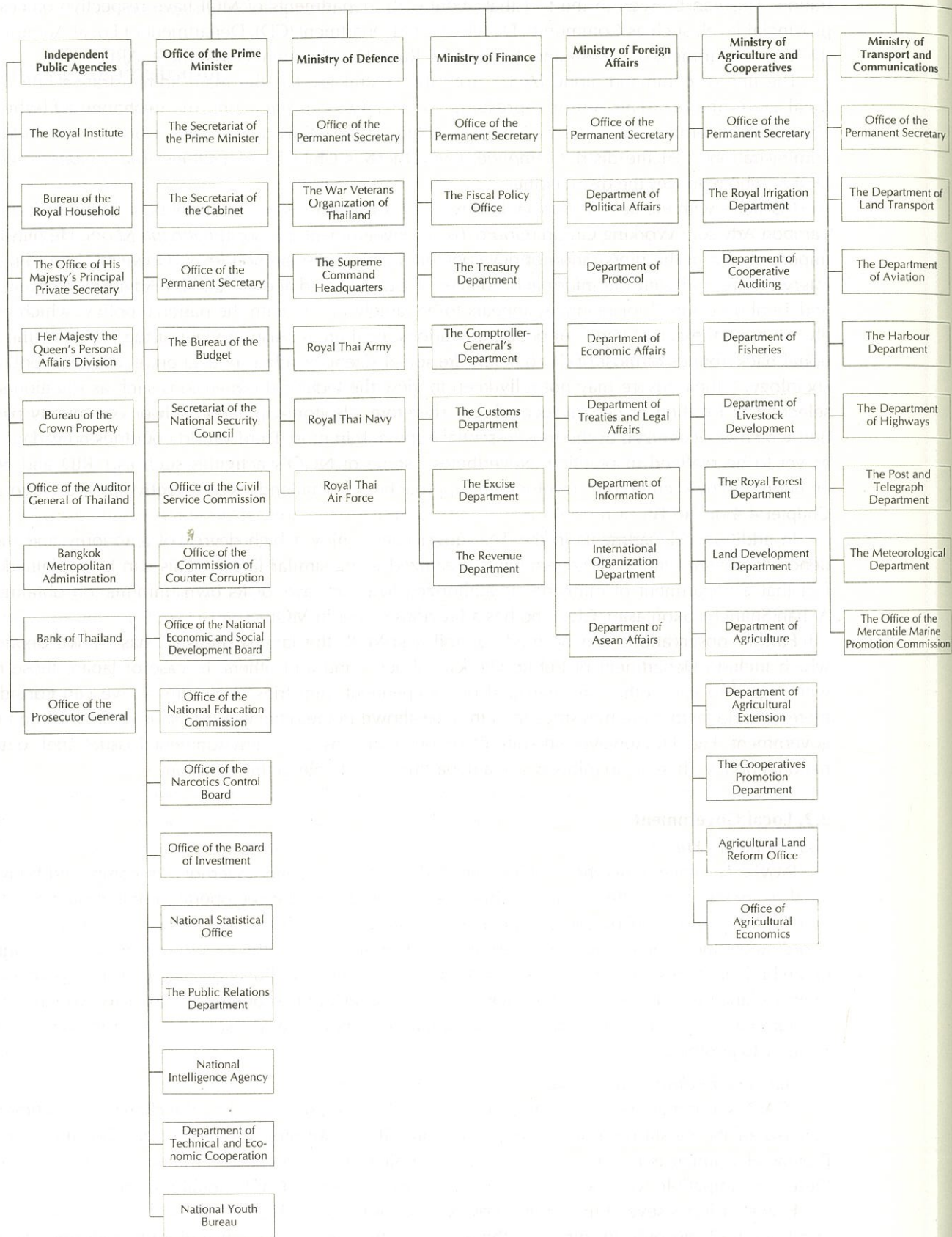
Provincial office (Governor's office), headed by the *changwad* governor is a compound body of the local agencies representing various ministries. These representatives operate commensurate with their own budgets provided by their respective central agencies. They are "expected", as it were, to be coordinated under the *changwad* governor. However, in practice, the governor is not fully kept informed of the budget of these line ministries. It is because the budgetary allocation of a ministry is primarily done in accordance with the subnational division (or a "region") drawn out by one ministry, which comprises several *changwads* and furthermore, the boundary of subnational division of a ministry varies from one ministry to another.

(b) *Changwad* Administrative Organization (CAO)

"CAO is a primary unit of Local government" which is also headed by the *changwad* governor. CAO consists of its legislative body, Provincial Council and administrative section. The function of the Provincial Council is to enact by-laws and the policy for the local government (i.e., CAO) so long as these are compatible with the central laws, and also, to approve CAO annual budget.

However it has several limitations. For example, it has 1) no right to amend those by-laws against the constitution, 2) no right to intervene the administrative works at *changwad* level performed by central government agencies, 3) no right to compete an order of Minister of Interior to dissolve the provincial

Prime Minister and Council of Ministers



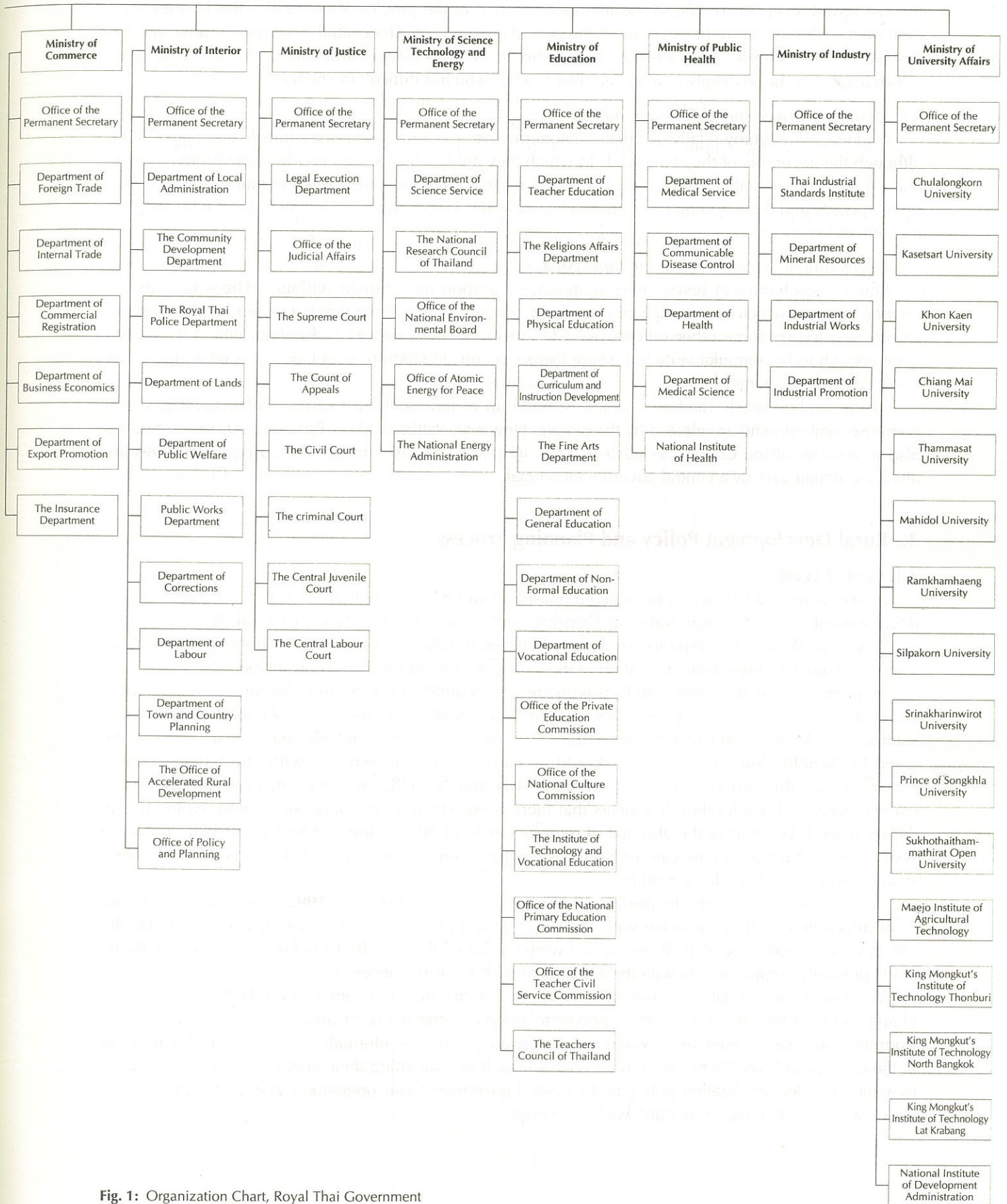


Fig. 1: Organization Chart, Royal Thai Government

council. (2, 3 are translated from T. Hashimoto's "*Thai no Chihogyosei to Nosonkaihatsu*" (Local Administration and Rural Development in Thailand).

Additionally, the changwad governor as well as CAO have no legal power to control the agencies at the changwad level. According to the interview we had at the provincial council in Roi-Et, they once tried to raise this matter to the attention of the central government. The central government, however, has showed no interest in it. Here, we can observe the heavy "Top-Down" structure at the changwad level, which appears to be so deeply entrenched over history, which is difficult to change.

(c) *Municipal Government (Tesaban Muang)*

"Municipalities enjoy relatively greater autonomy over the areas under their jurisdiction than CAO's, although the governors of the changwads in which they are located possess considerable reserve powers and exercise indirect influence over their affairs".⁸ Eighteen members are elected in municipality council by the people and three among them are re-elected as the Mayor and two Deputy Mayors who serve for the term of five years.

(d) *Development Management in the Rural Area*

Below the changwad level, there is *amphoe, tambon and muban* (village). There is a district (*amphoe*) office, which is a branch of changwad administration. The office is chaired by *nai amphoe*, DOLA, assisted by some other officers like CD officer. Sanitary District (*sukapiban*) which is "not yet large enough to be a municipality but where there is a concentration of population",⁹ is administered by district officers in charge.

At the tambon level, Tambon Council is made up of representatives of the *mubans* (villages) that comprise tambon, who are elected by the people. However, Patthana Khon Tambon, CD officer, MOI, is also a member of the Council as advisor. This, in a way, means that the elected representatives are always watched over by a central government official.

3. Rural Development Policy and Planning Process

3.1. Central Level

As mentioned earlier, a considerable emphasis is laid on the decentralization in the context of rural development in the Seventh National Development Plan. The importance of rural development is explained that the income disparity particularly between Bangkok and provincial peripheries has become a serious issue and more decentralization of the local government should be considered.

As pointed out earlier, only NRDC is working as coordinating organization for rural development at the central level. Rural development seems to be largely under the supervision of departments of MOI, such as DOLA, ARD and CD. On the contrary, the leadership on relevant national policies seems to be taken by NESDB. Since the planning should be carried out in accordance with the national policy, I wonder that the two key agencies, namely MOI and NESDB, may need more opportunities to communicate with each other. It appears that there is no official forum of dialogue between the two at the local level, because of the absence of representatives of NESDB there; Although NESDB does have several regional offices (in the case of Northeast Region, there is one in Khon Kaen), it is no more than a small liaison and data collection office.

The central government allocated Bt 30 billion to six key ministries in 1992 as a special budget for rural development in accordance with the decentralization policy. When we had a briefing by the officials concerned of NESDB, Bangkok, we were explained that this Bt 30 billion allocation should be made primarily commensurate with the capacity of each ministry concerned.

We tried to obtain data concerning its allocation forthcoming to changwad Roi-Et. However, as the changwad governor has no statutory power to intervene the decision making of each agency (i.e., Coordination between each agency and the changwad governor is informal), it was not possible to do so at the changwad level. Therefore, further analysis, such as examining the extent to which and the ways by which the decentralization policy of the central government was operationalized at changwad level, which we consider rather important, was not possible.

3.2. Changwad Level

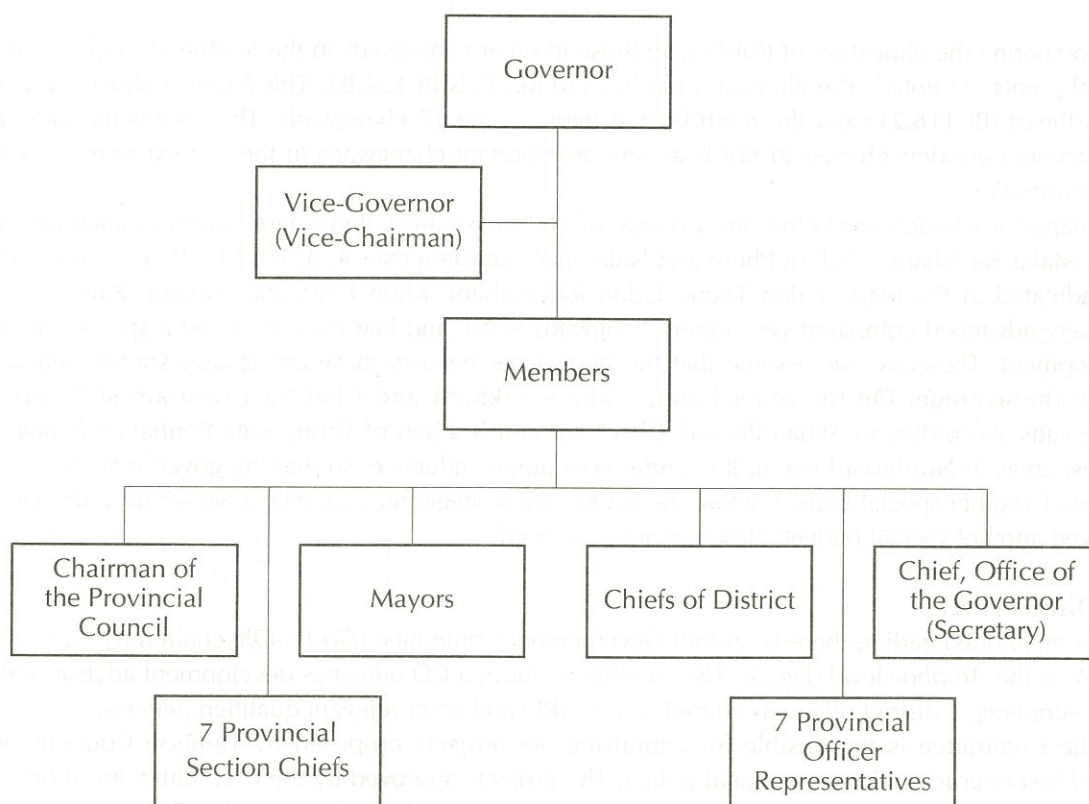
There is a planning organization committee under NRDC, called Provincial Development Committee (*Go-Pho-Jo*), chaired by changwad governor (Fig. 2). According to the NESDB report "*Thailand's Rural Development*", the Committee consists of Vice-Governor, Chairman of the Provincial Council, Mayor, *Nai Amphoe*, not more than seven provincial section chiefs (CAO) appointed by the Changwad Governor, not more than seven representatives of government agencies appointed by the Changwad Governor and the chief of the Provincial Office who serves as secretary.

However, according to the Chief Planning Officer of changwad Roi-Et, six key ministries are chosen by the *central government* and the other agencies are chosen by the Governor. In other words, although the Governor chairs this Committee, the opinions of the central government appears to be strongly represented.

Responsibilities of this Committee include: Drawing up of development plans, approving and monitoring of the projects submitted by the sub-committees (Fig. 3) and District Development Committee (*Go-Pho-Oh*). Provincial Development Committee holds meetings very often especially before budgeting time. It is called upon by the Chief of Planning, Changwad Roi-Et.

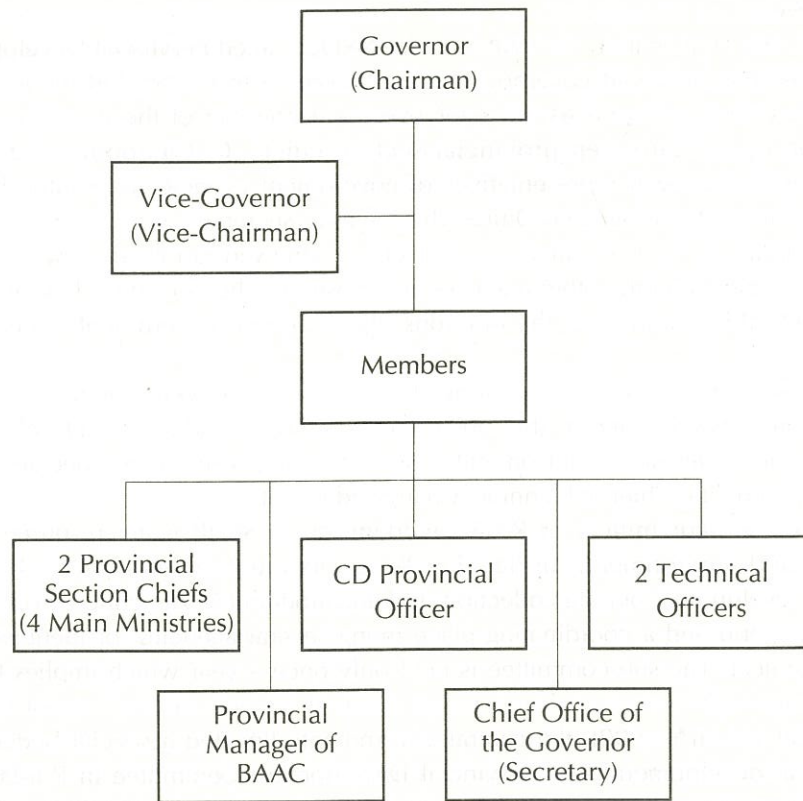
There are seven sub-committees in Roi-Et, working on 1) Small water resource development, 2) Natural resource and environment, 3) Planning & development of rural areas, 4) Coordination for infrastructure, 5) Development of data collection, 6) Education and 7) Agriculture. The sub-committee is an actual working group and a coordinating place among several agencies for identifying the executing agency for each project. The sub-committee is held only once a year which implies that one planning cycle takes one year.

