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CASE STUDY SERIES
OF THE EAST—WEST
COMMUNICATION INSTITUTE

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**RADIO
CORRESPONDENCE
EDUCATION
PLANNING
IN THAILAND**

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SERIES FOREWORD

In 1976 the East-West Communication Institute began a collaborative international research project in communication policy and planning. It had become evident that problems in the development of policies and plans for the creation and use of communication resources in society were becoming increasingly acute. Not only were new technologies rapidly expanding the potential of communications systems to serve a variety of purposes, but there was increasing emphasis on the demand use of communication as part of programs for development and social change. With this project, the Institute set out to document and analyze policy development and planning processes of communication systems, East and West. Our intent has been to produce a range of research and educational products that could serve as a foundation for continued and expanded research in this field.

The project as a whole has dealt with three principal components, or levels, of policy and planning problems. At the international level, work has gone forward on international policy issues and the roles of international organizations. At the national level, the project has examined policies and policymaking processes in a number of countries. At the level of agencies and organizations, termed the institutional level, the project has included initial work on the economics of communication and decision making in communication organizations.

This case study is one of a series undertaken to document and analyze the processes of communication planning at the institutional level. These studies describe the communication planning processes in a radio correspondence education project in Thailand, a rural development agency in Malaysia, a national population program in the Philippines, a national voluntary health agency in the United States, and an organization designed to secure citizen participation in broadcasting policy development in the Philippines.

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Research at the institutional level began with the compilation of an annotated bibliography of key academic and professional materials, mainly fugitive, relevant to this kind of communication planning (Adhikarya et al. 1979). From this review it became clear that while much had been written about planning, much less had been written about institutional-level communication planning. The materials that we did find on institutional-level communication planning supported one of our early hypotheses--that there is a lack of consistency between the various proposed normative models of communication planning and the way it is actually done. In short, planners appeared to be planning in a variety of ways that were different from how the literature said they ought to plan.

To better understand this discrepancy, it was decided to document as completely as possible how people go about planning communication strategies, activities, and events at this level under field conditions. Our purpose was not to evaluate these planning activities using abstract and normative criteria of excellence, but rather to study them as ongoing dynamic planning processes in a range of cultural and organizational settings. We believed knowledge of this type could serve several purposes. First, it could provide a foundation for further research. Second, it could provide a basis for evaluating existing normative models of planning, strengthening the adaptability of these models to different worlds of reality and, equally important, pointing toward the development of new normative models.

A request for proposals for case studies of institutional communication planning processes was circulated to scholars in Asia and the United States in early 1977. Resultant proposals were evaluated, and six (covering four countries) selected for inclusion in the study series.

The studies were inaugurated with a research planning meeting in the spring of 1978 at the Communication Institute. Principal investigators for each of the studies attended. During this meeting, each researcher completed a general theoretical and methodological approach to be used as a guide by the field investigators.

This research design was based on a foundation of grounded theory, a sociological research approach that emphasizes participant observation, unstructured interviews, document analysis, and inductive development of concepts and generalizations. Under this approach, the investigator begins the study with as few preconceptions as possible. As data are

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gathered, the researcher prepares interim summaries and partial analyses that are shared and discussed with members of the organization being studied. From these cooperative analyses, revised concepts emerge, and these in turn are used as the bases for collecting additional data and carrying out further analyses. The evolutionary process continues until both the researcher and the members of the subject organization are satisfied that the study accurately portrays the processes under investigation.

This approach to the studies was adopted by each member of the collaborative research team, with some modifications. The principal departure from grounded theory was the delineation of six broad areas of inquiry to guide the studies--problem definition, planners, process, plans, resources, and environment. It was agreed that these broad data-gathering categories set broad parameters within which data would be collected and analyzed.

Following the planning meeting, individual investigators returned to their countries for a year of data gathering and analysis. During this period most were visited by one of the coordinators of the study series.

The team members returned to Honolulu in the spring of 1979 for a three-month data-analysis and report-writing workshop. During this period, researchers interacted frequently with each other and the activity coordinators during the preparation of draft study reports.

These reports were then reviewed in preliminary form at a two-week working conference by a panel of communication planners, some of whom held responsible positions in the organizations studied. Following this review and evaluation in June 1979, the individual investigators returned to their home bases for supplementary data collection and preparation of final reports. The drafts became available during the fall of 1979 and spring of 1980. They were reviewed by the study coordinators and in some cases additional data collection, analyses, and interpretations were carried out.

From this process have emerged case studies of a wide range of organizations in four cultures. We expect them to be useful in a number of ways. As noted, they can serve as a rich source of ideas and problems for further studies of communication planning. Second, they will have significant educational uses and, in fact, have served in draft form as the basis for the development of a university course on

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communication planning. Finally, as examples of a range of real-world planning efforts, they may help working planners achieve new insights into their own efforts.

As coordinators of these studies, we feel especially indebted to a large number of people. Dr. S.A. Rahim, leader of the EWCI Communication Policy and Planning Project, was instrumental in developing the project framework within which the studies have been developed and has strongly supported our work as it progressed. Our close colleague, Dr. Meheroo Jussawalla, provided significant assistance in conceptualizing economic aspects of the studies and participated extensively in support of data analysis. Meow-Khim Lim and Mark Rasmuson, participants in the Communication Policy and Planning Project, provided invaluable assistance at various stages.

Special thanks are due to Alan Hancock of Unesco's Division of Development of Communication Systems. Alan encouraged us in our work and provided significant professional advice. He was instrumental in taking the lead to coordinate this series of studies with similar work being done under the auspices of Unesco and facilitated cofunding by Unesco for one of the studies in this series.

Staff support from the Communication Institute has been, as always, outstanding. Phyllis Watanabe oversaw the preparation of the manuscripts at several different stages. Terry Schulze, Institute Publications Officer, provided excellent editing and production support. Program Officer Merry Lee Corwin provided able assistance in arranging the several meetings that supported the research work.

All of these individuals have contributed in important ways. The major contributors, though, have been our colleagues from Asia and the United States who carried out the studies and whose manuscripts have been approved for publication: Zenaida Domingo, Gerald Klonglan, Chun-Nan Lo, Ramli Mohamed, Melina Pugne, and Boonlert Supadhiloke. Their diligence, intelligence, creativity, and energy have been a source of constant inspiration and collaborative learning. We present their work proudly, with full recognition of the difficulty of the tasks they undertook.

John Middleton

George Beal

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PREFACE

It has been a long journey for me to finish this case study, back and forth, between Bangkok and Honolulu. It was indeed a very pleasant and productive one. During the course of the study, I have come into contact with several wonderful persons, but to only a few can I extend my sincere thanks here.

On the East side, my deep gratitude goes to Dr. Kowit Vorapipat, then deputy director-general of the Ministry of Education's Education Technique Department and now director-general of the Nonformal Education Department, and his colleagues: Dr. Kasama Vorawan na Ayudhaya, Ms. Patrada Yomanark, Miss Saisanit Yenpensook, and Mr. Boonsom Nawanukraw. They are among a few specially wonderful Thais I have met during my lifetime. Without their cooperation, generosity, and understanding, this case study could never have been undertaken.

On the West side, I have been profoundly touched by the friendship and inspiration of two men: Dr. John Middleton and Dr. George Beal, both of the East-West Communication Institute, who supervised our collaborative research project. I found it hard to express my gratitude adequately to them; all I can say is that I will treasure all they have kindly extended to me forever.

On my side, I always wish, given a "chance," that I would like to do things better in life. I still dream. . . .

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ABBREVIATIONS

AED	Adult Education Division
ACRCE	Administrative Committee on Radio Correspondence Education
DGE	Department of General Education
ETD	Education Techniques Department
GST	General Systems Theory
GTA	Grounded Theory Approach
MMU	Mass Media Unit
ORCE	Office of Radio Correspondence Education
PLEC	Provincial Lifelong Education Center
PRD	Public Relations Department
RCE	Radio correspondence education
REC	Regional Adult Education Center

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STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND RATIONALE

The study of communication planning is a recent phenomenon, the result of practical concern for, and academic recognition of, the important social function of communication.

In a developing society, many modes of communication are limited and are available only to a restricted segment of the population. Communication has, however, great potential for expediting the process of national development and more effectively disseminating knowledge and information within, and between, nations. Its potential has been greatly enhanced by recent developments in communication technology, particularly those in broadcasting.

In the past, communication has not been consciously and systematically utilized in the process of societal development. When it has been used for this purpose, it has mainly been in a random manner. Consequently, communication has frequently been cited as a possible factor in such unfavorable social phenomena as "low public taste," the "education gap," and "rising frustration."

In recent years, academicians and communication planners have realized that to utilize communication potential for the benefit of the nation and the world, certain consistent and systematic procedures have to be established. Given the scarcity of communication resources in Third World countries, resource allocation and control have to be employed. This leads to consideration of two closely related activities, policy-making and planning.

As Middleton (1978, 3) puts it,

Control is generally manifest in the form of policy-making and planning, two related mechanisms which enable people in organizations (including political

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organizations) to exert control, or influence, over a social process.

Thus, there emerge in this case two relatively new social forces--communication policymaking and planning.

Practical and academic concerns over communication policymaking and planning has prompted the undertaking of numerous studies of these subjects in various countries. The East-West Communication Institute initiated in 1975 a problem-oriented project to describe and document the ways in which communication policymaking and planning are pursued in various countries and institutions. To establish the nature and direction of the research, the project commenced with an international conference in 1976. The core of the project consisted of two series of case studies. The first, which focused on policymaking at the national level, was completed in 1978 and featured seven studies in six countries: Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, and the United States.

The second series of case studies was originally designed:

To describe the process of planning for the utilization of communication resources within single organizations or sets of coordinated organizations working on a reasonably defined common problem. To the extent possible, our task is to move beyond description to begin drawing analytical conclusions and about how elements of the described process fit together, and why (Middleton 1978, 4).

Inaugurated in March 1978, the series was based on cross-cultural comparison. Five case studies were carried out in four countries. The studies were:

- "Communication Planning in the Muda Irrigation Scheme" (Malaysia)
- "Communication Planning within New York State Cooperative Extension" (United States)
- "Communication Planning in the Philippine Population Commission" (Philippines)
- "The Community Advisory Board as the Grassroots Planning Arm of the Broadcast Media Council of the Philippines" (Philippines)

- "Radio Correspondence Education Planning in Thailand" (Thailand)

A later addition to the series was the study, "Communication Policy and Planning in the American Cancer Society."

