Training Programmes and Materials on Local Social Development in Thailand[1]

Direk Rerkrai[2]

ABSTRACT

Training programmes in local social development in Thailand (1985-1987) were responsible by 12 government organizations of six ministries under the National Rural Development Committee with the supporting of 4 Non-Government Organizations. The 30 major courses may be classified as 3 groups such as : 1) intersectoral cooperation in planning and development, 2) people's organization and involvement, 3) spiritual development, and etc. After analysis of 38 training materials it was found that the concepts, strategies, methodologies, techniques and administration of training programes were quite good but it was needed to get the supporting from the NGOs in budgeting and consultant in improving the training programme to meet the objectives.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Problems of Poverty and Quality of life.

After the two decades(1960-1981) of emphasis on economic growth, poverty is still found among the rural people. However,in 1981 the conditions of income and wealth distribution has deteriorated over the years. Income disparities have become larger among the different regions,and within each region the rural-urbangaps has also become wider(NESDB,1982-1986). Poverty has also found to be closely related to problems especially concerned on quality of life(NESDB,1982 a). In 1981, over 64% of Thailand's population suffered from vermi-intertinal infection, and about 80% of the rural poor suffered from infection, and nearly 90% suffered from anemia. Furthermore,statistics also revealed that about 80% of pre-school children in rural villages suffered from under-nutrition, and illiteracy rate was as high as 14% of the total population, the majority of which live in the rural areas (NESDB,1983).

However, the development programmes carried out under the five National Economic and Social Development Plans for the past 25 years had cleary helped raise the economic level of the country and the standard of living of the population. The GNP had increased 18 times from about 58,900 million baht in

1961 to 1,047,500 million baht in 1985, while at the same time per capita income rose almost 10 times from 2,150 baht per person in 1961 to 20,420 baht in 1985. In social development, the level of services was change significantly and widespread distribution was achieved since 1982, both in education and health which resulted in a general improvement in the quality of life of the Thai people For example, in education,schools at the high school level were expanded to cover every district. In · health, district hos-pitals were open for services in 86% of the total number of districts, clinics in 98% of the sub-districts, and the basic health services were provided in not less than 90% of all villages in rural are as about across the country. In 1987, about 5,787 villages were the backward areas, 11,621 villages were the progress areas while the majority vil-lages (35,514) were in the transitional areas (NESDB,1987).

2. The Government's Response to Im-prove the Poverty and Quality of life.

The increasing pressure of rural poverty problem, ineffective coordination and cooperation among government agen-cies which caused the problems of mul-distribution of wealth and welfare ser-vices, had prompt the government to launch a new rural development system in the 5th national plan (1982-1986). Its main objective was to enable disadvan-taged rural people in poverty-stricken village to be more economically and

socially self-reliance and to adjust themself-reliance and to adjust them selves appropriately to environmental conditions (NIDA,1987).

During the 5th national plan(1982-1986), Thailand made national efforts reconstructed the imbalances which had been created during two decades of rapid growth in favour of the urban, industrializing segments of society. The anti-poverty approach was assigned in the poverty areas which attempted to climinate the imbalances. Improving the quality of life of the people, it is ne-cessary that their basic minimum needs be satisfied, that they would have opportunities for advancement sui-table to their capabilities and aptitudes, that they have access to basic production assets, goods and services, that they have freedom of choice and that they can participate in the decisions that affect their lives (NESDB,1986)

Therefore, reduction of inequali-ties and disparities of any kind among the different regions and parts of the country and among the population groups had been selected as the main objective of the 6th National Five Years Plan (1987-1991)(NESDB,1986)