In the last fiscal year (FY 1992), the central government allocated a special budget of around Bt 6 billion for the local development. The Provincial Development Committee in Roi-Et received Bt 155 million. Roi-Et Municipality received 11% of this special allocation (Bt 17.05 million). The rest, viz. 89% (Bt 137.95 million) is used for rural development. The government is expected to increase this special allocation to Bt 9 billion, and Roi-Et will most likely receive Bt 200 million for the next fiscal year (1993).¹⁰



Source: Thai's Rural Development, NESDB

Fig. 2: Provincial Development Committee



Source: Thai's Rural Development, NESDB

Fig. 3: Provincial Development Sub-Committee

Comparing the allocation of Roi-Et with those to other changwads in the Northeast Region (Table 1), several points are noted. The allocation per head to Roi-Et is Bt 124.85. This figure is above the average of Northeast (Bt 118.21) and the ninth biggest figure of the 17 changwads. This means that the central government considers changwad Roi-Et as one of important changwads in the context of rural development promotion.

Changwads which are below the average of NE region are Udon Thani, Ubon Ratchathani, Khon Kaen, Maha Sarakharn, Chai Ya Phum and Nakhon Ratchasima (No. 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, those numbers are indicated in the map.) Udon Thani, Udon Ratchathani, Khon Kaen and Nakhon Ratchasima are relatively advanced compared with other changwads in NE and had once received a special budget for development. Therefore, we assume that the budget per head in these changwads should naturally be below the average. On the other hand, Maha Sarakharn and Chai Ya Phum are still very poor changwads. According to Achan Phaisal, Chai Ya Phum is a part of Thung Kula Ronhai area, one of the poorest areas in Northeast Region. It is under communist influence, so that the government had already allocated another special budget before this budget for strategic reasons. Maha Sarakharn must also have received another special budget, although not confirmed.

3.3. District Level

As mentioned earlier, there is District Development Committee (*Go-Po-Oh*) chaired by *Nai Amphoe*, DOLA, at the *Amphoe* level (Fig. 4). The member includes a CD officer as development advisor (*Patthana Khon Amphoe*), a district officer as administrator, ARD and other relevant qualified persons.

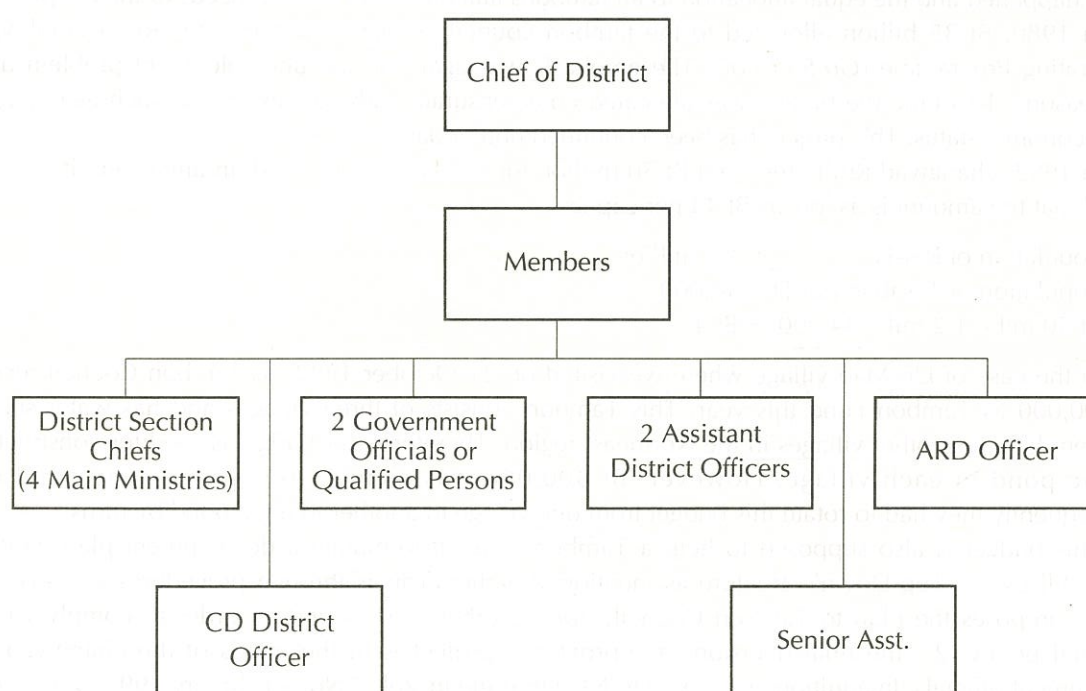
The Committee is responsible for appraising the projects proposed by Tambon Councils, which should be congruent with the national policy. The projects approved by the Committee are submitted to sub-committee of the Provincial Development Committee. At the same time, the Committee supervises and monitors the development activities.

Table 1: Special Development Budget Allocated to 17 NE Changwads by the Central

No.	Name of Changwad	Special Dev. Budget (Bt)	*Population	Amt. of Budget per capita (Bt)	% share in Nat'l Bud.	% share in Nat'l/Pop'n Total Pop
1	Nakhon Phanom	102,999,253	643,792	159.99	1.73	1.14
2	Sakhon Nakhon	140,982,000	991,929	142.13	2.37	1.75
3	Narg Khai	118,999,945	888,798	133.89	2.00	1.57
4	Udon Thani	200,998,819	1,851,621	108.55	3.38	3.26
5	Loei	78,999,910	559,508	141.20	1.33	0.99
6	Mukdahan	64,995,536	292,185	222.45	1.09	0.52
7	Yosothon	88,997,373	533,196	166.91	1.50	0.94
8	Ubon Ratchathani	218,000,000	1,962,192	111.10	3.67	3.46
9	Kalasin	128,211,819	906,709	141.40	2.16	1.60
10	Khon Kaen	113,999,800	1,696,276	67.21	1.92	2.99
11	Maha Sarakham	94,797,907	905,951	104.64	1.60	1.60
12	Roi-Et	154,961,867	1,241,171	124.85	2.61	2.19
13	Buri Rum	180,000,000	1,460,400	123.25	3.03	2.57
14	Si Sa Ket	192,963,947	1,359,276	141.96	3.25	2.40
15	Surin	182,997,528	1,304,480	140.28	3.08	2.30
16	Chiyaphum	118,981,075	1,076,501	110.53	2.00	1.90
17	Nakhon Ratchasima	191,973,296	2,407,856	79.73	3.23	4.25
Nat'l Total: 5938332498 NE:2,373,860,075			20,081,841	118.21	39.98	35.41

*Estimated, Population Institute, Chulalongkorn Uni., Dec. 31. 91

The amount of Special Dev. Budget is obtained from the Provincial Office at Roi-Et. The whole table is worked out by the author.



Source: Thai's Rural Development, NESDB

Fig. 4: District Development Committee

3.4. Tambon Level

(a) Tambon Advisory Working Group (Go-Po-To)

This working group is established for providing advisory services to the village people/Tambon Council for the preparation of development plans at the Tambon Council. Here also the CD officer renders advisory services for the planning (Fig. 5).

(b) Tambon Council

According to "*Thailand and its People: History, Culture, Government and Politics*", prepared by Achan Phaisal for the Intensive Course on Thailand held at Nagoya University, July 1992, Tambon is an organization comprising from 2 to 28 villages. The number of villages depends on topography and population density. Tambon Council Committee is headed by "Kamnan", elected from among Village Headmen. "The committee is responsible for the identification of problems and needs of the people in the tambon and proposition of projects as the Tambon Development Plan"¹¹ (Fig. 6).

As an element of the national policy for decentralization, the government allocated Bt 2 billion to the Tambon Councils for the tambon development in FY 1992. According to the briefing given by DOLA, Bangkok, they will distribute the budget based on population, area and poverty indicators like per capita income of each tambon. The minimum allocation is Bt 200,000. This will be spent mostly for the construction of infrastructures such as road and water supply.

Tambon Development Fund actually started 17 years ago since 1975. First project called "Tambon Development Project" was to set for tackling unemployment problem during dry seasons. The government approved the total budget of Bt 25 billion for this project and allocated equally approx. Bt 500,000 to each of the 5000 tambons. The objective of this project is to create job and income for the villagers through payment of wages for infrastructure construction.

However, this project was discontinued after one year only. Although "the idea of giving the budget directly to Tambon Council was epoch-making for rural development", the council members were not ready to utilize it effectively owing to their inadequate management capabilities. As a result, misuse of funds happened and the equal allocation to all tambons failed to meet the real needs of the people.

In 1980, Bt 35 billion allocated to the tambon council changed the name to "Rural Employment Generating Programme (*Go-So-Cho*)". The emphasis was again on the unemployment problem during dry seasons. This time the budget was allocated commensurate with certain criteria such as population and economic status. This project has been continued until today.

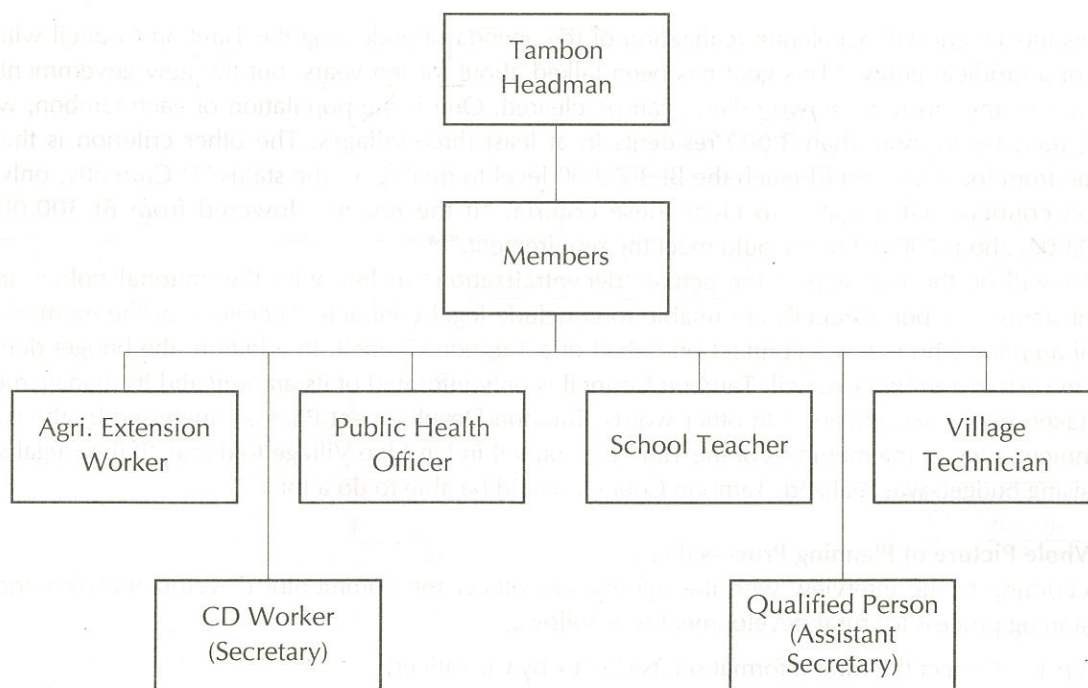
In 1992, changwad Roi-Et received Bt 50 million for this *Go-So-Cho* fund. In any event, it should be noted that the amount is as low as Bt 43 per capita.

Population of Roi-Et : 1.2 million
 Population of Tesaban Roi-Et : 34,000
 $Bt\ 50\ mil / (1.2\ mil - 34,000) = Bt\ 43$

In the case of Un Mao village where we visited on 21 October 1992, its Tambon Council received Bt 300,000 as Tambon Fund this year. This Tambon consists of three villages and has water shortage problem like most other villages in the Northeast region. Therefore, this budget is used for constructing a public pond in each village. However, Bt 300,000 was enough to construct one pond only. Consequently they had to rotate this budget from one village to another to dig a pond by turns.

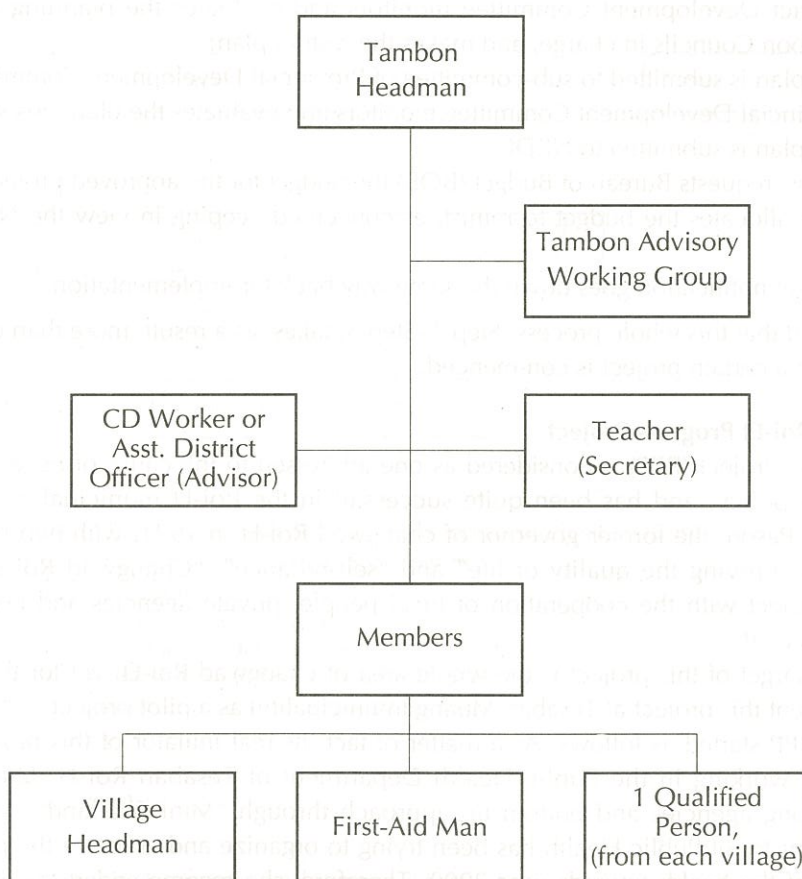
This budget is also supposed to help a Tambon Council formulate a development plan. However there still exists "Top-Down" structure as mentioned earlier. This is through procedures such as 1) CD officer proposes the plan to Tambon Council, *not the other way around*, in order to comply with the national policy; 2) "the final decision to approve the project is in the hands of the changwad level government officials. In addition, according to NESDB Bulletin Vol. 7 No. 2 February 1992, 3) the central government drew out certain criteria or limitation to the Tambon Council for selecting a development project".

Nonetheless, the government is trying to improve this project both in terms of budgeting procedure and institutional arrangements as well. As a matter of fact, the issue was raised and "the new planning of the government that Bt 1 million budget allocation to each tambon from next fiscal year (1993) as Tambon Development Fund will be the first step. This amount would rise further in the following years".¹²



Source: Thai's Rural Development, NESDB

Fig. 5: Tampon Advisory Working Group



Source: Thai's Rural Development, NESDB

Fig. 6: Tampon Council

This movement will accelerate realization of the agenda of endowing the Tambon Council with the status of a juridical entity. "This goal has been talked about for ten years, but the new government will make it a reality this time, if two criteria can be cleared. One is the population of each tambon, which should increase to more than 3,000 residents in at least three villages. The other criterion is that the revenue from local tax should reach the Bt 300,000 level to qualify for the status."¹³ Currently, only 100 tambon councils will be able to clear these criteria. "If the revenue lowered from Bt 300,000 to Bt 100,000, about 700 of them would meet the requirement."¹⁴

This will be the first step to the actual "decentralization" in line with the national policy. In the present status, Tambon Councils are unable to conclude legal contracts. Therefore, at the moment, it is the *nai amphoe* who enters a contract on behalf of a Tambon Council. In addition, the budget does not come in cash to Tambon Council. Tambon Council is only informed of its *amount* and its management is undertaken by district officers.¹⁵ In other words, Tambon Development Plan is supervised by the central government. One of the members of the Tambon Council in Un Mao Village told that "If this (legal status and raising budget) was realized, Tambon Council would be able to do a lot".