All of these studies attempt to delineate the ways in which communication planning is implemented in practice. Empirical knowledge is essential to a clearer understanding of the planning process. The findings of these case studies form the basis for tentative generalizations concerning the state of the art in communication planning at the institutional level and also for the development of educational and training materials and programs for use by planners.

In essence, the long-range goal of the Communication Policy and Planning Project (CPPP) is "to establish ways to do it (planning) better." Once that goal has been achieved, the practice and theory of communication policymaking and planning can converge and reinforce each other. Knowledge of communication policymaking and planning will have come from practical experience. The ultimate goal is to improve communication policymaking and planning practices.

RATIONALE FOR THIS CASE STUDY

Radio Correspondence Education Planning

As an outgrowth of the CPPP, this case study shares many of the parent project's practical and academic concerns, objectives, and methods. It is hoped that the study will shed light on the Thai planners' work and practices. Thus far, information concerning this area has been scanty. It is fervently hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to the expansion of a growing body of planning theories and philosophy which relates to the process of planning for media-based nonformal education programs in Thailand. Education and communication are means by which information is imparted to the public. Thus theories or principles drawn from one discipline may be applied to the other.

Why Study Radio Correspondence Education Planning

The author has had a continuing interest in the utilization of mass media in nonformal education programs. The Radio Correspondence (RCE) Program, under the aegis of the Adult Education Division (AED), which in turn is subject to the

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Office of the Under Secretary of State for Education, offered an opportunity to study this subject. No other program in Thailand extensively utilized the mass media in the nonformal learning process. The choice of research topic was guided by both theoretical and practical considerations. The author has long been associated with both mass communication and education. He was interested in learning whether various theories and principles, referred to here as "theories in planning," have been, or could be, applied to the planning process for media-based nonformal education programs. He was also curious to learn whether these mass communication and education theories had inter-disciplinary applications. The author has also been deeply concerned with educational problems in Thailand and considers their solution vital to the survival of Thai society.

Given the great public demand for educational services at various levels, and the limited availability of resources, one serious problem is of continuing concern to Thai planners: each year large numbers of students, particularly those in rural areas, do not attend school. This causes the so-called educational inequality between the country's various regions. It has become clear to planners that this problem can be remedied only by means of nonformal education programs with mass media support. At the secondary school level, the RCE Program is a pioneer in this field. A bigger project, known as the "Open University," is planned. Additional related projects will probably be initiated. Thus, information on past and present planning for the RCE Program can be used in the planning of subsequent education programs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this case study is twofold: (1) to describe the processes of communication planning as they occurred in the development of the RCE Program and (2) to draw analytical conclusions about patterned relationships between various elements in the planning process as it was described.

The two functions are closely related: the description provides a basis for drawing conclusions at an abstract level. In other words, this case study attempts to map out, at several abstract levels, a model of the communication planning process. It does so by using the following six concepts as organizational guides for observation, data collection, and preliminary analysis.

Planners
Definition of Problem
Resources
Environment
Plans
Processes

For purposes of clarification, it should be emphasized that this case study deals only with the planning of communication components of the RCE Program, with emphasis on the planning process.

This study does not attempt to describe and evaluate the RCE Program or its organization. Insofar as certain aspects of the end product are described, this is done primarily to enhance understanding of the planning process.

Middleton (1978, 6-12) has developed a conceptual framework for description of the six concepts that serve as the guidelines for this case study. These concepts are briefly described below:

Planners. Identification and examination of all persons involved in the planning process is emphasized. The planners' education, practical experience, philosophies, theories, image, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors are described in order for the reader to better understand factors in the planning process.

Problems. The study's focus is on the description of the planners' perception and definition of a case problem. Correlation of problems to objectives as part of the planning process is one aspect of analysis.

Resources. The study describes various types and quantities of resources available within the system, including information, facilities, personnel, and budget, and examines how such resources have been planned and controlled for the action program.

Environment. Emphasis is on description of environments external to a given system, which range from political and sociocultural conditions to policy guidelines, media systems, suppliers, competitors, and public participation.

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Plans. The term refers to any kind of plan that could be used by planners in the planning process. The focus is on form, function, and continuity of such plans.

Processes. This study highlights analysis of the planning processes that occur in the RCE Program. Several aspects of the planning processes are described and include the types and degrees of planning procedures, organizational structures, time frames, decision making, and phases.

CONCEPTS EMPLOYED

Three concepts are frequently employed in this study. They are: communication, planning, and process. The three concepts are interrelated and should be considered in context.

According to Middleton (1978, 4), the composite concept of communication planning can be defined at the institutional level as:

The process of allocating communication resources to achieve organizational goals, where communication resources include not only mass media and interpersonal forms of communication, but also forms of organizational action designed to change levels of information or skill among individuals or groups within the organization's task environment. This process involves the creation of action by the application of theory (or images) to data.

To quote Middleton (1978, 8) again, the composite concept of planning process can be conceptually defined as:

A set of patterned interactions among individuals and/or groups intended to lead to decisions on allocation of communication resources . . . over [a period of] time.

Two components of a process are singled out from this definition. They are: "decisions" and "over a period of time."

The term "planning" involves the allocation of resources to achieve goals, and it can occur consciously or unconsciously.

APPROACH TO RESEARCH

This case study is descriptive and investigative in nature. The research methodology used here is primarily the qualitative-inductive approach that is generally used in other case studies. Another characteristic of the methodology of this case study is the use of the recently developed "grounded theory" approach (GTA).

GTA may be defined as "a constant, comparative method of analysis, whereby the researcher simultaneously gathers, codes, and analyzes data. In this manner, the researcher moves back and forth between data and concepts emerging from the data, to develop clues to the emerging theory and focus for further collection of data" (see Marsick 1976, 6).

GTA was the primary methodology used in conducting the early fieldwork for this case study. Many insights were gained through the use of this approach. At a later stage in the research, a hypothetical-deductive research model known as the "general system theory" (GST) was also used. This model can be described as a problem-solving methodology that involves resource inputs, an internal process, output, and evaluation (see Wedemeyer 1977).

GTA was particularly useful when the researcher approached the case problem without a clearly structured picture in mind. When he undertook this case study, he was preoccupied with securing a theoretical framework and sought empirical evidence to fit into such a framework. GTA and GST were chosen and tended to interact throughout the course of the study. The two approaches functioned well together in this case analysis. They frequently complemented each other and illuminated the case problem.

As it happens, both the qualitative-inductive and hypothetical-deductive approaches have been especially helpful at various stages of the study. GTA was quite useful in the study's early stage, when phenomena had to be described. In the final analysis, the general system theory was utilized in drawing analytic conclusions about patterned relationships.

Three qualitative methods of data gathering were used in this case study: interviews with planners, documentary analysis, and personal observations.

The main part of the early stage of research was devoted to reading relevant documents, including official reports,

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existing plans, manuals, and journal articles. Access to these documents was obtained through personal contacts with government officials at the Adult Education Division (AED) and the planning office for the RCE Program. Thanks to the cooperation of the people at the planning offices, useful written materials, including plans and official reports, were made available.

As a result of the reading and personal contacts, the author was able to familiarize himself with the RCE Program and its planning process. He was also able to identify the planners behind the process.

Personal interviews with the planners were conducted during the lengthy intermediate stage of research, which lasted approximately five months and extended from August through December 1978. At the outset of this second phase, several visits to operations sites were made to determine firsthand whether the communication planning that had been done was that specified in the documentation. These preliminary field trips were useful in interviewing planners and in learning more about the planning process.

During the second stage, several of the planners were repeatedly interviewed to clarify certain points and to obtain additional details on specific aspects of planning. The existence of patterns in the relationships among various elements of the planning process became apparent from the readings, preliminary field trips, and personal interviews with planners. The existence of these patterned relationships prompted a further series of interviews with the appropriate planners, as well as an additional review of materials. At this stage of research, GTA was valuable in systemizing the data.

During the follow-up interviews, memos to planners were used to solicit comment and to obtain clarification of ambiguous aspects of the planning process. The memos usually contained statements on, and diagrams of, the planning process that had been developed by the author from the readings and interviews. The "memo method" was particularly helpful in defining a model of the planning process and the planners' roles on the basis of ambiguous data. It was also a means of securing clarification and ultimately agreement from those involved.

In the final stage of research, additional interviews were conducted and the planning processes were conducted in the field. By this phase, the existence of patterned rela-

tionships among elements of planning had already become apparent and seemed to be consistent with the conceptual systems framework the author was using. GST was useful in drawing analytical conclusions about the RCE Program's planning process. Many of these conclusions were confirmed by further analysis of the data.

ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING

The RCE Program is organized as part of the proposed "Nonformal Education for National Harmony and Development" (also known as Project #4). Project #4 dealt with the development of locally relevant nonformal adult education programs and involved the establishment of four Regional Adult Education Centers (RECs) and numerous Provincial Lifelong Education Centers (PLECs). The Adult Education Division was responsible for Project #4.

This chapter deals with: (1) the historical development and organization of the AED; (2) Project #4, with emphasis on the organization of the RECs; and (3) the organizational structure of the REC Program itself.

THE ADULT EDUCATION DIVISION

Historical Development

The first modern school in Thailand was established in 1907. Prior to that time, essential knowledge, attitudes, and skills were passed on to children by means of informal education. At age nine, boys were generally sent to local temples to serve the priests, who in turn provided them with instruction in such areas as reading, writing, vocational training, and moral principles. Some boys received vocational training as informal apprentices to local craftsmen and village elders. Girls, on the other hand, were prepared at home, in the fields, and in the marketplace for their roles as mothers, traders, and farmers' wives.

Primary education was originally intended to provide literacy skills and to train future civil servants. Even when primary education became more widely available, informal education continued to play an important part in preparing children for their adult roles.

Until 1937, however, the Thai government did not recog-

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nize the need to organize education for the out-of-school population. In that year, the first national census revealed that 68.8 percent of the population over the age of ten years was illiterate. This finding was alarming, since a modern school system had operated for more than 50 years, and its success in equipping the population with literacy skills had never been challenged. Such a high rate of illiteracy was considered an obstacle to democratization of the country. Therefore, in 1940 the government embarked upon a nationwide campaign to eradicate illiteracy.