While another main objective in the Sixth National Plan is the develop ment of human quality so as to enable progress in social development and to create peace and equality. Social deve-lopment will be consistent with and support the overall developmental process

of the country, together with preserving traditional values and cultural life while improving the urban and rural quality of life to meet the standards for basic minimum needs. The important strategies in meeting this objective are as following 1) Adopt measures to achieve appropriate population size and structure in the long run with the rate of population growth in 1991 to be at only 1.3% 2) Develop ment of human quality by encouraging education and training innovations and emphasis on the prople participation in primary health care. 3) Aim to lessen the unemployment problem by accelerating the development of information system on human resources and employ-ment, and also make the educational system more consistent with labor market demand. 4) Using the problem oriented approach related to the facts and real needs of the community by dispersing authority to the province. 5) Emphasize integration among the government agencies and between the state, the private sector and people's organization. 6) Encourage private organizations, commu nities, and families to participate in the prevention and find out the solution of social problems (NESDB,1987) 7) The basic minumun needs (BMN) strategy which allows village committees to in-dentify common needs,critical problems and local decision-making, including the way how to moblilize resources is a first step to enable local people to participate in the planning process(NESDB,1987).

Then we have to realize that the 6th national plan (1987-1991) aims to strengthen the efficiency and effective-ness of management at district level in linkage with the provincial level and also the participation of village committee and sub-district council in decision-making for bottom-up programme.

However, social development plan ning does not imply a separate plan for the social aspects of people's lives, but a consideration of people's social, eco-nomic, physical, political and other needs in all planning decisions(NESDB,1986)

To implement the new approach in rural development, a new rural development administrative system (National Rural Development Committee) was established in 1982. The system is aiming to integrate and mobilize resources of participating 4 major ministries in rural development endeavours. The intersectoral collabora tion is synchronized at all levels from the national down to the provincial, dis trict, tambol and village levels. Imple-mentation plans of agencies at all levels are to be set up and carried out with integrated and continuing efforts. The selection of target areas is based on the village information system that enhances the formulation of appropriate projects to solve problems in each area. The action taken in each area is systemati-cally recorded and reported to all parties concerned. Monitoring and evaluation

of projects implemented in each area are also performed systematically by concerned agencies at the national, provincial, and district levels. The sub-district council can participate, with supported from sub-district official, draws its own annual development plan that is subsequently screened by the district development committee prior to being submitted to the provincial development committee. The provincial development committee then draws its own annual development plan to response to local needs and the national annual development policy framework and submits it to the participating ministries for approval(NIDA,1987)

3. Some Directions for Improving the Existing System.

The existing situation for rural development especially for social development schemes in Thailand, for going to be effectiveness under the new system, should be improved as following

3.1 Each province should serve as the focal point where national and ministerial development plan be integrated with provincial development plan. Therefore, the scope of authority and responsiblity to be delegated depends upon the potential and absorbing capability of the provincial, district and sub-district administration. However, the provincial authority should be given both administrative and financial allocating authority. Effort must be made to

strengthen the provincial planning bureau first in order to increase its analytical and planning capabilites(NESDB,1982 b) District office is the vital organization that effects the successful rural development effort too, but it is still unable to intersectoral cooperation truly. Thus, the intergrated planning has been unsuccessful (NIDA,1987).

3.2 Developed administrative tool measures and criteria for decision-making of the sub-district council and village committee is needed for problem diagnosis,priority setting,monitoring and evaluation (Rerkrai,1986) By this way it will bring the people's organization to have a higher degree of self-reliance development.

3.3 Development projects should be based on community,their critical problems and real needs(Rerkrai,1986)

3.4 The social preparation should be prepared both to the officials in any level and local people. The officials should have their role as a supporter to the initiation of people's organization. They have to realize of the .outcome of development would be the people who are beneficiary, not only budget aggradizement of their organization. The subdistrict council and the village committee should be trained for increasing the capability in their making decision for problem analysis, priority setting, mobilization and utilization of resources, monitoring and evaluation of the deve-

lopment output. The self-service approach and self-reliance development should be trained for the local people too (Rerkrai,1987)

4. Objectives of the Study and Methodology for Assessment.

The general objectives of this study were : 1) Locate the key training,teaching programmes and the materials concerned with local social development planning and management in Thailand. 2) study and extract from these materials the concepts/approaches, strategies/policies, methodologies, and techniques/tactics, and assess their utility for UNCRD use.