3.5. Whole Picture of Planning Process (Fig. 7)

According to the interview with the information officer for Community Development Department, the planning process for rural development is as follows;

- Step 1 Collect the rural information (NRD.2C) by CD officer;
- Step 2 Information is forwarded to NRDC;
- Step 3 Formulation of the national policy;
- Step 4 National policy is informed to CD officer down to the tambon level;
- Step 5 Based on the national policy, CD officer will advise the project planning;
- Step 6 5-year plan in line with the national policy at Tambon Council;
- Step 7 District Development Committee monitors and evaluates the planning submitted by Tambon Councils in charge, and makes the district plan;
- Step 8 The plan is submitted to sub-committee of Provincial Development Committee;
- Step 9 Provincial Development Committee monitors and evaluates the plan thus submitted;
- Step 10 The plan is submitted to NRDC;
- Step 11 NRDC requests Bureau of Budget (BOB) the budget for the approved projects;
- Step 12 BOB allocates the budget to ministries concerned keeping in view the NRDC request; and
- Step 13 Budget notification goes down the same way back for implementation.

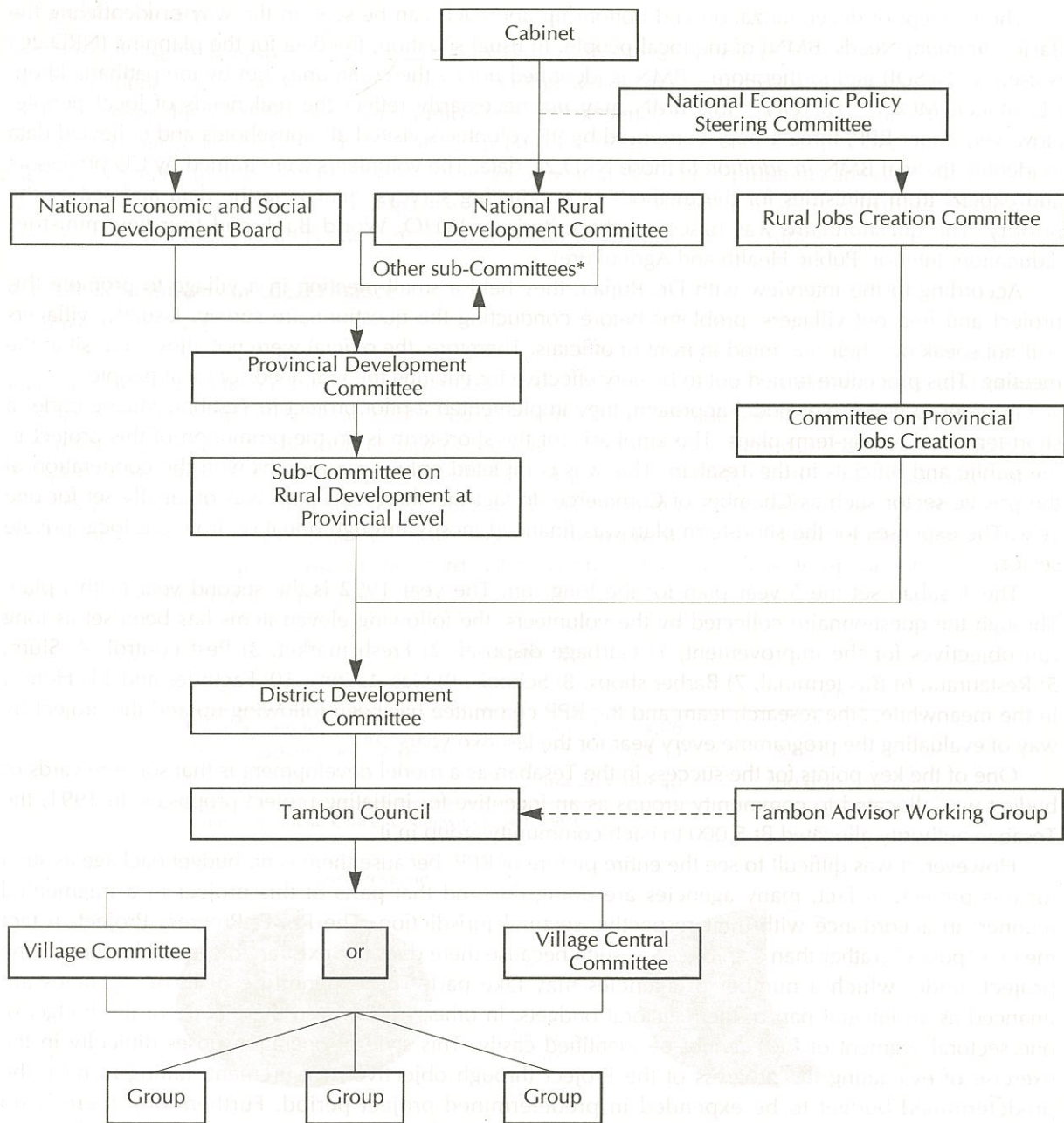
The officer told that this whole process (Step 1–Step 3) takes, as a result, more than one year and then implementation of a certain project is commenced.

3.6. Case Study: Roi-Et Progress Project

Roi-Et Progress Project (RPP) is considered as one addressed to the cause of decentralization in line with the national policy, and has been quite successful in the Roi-Et municipality. This project was initiated by Khun Pason, the former governor of changwad Roi-Et in 1991, with two main objectives in mind, namely, "improving the quality of life" and "self-reliance". "Changwad Roi-Et has decided to undertake this project with the cooperation of local people, private agencies and every governmental unit in the province".¹⁶

The ultimate target of this project is the whole area of changwad Roi-Et, yet for the beginning, they started to implement this project at Tesaban Muang (municipality) as a pilot project.

The idea of RPP started as follows. As a matter of fact, its real initiator of this project was Dr. (Ms.) Rujiaa, who was working in the Public Health Department of Tesaban Roi-Et. She felt the need of coordination among agencies and bottom up approach through "Mini Thailand". Mini Thailand is a project which Ministry of Public Health has been trying to organize and enhance the people's participation in the field of the health towards year 2000. Therefore, she recommended this idea to the former governor. He wholeheartedly supported her idea. Then, after several meetings, the governor succeeded in convening the representatives of six key ministries from the central government. NESDB, Chulalongkorn University (CU) and the private sector people also took part in the conference held at Khao Yai. It was the initiation of the Project.



- * 1. The Co-ordination between National Plan and Local Plan Sub-Committee.
- 2. The Regional and Local Planning Sub-Committee.
- 3. The Plan and Project Sub-Committee.
- 4. The Land Policy Sub-Committee.
- 5. The Rural Manpower Development Sub-Committee.
- 6. The Rural Development Information Sub-Committee.
- 7. The Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Committee.
- 8. The Village Development Fund Sub-Committee.

Source: Thai's Rural Development, NESDB

Fig. 7: Organizational Structure of Rural Development Management

The concept of decentralization and bottom up approach can be seen in the way of identifying the Basic Minimum Needs (BMN) of the local people. In usual situation, the data for the planning (NRD.2C) is used by NESDB and furthermore, "BMN is identified *not* by the community but by the patthana khon. CD officer, MOI."¹⁷ Therefore, this BMN may *not* necessarily reflect the real needs of local people. However, under RPP, three groups composed by 97 volunteers visited all households and collected data to identify the real BMN *in addition to* those NRD.2C data. The volunteers were trained by CU professors and experts from ministries for the methods of conducting surveys, analyzing the data and setting the priority. The questionnaire was based on the criteria of WHO, World Bank and four key ministries (Education, Interior, Public Health and Agriculture).

According to the interview with Dr. Rujiaa, they held a small meeting in a village to promote this project and find out villagers' problems before conducting the questionnaire survey. Usually, villagers will not speak out their real mind in front of officials. Therefore, the official were not allowed to sit at the meeting. This procedure turned out to be very effective for eliciting the real needs of local people.

In order to develop a model approach, they implemented a pilot project in Tesaban Muang under a short-term and a long-term plans. The emphasis for the short-term is on the promotion of this project to the public and officials in the Tesaban. This was completed only in six months with the cooperation of the private sector such as Chamber of Commerce. In fact the short-term plan was originally set for one year. The expenses for the short-term plan was financed mostly through donation from the local private sector.

The Tesaban set the 5-year plan for the long run. The year 1992 is the second year of this plan. Through the questionnaire collected by the volunteers, the following eleven items has been set as long run objectives for the improvement; 1) Garbage disposal, 2) Fresh market, 3) Pest control, 4) Slum, 5) Restaurant, 6) Bus terminal, 7) Barber shops, 8) Schools, 9) Gas stations, 10) Factories and 11) Hotels. In the meanwhile, "the research team and the RPP committee has been following up and the project by way of evaluating the programme every year for the last two years".¹⁸

One of the key points for the success in the Tesaban as a model development is that some rewards or budget was allocated to community groups as an incentive for initiating project proposals. In 1991, the Tesaban authority allocated Bt 5,000 to each community group in it.

However, it was difficult to see the entire picture of RPP, because there is no budget package as such for this project. In fact, many agencies are doing this and that parts of this project in a fragmented manner, in accordance with their respective sectoral jurisdiction. The Roi-Et Progress Project in fact mean a "policy", rather than a "project" as such because there does not exist an integrated budget for the project, under which a number of agencies may take part. The expenditure of those agencies are financed as an integral part of their sectoral budgets. In other words, even the picture of the budget of one sectoral segment of RPP cannot be identified easily. This style of operation poses difficulty in the exercise of evaluating the progress of the Project through objective measurement, failing to have the predetermined budget to be expended in predetermined project period. Furthermore, there is no organization which is in charge of whole RPP, except to say that Mayor is overseeing the whole things as top administrator.

In the master plan of RPP, translated by Achan Snanchit, responsible agencies are indicated for each project activity. Dr. Rujiaa confirmed that the agency whose name is mentioned at the top in the plan is supposed to act as coordinator in that particular activity. However, in practice the coordination is performed in an informal manner only.

Consequently, it would be fair to say that RPP as yet does have serious weaknesses in terms of institutional arrangement required for a multi-sectoral project like RPP. However, it is obvious that such weaknesses are caused primarily because of the highly centralized and sectorally compartmentalized Thai administration, rather than inadequacies of effort at the local level. Quite on the contrary, the spirit of community participation and the concerted effort of all the agencies concerned (even including non governmental organizations such as Chamber of Commerce) being enhanced under the leadership of the Mayor of Tesaban Roi-Et would certainly deserve high commendation as an important new wind direction that may eventually help bringing about innovations in the Thai bureaucracy today. We very much look forward to seeing further development of RPP in the coming years.

4. Public Finance

One of essential reasons for the weak autonomy of the local government derives from its financial overdependency upon the central government. In other words, the central government has overwhelming influence over the local finance. "In addition, the big presence of the central government also causes regional disparity because the financial resource allocation has a short term rather than long term view".¹⁹ It means that the money tends to flow into those areas where problems are visible and need to be concerned right now, such as Bangkok where the traffic conditions and slum growth are much more visible rather than rural countryside suffering from chronic poverty over centuries.

4.1. Weak Autonomy in Local Finance

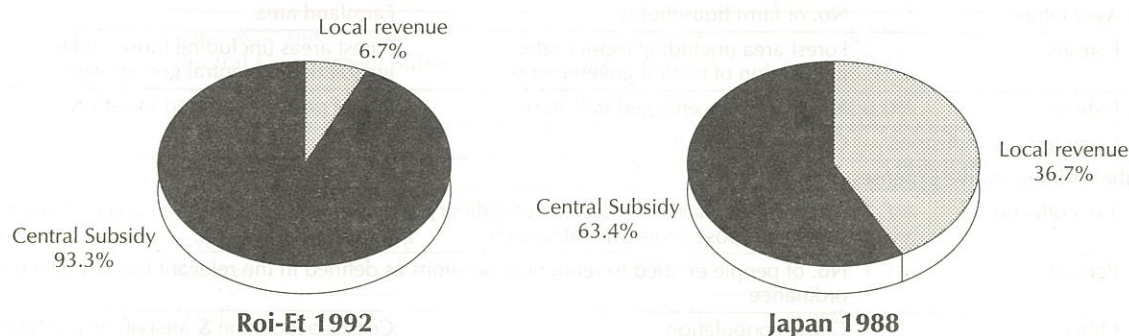
(a) Provincial Level

Information obtained from the financial office in the Roi-Et provincial office revealed an interesting fact. First, locally collected money through taxes, fees and fines, except fees for education and hospital management, are sent 100% to the central government. Then central government reallocates the budget to the local government. The total receipt or the total expenditure in changwad Roi-Et in FY 1992 is Bt 3,564,454,465.40, then the locally collected money is Bt 238,518,154.86 (Table 2). This means changwad Roi-Et heavily depends on the subsidy from the centre. As shown in the pie chart (Fig. 8), 93.3% of changwad Roi-Et financial source is subsidy from the central government. The policy of decentralization in its true sense of the word will never be achieved unless drastic actions are taken to change the present financial position.

Table 2:

		Unit: Baht
Local Revenue	238,518,154.86	6.7%
Central Government Subsidy	3,325,936,310.54	93.3%
Total Receipt	3,564,454,465.40	100.0%

Source: Provincial Office, Changwad Roi-Et, 1991



Source: Roi-Et Provincial Office, Ministry of Commerce and data of Min. of Home Affairs, Gov't of Japan 1992.

Fig. 8: Sources of Local Government Revenue

This is amazing when it is compared with the case of Japanese local government system. In Japan, there is a calculating system for fix the amount of the central subsidy based on what is called Basic Financial Requirement (BFR)²⁰ of each local government. The expenses of each prefecture, cities, towns and villages are calculated based on the BFR criteria. The indices employed for the enumeration of BFR include such as regional characteristics (cold area, mountainous area, etc.), financial award base (Number of school teachers, policemen, etc.), components related to industry, education, welfare, etc. (See Table 3). In case local tax revenue falls short of this objectively computed financial requirement (i.e., BFR), a local government will receive a lump sum allocation from the central government. This system will lessen the regional disparity between richer and poorer provinces. It would seem that there is no reason why similar arrangements can not be introduced to Thailand for more equal distribution of financial resources to all the changwads.

Table 3: Criteria for the Calculation of Basic Financial Requirements (BFR) for Prefectural Administration

Expense Items	Criterion ¹	
	For Routine Expense	For Investment Expense
Police	No. of Police personnel officially designated to each prefecture	
Public Works		
1) Roads/bridges	Road area	Length of roads
2) Rivers	Length of river banks	Length of river banks
3) Ports	Length of quays	Length of breakwaters & related facilities
4) Others	Census population and length of shore-line conservation facilities	Census population and length of shore-line conservation facilities
Education		
1) Elementary Schools (6 grades) ²	1) Officially determined number of teachers in all the CTV-run schools in the prefecture 2) Number of schools, above	
2) Junior High Schools (3 grades) ²	Same principle as above is applied to CTV-run junior high schools	
3) Senior High Schools	1) No. of teachers officially determined for prefecture-run high schools 2) No. of students ³ enrolled in the schools, above	No. of students enrolled in the schools, above
4) Others	Census population, number of handicapped children, ³ pupils, students enrolled in special schools run by all public authorities	
Welfare & Labour		
1) Allowance to low income families	Census population of towns & villages	
2) Social welfare	Census population	Census population
3) Sanitation & public health	do	do
4) Labour	Census population & the number of workers engaged in the official unemployment relief programmes	
Industries		
1) Agriculture	No. of farm households	Farmland area
2) Forestry	Forest area (including those under jurisdiction of central government)	Forest areas (including those under jurisdiction of central government)
3) Fishery	No. of persons engaged in fishery	No. of persons engaged in fishery
4) Commerce & Industries	Census population	
Other Administrative Expenses		
1) Tax collection	Amount calculated on the basis of ordinary prefectural taxes (<i>Futsu-Zei</i>) and two other special purpose taxes (<i>Mokuteki-Zei</i>)	
2) Pensions	No. of people entitled to retirement pensions as defined in the relevant law & prefectural ordinance	
3) Others	Census population	Census population & area of the prefecture
Restoration from Disasters	Amount of redemption (both principals & interests) for bonds floated ⁴ for relevant purposes (e.g., land subsidence, acute land erosion, typhoons, floods, mining damage)	
Repayment of Special Bonds	Same as above applied to those bonds issued for financing special projects like public works, Dowa projects (minority group-addressed schemes), environmental improvement schemes	

1. Items employed as criteria for the allocation refer to those which relate to the official jurisdiction of the prefecture administration. For instance, "length of road" refers to those roads that are officially maintained by the prefectural government.
2. Elementary school and junior high school constitute nine years of compulsory education in Japan. These schools are basically managed by CTVs (Cities, Towns & Villages). Hence, the prefectural government does not deal with the investment expenses of those schools.
3. Reference is often made to special groups of people, e.g., school children, number of households engaged in agriculture. It is statutorily provided that these figures be obtained from relevant statistics periodically and officially conducted.
4. There is a ceiling statutorily provided for these local public bonds, subject to sanction by the central government.