The Adult Education Division (AED) was created within the Ministry of Education (it has now been elevated to the departmental level and is known as the Department of Nonformal Education). Its purpose was to develop and implement educational programs for those beyond the age of 15 years who were not enrolled in the formal school system. The main thrust of adult education programs was to provide the adult segment of the population with literacy skills and to enhance its understanding of democratic principles. Funding to implement literacy classes was allocated to all provinces. Most importantly, a law mandating compulsory literacy for all Thai citizens was passed. Between 1940 and 1943, more than 1.4 million people graduated from adult education programs.

During the Second World War, economic necessity forced the repeal of the compulsory education law, but literacy classes continued to operate on a voluntary basis. However, the repeal of the law, combined with the lack of enthusiastic support from government officials and the hardships of the war, greatly reduced attendance at literacy classes. Enrollment dropped so much by 1945 that adult education programs virtually ceased to exist.

The government's interest in adult education was renewed following the Second World War. In 1948, the objectives of adult education were expanded to include: vocational training, improvement of living standards, and promotion of a more profitable use of free time.

The expansion of objectives resulted in the establishment of new adult education programs. Vocational night schools were established; they utilized the facilities and faculties of regular day schools. General adult education beyond the literacy level was inaugurated. Public education units were sent to every province to keep the rural population informed of new developments. In addition, public libraries were established at the district level.

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The Unesco Fundamental Education Center was established in 1957 at Ubolrajthani. Also known as TUFEC (The Training Center in Adult Education at Ubolrajthani), the center, with its focus on rural development, spurred the AED to concentrate its activities on rural areas. The shift in emphasis is apparent from the 1956 revised AED objectives:

1. To improve, in cooperation with TUFEC, the rural population's standard of living.
2. In collaboration with other agencies, to establish and promote institutions of adult general and vocational education.
3. To promote general and vocational education in rural areas by utilizing mobile units.
4. To establish and operate public libraries.
5. To develop and produce reading materials for adults.
6. To produce and distribute audiovisual materials for use in educational programs.
7. To promote public education and to develop responsible citizenship.
8. To provide vocational training.
9. To conduct research and training programs in adult education.

In 1963, all fundamental education units and the rural development functions of TUFEC were transferred to the new Department of Community Development. TUFEC became merely a training center for local leaders and for unqualified primary schools teachers.

In 1965, a Unesco functional literacy program designed to combine the teaching of literacy with the promotion of occupational skills ran into obstacles arising from lack of technical expertise on the part of the teachers. Because of this, and the increasing number of social action programs aimed at directly raising the standard of living, the planners of adult education programs saw the need to differentiate the responsibilities of their programs from those in community development. Adult education was viewed as serving two major functions. First was developing the learner into a problem-

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solver with critical judgment. Second was providing the learner with current information and opportunities for skill training which could be applied to improve the learner's quality of life.

These views were tested in the functional literacy and family life planning program, which was established on an experimental basis in 1970. The curriculum was designed to help the learners examine their living conditions, identify problems and their causes, seek solutions, and select the solution most appropriate to their circumstances. The curriculum was flexible and could be tailored to the needs and conditions of the target group. Information and skills were provided as means to acquire better understanding of problems and develop the ability to cope with them. By urging the learners to solve their everyday problems, the program encouraged them to seek technical information and services from extension workers. Although modest in scale, this program has had a tremendous impact on the design of other adult education programs. It has demonstrated that adult education programs can serve as vehicles for improvement of the quality of life if they focus on the learners' personal development as well as on the provision of information and vocational skill training.

Organization and Administration

To a considerable extent, the effectiveness of adult education programs depends on the efficiency and flexibility of the organizational and administrative structures of the program. The development of the administrative structure of adult education programs has consisted of a series of swings from decentralization to centralization and back again. During the first few years, when adult education programs consisted mainly of literacy classes, the AED's function was simply that of coordinator and promoter. Funds were allocated directly to the provincial educational officers, who set up and ran classes as they saw fit. To aid the provincial educational officers in discharging their additional duties in community development, assistants were provided who had direct charge over adult education programs. The experiences of these early literacy classes, however, convinced the Ministry of Education that funding and the enthusiastic support of administrators alone could not ensure the success of the programs. Curricula and materials suited to adult learners had to be developed.

When AED came under the jurisdiction of the Department of

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General Education (DGE) in 1956, the administrative structure became more centralized. AED gained complete control over the technical aspects of the adult education program, from development of curricula and production of materials to teacher evaluation. Vocational curricula that had been formulated at the provincial level were standardized with regard to subject matter and class duration. Although the initial requests for adult education programs still came from the provinces, the centralized administrative structure drastically reduced the range of alternatives.

As planners realized that adult education programs should be more relevant and responsive to the needs of the target population, it became apparent that AED's centralized administrative structure was growing ill-suited to achieving those goals. Attempts were made to return the administrative functions and technical control to the provincial level. Decentralization is, and has been, hindered by the lack of trained personnel at the provincial level. Because of the programs' complexities, scale of operations, and conditions under which they operate, it has been impossible for the provincial adult education supervisors to give their full attention to all units in the province, let alone handle all the technical aspects of the programs. AED is therefore faced with a serious dilemma. Unless the provincial level becomes able to handle both routine operations and technical matters (which require expertise and an understanding of adult education), decentralization could become as harmful to the program as centralization did.

PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCALLY RELEVANT ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In the relatively short period since the establishment of AED, there has been a dramatic transformation of out-of-school education. Programs that formerly concentrated on schooling rural illiterates now focus on all adults and youths who are not in school, although the emphasis is still on those in rural areas. Similarly, there has been considerable expansion in the scope of the program. The goals now include the following additional objectives:

1. To provide learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to continue their education on their own.

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2. To create a system that encourages lifelong learning.
3. To assist learners in retaining their problem-solving abilities and critical thinking.
4. To provide the entire population with opportunities for continuous acquisition of new skills, attitudes, and knowledge to enable its members to improve the quality of their lives.

For it to achieve these objectives, Project #4's adult education has to depart from the rigid, standardized procedures of the formal school system. Adult education curricula should not be judged according to the complexity of their academic content, but rather, according to their flexibility, responsiveness, and relevance in serving the ever-changing needs of the target populations. Activities in the programs must likewise be tailored to the learners' various environments and cognitive processes. Thus, programs have to be planned in accordance with the life-styles of the target groups to ensure relevance and facilitate participation.

People who are out of school constitute 70 percent of the population. Attempts to provide them with relevant adult education programs of reasonable quality, however, have been hindered by several fundamental problems. First, in rural areas there is a grave shortage of qualified adult education personnel to handle the program's administrative and technical aspects. Most programs, therefore, remain centralized and incapable of attaining the flexibility so crucial to success. Second, because of lack of personnel and funding, and the weakness of many programs, current educational efforts to reach the out-of-school population involve only a very small proportion of the target group and leave a majority of the people with little educational assistance in improving the quality of their lives. Third, the scarcity of educational resources, coupled with the lack of a lifelong education system, further deprives those who are out of school of opportunities to retain or augment knowledge and skills acquired in existing adult education programs.

Project #4 was proposed as a means of coping with the aforementioned problems and as a means of laying the groundwork for an effective nationwide lifelong education system. The project's objectives are to establish RECs for experimentation with correspondence education via radio and to design and inaugurate a system of lifelong education.

PROJECT FOR ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS / 17

The RECs have the following objectives:

1. To investigate, design, and test new ways of providing relevant, problem-oriented continuing/lifelong education for the rural population and to do so with limited financial resources and personnel.
2. To examine existing teaching methods, and design and test new ones so that khit-pen ("critical thinking" or "problem solving"; see chapter 3) abilities will be imparted in existing programs.
3. To investigate current local attitudes toward education so that mass campaigns to promote more positive and realistic attitudes can be designed and tested.
4. To promote community interest and active participation in adult education activities.
5. To build up a large pool of administrators and technicians to effectively run present and future adult education programs.
6. To coordinate all nonformal education activities at the regional and local levels.
7. To devise plans for generating or utilizing new adult education resources and for using more efficiently all available resources.

The pilot project for the establishment of rural and urban lifelong education centers has the following general objectives:

1. To provide continuing lifelong education opportunities to the members of the local community, as opposed to most of the existing "one-shot" programs.
2. To mobilize all available educational resources within the community and provide an educational resource center for the community.
3. To establish administrative headquarters for all non-formal educational activities.

Regional Adult Education Research and Development Centers

The four RECs come under the jurisdiction of the Department of General Education, which administers budgets and personnel and controls the centers' functioning by means of the AED.

The centers are responsible for the operation of pilot projects and for all technical aspects of continuing programs. Provincial education officers are in charge of the day-to-day administration of adult education programs.

Each REC is headed by a director responsible to the AED and is divided into the following six teams: an administration unit, a research and development unit, a training unit, a materials production unit, an operations promotion unit, and a radio unit.

The four RECs cater to different, relatively homogeneous sociocultural groups. They are situated as follows: The Northeastern REC at Ubolrajthani is responsible for 17 provinces in the northeast. The Northern REC at Lampang is responsible for 15 provinces in the north. The Southern REC at Songkhla is responsible for 14 provinces in the south. The Central Plains REC at Rajburi is responsible for 27 provinces in the Central Plains.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE RCE PROGRAM

The administration of the RCE Program can be described on three levels.

Central Level

1. Administrative Committee on Radio Correspondence Education. This committee is responsible for formulating policy and goals, providing guidelines and recommendations for administering the program, and coordinating its actions with those of other agencies.
2. AED's Radio Correspondence Education Section. This section was established within AED to oversee and coordinate the RCE Program at the central level. The Central Office is responsible for:
 - long-range planning, development of operational strategies, and budget allocation in conjunction with the RECs;

ADMINISTRATION OF RCE PROGRAM / 19

- development of policy guidelines for coordinating the RCE Program's implementation and evaluation;
- development of policy guidelines and models for radio scripts and training and self-teaching materials; and
- provision of necessary support services to the RECs.