The specific objectives of this study were as following: 1) To study the organizations responsible for training in social development and their training programmes. 2) Evaluate for strengths and weakness such as : a) the concepts, strategies, methodology, techniques of social development training programme   b) the level of quality, effective and adequate of training materials. 3) Analyse for the recommondation for improving social development programmes and materials.

The methodology of this study was to assess the training programmes and materials under the 12 government organizations and 4 nongovernment organizations.   About 30 courses and 38 materials (training manuals, training

guidelines, lecture notes, supplementary articles, training modules, books) were synthesized and analysed.

Analysis and Recommendation
5. Organization Responsible for Social Development Training, Their Training Programmes and Training Administration

5.1 Organizations and their training programmes in Thailand, there are various government organizations responsible for training the officials and local people. Those organizations are 1) The Office of National and Economic Development Board, Office of the Prime Minister and other offices under the Office of the Prime Minsiter, 2) The Ministry of Interior 3) the Ministry of Public Health, 4) the Ministry of Education 5) the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative 6) the Government University such as Kasetrat University, NIDA, etc. However, the NGOs also have their roles in social development programmes too. (See more detail in appendix 1) There were many kinds of social development programme (more detail in appendix 1) which may classified as 4 items such as : 1) Intersectoral cooperation in planning and development, 2) spiritual development, 3) pre-services and on the job training, 4) people involvement in planning and development. However, for the universities programme mostly concern on the formal education for undergraduate and graduate in social development (see their relationship in Figure 1)

Organizations   Major course training programme   Target groups
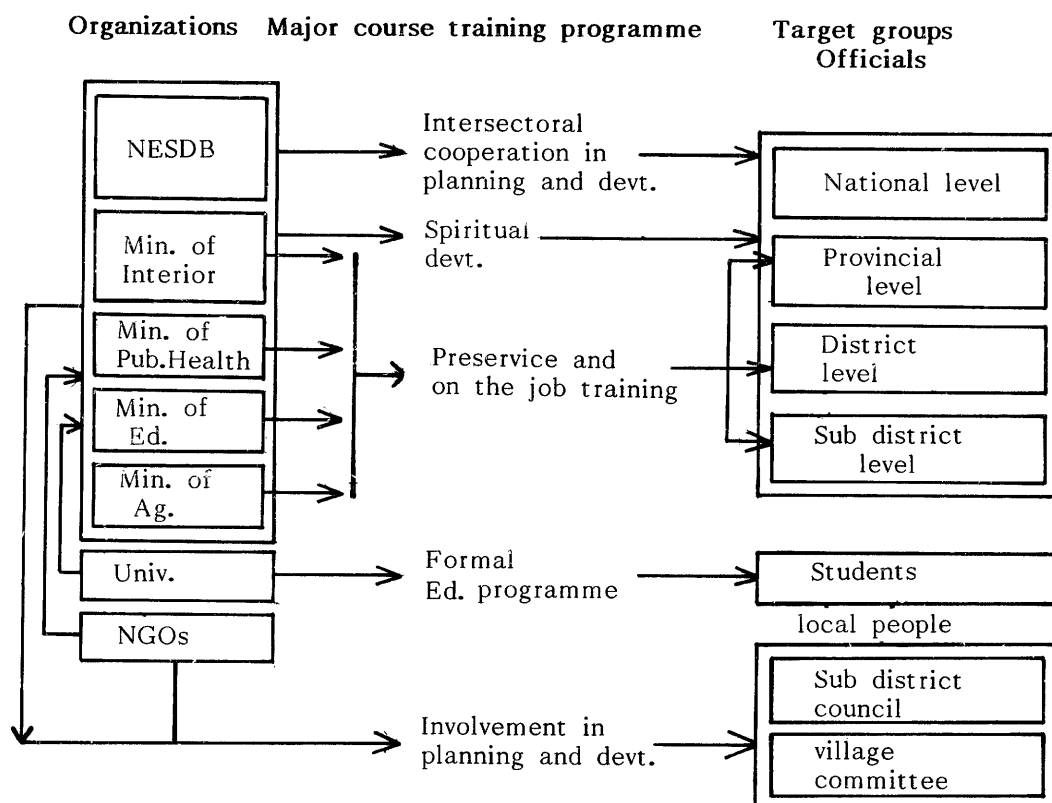**Officials**