Source: Nagamine, ed, *JAPAN, A Compendium—Facts and Figures on Development Administration and Planning*, UNCRD, 1983

(b) CAO

CAO seems to have relatively better degree of autonomy compared with the provincial government. 25% of taxes, fees and fines collected by CAO goes to the centre, the rest (i.e., 75%) can be managed at CAO. Taxes, fees and fines collected at Tambon Council can be kept 100%. Subsidy from the central government, as a result, is as low as 12.7%.

Unfortunately, we were unable to conduct further analysis like percentage of capital investment in the total expenditure owing to the lack of information.

Table 4:

	Unit: Baht
1) Tax, fee, fine collected at CAO	137,667,064.34
2) Tax, fee, fine collected at TC	7,376,355.61
3) Special Budget (water supply)	159,428.00
4) Subsidy from the centre	16,038,620.00
5) 25% of 1)	34,416,766.16
6) Total Income (1+2+3+4-5)	126,824,702.082
7) Total Expenditure	151,714,930.89
Difference (6-7)	-24,890,228.808

Source: CAO, Changwad Roi-Et, 1991

(c) Tesaban

Budget of Roi-Et municipality is as follows.

Table 5: Fiscal Year 1991

Revenue		Unit: Baht
Local Revenue	30,533,686	62.9%
Central Government Subsidy	18,037,150	37.1%
Total	48,570,836	100.0%
Expenditure		Unit: Baht
Regular Expenses (Salary, etc.)	46,276,488	95.3%
Investment Expenditure	1,701,300	3.5%
Reserve	593,043	1.2%
Total	48,570,836	100.0%

Source: Roi-Et Province's Data, prepared by Achan Phaisal

As shown in the Table 5, they cannot manage even regular expenditure with its own revenue. Therefore, although Roi-Et Tesaban received the 37.1% of income from the centre, they can only use 3.5% of expenditure for capital investment. Accordingly, Mayor of Roi-Et Municipality also emphasized three main institutional problems as follows.

- 1) Insufficient budget for development,
- 2) No decentralization regarding Taxation. Taxation system is regulated *only* by the central government; and
- 3) Personnel problem concerning the transfer. As a result of "two years' service in principle" of the changwad governor, it is not easy to ensure continuity in the long-range development management.

4.2. Regional Disparity*

Northeast region is considered as the poorest region in terms of per capita income and the distribution of the rural poor (Table 6, 7). However, more funds per capita are allocated to Bangkok and its neighbouring regions, rather than to its poorer regions like in the Northeast Region (Fig. 9). This may come from the idea of spread effect, which means that the impact of development in certain areas such as Bangkok Central Region will ultimately spread to wider regions in the country.

Regional per capita expenditures depend on the central government's transfer for 90% of its source (as we have observed that Roi-Et case is 93.7%). The central region with the second greatest per capita GNP received the highest subsidies per head from the central government in 1989. On the other hand, the Northeast Region, which has the lowest income received the least amount of resources.

Although the central government is already fully aware of regional disparity and set the solution of this problem as one of the major objectives in the Seventh National Plan, as already discussed, the subnational decentralization of the financial autonomy to regional and local agencies would be the crucial precondition for materializing such a policy goal.

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Rural Poor by Region: 1985

Region	%
N	23.4
NE	52.2
C	10.9
S	13.5
Total	100.0

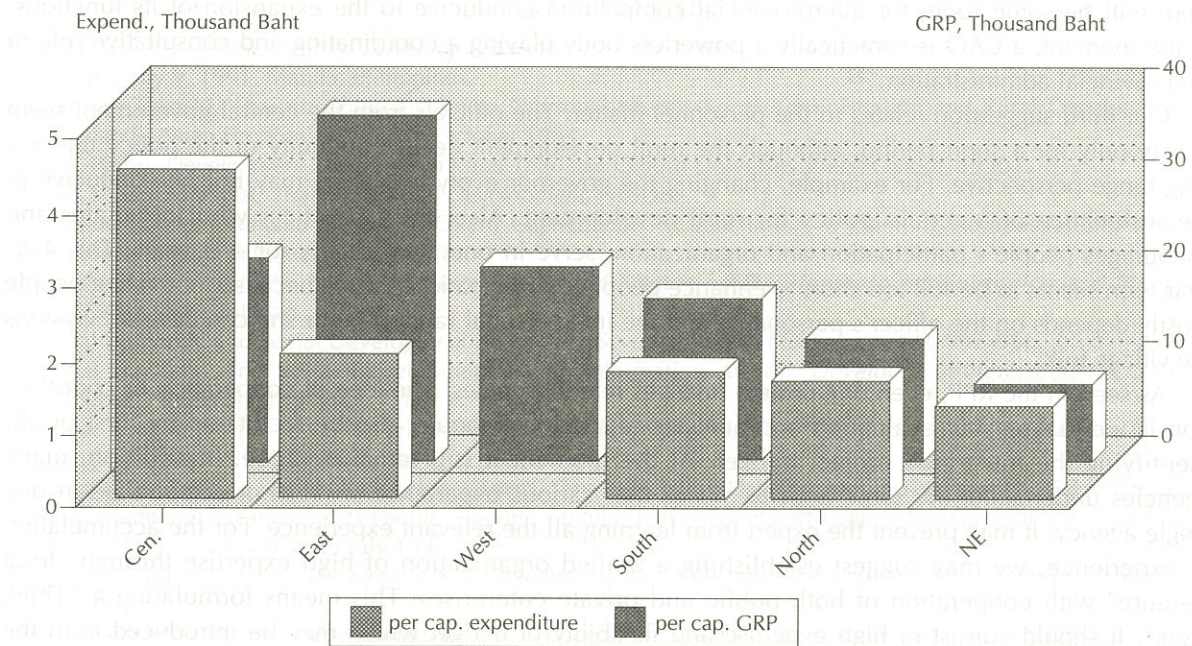
Source: NESDB

Table 7: Per Capita Income by Region

Regions	Unit: Baht			
	1960	1970	1979	1988
N	1,496	2,699	8,781	16,154
NE	1,082	1,822	4,991	9,493
C	2,565	4,662	17,655	28,294
S	2,700	3,858	12,683	20,387
Bangkok	5,630	10,234	30,161	93,496
Whole Kingdom	2,106	3,849	12,067	27,631

Source: NESDB

*This section is based on the analysis made in our earlier report made for the intensive course on Thai development in July 1992.



Source: Statistical Yearbook, Thailand No. 37

Fig. 9: Regional Per Cap. Expenditure and GRP Thailand, 1989

5. Task Ahead

As we have observed and analyzed institutional aspects of local and regional development in Thailand despite paucity of information and time at our disposal, we identified several structural problems in the present system of Thai development administration. One of its conspicuous characteristics is the heavy top down structure, which may pose a bottleneck for decentralization for the promotion of rural development. We identified some of the sub-problems that seem to reinforce the heavy top down structure, too. Despite serious constraints in terms of time and information during our fieldwork in Thailand, several suggestions can be humbly submitted as follows.

First suggestion is that all relevant information should be made more accessible to the public, especially those related to financial allocation. In this regard, we could only get the total amount of revenue and expenditure, not the breakdown figures at the provincial level, particularly those figures which would indicate allocation to key sectors. Therefore, we could not make further examination. In other words, only the central level controls the financial information. This made the analysis of evaluation for the development very difficult. The government should see to it that much more of basic information be more open to the public on, among other things, how the financial allocation is made and whether the allocation is appropriate or not in view of the stated national policy. It would be one of most fundamental steps to be taken for achieving the rural decentralization.

Second, the election of the changwad governor is now an issue of national concern. "The Ministry of Interior has been instructed to set up a committee to look into the process of electing provincial governors".²¹ The changwad with elected governor will naturally become more independent. Should this be realized without substantial changes in the financial resource allocation system, the poorer changwads like Roi-Et would not be able to survive themselves, as we have observed in Section 4, on account of heavy dependency on the central treasury.

In the meanwhile, Mayor of Roi-Et Municipality expressed considerable misgivings that Roi-Et is not ready for the elected governor under "low level of awareness of the cause of democracy of general public." Nevertheless, it is also true that people will never learn unless they are given opportunity of experience. As a matter of fact, "the Democratic Party has already suggested a gradual strategy in this regard, namely, that the decentralization should start with the public election of the head of Provincial Administrative Organization (CAO)."²² If the head of CAO (currently the changwad governor) is elected,

there will be some room for interprovincial competition conducive to the expansion of its functions. At the moment, a CAO is "practically a powerless body playing a coordinating and consultative role in the provincial administration."²³

Our third suggestion relates to the personnel matter. The officials from the central government seem to stay only for a short period, although the rural development needs continuity of the policy under a long-range perspective. For example, changing the governor every two years may not be conducive to the sustenance of a certain policy for rural development. Also, the CD officer who formulates and encourages people's participation and organization, serve in one area usually for 4-5 years. This 4-5-year term seems to be still too short to enhance people's participation. This is because motivating people mostly depends on the officer's personality and the interpersonal rapport he or she can develop vis-à-vis the village folk.

As seen in the RPP, even one project involves many agencies. The idea of cooperation or coordination is well taken, but evaluation and analysis of a project should also be facilitated by, first of all, identifying the integrated project budget. At the moment it still remains vague. In addition, many agencies undertaking the same activity means that various experience would not accumulate in one single agency. It may prevent the expert from learning all the relevant experience. For the accumulation of experience, we may suggest establishing a unified organization of high expertise through "Joint Venture" with cooperation of both public and private enterprises. This means formulating a "Think Tank". It should consist of high expertise and flexibility of budget which may be introduced from the private sector.

Lastly but never the least, the introduction of international assistance will be desired to be more utilized for rural development. This included not only the financial assistance but also technical assistance. Also the exchange of training among the Third World countries should be encouraged.

These are the suggestions and recommendation we found through this fieldwork. There are problems and dilemmas in terms of institutional aspects. However, we have seen that Thailand is really trying to tackle them such as seen in the promotion of tambon council status towards legal entity and the special budget allocation for rural development. It would be our privilege indeed if any part of our suggestions and analysis we have submitted here would be found useful for further enhancement of rural development in Thailand.

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REPORT

The following report was prepared by the committee on the subject of the proposed changes in the curriculum of the Department of Education. The committee has considered the matter carefully and has reached the following conclusions:

1. The present curriculum is based on a broad and liberal education, and it is believed that this is the best foundation for the student.

2. It is recommended that the present curriculum be maintained, with such minor changes as may be necessary to bring it up to date.

3. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of courses, and that the student be encouraged to choose his own course of study.

4. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of extracurricular activities, and that the student be encouraged to participate in these activities.

5. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of scholarships, and that the student be encouraged to apply for these scholarships.

6. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of internships, and that the student be encouraged to apply for these internships.

7. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of research opportunities, and that the student be encouraged to apply for these opportunities.

8. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of fieldwork opportunities, and that the student be encouraged to apply for these opportunities.

9. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of community service opportunities, and that the student be encouraged to apply for these opportunities.

10. It is recommended that the Department of Education continue to offer a wide variety of leadership opportunities, and that the student be encouraged to apply for these opportunities.

Chapter 4.3: Participatory Rural Development: A Case Study on Water Resource Development Administration

NAGAMINE Ryoko (Ms.)

1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to identify potentials and bottlenecks of local administration in order to realize participatory rural development in Roi-Et, Thailand. As a case study, the water resource development administration is analysed which is the most important issue in Roi-Et Province as well as other Northeast provinces.

Section 2 briefly conceptualizes the participatory rural development and describes the ways by which the local administration in developing countries should operate, and the strategies to bring about decentralization.

Section 3 attempts to analyze institutional dimensions of local administration in Roi-Et based on the information collected during the fieldwork in Thailand in October 1992. The main concern is the effectiveness of institutional arrangement for promoting participatory rural development within the context of the reality in Roi-Et.

Section 4 deals with multi-agency involvement on water resource development in Roi-Et. Given the condition mentioned in Section 2, it would be aimed to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of administration system. Section 5 is the concluding remarks of this chapter, summarizing the problems and giving an alternative proposal for future development.

2. Conceptual Framework: Participatory Development and Local Administration

2.1. People's Participation in Rural Development

In this section, an attempt is made to conceptualize what is essential to cater to the grassroot people's need in the developing countries with respect to the institutional arrangements at the local level. First of all, I must point out that it would be one of the prerequisites of rural development that people have formal opportunities to participate in the whole cycle of development process. In many cases, formal or informal, rural people do have opportunities to voice out their needs/problems at least at the lowest level of decision making hierarchy. The Statutory Panchayati Raj System (village council) in India, Tambon Council (further explained in Section 2) in Thailand are examples.

These village level institutions play important role not only in rural development activities but also in the integration of village society. The village council would be in charge of conflict resolution and keeping socio-cultural tradition among village people. The lowest level institution is likely to be compatible with indigenous social structure. At the same time it is connected one way or another with higher level modernized local administration system. Local administration has power of supervision and control on grassroot organizations. In many cases, the relationship between these two are not equal, in spite of the fundamental principle of democracy.

The council members should be elected from the village community. Those elected are the representatives of the people so that the council is responsible for the welfare of the community and protection of the villagers' human rights. The representatives should exert good leadership, integrate the people's needs/aspirations and raise these to the upper level on behalf of the people. The role of the elected members, who should in fact be the village leaders, is therefore important, for it is mainly through the village leaders, that the rural people would be able to participate in decision-making and development activities. While every community member can raise his/her opinions and problems frankly at the time of

village meeting, these may not fructify unless the representatives are capable to respect traditional socio-cultural values of community and to have a sense of justice, namely, avoid corruption with government officials.

To ensure participation in government-initiated rural development projects, the collective needs/aspirations must be reflected through above-mentioned village representatives in the whole process of the project cycle. The process could be explained as follows. First, at the preparatory stage, planning should be based on the information collected from the village community itself, needs/problems identified by themselves, the project objectives prioritized in accordance with the needs and aspirations. Based on a tentative plan, thus designed, the decision should be made on its critical appraisal, followed by fund raising.

The second stage is the implementation of the project. In this stage, rural people may offer labour, bear allocated cost or tolerate certain degree of sacrifice. Third, monitoring and evaluation must be done. If there occurs unexpected damage on village community/people during and after implementation, the opportunity to protest or ask for modification of the project or compensation should be institutionalized.

The whole process should be done under the cooperation and consultation between the government/government officers and village community/people. On cost sharing, in order to provoke motivation, it would be the better way that beneficiaries participate in terms of cost bearing. But in accordance with the income standard, cost burden should not be heavy. Therefore, the government should provide an appropriate amount of financial assistance. In addition, concerning technical assistance as well, it would be advisable to adopt indigenous and/or relatively inexpensive technology for village-level projects. Nonetheless, technical assistance as an integral part of extension service from government agencies concerned may still be required for project implementation. It is an important task to identify the most suitable technical assistance for enhancing the welfare of people on the principle of self-reliance. Overdependence on external skills will be harmful.

The discussion above describes the essential operational principles to be abided by villagers and their leaders on cooperating with government agencies. Communities should realize that the impact of the government actions on themselves, good or bad, is enormous. Therefore, their irrelevant control or incapability can easily result in the failure of a project. It is in this context that the general principles of administrative organizations are proposed in the next sub-action.

2.2. Local Administration and Rural Development

First of all, I would like to define sub-nation/local administrative organizations by dividing them into two categories. One is the line agencies of central ministries and the other is the local government headed by locally elected representatives. I would like to call the former as local agencies and the latter as local governments. These two bodies are both in charge of regional (subnational) development (including rural development) by functioning in various ways.

Rural development covers various kinds of activities such as constructing schools/hospitals, extending health care services and education, establishing farmers cooperative, disseminating improved methods of farming and so on. Therefore it would be necessary to adopt an integrated approach. However, in view of the two lines of command running in parallel (i.e., one for local agencies and the other for local governments), the division of responsibilities among all those is not clear. The question is who and which authority/agency would decide to distribute power and resource and coordinate amongst themselves.

When several organizations/agencies are involved in one single project, the relationship among them, particularly the agency responsible for overall supervision should be clearly identified. It is a crucial issue indeed. In case of Roi-Et, Thailand, local agencies are vertically compartmentalized, and duplication of function appears to be quite common. To make things worse, a local government has very weak power of resource mobilization, almost entirely depending on the subsidies from the central government and having no formal authority to control local agencies' activities (further explained in the next section).

Both of these two types of organizations have hierarchical structure consisting of two or three levels, namely, provincial, district/block and village levels. Presumably, the most important part of the local administration would be the smallest unit which keeps direct contact with village communities. The quality and formal authority of the lower level agency and officials would be crucial for they can take part in the identification of local needs as well as problems directly and reflect them in policy formulation at higher levels. Meanwhile, power may sometimes cause corruption or exploitation of rural people.

In other cases, the official at a key position may not have keen interest in rural development for they are educated in the urban area. Indeed, personnel issue can be critical.

In order to promote participatory rural development, the extent and nature of the authority at sub-national/local level and attitudinal qualities of the incumbent would be vital. This relates to the question of the ways of training local government officials, in other words, one aspect of human resource development. However, the issue of human resource development is not covered in this chapter.

2.3. Decentralization

The next question to be discussed is that of decentralization. The main aim of this subsection is to find out the necessity and relevance of decentralization of power from central to local administration. As mentioned earlier, the vertical compartmentalization of functions of most local agencies, and the weak power of fund raising as well as decision-making of local governments would not be conducive to participatory and integrated rural development. It would be vital to establish a core organization at a key local level which would be responsible for rural development holding financial and policy-making authority, even under the supervision of the central government.