Regional Level

Each REC serves as the Radio Correspondence School for the area under its responsibility. It has charge of:

- planning of implementation;
- administration of the project;
- research on listening patterns of the target audience;
- production and transmission of radio programs;
- production and distribution of supporting materials;
- recruitment, training, and evaluation of group leaders;
- promotion of the RCE Program;
- registration and organization of participants; and
- evaluation and follow-up of the program.

Provincial Level

Expansion of the RCE Program is planned to correspond with the establishment of Provincial Lifelong Education Centers (PLECs). Their role is to:

- assist the RCE Program in conducting promotional campaigns;
- organize groups of listeners;
- collect fees; and
- evaluate group activities.

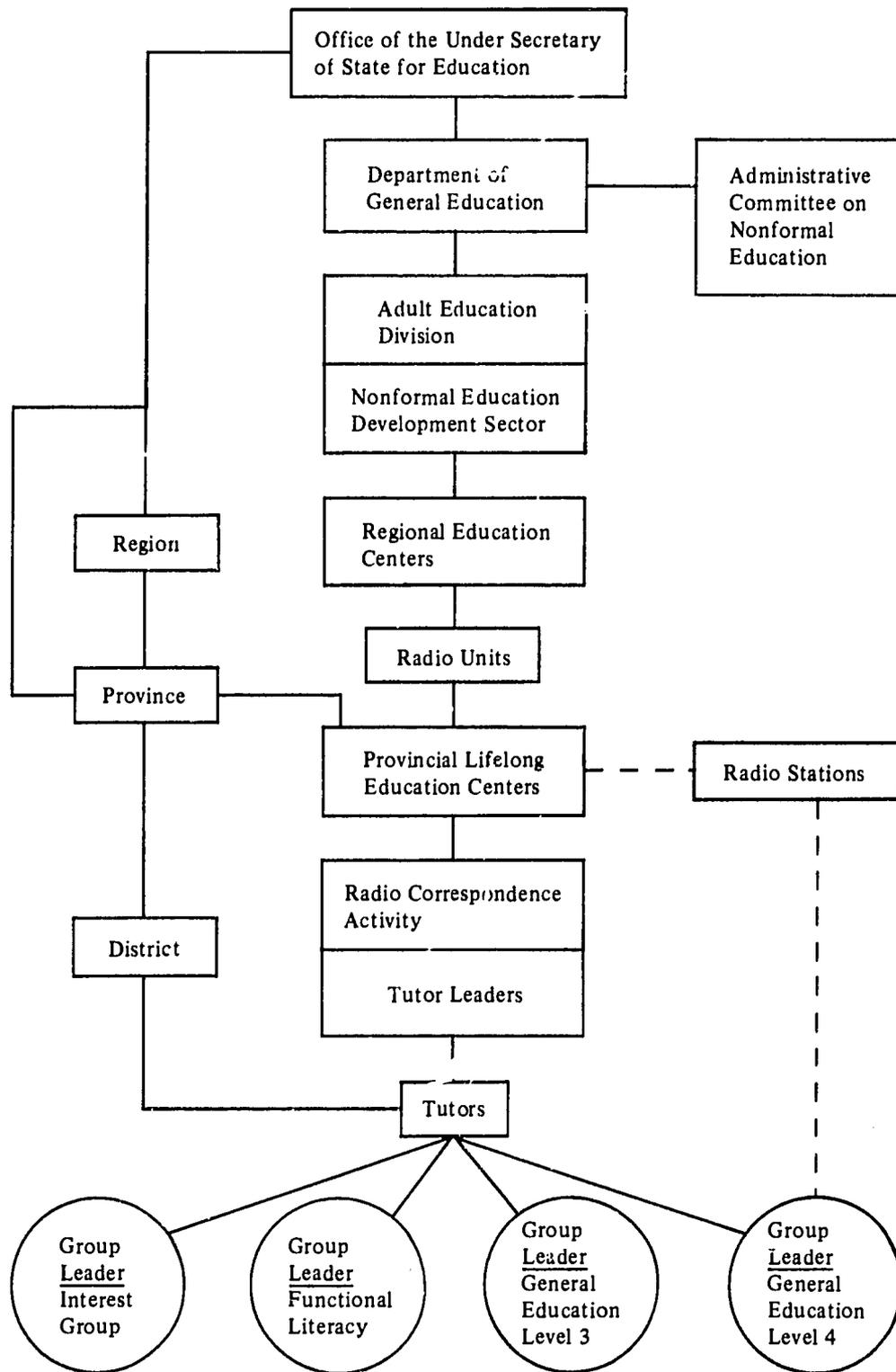


Figure 1. Organizational Structure of Radio Correspondence Education Program

Chapter 3

CASE STUDY ONE: RCE PROGRAM PLANNING

This chapter and the next present data on communication planning that was done as part of the media-based nonformal education program in Thailand. These descriptions are intended to provide a framework for further analysis of all communication planning processes, which is found in chapter 5.

Case One, presented here, is a description of the planning of the RCE Program in Thailand, which uses a combination of communication components that range from manuals, radio, and correspondence methods to the interpersonal communication of group discussion. Case Two, in chapter 4, is intended to shed additional light on the planning of instructional media (i.e., manuals, radio programs, and group activities). In this manner, the two case studies deal with planning on two levels, the macro level (planning for the RCE Program) and the micro level (instructional media planning). In both case studies, descriptions are based on the following six concepts: planners, problems, resources, environment, plans, and processes.

BACKGROUND

As previously described in Chapter 2, the RCE Program was the first pilot project launched by the Department of General Education's AED to provide educational services to the rural out-of-school population via the mass medium of radio. The RCE Program and the AED's support infrastructures (i.e., RECs and PLECs) were developed simultaneously.

The need for RCE was obvious from the fact that more than 80 percent of Thailand's population lives in rural areas; these people have access to far fewer educational opportunities than those from more affluent urban environments, even though their educational needs are frequently greater. The RCE program's system of correspondence, which uses programmed texts supported by radio programs within the context of interpersonal communications, meets their needs. It is relatively

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cheap and is designed to effectively cater to people living in remote regions.

Begun as a pilot project that was to span the five-year period 1977-1981, the RCE Program's target audience was rural youth who had dropped out of school after grade seven or even earlier and who were living in villages without conveniently located schools. Three types of study programs were incorporated into the RCE Program: interest group study (bringing together people with common occupational interests), "second chance" or general education levels three and four equivalency, and functional literacy programs.

The Radio Correspondence Education Section within the AED was established as a central office to coordinate and administer the RCE Program. The RECs and PLECs were also heavily involved in the program's administration.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on how planners: (1) arrived at the selection of the RCE approach, (2) coped with certain problematic operational aspects of the RCE pilot project, and (3) dealt with the structural organization of the RCE Program and its system of coordination.

METHODOLOGY

In the RCE case study, two methods have been used to trace the entire planning process and several related secondary processes:

1. Documentary Analysis. In the study's early stages, the author gained access to as many relevant documents and materials as possible in order to determine the parameters of the case. Materials that proved to be particularly useful included: existing written plans, official reports, seminar reports, magazine and newspaper articles, and booklets, some of which were made available to the researcher through the generosity of officials at the AED.
2. Personal Interviews with Planners. Much time, particularly at the mid and final stages of the study, was devoted to interviewing and talking with groups of planners; this case report is one result of the

interviews. Planners were initially identified by either conferring directly with the appropriate officials or by scanning official reports and documents. The planners were contacted and arrangements were made to interview them; some were interviewed two or three times to clarify certain points, as well as to probe further details of the case. Most planners were officials of the Ministry of Education, and of the AED in particular. Because of their cooperation, generosity, understanding, and prompt assistance, this case report is the result of the researcher's fruitful discussions with them.

PLANNERS

This section describes the persons who are involved in the planning activities. The focus is on the planners' identities, educational backgrounds and experiences, and the philosophies, models, theories, and images that they use in their planning. Another focus of this section is the way in which their attitudes, beliefs, values, and knowledge influence their behavior and the outcome of their planning activities.

Identification of Planners: Personal Profiles

Many public figures have long been remembered by succeeding generations for their success in translating their ideas into action. In tracing the development and functioning of Thailand's RCE Program, one has to examine the background, personality, and thinking of the man who is at the helm. Planner A, although not as yet a nationally renowned personality, will surely make a lasting impression on the minds of future generations of scholars.

Planner A was born in the eastern province of Chacherng-Sao, not far from Bangkok. After graduation from secondary school, he taught in his hometown's local schools and simultaneously took a series of advanced equivalency courses in teacher training. He became well acquainted with the problems of local people, students, and teachers, and this has undoubtedly influenced his thinking and personality.

Several years later, he was a principal in the local school system. Having completed all the equivalency courses in teacher training, he left Thailand for nearly six years to work for his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in

education. Upon his return to his motherland, Planner A joined the Ministry of Education Adult Education Division.

Surprisingly enough, the subject of communication planning, and planning in general, seemed to be rather unfamiliar to Planner A. It is impossible to determine where in his academic and professional careers he learned the techniques of planning. Aside from his numerous writings on communication and nonformal education and his experience as a school administrator, there is no clear-cut evidence of formal training in those fields.

By the time the RCE Program was initiated, Planner A had risen to the rank of chief of the AED. He is known as the architect of the RCE Program. Approximately 45 years of age at the time of this research, he was deputy director-general of the Education Technique Department. "Originally, I just wanted to be an ordinary junior school teacher. What I have got now already surpasses my expectations," Planner A humbly stated during an interview at his office.

Planner A was not alone in working out the scheme for the RCE Program. Throughout the planning processes, he was assisted by several key AED officials.

One such assistant was a self-made man. Planner B was born in the central province of Arng-thong and as a farm boy had been well acquainted with the rural way of life. After completing his schooling in his hometown, he studied in Bangkok and received his B.A. in education from the famous teacher-training College of Prasarnmitr. After graduation, he was intimately involved in the Thai educational system and served for several years as a teacher and supervisor. Later, he was awarded a scholarship to study in the United States for his M.A. in education. After receiving his degree, Planner B returned to Thailand and worked for the AED for several years. He then took a leave of absence to study for his Ph.D. at the University of Massachusetts. However, owing to heavy responsibilities at the AED, Planner B was called back to Thailand before completing his doctoral program. As head of the Technical Section, he was responsible for all of AED's academic affairs, and helped draw up the RCE plan. With no prior experience in planning, Planner B managed to compensate for his lack of expertise by means of extensive reading and study. Renowned as a scholar, writer, and planner, he has since taken over as chief of the AED after his predecessor, Planner A, was promoted to the post of deputy director-general of the Education Technique Department several years ago. Planner B is in his mid-40s.