Figure 1. The organizations responsible for social development training programme and their
target groups according to their programme

5.2   Character of social develop-
ment training programme.   We may
identify the character of social develop-
ment in Thailand as following:

5.2.1   The target group of train-
ing programmes mostly aim at the
official in the provincial level at the
first stage and train them to be trainers.
However, recently most of the government
organizations and NGOs aim directly to
the district officials and train them to
be trainers for the local people who are
the members of sub-district councils and
village committees.   However, in the

subject concerning the National policy
and strategies in rural development pro-
gramme, the governors and deputy gover-
nors were the target group.

5.2.2   The objectives of local so-
cial development training programme
mostly concern on the following: 1) To
promote the intersectoral collaboration
among the government agencies in any
level,   2) to change the role of the
people's organization to be the initiator
and the government agents to be the
supporters, 3) To increase the capability
of the people's organization (sub-district
council members and village committee)

in diagnosis, setting priority of problems and needs of the community, find the alternative of solutions, utilization of resources, and participate in the community's development programmes inorder to increase of the degree of self-reliance development, 4) To utilize the available resources,information system for planning monitoring and evaluation system which makes the equity in allocation of resources to the local areas, 5) to develop the selected spirits for the government agents and the local people such as:cooperation, diligent, self-help, and responsibility to the society.

5.2.3 Duration of training programme depended on the target groups and subject concerned. For the governors the duration was about 1-3 days. Most of the major training programmes had their duration about 4-5 days. However, some training programme spent more than 15 days.

5.3 Training administration. Local social development training in Thailand are under various organizations as shown in figure 1. Usually the Office of Economic and Social Development Board has the responsibility for coordination among various ministries for national integrated social development programmes under the National Rural Development Committee. While the ministries itself such as Ministry of Interior, Education, Public Health, and Agriculture and Cooperative

handle for their own pre-service and in-service training programmes. The non-government organizations work as an imitator sponsor and consultant and allow the ministries manipulate the training programme themselves.

6. Current Training Materials and Their Uses.

6.1 Local social training materials. There were various kinds of printed matter such as training manuals, training guidelines, lecture notes, supplementary articles, training modules, books. Mosty of printed materials were in local language-However, the video-tape was used as supplementary in social development training programme too.

6.2 The major purpose of training programme and materials in local social development may be classified as following: 1) to develop a consensus for the government officials and local people for the new approach and management system in social development, 2) create the sense of society responsibility and self-belongingness to all concerned, 3) increase the capability in participating for local social development, 4) mobilization, utilization and allocation of resources to serve the national policies and people's quality of life.

6.3 The main contents of current

training materials of local social development in Thailand may be classified as 11 groups which concerned:

6.3.1 The national policies and its programme's frame and approach.

6.3.2 Concepts, approaches and strategies in social development.

6.3.3 Restructuring function, of change agents and target groups, and scope of responsibility.

6.3.4 Social preperation for: 1) community participation, 2) mobilization,utilization and allocation of resources, 3) appropriate technology and its management, and 4) self-reliance development.

6.3.5 The intersectoral co-operation,and techniques for intergrated local social development planning, monitoring and evaluation for improving social development project.

6.3.6 Information system and indicators for social development.

6.3.7 The innovative approach and implementation at the local level.

6.3.8 People's organization and leadership development.

6.3.9 Community fund management and its contribution to the community.

6.3.10 Spiritual development for community responsibility and self-improvement.

6.3.11 Technical cooperation among developing villages for quality of life improvement.

6.4 The quality relevance and

usefulness of training/teaching materials. Many of them were low standard only few were clear practical and complete. Mostly it was not well prepared,then the content was too vague and failure to understand. Most of the materials tried to build up the trainees learning by `doing,but it could not work so much according to lack of experience in making the training activities. It is needed to improve the content of the training materials in relating mostly to community based not only the social development concept alone. The results of training programme would be created such as: 1) the ideology performing, 2) the movement in social development for improving the social development performance of related ones and bring the benefit to improve their quality of life.