The next question would then be to which organization such power should be transferred. I think the local government should be the right one to be bestowed with power to implement participatory rural development in accordance with locally identified needs and aspirations. The other issue would be to which level of the hierarchy the power should be given to undertake developmental activity most effectively. These issues are to be examined based on the situation of Roi-Et Province in Section 3.

The environmental requirements for promoting decentralization should be pointed out. Generally speaking, decentralization in developing countries has been argued for long time but the progress is extremely slow for decentralization is a question of highly political nature. Central government tends to be reluctant to promote decentralization on account of the apprehension towards national disintegration or the desire to control natural resources, that tend to exist in remote areas. Adding to this, decentralization could become mere 'lip service' or temporal policy in accordance with the change of leading party at the national level. There is a long way before putting the cause of decentralization into practice.

3. Local Administration Institution and NRDC System in Roi-Et

3.1. Local Administration in Thailand

In Thailand, the administration is divided into three levels, namely, changwad (province), amphoe (district) and tambon (administrative village consisting of two or more traditional villages). These three-tiered line is directly connected with central government under the supervision of Ministry of Interior. Along with these, there exist local self-government entities established to undertake local government mandates (Demographic registration, vaccination, garbage collection, etc.) This is Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO), Tesaban (Municipality), Sukapiban (Sanitary District) and the City of Pattaya besides Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

As briefly outlined earlier, there are two lines of government institution for local level administration. To promote rural development, the line directly connected with the central government seems to play a pivotal role. The three-tiered central government agencies at local level identify the needs and problems that exist in rural areas.

Adding to this, CAO even though it has very limited power in terms of financial and decision-making authority is does play certain roles in the field of rural development. The function of these two parallel organizations are further described below;

- *Changwad Authority and Changwad Governor:*

The chief of the changwad administration is Governor who is appointed by the Ministry of Interior, not publicly elected by the local people. The Governor functions as an informal coordinator among key line agencies of central ministries. However governor himself does not have formal power in respect of decision making or distribution of development budget.

The changwad authority consists of provincial representative of respective ministries that has its own budget allocated by the central head office in Bangkok. The reason why the administrative system of Thailand is highly centralized is that each provincial department is no more than the local arm of the line

agency of central ministries in terms of budget allocation and decision-making. The administrative set-up is almost the same at district level, which is the sub-changwad level.

- *District (amphoe) Level Administration*

District (amphoe) is the lower level local administration directly accountable to the changwad authority. The chief of district administration (Nai Amphoe) is an officer of Ministry of Interior, appointed by the central government. The Nai Amphoe does not have official power in terms of decision making or budget allocation. However, he takes into consideration the local needs which are directly brought up from grass root level and at the same time performs duties mandated by the upper level government. Therefore Nai Amphoe and amphoe level administration is important as the contact point between government and rural communities.

Nai Amphoe and his office which is in fact the lowest arm of DOLA (Ministry of Interior) are in charge of various administrative matters. Apart from them, Department of Community Development (Ministry of Interior) also lays quite an important role in rural development. The amphoe officer in charge of Community Development Dept. is called Amphoe Development Officer (*Patana Khon Amphoe*) who gives guidance on rural development to Tambon Councils. The amphoe development officer serves in one amphoe for around four years. Most of community development officers have background of social science like art, education, sociology, economics, law, political science, finance and so on and before leaving for the local office, they have to have training for one year in the village.¹ The period of four years seems to be not long enough to communicate with rural people and identify their real needs and problems. However, the longer period in the service might bring about corruption between the officer and village people.

- *Tambon Council*

The Tambon Council consists of village headmen of each traditional village belonging to the Tambon, as well as other members like school teachers as secretary and other qualified persons. The council is chaired by the Tambon headmen called Kamnan, mutually elected from among the village headmen (*Puyaibahn*) concerned. The members of Tambon Council also include some general officials. The tambon development officer from Department of Community Development at amphoe level mentioned earlier is also included as Tambon Council member as advisor.

The Tambon Council proposes local needs or certain rural development projects such as construction of an irrigation pond or establishment of advanced school system with the assistance of Tambon Advisory Working Group (TAWG). The TAWG is chaired by Kamnam, the chief of Tambon Council, as well as members from several agencies of key ministries at amphoe level. They include an agricultural extension officer, a school teacher, a community development worker and a public health worker. Other members from village people are the village technician and other qualified persons. The TAWG does not have official power, however, and is responsible for assisting the Tambon Council. It appears that the TAWG has an informal influential power over rural development.

Since 1975, Tambon has been given special budget called *Tambon Fund* to promote rural development. The amount is two billion Baht earmarked out of the national budget. It is too small a proportion considering the population in rural areas. The Tambon Fund is a grant in kind so that Tambon Council requests to amphoe office to get materials. The fund is rotated among villages in each Tambon.

Finally, it would be fair to say that the Tambon Council is the sole body through which the rural people can directly appeal their needs as well as problems. However, the Tambon Council is not a judicial entity so that it neither has its own budget nor legal power to undertake a development project by itself. Strengthening Tambon's independence in terms of financial power and policy formulation would be one of essential steps to be taken for promoting participatory development.

3.2. Local Government

In Thailand, there exists local self government which is separate from those discussed in 3.1. The local self government consists of three parts, namely, Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO), Municipality (*Tesaban*) and Sanitary District (*Sukapiban*).

1) According to Mr. Surakiat, Community Development Officer at changwad office. (Interview dated 19 October 1992 at Roi-Et Changwad Office)

- *Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO)*

This is the local self-government called *Ongkarn Borihan Suan Changwad* in Thai language. The head of CAO is Changwad Governor. Therefore, Changwad Governor wears two hats.

- *Municipality (Tesaban)*

Municipality has Municipal Council consisting of elected members and administrative organization with own budget. The chief of the Municipality, i.e., Mayor and Deputy Mayor are members of the Council. Roi-Et Municipality has annual budget (1990/91) around 48 million Baht. Thirty million was general income of its own, and other 18 million was the subsidy from the central government. The proportion of subsidy is rather low. Besides, the amount itself is quite small.

Since 1990, under the initiative of Roi-Et Changwad Governor and Mayor of the Municipality, Roi-Et Progress Project (RPP) was started. It is the project to up-grade the quality of life of the population under the slogan of "self reliance". Local agencies of central ministries also jointed the RPP. There is no responsible RPP committee nor independent budget. RPP activities in fact constitute no more than various parts of the routine work of the local agencies concerned. However, many volunteers have participated in the cleaning of public spaces and the conduct of basic human needs survey of all households in Roi-Et Municipality. It would be fair to say that the RPP activities have stemmed out of self reliant philosophy, and are one type of participatory development to stimulate people's motivation.

In sum, one can say that the power of the local government at changwad level is rather weak. It does not have authorized power to coordinate local branches of central ministries. Therefore there does not exist a body responsible for integrated regional/rural development. However, there is a national trend towards strengthening development management capability of Tambon, so that there is a possibility for developing Tambon as the focal institution for area-based development.

3.3. NRDC System

In 1982 as a policy of Fifth National Plan (1982–1986), National Rural Development Committee was established chaired by the Prime Minister. This is to establish an independent machinery for promoting integrated rural development. Adding to the Tambon Fund, the NRDC allocates special budget to the Provincial Development Committees and six key ministries as follows;

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Public Health
- Ministry of Industry (Since Sixth Plan, 1987–)
- Ministry of Commerce (Since Sixth Plan, 1987–)

However, the special budget for the Provincial Development Committee is 6 billion baht for six key ministries each, meaning 30 billion Baht altogether. This amount plus Tambon Fund (2 billion) constitutes only 13.5 percent of the national budget. Therefore the budget for rural development is still very small.

the NRDC system has a hierarchical setup, consisting of the National Rural Development Committee, Provincial Development Committee and the District Development Committee. The policy is formulated and sent from District to Provincial level, then from Provincial to National level. At each level, the Development Committee concerned coordinates sectoral components and proposes the plan. The final decision is to be made at the national level.

3.4. Conclusion

As a result of the analysis hitherto described, the concluding remarks are summarized as follows;

- a. Strengthening the coordinative power of Governor and CAO would be an indispensable step for implementing the policy of decentralization. Public election of Changwad Governor which has recently been debated as a big national issue, would also be one of the ways to widen the range of people's opportunity to participate in the decision-making for regional development through political actions.
- b. Giving more budget allocation to the Provincial and District Rural Development Committees is very much called for in order to remove resource inadequacy in rural development. At the same time

legislative and executive power of these Development Committees should be strengthened, for at present stage it largely remains no more than an informal coordinator and a passive receiver of special budget from the centre.

- c. Strengthening development management capability of Tambon Councils would be essential for reflecting grassroot problems and needs in the policy formulation. In other words, to upgrade the Tambon Council to a judicial entity and have its own resource appears to be a sound approach.

4. Water Resource Development in Roi-Et: A Case Study

4.1. Background

Before analysing the institutional aspect of the water resource development, I would like to describe the natural condition of Roi-Et Province as the background. In Roi-Et, rainy season normally starts in May and continues up to October. The annual average rainfall is around 1400 mm. The soil is sandy and it gets very hard during dry seasons. The soil is not water absorptive. As a result, it is prone to recurrent floods. At the same time the region is also likely to be attacked by drought and chronic water shortage, for the rainfall pattern is quite irregular.

There are two main sources of water, viz. Moon and Chi Rivers. However, the whole Northeast region is a vast plateau slightly tilted downward to Maekhong River, it does not have a rich water shed area as such. Therefore the flow of water in these rivers during dry seasons gets extremely meagre. In the meanwhile, on account of the recurrent floods, the ground water table is rather high, containing high rate of inorganic salt. In Northeast, all provinces including Roi-Et have the same problem of saline ground water.

The most serious problem is the water shortage particularly during dry seasons. Added to such a condition, the irrigation facilities are far from adequate. The rate of irrigated land is around 14 percent in Roi-Et Province. It means that the water supply for agricultural uses is almost solely rain fed, and is seriously inadequate. Therefore most farmers can grow rice once in a year only. Given unfertile soil and irregular rainfall, the productivity can not be very high. In dry season, few people who have private pond or reservoir can grow vegetables, tobacco and so on or raise fish and get cash income. However, many rural people in the Northeast region go to Bangkok Metropolitan Area for getting jobs for additional income.

One of the most urgent tasks in this region therefore appears to be the improvement and expansion of irrigation system. The irrigation development in Roi-Et started in 1939 by the Royal Irrigation Department (RID). At present, there are 14 medium-large scale irrigation systems, of which two are constructed for the purpose of flood control. The number of small scale irrigation systems is around 300. Because of the natural conditions mentioned earlier, the major style of irrigation in this region is of water storage type, which are traditionally shallow wells, ponds or reservoirs. Deep digging would often bring up saline ground water. Another technical difficulty is in the designing of embankment section. Inappropriate slope of pond/reservoir embankments causes flooding, owing to the break of those inadequate embankments. Therefore proper location and designing are vital. However, in many cases, the irrigation systems are not properly constructed, so that the water is not fully utilized.

In spite of such difficulties, not only government agencies but also farmers themselves have been making effort for the development of irrigation facilities. A recent successful example is the experimental project undertaken under collaboration between Chulalongkorn University, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Kyoto University. It is the new type of small pond called "Tameike" (Japanese word meaning a small reservoir). It is a pond dug deeper than traditional shallow ones. Generally, deep digging is considered to bring saline ground water. However, the depth is the very key to the success. In the initial period, the pond is invaded by saline water of course through capillary effect, but after some time, thanks to the pressure of the stored sweet water, saline water goes underneath because it is heavier, the contained water seeps into the ground and ultimately the whole water becomes sweet water. The point to be careful is to prevent rapid evaporation of the stored water.

This new type of irrigation brought about substantial benefits to the farmers. Although the total volume of the stored water is not sufficient for irrigating rice paddies during the dry season, it surely enables farmers to produce other income-generating things such as vegetable, tobacco, fish, frogs and so on. The number of 'tameike' is still very few. Construction of tameike costs much less than medium-large

scale pond construction. Therefore, it seems to be more accessible for the farmers for securing water supply during dry seasons. However, there have often been cases wherein mis-location or mal-designing have resulted in a failure. Appropriate technical assistance would be essential. In addition it should be noted that poor farmers cannot afford to construct ponds without a small loan.

On account of poor irrigation development, in the Northeast Region and Roi-Et, it is difficult to grow rice in dry seasons. Ponds/reservoirs already constructed in Roi-Et were not meant for supplying water for rice growing in dry seasons. Unless large dam is constructed, it won't be possible. From the point of cost-benefit consideration, such huge amount of investment in irrigation development in this region seems unfeasible. It is therefore necessary for all concerned agencies as well as local people to identify and concentrate effort to promote the most effective irrigation systems.

Water, the essential element for survival, is the most crucial issue for Roi-Et as well as other North-east Provinces. I think water must be equally distributed to the rural people. Ample, clean water supply not only for the agricultural purpose, but also household use and drinking is indispensable. However, water is a limited resource. Water resource development should be subjected to the open public supervision. From this point of view, the related agencies would have great responsibility. In the following sections, an attempt is made to review the organization and characteristics of the agencies and the role played by the Small Scale Water Resource Development Committee of Roi-Et Province, which is mandated to supervise and coordinate small scale water resource developmental activities in Roi-Et.

4.2. Agencies in Charge of Water Resource Development

As mentioned in Section 2.2., water resource development in Roi-Et is undertaken by a number of local branches of central ministries. The local government, namely, Tesaban (municipality) and CAO (Changwad Administrative Organization) are also in charge of it. However, main actors of water resource development are sixteen government agencies under six ministries. According to a confidential report of the World Bank (1990),² they are as follows;

1. Ministry of Interior (MOI)
 - Provincial Waterworks Authority (PWA)
 - Public Works Department (PWD)
 - Department of Local Administration (DOLA)
 - Department of Public Welfare (DPW)
 - Office of Accelerated Rural Development (ARD)
 - Community Development Department (CDD)
2. Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC)
 - Royal Irrigation Department (RID)
 - Department of Fisheries (DOF)
 - Department of Land Development (DLD)
 - Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO)
 - Mobile Agricultural Service Unit (MASU)
 - Cooperatives Promotion Department (CPD)
3. Ministry of Public Health (with separate division for rural water supply, sanitation, rural and environmental health)
4. Ministry of Industry (Department of Mineral Resources)
5. Ministry of Defence
6. Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology (National Energy Administration)

Among these agencies, in so far as I was able to investigate, RID, ARD, CDD and DOLA seem to be playing most important roles in water resource development in Roi-Et particularly in irrigation development. Irrigation development is given emphasis in several rural development projects in Roi-Et. In 1989, the budget allocated for provincial rural development through Provincial Development Committee from NRDC was approximately 188 million Baht. Of this, budget for irrigation development was 91 million Baht.³

I would briefly describe the general profiles of RID and ARD.

2) World Bank, *A Framework for Development of the Northeast Region*, Report No. 8388-TH, 70P., P.28.

3) Provincial Development Budget on Rural Development, Roi-Et, 2532 (1989)

a) *Royal Irrigation Department (RID)*

This was established in 1902. It is the organization responsible for irrigation development throughout Thailand and the largest of all agencies in charge of water resource development, as well as the largest department under Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. As mentioned earlier, there are many agencies engaged in water resource development. Among them, RID is the only one in charge of large scale irrigation projects such as dam or large reservoir construction. At present, dam construction is under jurisdiction of EGAT (the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand, a state enterprise). The whole area is divided into zones according to the river system. Roi-Et belongs to the Fifth Zone under River, Moon and Chi. The head office of the Zone is located in Ubon Ratchathani Province. Generally speaking, each zone includes at least two to four districts. In case of Roi-Et, the whole area belongs to the Fifth Zone. There is a regional office of RID in Roi-Et. The annual budget of the office is 37 million in 1992.⁴ The activities are as follows.

The main work of RID is irrigation development planning, construction, distribution of water, and maintenance. First, at the stage of planning, the project is classified into three types in accordance with the construction cost. They are 1) small scale which does not exceed 15 million Baht, 2) medium scale, less than 200 million Baht with expected irrigated area 80,000 rai (=13,800 ha), 3) large scale, costing 200 million Baht or more with irrigated area beyond 80,000 rai. With regard to the land on which the irrigation system is to be constructed, it is to be donated by rural people who will benefit from the project in case of a small scale project. In case of medium or large scale projects, the land is to be purchased by RID. The irrigation system constructed by RID is deemed to be public property.

Taking into account the demands from Tambons and the findings made out of the RID survey, the project plan will be prepared. The feasibility study will be undertaken by experts of topography, hydrology, earth science and others within the RID office. After planning is completed, it would be submitted to the district (amphoe) and provincial level development committees. These region-based committees do not have power to authorize, but serves as coordinator. After getting their approval, the proposal is submitted to the central office. If the project is of large scale, it will be reviewed by NRDC. Finally, the budget is allocated by Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

After completion of the construction, the proportion of water distribution will be determined by RID and implemented by the local staff. The beneficiaries do not have to pay user's charge. However, the cost of maintenance would be shared by the farmers, CAO and DOLA. Farmers have to construct distribution channels by themselves. They have to get loan from BAAC (Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives) or other sources of finance. RID would send technical experts and offer assistance. These arrangements are the same in case of repairing or dredging the irrigation system. Farmers have to bear the cost.