Another planner is a brilliant woman. Planner C is somewhat different from the previous two high-ranking planners. Born into a well-to-do family, she spent most of her early life in Bangkok before going to the United States to study. During her several years abroad, she became socialized in the American culture and way of life. Planner C received her bachelor's degree from Radcliffe College and her master's and doctoral degrees from Harvard University. Her primary responsibility was to assist in writing the proposal for Project #4, which called for the creation of RECs, PLECs, and the RCE Program. At the time of this writing, she was in charge of the Office of the Nonformal Education Development Project, which has jurisdiction over the RECs, PLECs, and RCE Program.

Planner C is the only key planner who has an academic background in planning; her doctoral degree is in the field of education planning. Planner C joined the AED after receiving her bachelor's degree and worked there for many years before leaving to pursue her doctoral studies at Harvard on a Thai government scholarship.

When Planner C left, a highly respected senior supervisor from the south was transferred to replace her. As head of Project #4, Planner D was responsible for subsequent revision of the project proposal and also served as Thai counterpart to the World Bank's appraisal team. When the World Bank approved Project #4, Planner D was entrusted with laying the groundwork for its implementation. Under his guidance, plans were developed for financial support, personnel allocation and recruitment, and organizational set-up, as well as for operational strategies. After a year of supervising project implementation, Planner D was assigned to be director of the southern REC, where he began one of the most effective correspondence programs in the country.

Another official who contributed to RCE planning holds a Ph.D. from Florida State University. Planner E became head of the Technical Section after his predecessor was promoted to the position of division chief. Planner E provided leadership and expertise in the operational planning of RCE, particularly in areas related to training and curriculum development. More importantly, he served as a link between the RCE Program and other nonformal education projects.

Examination of first-level planners clearly reveals their complementary functions and backgrounds. Planner A, the RCE architect, provided the philosophical foundation that underlies the entire system of nonformal education in Thailand.

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The two heads of the Technical Section, Planners B and E, provided training and curriculum expertise. The other two planners, C and D, served as links between planning and implementation.

At a later stage in the planning process, responsibilities were shifted to AED officials of middle rank, all of whom worked in the Central Office. Planner K was then head of the Office of Radio Correspondence Education (ORCE). He was about 40 years of age and graduated from the Teacher Training College of Prasarnmitra with a bachelor's degree in education. Once he visited Israel to observe adult education activities. Unlike many other planners, he did not hold an advanced degree from a foreign university. As head of ORCE, Planner K formulated the RCE Program's operations and strategies and produced a scheme entitled, "Planned Use of Radio and Television for Nonformal Education Programs." He had no prior experience in planning. According to a colleague, he worked very hard, read widely, and consulted with many authorities in order to draw up the plan.

When the head of the division was promoted to a higher position as head of Chiangmai PLEC, his assistant, Planner L, took over his job. Planner L graduated from the Fine Arts University in Bangkok and received extensive training in radio and television in Australia. Her duties included acting as liaison for the RCE Central Office and making frequent trips to up-country sites. Although rather inexperienced in practical communication planning, Planner L compensated for this by studying on her own and learning from her day-to-day work. As of this writing, she had successfully discharged her duties and was about 40 years old. She was assisted by five staffers.

Probably no other member at the RCE Central Office was as energetic and intelligent as Planner M, who was approximately 30 years of age. After earning her bachelor's and master's degrees in education at the University of Massachusetts, she joined the AED and within a short time became a productive key planner for the RCE pilot project. She was responsible for all academic affairs of the RCE Program at the Central Office. This required heavy contact and interaction with foreign and local experts. Planner M lacked academic training in planning and communication before assuming her present role, but that apparently posed no problem for her. Planner M was entrusted with high confidence to push the RCE scheme toward its goals.

Although the planning for the RCE Program was directed toward the problems and conditions unique to Thailand, there was significant input from foreign consultants. In 1974, a Dutch correspondence specialist was hired to assist the Thai staff in preparing the RCE Program's funding proposal to be submitted to the World Bank. Throughout the initial phase of planning, a Unesco planner served as a consultant to AED in framing the funding proposal for the World Bank and also served as liaison between AED and the Center for Educational Technology. In 1976, a preinvestment team headed by the Unesco expert recommended that air time on the planned educational radio network be allocated to the RCE Program.

Once the RCE Program was approved by the Thai government and the World Bank, other foreign consultants contributed to the operational planning process. Two consultants to AED who were from World Education were instrumental in insuring that the operational strategies of the RCE Program would conform to AED's philosophy and goals. The most important consultant was a communication and agricultural extension specialist from the Colombo Plan. During the two years that he worked with AED, he was a key communication planner. He assisted AED in identifying problems, clarifying roles of communication, and designing communication strategies, training, and evaluation.

In addition to the high-ranking AED officials mentioned previously, and a few foreign consultants, several officials from outside agencies were also involved in RCE planning. These ranking Thai officials served on various committees concerned with the activities of nonformal education programs. One group, the Administrative Committee on Radio Correspondence Education (ACRCE), was specially established to supervise and coordinate all RCE activities. At this writing, the body comprised 11 official members and was chaired by the director-general of the DGE; the chief of the AED served as deputy chairman. Two committee members represented the Public Relations Department (PRD) and the Education Techniques Department (ETD), which respectively provided air time for radio programs and technical assistance for the production of curricula. ACRCE met when problems concerning RCE arose and thus was not very active in high-level planning processes.

Planner's Philosophy

It is evident that the RCE planners used their personal philosophies in approaching the RCE Program. It is particularly significant that Planner A had already formulated his own philosophy of adult education before he set up the RCE

Program. Widely known as khit-pen philosophy, it influenced the thinking of many educational planners and was used as a guideline in developing many other nonformal education programs under the auspices of the DGE. This philosophy was also a cornerstone of the RCE Program. As will be seen later in this study, the khit-pen tenet was reflected in the RCE Program's problem definition, objectives, content, choice of model, organizational structure, and operations planning.

How did this philosophy evolve? The originator himself has a story to tell:

It came all of a sudden. At Michigan State University, one evening about ten years previously, a group of visiting scholars met. The dinner was followed by a series of speeches by prominent persons. After a few lecture-like addresses had been delivered and the audience began to fall asleep, Planner A was invited to talk. Although he was well prepared on a topic of the evening, he immediately knew that he would not be able to get his messages across that time. Then, suddenly, these opening remarks flowed from his mind and poured over the sleepy crowd:

To look around this room and see that most of you are waiting patiently, in spite of a long tiring day, to hear yet another lecture, reminds me most succinctly of a large number of educational programs all around the world. For so long, we educators have committed a sin by forcing our students to attend classes and to listen to our lectures without ever taking into consideration their needs and experiences. For so long, we pride ourselves for having solutions which can be prescribed to the students. The time has come for us to critically re-examine our role and to recognize that the aim of education is to develop thinking individuals and not to produce ones who are programmed with certain sets of knowledge and skills. Our task, therefore, is not to preach, but to facilitate thinking processes within our learners so that they will become what we call in Thai khit-pen.

It is necessary to grasp the general principle of the khit-pen philosophy to understand its applicability to the real world and its influence on the goals, processes, and results of communication planning. This philosophy was formulated as a popular means-end or instrument-goal analysis. Khit-pen can be roughly defined as "critical thinking," "rational thinking," or "problem solving." In this case, it

refers to a means leading to the ultimate goal of happiness, which is defined as harmony between oneself and one's environment. In this context, khit-pen relates to nonformal education projects such as the RCE Program in that these projects can contribute to the development of a person's critical thinking or problem-solving (khit-pen) capabilities. Nonformal education programs contribute to the development of khit-pen abilities by providing information on environmental changes. In other words, nonformal education programs are presumably a means of developing khit-pen capabilities, which in turn lead to one's happiness in life.

Along this same line, the khit-pen philosophy can be elaborated upon so that one gains deeper insight into its principles and underlying assumptions. To begin with, the philosophy concerns the way in which the education programs view humanity and the role that education can play in improving the mass' quality of life. The underlying assumption is that the ultimate goal in life of all people is to achieve happiness. Happiness is defined by each individual and is based on his or her own personal experiences; since individuals may never be clear about their own states of complete happiness, the definition of happiness can be extremely broad.

The author defines happiness as the extent to which man and his environment are in harmony. Complete happiness is achieved when no physical or mental conflict exists between man and his environment. Here are two simple examples of conflict with one's environment. A man who has to wear a heavy suit in a very hot climate is not likely to be completely happy, no matter how proud he might be of his suit. On the other hand, if he has to attend a formal function, the same man would probably also be unhappy if he were to wear only his shorts, no matter how cool and comfortable he would be. A rich man who has plenty to eat, but who is guilt-ridden or suffering from a stomachache, is probably just as unhappy as a poor man who does not have enough to eat. People strive to reach the equilibrium that can be established by either changing their environment or by making adjustments within themselves. A person who has mastered khit-pen will be able to systematically approach problems in daily life and will be able to gather the widest range of information on alternative courses of action. The person will be able to weigh the merits of each alternative on the basis of his or her own values, capabilities, and situation and the feasibility of each solution.

For the Thai people, particularly those who are Buddhists, khiti-pen philosophy means accepting life as suffering and living as happily as possible by minimizing that suffering. The first step that an educational program can take to assist in the alleviation of suffering is helping people to master khiti-pen.

There are at least four ways in which educational programs can lead to the development of khiti-pen capabilities. Educational programs can:

1. provide learners with the opportunity to study history and see how people in the past coped with their problems;
2. focus on immediate problems encountered by the learners themselves;
3. predict the kinds of problems that the learners may encounter in the future and assist them in solving hypothetical problems; and
4. use a combination of the preceding three approaches.