7. Concepts, Strategies, Methodologies, Techniques and Administration for local Social Training Programmes.

7.1 Concepts and approaches of local social training programmes in Thailand conerned on : 1) The general social structure and attempt in solving social problems. 2) The concept as a framework for planning, implementation monitoring and evaluation. 3) The concept in improving the quality of life. 4) The structure function of National Rural Development Committee in intergrating the major ministries for running the developement programmes. 5) The role of people's organization in decision-making for diagnosis and development

planning. 6) Planning, monitoring and evaluation system and its prerequisites. 7) Utilization of village information and indicator for development programme. 8) The dissemination of innovations. 9) Community participation and self-reliance development.

7.2 The major strategies of local social development training programme in Thailand was the "multiple effect strategy." This strategy managed the trainers at central level, trained the trainers at provincial level, then the provincial trained the district trainers, and the district trainers train the subdistrict trainers repectively. At last the trainees at village level were trained by the subdistrict trainers.
However,in the content of training materials, the strategies which were assigned for the lesson of the trainees were: 1) The strategies for people's organization in solving problems. 2) The strategy for developing the intersectoral collaboration. 3) The strategy to create the popular participation in the community. 4) Strategy of bringing change in community, etc.

7.3 The methodology of local social training was depended on situations concerned but mosty concerned respectively as: 1) lecture, 2) workshop, 3) seminar, 4) brainstorming, 5) syndicate and 6) dialoque. However,many training programme had the activities of ice-braking and group process to stimulate the trainees in having learning by doing.

Some training programmes use the method as "twin-action" that have the mutual training among the subdistrict officials and local people which let them work together for a period of time.

Anyway the curriculum and content of social development training programme in Thailand mostly related to: 1) The methodology to prevent social problems. 2) The methodology for community participation in planning and development. 3) Appropriate methods for data collection in the village level by using social indicator such as "basic minimum needs indicators". 4) The methodology of using social indicator and village data bank for diagnosis the critical problems and real needs of the community and used for monitoring and evaluation devices. 5) Methods for generating, developing, and mobilizing of resources to achieve social development objectives. 6) The methodology for instrument and mechanisms for intersectoral coordination.

7.4 The techniques in local social training were composed of: 1) The technique for solving social problems. 2) The techniques of developing the effectiveness of social development mechanism. 3) The techniques of developing cooperative among the partner and the local people in social development process. 4) Techniques for developing the capacity for the people's organization in manipulate their own development. 5) Techniques for coordinat-

ing resources to accomplish local social development objectives.

7.5 The utilization of those who have been trained. Most of the national social development training programmes do the steps for utilization of the trainers and the trainees as following:

7.5.1 Creating the commitment the national policy makers and the governor.

7.5.2 Using"multiple effect strategy" for training programme and give them manuals for practical and running programme that produced the common philosophy and knowing their responsibilities in any level on social development.

7.5.3 Inform and stimulate these who have been trained pass through mass media such as television spots to confirm their ideology in responsible for their own community.

7.5.4 The national level have direct and indirect follow-up and monitoring in social development programmes to the province, district and subdistrict by checking and simple analysis for provincial, district and subdistrict development programmes. These were the inspectors from the Office of Prime Minister went to the province and random checking in every 2-3 months. At the same time they will receive a continuing training if it neccessary to do to increase their capabilites.

7.5.5 Creating the contest among the villages for social development

programme to stimulate them to have a continuous development programmes and utilize the existing resources to be useful for their own community.