RID promotes to organize water users' associations by undertaking guidance. Water users' cooperative is aimed at managing and maintaining irrigation system effectively by the farmers. It is generally organized at the district level (amphoe). However, this does not seem to function effectively because of too big network. If a water users' cooperative functions well, it could have been more conducive to the establishment of more cooperative relationship between farmers and RID, or between people and other local agencies. However, it was not possible to inquire the state of water users' organizations in Roi-Et. Presumably it is a subject to be further investigated at the occasion of the next Overseas Fieldwork.

B) *Office of Accelerated Rural Development (ARD)*

ARD is one of the departments of Ministry of Interior which are in charge of water resource development. ARD was established for the objective of promoting infrastructure development in rural areas. Its main activities include road construction, small scale water resource development such as pond and training of rural people. At the district (amphoe) level, ARD staff joins the District Development Committee. The local Office of ARD in Roi-Et receives the annual budget of around 162.5 million Baht (1992).

The project preparation process is mostly the same as that of RID. For the construction of road or small scale irrigation, the required land is to be donated by people. People do not have to pay the construction cost but have to bear maintenance cost. Different from RID, ARD deals with small scale projects such as pond for household uses and agricultural purposes.

4) Budget of Irrigation Office, Roi-Et, 1992

Thus far, two main agencies concerned with water resource development have been reviewed. It appears that there does not exist any functional relationship between them. However, within the context of provincial level planning, an exchange of information and coordination in an informal manner takes place in the Small Scale Water Resource Development Committee under the Provincial Development Committee.

C) *The Small Scale Water Resource Development Committee*

Next, the functions of the Small Scale Water Resource Development Committee are analyzed.

(1) Organizational structure

This Committee was established in 1986 as one of sub-committees of Provincial Development Committee. The members represent the agencies which are responsible for water resource development as follows:⁵

- Permanent Secretary of Roi-Et Province as Chairman
- The Chief of Roi-Et Irrigation Project (RID)
- Agricultural Officer of Roi-Et (MOAC)
- Forestry
- ARD (MOI)
- Public Health Doctor of Roi-Et (MOPH)
- Fisheries
- Roi-Et Provincial Development (CDD, MOI)
- The Chief of the Roi-Et Provincial Office (Governor's Office)
- Secretary of CAO
- Secretary of Deputy Provincial Officer

and the Advisory Committee members are

- Commerce Office of Roi-Et (MOC)
- Industrial Office of Roi-Et (MOIN)
- The Chief of the Land Development Station
- The Chief of the Fresh Water Fisheries, Roi-Et

The tasks of the Committee include;

- 1) Deliberation on the small water resource development and identification of priorities;
- 2) Coordination amongst concerned agencies and planning of the provincial development to seek for budget allocation from the central government and permission of the Changwad Council;
- 3) Coordination with concerned agencies;
- 4) Supervision on amphoe/sub-amphoe offices for establishing water user's associations; and
- 5) Supervision on amphoe/sub-amphoe offices to conduct survey on unutilized or inadequately utilized ponds.

In addition, the Committee has formulated a five year plan of water resource development in Roi-Et.⁶ It covers four basins of small rivers in Roi-Et.

(2) Analysis

The Committee was established as an integral part of NRDC policy. It does not have formal but an influential power at the provincial level. It receives certain amount of special budget from NRDC for rural development projects. During field study in Roi-Et, it was not possible to obtain a clear breakdown of budget allocation of each agency. It would be necessary to inquire the proportion of the budget allocated by the NRDC for each agency concerned in order to evaluate the effect of the special NRDC fund.

The Committee is chaired by Permanent Secretary of Governor's Office (Palat Changwad) who is sent from the central government, Ministry of Interior. Except one officer from CAO, all members are from local agencies which means that the water resource development is under the jurisdiction of the central government. In terms technical expertise and financial resource mobilization, the central government have much stronger power than local government. However, if a local government fails to have due

5) Order from Roi-Et Province 1130/1989 on appointment of Small Scale Water Resource Development Committee

6) Water Resource Development Plan 2535-2539 (1992-1996), DOLA, Roi-Et

authority, it would be difficult to promote integrated water resource development in accordance with situation-specific conditions of a region.

Duplication of activities by several agencies will most likely bring about inefficiency and inconsistency. However, according to a local agency official in Roi-Et who happens to be a member of the Committee, so far no thoughts have been given to the idea of integrating water resource development activities into one specialized organization.

On the Water Resource Development Plan 1992–1996 made by DOLA and the Committee, it is expected to investigate possibilities of enlarging the source of budget and increasing budget and project distribution to agencies concerned.

It is not investigated in Roi-Et the situation of supervision on amphoe/sub-amphoe offices.

Though limited in power, the Committee is expected to contribute in region-based water resource development. The remaining question is the way of participation process followed by CAO. Anyway, to strengthen the authority of the Committee would be one of first steps for promoting regional/rural development in its true sense of the word. In this regard, the NRDC policy seems to make sense.

5. Concluding Remarks

As mentioned in the former sections, the administrative institution in Roi-Et has several problems that hamper the upgrading of self-reliant capability of rural people. Some alternative suggestions are already made in Section 3.

Presumably, it appears that Thailand is now at the point of across road. It has already achieved enormous economic growth. However, there exist gaps between the rich and the poor, the advanced central region and the stagnant rural areas. However, the average living standard certainly improved. The infant mortality is quite low in Roi-Et, the main disease of rural area is no longer diarrhoea; The rate of literacy is considerably high even in remote rural areas. On the other hand, commercialism and materialism penetrated deeply into rural areas. As a result, many rural people are indebted. Rural girls have to go to urban area and become prostitutes to clear debts of their parents. Obedience, traditional culture and values might further marginalize weaker sections of the society. Other serious problems include deforestation and environmental degradation. On the reverse side of economic development and prosperity, several serious problems have surfaced and are worsening.

About future perspective, it would be about time for the Thai people to choose between the pursuance of further economic development and the adoption of alternative development without destroying environment, nor marginalizing the weak and the poor. I believe that one of the key issues in promoting the latter development alternative should be the institutional reform. The concrete strategies have already been proposed. The most vital issue is the awareness of the Thai people. How to awaken and empower people is the next task to be further investigated.

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Chapter 4.4: Non-Governmental Organizations in Thailand

WATANABE Ayako (Ms.)

1. Introduction

As discussed in the foregoing chapters, we can find that the administrative system in Thailand has a very strong "Top-down" character and it is also reflected in government policies and ways of development management. Thai government pays attention not only to nationwide economic growth but also to grass-root development. And they also intend to get more information from people at the grass-root. Such policies would certainly deserve commendation. However, its function to collect information is still at an incipient stage and furthermore, because of their "top-down" structure, the result is still mixed. As a matter of fact, we were struck by the strong tendency of placing considerable importance on "teaching" people. As a matter of fact, Thai government provides various kinds of educational activities to enlighten people, especially the poor, and to deepen their awareness of rural development.

This is the reason why we have taken notice of NGOs activities, for NGOs usually emphasize to *learn* from people, rather than the other way around. It appears that Thai Government also recognizes the importance of their "bottom-up" approach. The objectives of this chapter are to analyse the function of NGOs; What is their strengths and weaknesses? To what extent can they contribute to rural development in its true sense of the word? Thereafter, we intend to look into the ways by which the needed activities be made more viable and effective.

2. Concepts of NGOs

2.1. Rationale for Establishing NGOs

According to Philip Hirsch's book "Development Dilemmas in Rural Thailand", the basic rationales for the establishment of NGOs are; dignity, self-reliance, decision-making power, increasing the bargaining power of villagers, self-sufficiency, and offering an alternative view of rural development.¹ In other words, the NGOs intend to approach "development" from the grass-root viewpoint, which certainly differs from that of many governments in the Third World. Main activities of NGOs are to focus on "village level co-operative activities and training." The strength of NGOs consists in the "flexibility" and "independence". Our analyses have been made basically subscribing to this viewpoint.

2.2. Concept in Thai Government

During the present fieldwork in Thailand (from 12 to 27. Oct. 1992), we found a difference between our view on NGOs and that of Thai government. Therefore we should begin with the clarification of the difference.

The first is the fundamental attitude of government to NGOs activities. It was pointed out by a number of changwad officials concerned, "We strongly support and encourage NGOs members to participate in development projects", "People in NGOs are very important to make rural development successful and they can contribute greatly". It would be fair to say therefore that the government basically has a policy to support NGOs' activities. As a matter of fact, we got information from DOLA about the "Joint Committee" between government and NGOs established at changwad level. Since then, we repeated the same question about it at Roi-Et Governor's Office, Changwad Administrative Organization (CAO) and Municipal Office in order to find out the types of organization which a government agency considers as NGOs.

1. Philip Hirsch, *Development Dilemmas in Rural Thailand*, Oxford Univ. Press, Singapore, 1990

At this juncture, a brief explanation is made about the Joint Committee mentioned above. It was established for coordination between both of them at the provincial level. Meeting is held once in every two months. Its functions are to 1) try to solve the obstacles and problems at present and in future, 2) cooperate in planning and financing of projects, 3) support private sector, 4) evaluate and monitor the implementation of the projects, 5) set up special task forces for certain activities, and 6) undertake such works as may be entrusted by the Roi-Et Provincial Development Committee. In the list of members, we can find 57 members in total, 17 out of 57 being the representatives from NGOs, including five managers of companies (Toyota, Coca-Cola, etc.). This means that the large majority of its members represent government organizations as seen in the list of members of joint committee.²

According to the answers from those organizations, we have learned the following. First is that the government considers "rich" corporations and associations such as Lion's Club and Chamber of Commerce as NGOs. Through the interviews with NET (Northeast Thailand) Foundation and GRID (Grass-Root Integrated Development) Foundation which take part in grass-root activities and sit in the Joint Committee, we learned that government concept of NGO includes both 1) large, established, and "rich men's club", as it were, and 2) small-scale, grass-root organizations as well. In this sense, we must say that their concept about NGOs is broader than ours. This fact should be borne in mind as an important background for our analysis.

3. Case Analyses

3.1. Brief History of NGO Activities in Thailand

In 1969 at Chainat, the Thai Rural Reconstruction Movement took off the ground. Its main principle was to have an organization, outside government control, to work directly with the people and to learn from the farmers. At the same time, the State's interest in alleviating problems of the rural poor increased. The Maeklong Integrated Rural Development Program was created which implemented work-camps having the effect of political awareness raising.

Since the 1976 coup, NGOs activities were outlawed or denounced. As a result, many people fled from NGO systems to the forest in order to join the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). At that time, non-state sponsored activities were regarded as oppositionist to Thai government. However, since the 1977 coup, particularly after 1980, the Thai government liberalized their view on NGOs and approved the operations of NGOs.³ The Thung Kula Ronghai area, which is the target area of GRID activities, was included in the Poverty-Stricken Area Development Plan under the 5th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1982-1986).⁴ The other example is seen in the 7th Five-Year Plan (1992-1996). Government made its position clear, recognizing the strength of NGOs activities in the promotion of the rural development, that it started to grant subsidies to them.⁵ This supportive position of Government has led to the flourishing of NGOs activities.

3.2. Approaches of NGOs Activities

Participation and spiritual development appear to be the basic principles of "grass-root" type NGO approaches towards a bottom-up, non-materialist development strategy. According to Hirsch, *op. cit.*, there are three types of approaches.

The first type is an "Avoidance" approach. This approach emphasizes traditional cultural values which resists the influence of capitalist development, and aims at self-sufficiency, concentrating first and foremost on subsistence production. Unfortunately we did not have a chance to interview with members of this type of NGOs, therefore it is introduced here as an instance found elsewhere.

The Second type is the "Engagement" approach. This approach stresses the importance of increasing the bargaining power and ability of community organizations to operate within the existing system. It accepts capitalism and other external forces that already affect the village society and therefore emphasizes co-operative approaches.

2. Members List of Joint Committee provided by Roi-Et Provincial Office (vide Annex)

3. Philip Hirsch, *op. cit.*, P.23

4. GRID Report published in Nov. 1983

5. The Seventh National Economic and Social Development Plan of Thailand, 1992-96

The third type is the "Buddhist" approach. This type is more common in Thailand. This approach places emphasis on particular values within a locally-bound situation, not regarding themselves as part of a broader process.⁶

In this section, the following five organizations are analyzed; Chamber of Commerce, TBIRD (The Thailand Business Initiative in Rural Development), NET (Northeast Thailand) Foundation, GRID (Grass-Root Integrated Development) and a monk who devotes himself to improve the quality of life in the village area. The first one is an example of large, established, and well-financed "NGOs", having relatively close relationship with the government. The second one is picked up as an example of the philanthropy movement of some enterprises. NET and GRID belong to the grass-root category. As a matter of fact, these two organizations come under the classification of the second type, viz. "Engagement" approach, and the case of the monk is obviously in the third type. However, with regard to the last three, the categorization made here is rather provisional. We should keep this in mind in making further analyses.

1) *Chamber of Commerce*

Chamber of Commerce is an organization whose name was always introduced to us by Government agencies at the outset of our interview with the "Joint Committee" members. Therefore, let us start with describing what is all about the Chamber of Commerce. The document distributed for us at the first meeting at Governor's Office on 15. Oct. 1992, provides descriptions about its functions. According to them, Chamber of Commerce is a member of "Joint Committee" and group of businessmen, of which functions are; 1) gathering and keeping data about business, 2) giving information and opinions to government, 3) helping and supporting the economic growth.⁷

The members of this organization also told us its activities and projects which they were supporting. Generally speaking, it lays stress on proposals that would promote rural development, especially in regard to construction of infrastructure such as airport high-ways, and promotion of local enterprise development and trade. In short, we can say that it works as an "opinion leader" in development promotion. This kind of function that can be described as "advocacy" is one of the important factors in local economic development. Presumably, that is the reason why Thai government invites Chamber of Commerce to the Joint Committee as a member.

2) *TBIRD*

TBIRD, pronounced as "Tee-Bird", is an NGO organization called "Population and Community Development Association (PDA)". It seeks for participation of leading companies in Thailand. According to the report presented by the Japanese Chamber of Commerce on 30. Sep. 1991 (Its appendix 6), its objective is to "Assist village organizations in developing business skills, thereby improving income levels and local living standard".⁸ As a means to realize the objective, it encourages companies to send their personnel for developing business skills at the village level.

Such kind of activities carried out by companies for local development projects can be easily understood as philanthropy. However, that report points out another motivation to let them participate. It says, "the most notable benefits accrue to the company itself".⁹ That is, their employees can derive job satisfaction and company pride through those activities, and also economic profit such as supply of raw materials and potential market.

We are made a bit apprehensive, however, for their approaches appeared to place too heavy stress on economic aspect, especially on their own profits although, as the same time, we do appreciate their activities. It was encouraging to learn that they were also aware of the danger, and trying to prevent the danger from becoming a reality. Their efforts certainly deserve commendation. We hope them to sustain their sound stance.

3) *NET Foundation*

NET Foundation registered itself as a foundation in 1986, but the history of its activities dates back to 1978. It was engaged in managing a refugee camp near Kampuchean border until 1981 with the budget from Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Thereafter, they went into its second project,

6. "Development Dilemmas in Rural Thailand" Philip Hirsch, op. cit., P.23, 1996

7. Pamphlet provided by Chamber Commerce

8. The Japanese Chamber of Commerce Report 30. Sep. 1991

9. *ibid.*

addressed to the development of 52 border villages in Surin province. This project took six years (1981–1987). They spent a long time to make themselves well-understood and accepted by villagers. At first, when they went into villages, they were sometimes misunderstood as “communist” or “Christians”, so that were refused to work together. Time has somehow solved this problem, people now understand they are not communists nor Christians. They are really trying to help improve the quality of life of people in this area.

Target area of NET is Surin province. Its staff explained their criteria to select the project area as follows: 1) prevalence of poverty, 2) no NGOs operating in that area, and 3) availability of good leadership and community stability. Criteria for target population are to satisfy all the three conditions as follows; 1) low average income—less than 10,000 baht per household per year, 2) population with no land or smaller than 5 rai per household, 3) people’s willingness to solve problems by themselves, 4) female group, 5) youth group.¹⁰ NET picks up target through both fieldwork survey by its own staff members and information from the District (Amphoe) Office. In means that, though informal, there is a coordinating arrangements with government organization at the stage of problem identification. As pointed out again later, the NET member appears to be of the opinion that there is not a serious conflict between government and NGOs. The informal communication channel between them seems to function well. Its projects emphasize training, integrated farming, soil-cement brick project and so on.

We would proceed to the relation with the government. As pointed out earlier in this section, government policy toward NGOs changed several times and greatly influenced the activities of the latter. In a sense, their relation with government is the key point for understanding NGO activities, because it can either constrain or promote those.