Whereas all of these approaches can aid in the development of khiti-pen capabilities, their suitability depends upon the people the program is designed to reach. As stated by Planner A, the originator of the philosophy, in nonformal education programs, particularly those in rural areas, the people are not students by profession; they are farmers and fishermen, mothers and marketwomen. They already have enough problems of their own: the water pump does not work, the birds are eating the rice in the paddy, the baby is sick. They do not want to know about other people's problems. Therefore, the approach selected by the planners of Thai nonformal education programs focuses on the learners' real and immediate problems rather than on past or hypothetical ones.

Planners' Models, Theories, and Images

In addition to the khiti-pen philosophy described above, it appears that Thai planners used certain models, theories, and images in planning the RCE Program. Unlike the khiti-pen philosophy, however, these models, theories, and images were seldom explicitly spelled out. Frequently, they were implicit in the RCE Program and other adult education programs.

Most RCE planners had considerable experience in education and undoubtedly applied great amounts of learning theory to their professional work. This is particularly true in the case of Planner B, who was known to his colleagues as a scholar, writer, and educational practitioner. Because he has been largely responsible for mapping out the RCE Program's theoretical and technical strategies during its initial pre-planning stage, Planner B's educational theories must have been summoned to tackle the problems that confronted him.

As the division chief put it:

When the problem came, we originally conceived it as a routine education issue and were worried about the learning process among the rural population. We did think about the use of radio in our program from the beginning, but we knew so little about its potentialities and principles.

Planner A, the architect of the RCE Program, also proposed his own learning theory, which is very much in keeping with his khit-pen philosophy. This concept of the learning process echoes the author's firm belief that training people to think rationally and critically has to be based on the program's "process," not on its "content." The learning process, he believes, includes three functional stages: (1) acquisition of basic information and skills; (2) acquisition of information concerning environments; and (3) acquisition of additional necessary information and skills for applying the previously acquired information and adapting to changing environments.

The functional activities of various communication components, referred to here as "functional communication theory," are used in implementing the above learning process. As proposed by Planner A, correspondence methods and printed matter, not to mention schools, are used in the first stage of the learning cycle. Mass media--radio, for example--are used in the second stage, and such educational activities as tutoring, group discussion, and workshops provided by mobile vocational training units are utilized in the third stage.

Upon completing the learning cycle described above, the learner will theoretically have engaged in a lifelong process of education which includes seeking and acquiring basic information, data on environmental changes, and support materials via various channels of communication, so that "happiness" can be attained by living in harmony with the environment.

With regard to implementation, most AED nonformal education programs were designed to use all three stages of the learning process and their corresponding mass media activities.

Planners' Attitudes and Behaviors

With the exception of two female planners, all of the other Thai planners were raised in the up-country provinces and worked and taught in rural areas. Similarities in background and experience account for much of the commonality in their personal outlooks. Like most ordinary citizens, the RCE planners appeared to be pleasant, relaxed, gentle, friendly, and hospitable. It is striking that these planners seemed to be very socially aware, seriously concerned with social problems, and anxious to assist in improving local communities. Although oriented toward the status quo, as are many Thais, they had many innovative ideas and appeared ready to accept change at some risk.

It is not surprising that the two female planners also shared many common attitudes. They were raised in well-to-do families in Bangkok and were Western-oriented. They had been well taken care of and disciplined by their devoted parents and relatives. The mother of one key female planner was renowned as a dedicated senior social worker and wanted her only daughter to follow in her footsteps.

Certain striking characteristics of Planner A deserve mention here. Sober, decent, helpful, and soft-spoken, he was articulate and frequently took a hard line when presenting his tenets and views. A thinker, he was very concerned with translating his ideas and theories into action. A pleasant person with a nice personality, he was persuasive in convincing his colleagues and subordinates to accept his ideas and programs.

PROBLEM

To policymakers and planners, particularly those at AED, problems relevant to radio correspondence education were long perceived as perennial and complicated ones that were related to several other challenging educational problems. The definition of problems was a lengthy process involving several policymakers and planners at various levels. It was the result of practice and theory and resulted in several changes in organizational structure and program development.

The RCE planners viewed the problems of correspondence education as originating from the general nonformal education program, which itself is an offshoot of Thailand's formal education system. Thus, they saw that efforts to address RCE problems were tantamount to attempting to solve the problems of the country's entire education system. Accordingly, when defining RCE problems, Thai planners did not take a narrow view, but defined them as complicated, interrelated ones that called for coordinated efforts by various agencies.

The following illustration of the process of problem definition may aid in understanding the planners' perception of the problem, the alternatives they weighed and chose, the philosophical and theoretical bases they relied on, and the final outcome and potential consequences. Thai educational policymakers at the national level thought for a long time that, with more than 80 percent of the population living in up-country provinces and given very limited facilities, funding, and personnel resources, a formal education system could not be relied upon as the sole means of providing educational opportunities to Thai citizens. Of the numerous current educational problems, the education gap between urban and rural people was considered the most serious one by Thai planners. The nonformal adult education system was thus chosen as a means of solving the problem.

The AED operated several nonformal education programs, including ones for functional literacy, interest group study, and "second chance" or equivalency education for dropouts. The scope of these programs ranged from a preliteracy level to the completion of secondary school. After long operation, these nonformal education programs were still unable to remedy existing problems. A major problem, according to one planner, was the fact that "There has been the huge demand from the rural people to participate, compared to the very limited resources available to nonformal educational activities." In order to stretch these limited resources as far as possible, most of the existing equivalency programs, and some of the other nonformal education activities, were held in towns or semi-urban areas where economies of scale could be exploited. Thus, the mass of the population in rural areas was denied these educational opportunities. The education gap between rural and urban areas has yet to be solved.

These problems were identified and addressed by planners at the Ministry of Education and at the AED. Their decisions have been made on the basis of practical experience, philosophy, and theory. During the relatively short period since the

establishment of the AED, educational philosophy and goals have gradually evolved to keep pace with changing situations. Until recently, the khit-pen philosophy was a useful guideline and was applied to problem definition as well. With khit-pen philosophy as a basis, the AED educational goals expanded from simple eradication of illiteracy to encompass, among other things, attainment of happiness for rural people, improvement of learners' problem-solving abilities and critical judgment, and the acceleration of the entire process of rural development.

From the standpoint of practical experience, khit-pen philosophy and educational goals, Thai planners concurred that a new type of nonformal education program was badly needed to solve existing problems. Such a program would provide educational services of the greatest utility to the maximum number of people and at the lowest possible cost to government. By its demonstration it would help change the formal school system, with its millions of pupils and hundreds of thousands of teachers. The planners devised the RCE Program

to increase the equality of educational opportunity of people living in rural areas and to help promote rural development through correspondence-based functional and relevant school equivalence programs (Adult Education Division 1974).

Along with the above objective, the RCE Program was designed to address the following questions.

1. Will young adults in rural areas participate in the program?
2. Can the program be made financially self-supporting?
3. Can two-way communication be established with the scheme in the Thai context?
4. Can the correspondence method be used to teach functional curricula?
5. What kinds of teaching materials will be most effective?
6. Is radio support likely to produce commensurate benefits?
7. Are supplementary residential courses essential?

Thai planners also addressed urgent needs for change in the structure of the administrative organization and basic nonformal education program. The planners realized that most of the problems mentioned above were interrelated and complicated. The planners felt that if the AED continued to cope with each problem only as it arose, in view of the increasing demands for adult education and the need for more extensive and better-coordinated programs, the problems would likely increase beyond the AED's ability to solve them. Furthermore, by attempting to standardize adult education at the national level, nonformal education would run the risk of losing its flexibility and responsiveness to local needs. Thai planners thus agreed that organizational changes had to be made in the administration of nonformal adult education programs. This led to the decentralization of the administration. Moreover, a new nonformal education system was considered a viable means of integrating all adult education programs which would lead to the establishment of a lifelong education program in Thailand.

RESOURCES

When the RCE Program was proposed, Thai planners were faced with the scarcity of such resources as hard data, communication facilities, organizational structures, funding, and personnel. The planners' task was managing and maximizing the use of resources which were beyond AED's control. The entire RCE Program was planned on the assumption that it would make maximum use of available facilities and services and would require minimal increase in government expenditures.

Information Base

In the beginning, the planners at the RCE Central Office did not establish an information base. However, during implementation of the pilot project, certain kinds of information were collected at the RECs as records of program development and effectiveness. Such information was the result of official field trips, meetings, seminars, surveys, and formative evaluation of the RCE Program.

Communication Facilities

In 1975, prior to the RCE Program's inception, the Ministry of Education proposed that the new program be a joint effort between the AED, PRD, and the Education Techniques Department. The Cabinet approved the proposal. To insure

that the RCE Program would receive sufficient air time, the AED planners involved the PRD as a cosponsor; the PRD provided air time.

As it happens, the small amount of air time made available by PRD was insufficient. Worse yet, in certain southern areas of the country, air time on the AM band was not available at all. Planners had to find alternate sources of air time; outlets included armed forces radio stations in particular.

Correspondence also posed a problem for planners. In Thailand, particularly in up-country provinces, the postal system is still in its infancy, and in most places correspondence services had not been extended to rural areas. Thus, special arrangements had to be made by AED to facilitate communication between the RECs and PLECs and program participants in remote areas.

In addition to securing access to hardware, planners had to deal with preparation of software. They also had to make arrangements with the RECs and the Center of Educational Technologies before preparing and producing radio programs. The planners had to make sure that reading materials and programmed texts were revised to fit new study programs and local needs.

Organizational Structure

From the start, the planners knew that the RCE Program would require such support facilities as administrative offices and training and study centers in various parts of the country. AED maintained some of these facilities in certain areas, primarily for training purposes, but they were considered obsolete or ill-suited to the new education scheme.

At one point, planners thought of building a network of central and provincial RCE branch offices throughout the country. That would certainly have involved a great deal of investment which the Thai government could not have easily financed.

According to the planners, it so happened that during the initial stage of RCE planning, the DGE was designing Project #4, which involved the construction of four RECs and several PLECs across the country. The large-scale construction for the project was to be a joint undertaking between the Ministry of Education and the World Bank. The planners deemed it de-

sirable to incorporate the RCE Central Office in the Ministry of Education project.

Only the RCE Central Office was set up within the AED's facilities in Bangkok. The RCE Central Office was responsible for planning and coordinating the national activities of the RCE Program; the administration of the RCE Program in regional areas was left to the RECs and PLECs. Except for the small Central Office, the RCE Program did not involve the construction of new facilities.