8. The Strength and Weakness of Training Programme in Thailand.

8.1 The needs and demands of Thailand in local social development training programme.

8.1.1 The trainees of the local social development training programmes should be aimed directly at the district official and the local people in subdistrict council and village committee. Because in sixth national development plan(1987-1991),there were more strengthening in delegation of authority and responsibility in administration and financial allocation to the provincial level.

8.1.2 The initiation from the grass-root, the village committee should be created. Right now the National Rural Development Committee established the basic minimum needs (BMN) indicators as an indice for village committee, but it needs to train them more to understand the concept of self-reliance development.

8.2 The strength of local social development training programmes in Thailand. We may say that the major strengths were as following: 1) The new rural development system, the National Rural Development Committee has been

worked as only one national committee since 1981 which can integrate the 4-5 major ministries in local development together. This system has the training programmes that produced regulations and indices for intersectoral collaboration at any level. The training programmes in rural development created by NRDC also create the major ministries on solidarity, cooperation and collectiveness. 2) The strong support from nongovernment organizations,in budget and concepts for rural development,brought government organization training programmes expanded into subdistrict council and village committee. 3) The information management system was quite good in data bank at the village level. There were two types of socioeconomic data;NRDC2c and BMN indicator information in every village. These information indices, allowed the trainees understood the real situation and can practice naturally in planning and monitoring of the programmes. 4) The government has spent some special budget for job creation programmes since 1974 that allows the subdistrict council to have the exercise for bottom-up programme and make the subdistrict council strenthening in planning and monitoring. 5) The appropriate strategies conducted by the NEDC, the multiple effect, permitted the common understood in the concepts and related and can build up the movement in social development in the target community.

         8.3   The weakness of local social development training programme in Thailand. There were many weakness such as: 1) The staff of the Office of Economic and Social Development Board which responsible for national training programmes for integrated rural plan had very few experience for the strategies and methodology of training according to their major job at the office were planners. However, they tried to bring together for the teams from various training orgnaizations to support but it worked not so good. 2) The technical and materials in training programmes mostly supported from the international nongovernment organizations but the concepts produced were not enough for intersectoral collaboration, self-reliance development and etc. The text books from the university may be helpful for this weakness. 3) The framework for the contents of social development was not enough for the theoretical concept in comprehensiveness, it was very few practical case concerned too.

9. The Recommendations.

         9.1   Training courses and curriculum

         9.1.1   It is neccessity in creating consensus for curriculum development, strategy, methodology, and materials in local social training programme. Consensus will bring the related interagencies in having a sense of belongingness. That will bring each organizations concerned to have a movement

to support together. It also bring the benefit in creating high quality,effectiveness and coverage for training materials and methodology. The six activities that should be done in establishment for among interagencies (Figure 2): 1) framework setting, especially for general objectives and policies for social development training, 2) coalition building among the interagencies in bringing the common benefit and avoid the conflict, 3) agenda setting to let them have learning by doing, 4) brainstorming, 5) coordinators sell the ideas and convince, 6) make them believe that the programme will get the commitment from the top authority,and it also brings the task development to their organizations and the beneficiary are the local people,not only budget aggradizement of their organizations.
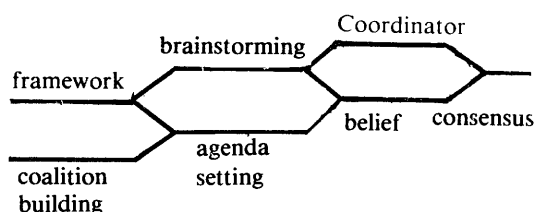
Figure 2 The six-step flow of creating the consensus in social development training programme

9.1.2 Spiritual development course of training programme should not only aim at cooperation, diligent, avoidance from alcohol and grambling, but also create the values of self-reliance

development, and the sense of solidarity and collectiveness too.

9.1.3 The curriculum development mobilization and utilization of human and other resources is needed especially in establishing the network system of community fund at any level. Also the concept of network of technical cooperation among developing villages. The techniques for social development programmes would be added in the curriculum and content such as: 1) The techniques of integrating the NGOs into social development planning,implementation monitoring and evaluation process. 2) Techniques for social costing. 3) Techniques to understand what are common mistakes which should be avoided in the project monitoring and evaluation. 4) Tactic for local development structures and process.