According to the member of NET, there is not so much problem between the government and NGOs. Provincial government in Surin considers NGOs very important and is very friendly to NGOs. NET members also visit government offices every once in a while to get information they need.

In regard to financial management, NET has been receiving its total budget for five years from CIDA, it amounting to about 30 million baht. However, it will be stopped in April 1993. After that NET intends to raise profit from village enterprises towards which they have invested. Surin Provincial government does not have intention to provide any financial support.

When it recruits its staff members, university degree is a requirement, the age range is 24–46 years, including full time workers. One problem about staffing is “brain-drain”. Presumably the major reason for that would be the low remuneration. Compared with the private sector which pays approximately 10,000 baht per month for a person with a university degree, NET pays only 4,000 baht per month as salary.

4) GRID

The target area of GRID is the area called “Thung Kula Ronghai”, inhabited by 530,000 people. They suffer from drought and flood cycles caused by sandy and saline soil. GRID project was promoted in September 1982 by three Thai NGOs and one university institute in order to extend support for the people in this area to solve their own problems.

In line with its main objective of developing people’s self-reliance, it is engaged in various activities such as the operation of a training centre, promotion of people’s organizations, grouping of villages (i.e., zoning), formation of occupation groups on informal or formal basis, WID (Women in Development) projects and community forestry projects. These are analyzed primarily from the viewpoint of its relationship with people and with the government.

It takes approaches different from those of the government in fostering people’s self-reliance. According to the GRID member, government tends to emphasize economic approach and tries to teach people from the top. On the contrary, the way taken by GRID is only “customary and traditional approach”, and its concept is expressed in the simple sentence, “the rich should help the poor”. They intend to mobilize the traditional spirit of Thai people who are very pious and have the culture of making offering to the temple. It is possible to persuade the rich to offer more for the poor. For example, GRID sets up the category of VDA (Village Development Animateur). Its “roles and responsibilities” include; gathering statistics and information through questionnaire surveys, identification of village leaders and

10. NET Report appendix 2

formation of groups, planning, monitoring, preparing of monthly reports, and assisting field managers of the projects. Their field workers go into villages by themselves and talk with villagers in order to find solutions. There are some other activities such as study tours, discussion among tour participants to select an available solution model, and inviting trainers to strengthen unity in the village. Conditions for recruitment include both degree and experience. They must be graduates from university, have majored in social science with rural development experience of more than three years. From these facts it is apparent that the personnel GRID really wants are field workers.

Their fundamental concept and approach differ from those of the government, therefore naturally conflicts can arise between them in activities of similar nature. The community forestry project is one such example. One of the biggest problems in this area being the soil salinity, the government has been encouraging people to plant eucalyptus which can both reduce soil salinity and produce quick and better cash income. On the contrary, GRID (and some other NGOs as well) takes an opposite position to eucalyptus, for they are concerned with its harmful effects for other plants and animals and about bad influence to water supply. Eucalyptus contains a kind of chemical which makes the land unsuitable to any other plants and animals, and also tends to lower the underground water table. A large gap between their opinions is found here. It emerges at actual implementation stage as well. Forestry Department believes that they have the right to make use of the public land and plant eucalyptus trees. However, villagers already know their evil effects through experience (The GRID member told us that they never teach about the damage eucalyptus causes to soil), so that after the government planting eucalyptus trees in the public land, people went into the forest to pull seedling trees out. Government misunderstood that GRID instigated people to do it. Perhaps it was due to the fact that GRID has training projects for villagers, emphasizing their education. Besides such misunderstanding, GRID cynically sees another factor causing conflict between them. According to GRID members, low rank government officials don't like the idea to educate people because their own positions might be threatened. Be that as it may, the conflict is obviously there.

However, GRID makes effort to retain good relations with the government. In the report published in Nov. 1983, it clearly states the initiation and coordination "between village group, *government agencies*, and private agencies"¹¹ as a special objective. With regard to public land utilization as well, it organizes a coordination committee and invites chief district officer as its chairman. Reciprocally, the government also invites GRID to the joint Committee in order to discuss about problems and look for solutions. Both of them at least seem to recognize the importance of each other.

We would proceed to the next topic "financial management". GRID, at first, received financial support amounting to 1.25 million Canadian Dollars (30 million Baht) from CIDA. But CIDA is related to the Canadian government, so that the support from CIDA for any purpose cannot avoid political influence. This means that it may weaken the strengths of NGOs, viz. "flexibility" and "independence". To prevent that possibility from coming true, GRID stopped receiving CIDA's support. Nonetheless, GRID is still continuing its activities with the reserve fund still left available from CIDA's contribution. There is no support from government. One dilemma and one of the most serious problems is found here. GRID lost "financial flexibility" instead of keeping independence and "flexibility in activities". We will further discuss this problem later.

GRID has a problem about staffing, too. It has 4 full time workers, at the age range of 25-26 years. Owing to fringe benefits, they continuously suffer from dropping out of man power.

5) Monk

As an example of the Buddhist approach, we take the case of a monk who has been engaged in activities at the grass-root. He doesn't belong to any NGO, but is an activist who looks for the real needs of villagers with his own eyes and devotes himself to solve the problems. We would start with his brief background.

After 4-year formal education, he entered the Buddhist priesthood. Thai people, as widely known, are very pious and give offering to the temple even when they themselves cannot eat enough. The monk noticed that monks including himself were living on those people and it was his turn to work for them. He went to Bangkok and received his education about engineering and approaches to enter rural

11. GRID Report published in Nov. 1983

communities, in order to make use of his knowledge and skills as a specialist for the communities under his jurisdiction.

The first task was the installation of toilets for each household. We asked the reason why he selected the toilet for his first project, and his answer was as follows; "You should start from the lowest level and that was the toilet." He witnessed a number of cases wherein people were suffering from diseases such as stomach ache and diarrhoea caused by the lack of sanitation.

Besides the toilet project, he established a child care centre, health centre, informal education, and a rice mill for fund raising. His way to identify problems and to put a priority, as mentioned above, completely depends on his own idea. Monitoring people's life, evaluation of the projects and checking maintenance, all of them are done by himself. We can say that his activities don't involve any systematic research. However, those activities resulted in almost 100% adult literacy rate, 100% toilet, and easy access to getting medical care. They certainly serve the essential needs of the people.

He is also wise enough to accept any available knowledge and skills, not only of modern but also of traditional nature. There are various people with different values in village and one project is not always easy for all villagers to understand the necessity and accept it. For example, toilet and the health centre: At first, the old people didn't think they needed a toilet, so that the monk spent about two years to convince them of the necessity. Meanwhile, he accepted both traditional and modern doctors for his health centre because there are some people still trusting only the medical effect of herbs. Such a flexibility is one of the strengths of his activities.

There are three types of fund-raising. First, he uses the profit from selling goods. The second one is the interest revenue accruing from the loans lent out only to community members, of which interest rate is much lower than that of ordinary money lenders. Fund cooperative, such as running of a rice mill, can be the third source of budget. It is based on cooperative principle, contribution from people. A community always includes some well-to-do families, if not too many; so a poor household may buy only one share (minimum) but the rich can buy 20 shares (maximum) although, the shortage of fund is still a problem here.

He provides many assistance in kind to government for the purpose of keeping good relationship with it. Therefore government officials friendly accept him. When problem comes up to him, he can visit Chief District Officer and request some financial support. His sincere attitude to go along with the government is so obvious. As a result, it has brought about very successful results.

3.3. Concluding Observations

Through five case analyses we can identify important strengths and weaknesses of NGOs activities in Thailand. We would list up and explain one by one. We expect NGOs, and other organizations surrounding them as well, especially the government, to improve NGOs' performance by means of facilitating their strengths and backstopping their weaknesses.

1) *Strengths*

Besides flexibility and independence pointed out by Philip Hirsch, roughly speaking, we can add two points, viz. 1) Maximum utilization of people's knowledge, experience and skills, and people-centred work styles and 2) The role of "watch dog" towards government activities in the field of development management.

NGOs seem to have common characteristics in their work style, namely, an emphasis on self-reliance as the basic principle. That prompts them to go into the target area by themselves, to identify the actual problems and needs at the grass-root level, and to find out solutions under a long-range perspective. As a result, the size of their activities is relatively small, inexpensive, and their policy is comparatively environment-friendly. They retain flexibility by way to undertaking all activities by themselves.

While the strengths of relatively small scale NGOs were discussed above, we should also identify those of large-scale and established organizations. They can use newest knowledge and techniques for research and project evaluation freely. This is no doubt a positive factor enhancing rural development.

The second strength can be found through the analysis of relationship with the government. All of five NGOs analyzed above are members of the Joint Committee and keep in touch with the government though to a varying extent. These are only five groups among many NGOs working in this area, but we

can identify a common attitude on the part of both Government and NGOs, namely, to appreciate the importance of both parties, and to see the benefit of cooperating each other. So long as this desirable relationship continues and NGOs keep their present stance to maintain their flexibility, it would be possible for NGOs to play the role of both "watch dog" and an important partner of the government. No doubt, government and NGOs should have different viewpoints vis-à-vis each development project. What is important for them is to exchange various pieces of information and opinions gathered by each of them. It means that they can have many eyes to find out obstacles for rural development and appropriate solutions toward them, and to check their suitability in the process of implementation management.

2) Weaknesses

We recognize that NGOs have two vulnerable points inherent in themselves among others, namely, limited fund and shortage of capable staff members. These two are so essential factors that these might pose a serious influence on its strengths, especially on the flexibility of their activities.

Limited fund may cause the loss of financial self-reliance. Expenditure of salary and other administrative requirements accounts for almost 40%, and the rest (60%) is for activities. It is perplexing to make a fair assessment on this basic financial profile. In some international organizations, the routine expenditure (salaries, etc.) often exceeds 50% of their total budget. Lower figure in case of NGOs quoted here presents a slightly better position, but the smallness of the total budget is another aspect to be kept in view. According to the fact that they have a very limited budget at the outset, only about half of it that can be spent for projects is small anyway. It is therefore impossible for them to undertake large-scale projects. No doubt, small-scale activities mean a merit of NGOs and can contribute meaningfully to rural development, but to spread desirable effect to a broader area is another thing. On the contrary, if they receive financial support from external organizations, they might lose flexibility in their activities. Here we can see a dilemma: Furthermore, the dilemma leads to its second problem, namely, "shortage of staff". In order to prevent brain-drain and to recruit good personnel, an NGO should determine its pay scale, taking into account at least to some extent the remuneration level of other organization. Another nasty problem is that many NGOs cannot ensure adequate fringe benefits to their staff members. It is one of the factors which make NGOs' staff recruitment more difficult.

In regard to the staffing problem, they should also consider career promotion even apart from the level of salary and fringe benefits questions. Most of their activities are carried out in the field. Fieldwork needs physical strength, so that nobody can expect a person to continue to work in the field in harsh conditions until the end of his/her life. This means that NGO activities are vulnerable as a life work.

4. Tasks Ahead

Through the analyses of five NGOs activities thus far, both their strengths and weaknesses have been identified. In Section 2 we defined two types of organizations as NGOs; One is large, established, and "rich men's club" type organizations such as Chamber of Commerce and TBIRD, and the other is Grass-roots community based organizations such as NET, GRID, and monk. Both of them and the government have different viewpoints and play different roles. Government takes charge of relatively large-scale and expensive projects such as construction of infrastructure. NGOs play a role in small-scale projects at the grass-root which the government is not necessarily versed in. In that sense, the government and NGOs are in complementary relation. Considering these facts, our conclusion is that NGOs activities must be strongly encouraged in order to lead the projects toward right direction and to implement them effectively.

Last by some suggestions are put forward on what to be done in the operational context. As mentioned in relation to their weaknesses, NGOs activities are weak in financial and personnel management. It may be fair to say that their strength in fact consists in the other side of the coin: their weakness. Bearing this in mind we should try to find out a solution that can strike a subtle balance between the two.

The first suggestion is about the financial management. At first, we must refuse the idea that money alone can solve all problems. As discussed in the case analyses in this chapter, small-scale and inexpensive activities can contribute very much and, as they are, play an important role by way of keeping complementary relation with large-scale activities. Therefore this type of activity of small-scale NGOs should be supported properly.

Their budget, however, is actually insufficient. Too heavy budget limitation may ultimately transform even their strength into weakness. It is imperative for them to maintain their own style and strong points with adequate budget. From where, then, can they acquire it?

In our opinion, there are two choices—support from the government or from donor countries. Regardless of the choice to be made between these two, NGOs members must avoid to be made under the mercy of donors, whereas donors should also recognize important role of NGO and keep themselves away from intervening in NGOs decision-making process. As a suggestion, financial support from donor countries such as Japan should be made use of not only for large-scale infrastructures but also for small-scale NGOs activities. We repeatedly insist that generally speaking, NGOs activities have a direct access to the task of improving quality of life of people, which exactly means one important objective the Seventh Development Plan of Thai government. We suggest the establishment of a system which can properly distribute financial support from all donor countries for the benefit of the target group.

With regard to the personnel management, the most serious problem is the absence of attractive career development perspective. Field workers obtain a lot of experience and knowledge through their work. However, it is difficult for them to find a place to make best use of such knowledge and experience except in the field. Fieldwork needs physical strength, and makes him/her feel a kind of uneasiness about their future after they get older.

Our suggestion as a solution to this structural problem is to organize an international career promotion system, for example, the establishment of several pools of experts in the world. Their functions may include; sending experts among the Third World countries as the need arises, holding training seminars, study tours and so on. Some of them should also be invited to universities and development research institutions. These arrangements, while providing solutions to give an access for NGO field workers to occupations which guarantee stability of life and job satisfaction, will significantly contribute for strengthening NGO activities in the forefront of development in the Third World.

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APPENDIX: Members List of the Joint Committee

Governor	President of Com.
Deputy Governor	Vice-president Com.
President of Chamber of Commerce, Changwad Roi-Et	Vice-president Com.
Provincial Prosecutor	member
Assistant Chief of Provincial Roi-Et Policemen (2 persons)	member
Chairman of Provincial Council	member
Mayor	member
Medical Doctor of PHC Primary Health Centre)	member
Provincial Industry Officer	member
Provincial Agriculture Officer	member
Secretary of Chamber of Commerce	member
Assistant Secretary of Chamber of Commerce	member
Provincial Commerce Officer	member
Planning and Project Officer	member
Livestock Officer	member
Tax Revenue Officer	member
Transportation Officer	member
Financial Officer	member
Labour Officer	member
Cooperative Officer	member
Fishery Officer	member
Forestry Officer	member
Education Officer	member
Chief of Land Development	member
Manager of Electricity	member
Manager of Water for Household	member
Manager of Building	member
Manager of Transportation Company	member
Chairman of Association of Bank	member
President of Merchant Club	member
President of Agriculturist Club	member
President of Oil Company Club	member
President of Rice Mill Club	member
President of Lion's Association	member
Manager of Companies (5 persons) (Toyota, Pepsi Cola, etc.)	member
Head of Changwad Roi-Et Office	Secretary
Secretary of Chamber of Changwad Roi-Et	Assistant Secretary
Provincial Commercial Office	Assistant Secretary
Head of Planning and Project Department	Assistant Secretary

Note: In addition to the above, sixteen persons from the private sector are invited as members (Their status, background etc. were not available).

PART V: SYNTHESIS

An Attempt for Interdisciplinary Integration

NAGAMINÉ Haruo et al.

Suppose there is a poor person. Being poor, the person tends to eat less than necessary (1). As a result, the person is less healthy owing to inadequate nutrition intake (2), so that the number of days or hours the person can work within a day, a week, or a month is less than a normal healthy person (3). Therefore, the earning will be less (4), making the person unable to get out of the poverty trap (5) (Fig. 1).

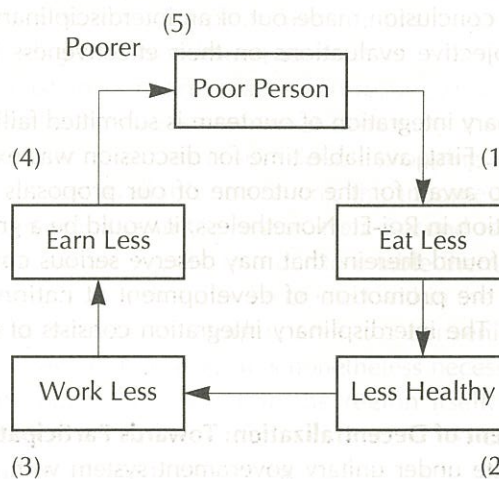


Fig. 1

This is a classical model of vicious circle of poverty quoted in G. Myrdal's masterpiece, *Asian Drama*. Though simple, an implication inherent therein is pertinent for our purpose. Of the five boxes in Fig. 1, (1) and (2) are usually dealt with by "social development" specialists, for these have to do with nutrition and health. In the meanwhile, (3) and (4) are taken up by those of economic development or labour economics, for they primarily relate to income and employment. Such a "division of labour" amongst disciplines is quite commonly practised for the simple reason that the tools of analysis available for us are organized largely in accordance with each of these conventional disciplinary domains. However, the above-mentioned poverty trap model neatly describes that all these disciplines are inseparably related to each other within the life of a poor person. The model thus implies that whatever the results of sectoral analysis need to be integrated, if we are to understand the human life in its totality.