Personnel

Not only did the RCE Program involve minimal office construction, it also had a very limited staff. When the scheme was conceived, only a few officials from other sections of the AED were assigned to plan for it and to aid top-level planners. Once the RCE Program crystallized, two officials were appointed to take care of the work.

When the RCE Central Office was established, it had only two officials, the chief and her assistant. Several more officials were recruited and, at this writing, totaled six, plus one typist.

In addition to those seven staff members, one foreign consultant worked in the RCE Central Office as a radio program specialist. He worked with RCE Program staff under the Colombo Plan from September through December 1978. Widely experienced in radio programming, he was responsible for formulating radio strategies for group study in rural areas. Sent to Thailand by the British Council, he was the second foreign expert to help in mapping out the RCE Program; the first was from the Netherlands.

With assistance from the World Bank, the AED sent four officials abroad to pursue their Ph.D. degrees; they were to return and work for the RCE program.

When asked why the RCE Central Office had such a small staff, its chief replied:

That is what we can have. We can surely keep on working because we are mainly concerned with policy planning and coordinating activities of the RCE. Many people in other sections have helped us do a lot of things. Yes, we will definitely expand once resources become available.

Budget

According to the planners, it had originally been planned that the RCE Program would be launched with Thai government financial support. Given the minimal requirements for physical plant and personnel, the new venture would involve little investment in its initial stage. When the Ministry of Education sought loans from the World Bank to construct facilities for the DGE's project, part of the RCE funding, particularly that for office construction and personnel training, was appropriated from World Bank funds. The Thai government would still be responsible for such other expenses as salaries, preparation and production of radio programs and programmed texts, and the acquisition of materials and equipment.

AED's first budget request for the RCE Program was turned down in 1976 due mainly to changing circumstances, even though the government's policy on nonformal education programs was at that time quite favorable. The following year, the AED received a total budget of 1.7 million baht to implement the RCE Program. By that time, the World Bank had already granted loans to DGE that totaled \$10 million for its project, which also included construction of the RCE offices. Only a small portion of the World Bank funding was to be used to support the RCE Program and was to cover only a five-year pilot project which began in 1977. After that, the Thai government was responsible for funding the implementation of the RCE Program.

In the meantime, government support for the RCE pilot project increased substantially during its course. The budget allocation for the RCE Program jumped from 1.7 million baht in 1977 to well over 2 million baht in 1978, and to 3.5 million baht as of 1979. One planner expressed confidence that even with only government support when the RCE Program commences implementation in 1982, it would still be expanding in scope and function.

The World Bank helped us only in building up support infrastructure and providing some personnel training and technical assistance. With that, we can surely learn how to stand on our own feet and grow up ourselves.

ENVIRONMENT

This section outlines the environment in relation to nonformal education activities in Thailand and how the RCE

planners dealt with it. This section first describes the social, cultural, and economic factors that influenced RCE planning. It then discusses education policy, participation, political environment, and mass media.

Social, Cultural, and Economic Environments

As noted previously, the RCE Program was planned with the khit-pen philosophy in mind. The planners took into consideration the Thai national character, as well as the social, cultural, and economic environment. This had a significant effect on the planning of the RCE Program and its organizational structure.

Planner A, the architect of the RCE Program, argues that

One of the major concerns of this project is the creation of a system which will, by its very nature, be consistent with the real needs, values, and characteristics of the mass of the population. If the ultimate objective of nonformal education is the satisfaction and happiness of man, then their needs, values, and beliefs must be taken into account.

The planners recognized the significance of cultural, social, and economic factors in the planning of nonformal education long before the conception of the RCE Program. They distinguished the unique Thai national character from the wide cultural, social, and economic differences existing between various regions of the country. As it turns out, the uniqueness of the Thai character served as the basis for developing new forms of distance learning and lifelong education that differed from Western models. Regional differences in cultural, social, and economic conditions also led to considerable decentralization of the administration of nonformal education programs.

Given the importance of the social, cultural, and economic environments to RCE planning, it is appropriate to describe and illustrate how these factors affected that planning.

The Thai Character

In the planning of the RCE Program, certain basic characteristics of the Thai people and their values were identified and taken into consideration. While admitting that there are difficulties in profiling a national character, the RCE planners concurred that the following seven traits can be consid-

ered basic components of the Thai national identity:

1. Sanook. A desire for pleasure with family or close friends. An educational activity that is to effectively attract and foster participation, therefore, has to provide opportunities for stimulating, enjoyable interaction among villagers.
2. Krengchai. An acceptance of different people as they are, without actually condoning their values or their actions. An educational program that aims to facilitate critical discussion of common problems, therefore, has to create an environment that is conducive to free exchange of ideas.
3. Karma. A large majority of Thais believe that a person's social and economic position in life is the result of one's "karmic balance" from a previous life. The idea is that what individuals do in this life cannot greatly alter their present situation. In seeking to foster khit-pen abilities, therefore, the program has to assist individuals in becoming conscious of their own capabilities, in becoming aware of the interrelationship between humanity and the environment, and in acquiring learning tools that will enable them to live effective and productive lives.
4. Work ethic. The Thai does not consider work to be an end in itself, but rather a means to certain specific and concrete goals, such as provision of the basic necessities of life. The content of educational programs, therefore, has to have concrete and immediate applicability to problems in the learners' daily lives.
5. Family relationships. The extended or joint family is extremely important. Considerable respect and authority are given to elder family members. Attempts to influence decision-making processes, therefore, should involve participation of family members.
6. Social conscience. Thais do not generally identify closely with less fortunate, but distant, fellow citizens. They cling to the tradition of tahn, in which people give in order to win merit and improve their karmic balances; however, they are not overly concerned with the consequences of their giving. A

nonformal education program, therefore, should foster feelings of group affiliation and, ultimately, free exchange of ideas within groups.

7. Appearance. Thais are famous for their smiles and graciousness. Such gestures are not the result of adherence to social norms, but rather are the expressions of a relatively happy, calm state of mind. A nonformal education program that relies on mass media and group organization, therefore, has to be directed at target audiences at appropriate place and time.

The planners perceived that these basic Thai characteristics differ from those of Western, urban, and technologically oriented peoples. To the planners, Thai characteristics center on the individual and his relationship with a limited and inflexible environment, whereas Western ideas focus to a greater extent on society at large and on the relationship between institution and the environment.

Consequently, the planners agreed that the Thai character need not necessarily be accepted, but it had to be considered in the planning for the RCE Program, since the ultimate objective of the adult education program was achieving personal satisfaction as prescribed by the khit-pen philosophy. The new nonformal education project was a marked departure from earlier ones, in which the learning requirements of the mass of the Thai population were determined by Western-educated, urban bureaucrats who had very little consideration for the actual social, economic, and cultural environment of the people.

Regional Differences

Whereas Thailand is relatively homogeneous in the basic characteristics of its people, it is much more heterogeneous with regard to social, cultural, and economic conditions in the country's four major regions. This necessitated partial decentralization of the administration and planning of nonformal education. The planners' reactions to regional differences in the RCE Program's planning are discussed here.

Most AED planners had extensive practical experience in the field and were well acquainted with geographical differences between the four major regions. Wide regional differences exist in language, religion, village structure, climate, entertainment, agriculture, and economic activities. In addition, there also exists a wide range of inequalities in

such areas as home environment, basic education, migration, government services, and security. For instance, 70 percent of young men in the central region migrate to the towns, the Community Development Department is most active in the northeast, communist insurgency is a problem in the northeast, and Malay separatism causes considerable concern in the south. The planners perceived these regional differences and inequalities as barriers to the planning of nonformal education programs and curricula at the national level. Apparently, the Thai planners took remedial actions to overcome the barriers.

As examples, one can examine linguistic, religious, and climatic differences. Although central Thai is the official language and is understood by the vast majority of the population, most villagers use different dialects and languages in their daily lives. Any lifelong education program designed to foster khit-pen abilities and to provide the mass of the population with problem-solving skills and attitudes obviously has to take into account the linguistic preferences of the target audiences. Aware of the need to develop instructional materials and curricula in local languages and dialects, Thai planners decided it was most effective to do so at the regional level.

In the field of religion, although the majority of Thais are Buddhist, the practice of Buddhism and the role of monks vary in different parts of the country. In addition, there are large numbers of Moslems in the south and a significant Christian minority in the northeast. In planning a comprehensive nonformal education program, RCE planners made use of all resources and tried to exploit local festivities for educational purposes.

With regard to climate, the dry season, usually the best time of year for organizing group learning activities, varies from region to region; so do the accompanying local work patterns. Therefore, when designing adult learning activities, the planners paid attention not only to the timing of the dry season, but to local work patterns as well.

Given wide regional differences in social, cultural, and economic conditions, it cannot be expected that nonformal education programs formulated at the national level would be most effective. Regional solutions were necessary. To identify local conditions and priorities, to determine local availability of resources, and to design flexible and locally relevant programs, a concerted research and development effort had to be mounted at the regional (and ultimately, local) level.

Educational Policy

During the course of field interviews, one planner stated, "This has been a golden time for planning of nonformal education programs in Thailand." Several other planners shared his opinion and admitted that, were it not for favorable national education policy in recent years, the RCE pilot project and other nonformal education programs could not have materialized. As a matter of fact, another planner said, "The RCE Program and part of its funding, along with other related nonformal activities, have been very much boosted up by the favorable policy."

Planners did not need to look far beyond their desks for evidence to back up their views. First, and most important, was the Fourth Five-Year National Economic and Social Development Plan, which spanned the period 1977-1981. With reference to development of nonformal education in Thailand during this period, the plan cited as a critical problem "a lack of clear-cut policy and planning as a frame of reference, thus leading to poor coordination among concerned agencies and between rural and urban locations." Addressing this situation, the Fourth National Plan set as a guideline the need to "promote coordination among private and government agencies so that nonformal education services become more accessible to the mass of the Thai people and more relevant to local needs."

Touching on mass media, the Fourth National Plan clearly spelled out its policy and guideline, which aimed at:

promoting more utilization of existing mass media to support a wide range of nonformal education programs. Especially all existing radio stations throughout the country should broadcast more programs that are deemed relevant and useful to the well-being of the people and that will promote public attitudes favorable towards a democratic system in Thailand with firm adherence to the monarchy, religion, and national institutes.