9.2 Training materials and their substances.

9.2.1 Training materials and their substances aim to create the sense of responsibility to the government officials to do the things right for the local people not do things only for building empire for their organizations. The results of training the subdistrict council committee and village committee should increase,their calibre in making decision for their own benefit,and resource mobilization.

9.2.2 The framework of courses should be developed as the various module in social development training

programmes of UNCRD for understanding
the concepts, and strategies for local
social development in Thailand. The case
study is also needed too for exercise as
learning by doing.

9.2.3   Video-tape is an ap-
propriate material especially in spiritual
development and creating the trainees
the contribution to the community. The
public relations in multi-media is nec-
cessary in making belief on the commit-
ment of the top administrators.

9.3   Training methods:

9.3.1   Any training method
that create the situation for brainstorm-
ing is needed.   Group process in the ap-
propriate way should be well prepared
in bringing the training to meet the
objective especially for integrated plan,
spiritual development,sense of belonging-
ness and spirit for responsibility to the
society.   At the same time the training
programme should bring the government
officials to realize that of the local
people would be the beneficiary.

9.3.2   The training method
should based on group process that bring
the atmosphere of learning by doing. The
tactics for stimulating the trainees to
have strong   desire in learning is also
needed and should be well prepared in
agenda setting.

9.4   The need for technical or
material assistance.   Actually the re-
source persons for local social training
in Thailand are efficience and effective-
ness in the government organizations

already.   But the utilization of this re-
source is needed by bringing them to-
gether in the national programmes. The
continuous supporting from the interna-
tional for budget allocation and consul-
tant is neccessity for them in creating
brainstorming and build up the schemes
that fit for local situation and also set
up the appropriate training meterials
with efficience and effectiveness too.

9.5   The roles of government
training institutions, nongovernment and
voluntary organizations, and international
organizations in collaboration in improb-
ing the training of local social deve-
lopment planners.

9.5.1   The single national or-
ganization such as the National Rural
Development Committee is needed to
provide the integration among the various
agencies in conducting the local social
development.   However, this body should
create continuously the appropriate re-
gulations and sound indices for social
development which will bring the benefit
to the training programme for its prac-
tical and understood.

9.5.2   The government would
set the condition which pursuade the
nongovernment organizations to support
the training programmes as sponsors and
assign the consultant for the programme
if neccessary. The nonorganization should
have the role as indirect manipulate the
training programme and should have their
roles in linkage for the   various govern-
ment organizations in brainstorming and

find out by themselves the solution for strategies, methodology and tactics using in local social training programmes.

FOOTNOTES

National Economic & Social Devt. Board (NESDB) 1982-1986.The Fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan,pp.338-9.

NESDB (1982 a), A Study of Intersectoral Action in Support to Health For All By the Year 2000 and the Rural Poverty Eradication Program in Thailand, National Social Devt. Project, Bangkok, p.2.

NESDB (1982 b), Summary Report of The First National Evaluation Meeting of the National Social Devt. Project, National Social Devt. Project, pp. 3-4.

NESDB (1983), Social Development Project-The Innovative Approach to Intersectoral Cooperation for Community Development, pp. 1-2.

NESDB (1986), Social Development Goals and Strategies, Draft Paper of Division of Social Devt. Programme, pp. 4-5.

NESDB (1987),Summary:The Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1987-1991),United Production Press, P.1,17.

National Instiute of Development Administration (NIDA) (1987),Protocal of Impact Evaluation and Improvement of District Rural Development Management System, p.2.

Rerkrai, Direk (1986), Assessment of Manpower Utilization in Rural Development of Thailand, p.85.

Rerkrai, Direk (1987), BMN Approach for Community's Diagnosis,Intersectoral Cooperation, and Resource Allocation to Improve Quality of Life, pp.3-7.