Our team undertook the fieldwork divided into four working groups more or less in accordance with conventional practice of development analysis, viz. 1) economic, 2) social, 3) physical infrastructure-environment and 4) institutional dimensions. With reference to the Myrdal's poverty trap model that explicitly represents both economic and social sectors, it would be fair to understand that the infrastructural and environmental domain represents the actual geographical and spatial milieu in which human

*This final part is worked out by Nagamine, consolidating the intensive discussion made in the last evening before final presentation at Roi-Et together with the leaders of the four Working Groups, viz. KATO Norio (WG-I), YOTSUMOTO Kenji (WG-II), NARITA Naoko (WG-III), and WATANABE Keiko (WG-IV). Nagamine owes a great deal to all the four members for their useful comments. However, Nagamine should be held responsible for any imperfection of this part.

activities take place, and the institutional dimensions represent the structure of our society that constitutes cause-and-effect socio-economic relationship, for example, the poverty trap.

Presumably, it would not be too difficult for all of us to agree on the rationale of interdisciplinary integration as a matter of general principle. However, it would not be easy to agree on the actual content of the conclusion thus to be derived as a result of such an integration, for each and every specialist can never be totally free from a professional bias owing to his/her training background. Nevertheless, there would be no doubt about the need for our effort to minimize such biases, in order to see to it that the interdisciplinary integration can lead to such a convincing conclusion as would be meaningful and effective for solving problems in the real world. As implied by the poverty trap model, all problems of our lives seem to involve interdisciplinary dimensions within themselves.

Meanwhile, given the state of the art of development analysis, the paradigm and operational principles of such an interdisciplinary integration is yet to be established and generally accepted, despite the fact that our society badly needs one for solving a host of its problems of both short- and long-term nature. Accordingly, it follows that all what we can and should do is to proceed with trials and errors, keeping two fundamental premises in view: First is that there is no better alternative to exhaustive interdisciplinary discussions that would warrant the meaningfulness of interdisciplinary integration. Second is that the validity of a conclusion made out of an interdisciplinary integration should always be examined through recurrent objective evaluations on their effectiveness in terms of solving real-world problems in question.

However, the interdisciplinary integration of our team is submitted failing to clear these two premises in full form for obvious reasons. First, available time for discussion was extremely limited and second: it is not possible for our team to await for the outcome of our proposals even if they were to be fully adopted for actual implementation in Roi-Et. Nonetheless, it would be a great privilege of our team if any grain of useful ideas might be found therein, that may deserve serious consideration and further follow-up by those concerned with the promotion of development at national, changwad or lower local community levels of Thailand. The interdisciplinary integration consists of five proposals as a package of actions, described as follows.

Proposal 1: Further Enhancement of Decentralization: Towards Participatory Development

Thailand is a sovereign state under unitary government system with a medium geographical scale, where the nationwide transport and communication infrastructures are fairly well developed in the Third World. As a result, it is quite possible to collect timely information concerning the current status of development in all parts of the country. Besides, there are a number of competent officials in those central agencies, many of whom being holders of advanced academic degrees in western countries like U.S.A., U.K. or Australia. Naturally, they have been playing leading roles in spelling out articulate policies and strategies of the nation over the past decades. The village bench mark survey called NRD 2C recently started under the auspices of NESDB is a typical case in point, demonstrating the initiative of central agencies in monitoring the progress of development in all parts of the nation (vide Part IV).

However, should the nation seriously seek for removing the negative effect of traditionally highly centralized government system in order to meet better the needs and aspirations of the people at the grass root, it is absolutely necessary to carry out decentralization policy, as recurrently stressed in the 7th National Plan. The fundamental goal of decentralization is to establish a system of local autonomy that can respond precisely and promptly to the needs of the people. Worldwide experience seems to testify that a top-down centralized system, no matter how elaborately organized and well-intended, is bound to fail in the realization of the cause of decentralization. It can never be realized unless the development management capability at the lower end of government is strengthened and made capable of coping with all sorts of situation-specificities, which vary from place to place.

Changwad Roi-Et, although located at the core of Northeastern (Eesarn) region, and no more than an average changwad in the region, which has long been the poorest in Thailand, really deserves our attention in that it has embarked upon a package action programme called Roi-Et Progress Project (RPP) for the purpose of improving the quality of life of changwad population at large under the leadership of local administration. Indeed, it demonstrates significant local initiative of operationalizing the decentralization policy (vide Part IV). RPP was originally conceived as an attempt of replicating the successful experience of public health administration in Thailand (achieved through long sustained effort of strength-

ening lowest arm of Thai health administration, vide Part II) to other key sectors such as education, physical infrastructures, environmental sanitation and so on.

An essential measure for achieving just and sustainable development is to promote two parallel efforts simultaneously. First is to create attractive employment opportunities in the Changwad itself, and the other is to improve the quality of local labour force by upgrading the level of their education, in order to enable the local labour force to take the employment opportunities thus created. Elimination of gender discrimination is an important consideration in this regard as well. The entry point for educational upgrading is to motivate parents to invest more for education of their children. The best way to convince parents is to spread local employment opportunities. It is yet too early to evaluate the extent of success of RPP. Nonetheless, it would be extremely important for the central government to facilitate further progress of local initiative such as RPP, as a concrete instance to materialize decentralization policy lest it should remain a mere lip service.

Proposal 2: Realization of Policies for Mitigating Income Disparities

It is a well established fact that the gap between the rich and the poor tends to expand in the process of rapid economic growth at earlier stages of development. The interregional income disparity between Bangkok metroregion and Eesarn region is a typical case in point. Our study has revealed that the gap is widening even within a poor village like Non-khun (vide Part I).

Eesarn will remain, at least in the foreseeable future, an area where the principal means of production is agriculture. However, owing to its natural conditions there is no prospect for introducing large-scale dams or irrigation system that may ensure double cropping of paddy. It follows therefore that there are only two alternatives left available for raising the income of local population. First is the increase of income earning opportunities in the region itself. Second is to improve the educational and vocational levels of labour force in the region, in order to enable them to start lucrative side jobs or to take attractive employment opportunities that may be created within the region.

No doubt, the seasonal outmigration to Bangkok area is a convenient means of additional income earning for many people in the region. However, it is nonetheless necessary to recognize the importance of increasing income earning opportunities within the region itself. As already pointed out in our Proposal 1, higher opportunities for attractive income earning is the crucial entry point for motivating people for better education. In this regard, the dissemination of the small reservoir (so-called *Tameike*) project introduced under a technical assistance scheme of JICA would be important. Allied supportive activities like technical guidance, marketing promotion, expansion of small loans, farm extension services for crop diversification and so on, should also be strengthened in parallel.

Proposal 3: Introduction of "Competitive" Strategy for Investment Promotion

An observation put forward in Part I: "It will take several decades for the non-farm sectors in Roi-Et to absorb all the jobless people existing at present, so long as the current trend persists", draws our serious attention. It means that Roi-Et will fail to solve its unemployment problem unless it succeeds in tapping massive investment from outside in the near future.

However, it is already recognized through our analyses in Parts I and III that the level of available infrastructures in the region is too low to attract investment from elsewhere, meaning that Roi-Et (and, for that matter, Eesarn region in general) is caught in the vicious circle between the poor infrastructure and the inadequate investment. The fact pointed out in Part III that there is little prospect for introducing innovation in the water supply system for higher efficiency unless there is a higher water demand, is a typical case in point.

Accordingly, it would be a sterile proposition if we would simply shout for higher investment for infrastructures, for it is not only Roi-Et that suffers from inadequate infrastructure. As a matter of fact, it is a problem plaguing the entire country except few fortuitous enclaves. It follows therefore that there is no way out unless a "competitive" strategy is pursued—that is, to vie with other regions by the attractiveness of the idea. In fact, competition amongst regions is an important part of the game of regional development.

It would be fair to expect that Roi-Et does have a good potential in this context, for it has already put RPP in action and is successfully raising the general level of awareness of changwad population in development promotion. Success in the crop diversification by introducing cantaloupe growing and

organizing a farm cooperative to strengthen their bargaining power for cantaloupe marketing is another example. Furthermore, the changwad authority has already obtained green signal of the central government for the airport development in Roi-Et. In view of the fact that the nearby airport in Khonkaen being quite crowded already, the new airport is expected to provide Roi-Et a new charm for external investors. The proposal for international research and training centre is made (ref. Part I) in anticipation of rapidly expanding economic cooperation and border trade with countries in Indochina, particularly Laos and Vietnam. Besides, opinion leaders of Roi-Et are now seeking for a core idea for the promotion of tourism development in and around Roi-Et.

Around the forthcoming airport as the key leverage, various ideas as exemplified above are being discussed among local policy makers concerned. Various promotional activities like holding of seminars, symposia, essay contests for college students, market research on touristic demand and so on, should be introduced for the sake of ultimately identifying a set of viable development strategies that may help make Roi-Et distinguished from other parts of Eesarn region.

Proposal 4: Strengthening Development Management and Financial Capability of Local Administration: Emphasis on the Learning Process

As repeatedly pointed out in Part IV and elsewhere, development administration and finance system in Thailand is highly centralized. This traditional characteristics seems to have hampered the formation of such an administrative management capability as would be responsive to the people's needs and encourage participatory practice at the grass root. Administrative capability of this nature cannot be cultivated without exposing the local administration to the experience of coordinating the conflicting interests of various government agencies concerned, collecting its own revenue, allocating its own resources overcoming various constraints, and critically evaluating the efficiency of resource allocation through frank dialogue between administration and the tax payers. At the moment, more than 90% of resources of Changwad administration depends on the central transfer. As a result, its role is no more than expending the revenue thus transferred from the centre in accordance with a predetermined sector-wise expenditure instructions from above.

In the meanwhile, serious debate seems to be underway as to whether the tambon council be given a status of a juridical entity, in order to enable it to undertake business contracts involving public expenditures. Parallel to this is another long pending issue as to whether a Changwad governor be publicly elected or not. Related debates appeared every now and then on leading English language newspapers with large coverage while we were in Thailand.

No doubt, the governor needs to be elected from the viewpoint of the fundamental principle of democracy. However, there are quite strong reservations against the idea on various grounds, for example: Local election in Thailand is still considerably "dirty", so that only so called "mafias" are likely to be elected. Simply changing the system from nomination to election cannot yield results, unless a big surgery is carried out to transform present highly centralized financial system: A governor, even if elected, cannot do much unless he is given much larger financial authority to undertake locally initiated projects. Otherwise, the election will result only in disillusionment to the democratic election: It is quite unlikely that politicians or bureaucrats will accept any radical reform over the current highly centralized financial system, so and so forth.

As a matter of fact, one of the questions asked in a needs survey conducted under RPP was "whether you have ever sold your vote". More than 50% of respondents replied "yes". Of course there are many who buy and sell votes both in rich and poor countries. However, the frankness with which Thai people in Eesarn admitted the fact is striking indeed, for it betrays that there is little sense of guiltiness in selling votes.

In any event, it is an affair of local politics, about which we outsiders have very little to contribute. However, we would nonetheless like to emphasize the importance of providing local administrators with the opportunity of experiencing people's-need-based and participatory development management practice. For this to happen, the administrative power of the Changwad governor to intervene and coordinate the activities of all sectoral agencies, as well as the revenue base of a Changwad need to be considerably strengthened. These innovative arrangements would be one of first steps to be taken for bringing about a more appropriate balance of power between the central and local authorities, and would certainly pave the way for successful introduction of the public election for the Changwad

governor in the long run. As a matter of general principle, a person or an organization will never learn unless they are exposed to an opportunity of learning by doing.

Proposal 5: Improving Access to Essential Information for Monitoring Progress of Development

No individual, no organization is totally free from committing mistakes in the process of managing development. For a number of unforeseeable and unavoidable reasons, many development targets fall short of reaching intended levels or, on the contrary, like the case of Income Doubling Plan of Japan during 1960s, the ten year target was achieved only in seven years' time, whereas entire Japan was plagued by totally unforeseen negative consequences of the so-called "miraculous economic growth", namely, serious environmental disruption. On account of the complexity of our societies, the process of development management is analogous to a continuous process of crisis management.

It follows therefore that the only way one can best manage the process is to monitor the development performance constantly, and introduce correcting measures whenever a serious problem arises. This means that one of the most essential prerequisites for improving development management capability is the access to relevant, reliable and timely information concerning development performance. As a result of our fieldwork in Roi-Et, it was found out that such an access is grossly inadequate at the Changwad or lower community levels. For example, basic local development indicators such as in- and out-migration of population and employment profile are not available even at branch offices of powerful central government ministries. All accounting records of revenue and expenditure of development finance is sent to Bangkok, so that it is difficult to analyse relative financial position of Changwad vis-a-vis other parts of the country, unless one can obtain data from central sources through certain personal influence or informal connections.

Such a situation poses a serious bottleneck against making key development performance indicators accessible to local government officials and researchers, to say nothing of the people at large, whose needs and aspirations should be the most essential point of departure for realizing just and sustainable development. Absence of access to those essential information deprives those key actors of development at the local level (i.e., local government officials, researchers and the people) of the "dent", as it were, required for their bargaining power vis-a-vis central authorities. It will also cause concentration of academic researchers in Bangkok area, and weaken the intellectual initiative in the provincial areas of the country.

It should also be noted that the role of mass media is very important in the formation of public opinion, which is one of essential bases of participatory development. However, on account of the fact that the quality of mass media is highly dependent on the accessibility to reliable information, steps need to be taken to facilitate the local mass media to contribute more effectively in the development process by way of mobilizing its yet untapped potential for advocacy.

Proposal 6: Revaluation of Traditional Values and Life Styles: A Redressal

The foregoing five proposals are based on an implicit assumption that the higher the level of economic well-being, the better will be our world for all. However, it would also be fair to assume that the amount of natural resources and environmental capacities presently available on Earth do not permit for every human being, whose total number is bound to reach ten billion in just a few decades' time, to share the level of affluence widely enjoyed by people in industrialized nation at present. As a result, the scenario of endless growth is simply unfeasible on that score, meaning that the implicit assumption mentioned here needs to be questioned.

If so, then, how should a global consensus be achieved concerning the life style that would be both manageable and acceptable by all, in the context of promoting just and sustainable development? There would be only two approaches for finding a solution. One is a macro global endeavour for deriving a consensus, as exemplified by the UNCED Conference held last year to Rio de Janeiro (Its outcome was largely abortive, but anyway!). The other is the self determination on values and life styles at micro community levels.

The simple life style of Eesarn farmers based on the Buddhistic values which our team had a chance to learn this time has given a striking insight in that context, for many of us are already getting keenly aware of the suspicion that the endless pursuit for material well-being, as vehemently practiced by most Japanese until now, is unlikely to lead to an ultimate satisfaction and peace of mind.

Needless to say, the rich Japanese people and, for that matter, anyone in affluent economies, have no right to solicit poor Eesarn farmers that they should remain poor on account of global resource constraints, unless we (e.g. Japanese et al in rich nations) decide to change our own life styles. Nonetheless, there seems to exist profound implications one should elicit from Eesarn farmers. For example, should we succeed in creating an environment where Eesarn farmers can find reasonably good side-job opportunities, sufficient to keep them happy to stay in Eesarn all year round without migrating to risky and polluted Bangkok, while continuously engaging themselves in paddy cultivation which for them is more of a "culture" rather than mere means of producing food, they may enjoy their stable life if there were minimum level of infrastructure that could protect them from recurrent natural calamities like droughts. They will celebrate traditional festivals every now and then, while making "tamboon" (voluntary contribution to "purchase" their happiness after death) from time to time at their nearby temples. There certainly is an attractive alternative here.

Many may apprehend that the period of time the simple farmers will remain simple cannot be long. On that ground, the observation advanced above may be cynically laughed away as an ephemeral proposition. However, it is also true that the life style model on our part of the world, namely, the endless pursuit for material well-being, is unlikely at all to be a universal solution.

No doubt, no one from outside can impose the type of life style and values one should adopt. However, a package of actions as summarized below would definitely deserve our serious consideration for bringing about an alternative that may be reasonably attractive and acceptable to a large number of common people in the Third World, namely: 1) Provision of minimum level of infrastructure that can protect farmers from incidental vicissitudes of life like flood or drought; 2) creation of side job opportunities that would ensure reasonably good additional income during their slack seasons; 3) utilization and revitalization of traditional knowledge and skills such as integrated farming, in order to minimize use of chemicals (pesticides, fertilizers, etc.) for hedging soil deterioration; 4) meeting basic human needs particularly education and health, and 5) *selective* revitalization of traditional values, festivals arts (drama, music, etc.) so that the virtue of traditional heritages be firmly retained in the future, keeping rural communities with sufficient amount of sound enjoyment and entertainment.

Epilogue

Despite all such efforts (if adopted at all!), our societies may sooner or later be eroded by "modern" and wasteful values and life styles. However, there is no need to be fatalistic. Our conscious effort to delay the catastrophe may certainly deserve our serious consideration. Though not much, a little time is yet left available for our radical redressal in development thinking. We would like to conclude this report with noting the grave message we have received from poor Eesarn farmers.