Then came the Ministry of Education's Policy Guideline issued on December 26, 1977. According to this document,

The Ministry of Education will promote and try to strengthen various nonformal education programs so that they become more efficient and to provide more opportunities to participant students in order that they can further acquire more knowledge and skills

mainly through the form of continuing or lifelong education systems.

Regarding communication media, the guideline states:

The Ministry of Education, with Government approval, will expand its existing radio facilities to rural areas to meet the nonformal education programs' needs. This radio expansion (known as the Second Public Radio Broadcasting Network) will be funded by the World Bank.

Apart from the Fourth National Plan and the Education Policy Guideline, one planner said, the government's education policy, which has a significant bearing on the development of the RCE Program, can be traced back much further. According to many planners, a turning point in education policy and planning came in 1974 when the Education Reform Foundation Committee was set up to draft national guidelines for planning and implementation of both formal and nonformal programs in Thailand. These guidelines, according to planners, helped boost the AED's development of administrative staff and organizations, including the RCE pilot project, in rural areas.

Participation

Judging from personal discussions with RCE planners, it is obvious that they thought about public participation in the RCE Program from the time it was proposed. Two kinds of participation were envisaged. The first was audience participation, the audience being mainly the rural out-of-school population. As was pointed out by one key planner, the RCE Program was based upon the assumption that large numbers of people not in the formal education system would be involved in learning at a relatively low cost to the government. This is supported by the fact that at present there are approximately 5,360,735 radios and 75 percent of Thai households own one. The second type of participation (or cooperation) is by people from various resource agencies. This cooperation is considered vital to the functioning and survival of the RCE Program.

Political Environment

As one planner recalled, the overall political situation in Thailand in recent years was a plus for the operation of the RCE Program. As part of the rural development process and to counter local insurgent activities, past governments had made it a point to reach out to the rural population, particu-

larly in remote areas, and secure its cooperation as well as to improve its well-being as much as possible. Thus, local outreach programs, particularly educational ones, had to be well funded by the government.

Communication Facilities

The RCE Program relied on communication resources provided by other government agencies, especially in the form of air time provided by the PRD. Since the air time available to the RCE Program was limited, and even nonexistent in the southern part of the country, the planners sought alternate sources for it. Because of the cooperation of the armed forces radio stations and the planned second public radio network in the country, the RCE Program has a good chance of continuing to develop.

PLANS

Tracing the development of RCE plans is like unravelling the plot of a mystery story. Four plans were written for the RCE Program, but the first was found accidentally just prior to the completion of this case study.

The "missing" plan was brought to the attention of the author by a good friend and former classmate who worked at the AED. He had forgotten that he had coauthored the plan. He has a journalism degree from Thammasat University and holds a master's degree in education from Indiana University. He is now head of the Coordination Section.

Plan One

According to its authors, this missing plan was written after a group of three Thai officials visited Nairobi, Kenya, in 1972, where they spent several weeks observing radio correspondence school activities. The education supervisor at the time was appointed to head a three-member working group to draft the plan to create a radio correspondence education program in Thailand. One member of the group, holder of a master's degree in education from Pakistan, was chosen to map out the project, assisted by two other government officials. One of them was an economist and was very helpful in drawing up the plan. The planners had no background in communication planning, and relied mainly on outside readings, talks with authorities, and personal experience in lieu of expertise. Finally, after almost a year, they managed to produce a fin-

ished plan and it was submitted to high-ranking authorities for consideration. No one knows its whereabouts now; the planners themselves do not have a copy at hand. Perhaps it was "lost" somewhere along the bureaucratic line.

As far as its authors can recall, the plan contained an outline of the RCE organizational structure and strategic and operational approaches to the issue of the education gap. According to this plan, the RCE Program was to be headquartered in Bangkok and have branch offices in various parts of the country. Radio was considered a supplementary instrument to motivate learners, but not a substitute for school teachers. Discussion groups were not proposed in this version of the RCE Program.

Plan Two

This is a project proposal entitled "Nonformal Education for National Harmony and Development: A Project for the Development of Locally Relevant Adult Education Programs." It is also referred to as "Project #4." Dated August 1974, the plan was written primarily as an application for loans from the World Bank. The joint product of several planners, the plan, now available in English, was primarily the responsibility of a key first-level planner. This person is now in charge of the Nonformal Education Development Project. This planner is very perceptive in grasping new ideas and images. After meeting and discussing other high-level planners' ideas regarding existing problems and possible approaches to solving them, she wrote the plan.

An examination of the plan itself shows that it incorporated much of Planner A's philosophy, particularly the ideas relevant to the organizational structure and operations of nonformal education programs in rural areas. As could be expected, the plan contained descriptions of the three new proposed projects: RECs, PLECs, and the RCE Program. Also included were development data on the projects and breakdowns of the technical and financial assistance sought for them. The total cost of the proposed projects amounted to \$4,703,500 for the proposed five-year period. This was the amount sought from the World Bank. The financing was finally provided and the project implemented.

Plan Three

The plan entitled "Use of Radio and Television for Nonformal Education Project" was designed primarily to serve as a

guideline for utilizing both radio and television in all non-formal education programs run by the DGE and the ETD, although it focused on the RCE Program. This undated plan was produced by a second-level planner who knew little English and who had no formal training in communication media. Holder of a degree in education from a local university, the planner was probably the first government official assigned to handle the newly inaugurated RCE Program on a regular basis. The plan was based mainly on readings and consultations with authorities. Not long after completion of the document, its author was transferred to head the PLEC in the northern province of Chiangmai. The plan itself is now considered rather outmoded by other planners at the AED.

Plan Four

The most recent plan, dated 1978, was the result of joint efforts by many planners, most of whom were based at the RCE Central Office. Entitled "Radio Correspondence Education Project," this plan was a guideline for the operation of the RCE pilot project during the five-year period 1977-1981. The content of the plan focused on the operations and phasing of the RCE pilot scheme and its target audiences, structural organization, and personnel resources.

The project proposal (Plan Two) obviously provides a basis for the two succeeding plans with regard to the operations and phasing of the scheme and its structural organization. Understandably, this project proposal is quite precise and narrow in its scope. The fourth plan is similar to the third, except that it had been updated and made much more relevant and practical. Comparison of the current plan and the continuing operations of the RCE pilot activities in the field, however, reveals vast discrepancies, particularly in regard to scheduling, phasing, and operations.

PROCESSES

Three planning processes will be described here: RCE pre-planning, coordination, and evaluation.

RCE Preplanning Process

The preplanning period forms a large and significant part of the entire planning process for RCE. During this early period, groups of Thai planners spent most of their time searching for a radio education model, choosing an appropriate

one, and designing an operational pilot project. Thus there are three planning processes to be described for the preplanning period: RCE model search, adoption of appropriate RCE model, and RCE pilot project implementation.

RCE Model Search. In addition to having a philosophical framework for the nonformal education programs, the Thai planners also had a model. The model itself did not come spontaneously from the planners' minds. The search for, and selection of, an appropriate model was a time-consuming process and constituted a large part of the initial preplanning stage of the RCE Program's entire planning process.

According to the planner now serving as chief of the AED, a search for models started circa 1972-73 and went on for quite a few years. During this period, a group of three Thai officials led by the division chief was sent to Nairobi, Kenya, for a one-month observation of education activities via radio in that country. The other two members of the group were educational supervisors from the DGE. Nairobi was chosen as a site to observe mainly because of its long-established and well-known radio correspondence school. After several weeks in Nairobi, the group returned to Thailand with some vague ideas as to applying certain aspects of the Kenyan case to the Thai setting. One distinctive feature of the Kenyan radio correspondence school that impressed the Thai visitors was the fact that, at that time, it operated using only the communication components of radio and correspondence, without the support of discussion in study groups. The Thai planners thought that a model "borrowed" from Kenya might not be applicable to the Thai situation.

Shortly after the Nairobi trip, the chief of the AED's Technical Section at the time led another Thai delegation to California, where they spent several weeks observing radio correspondence activities at the University of California at Los Angeles and at Berkeley. Simultaneously, ranking planners completed extensive readings of relevant material on radio correspondence schools in such countries as Great Britain, Russia, and Japan.

During the course of their foreign trips and studies, Thai planners discovered variations in radio education programs in various Western and African countries. These variations seemed to be in keeping with the differing socioeconomic conditions, cultural values, and characteristics of the people in these countries. The Thai planners therefore concluded that a useful radio education model had to be based on each

country's local conditions and national characteristics. They also concluded that, since Thailand differs in many ways from African and Western nations, a model borrowed from those countries might not be suitable for Thai society. Accordingly, the planners were inclined to reject the borrowing of foreign models of radio correspondence programs in favor of developing an indigenous one.

As one planner put it, "American or any Westernized models were not suitable. They have functioned well in a communication media-rich society, supported by modern and well-designed reading materials, equipment, and radio-support programs. Given the scarcity of budgetary, personnel, and communication resources in Thailand, such Westernized models could never become a reality or would only be dysfunctional in a Thai setting."

As for the Kenyan model, many planners said one drawback was that it relied mainly on radio, but not on such other means of communication as interpersonal channels, which are considered an essential learning instrument within the Thai sociocultural context.

Pointing to the national character as a crucial factor in denying the adoption of alien models, one planner said the Thais are more relaxed than their Western counterparts, are more concerned with immediate pleasure among family and friends than within society at large, prefer compromise to giving offense, and have no great love of work as an end in itself. Given these characteristics, foreign models of education were regarded by planners as inapplicable to Thais, especially those living in rural areas.

Adoption of Appropriate RCE Model. Once the planners decided to devise a Thai radio education model, they proceeded to consider the type of model that might be appropriate to Thai society. In the process, they concentrated on selecting appropriate communication components to be integrated into the general model for RCE. As was described in the problem-definition process, ranking Thai planners decided to attempt a radio-based learning system, instead of a general nonformal education program, to overcome the perennial urban-rural education gap. No decision was made as to which communication channels other than radio would be utilized.

In selecting an appropriate multimedia model, the planners apparently used as their criteria the khit-pen philosophy and learning theory. They also took into consideration the socioeconomic environment and national character.

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On the basis of the khit-pen philosophy and the basic learning theory, the planners were convinced that radio could perform only a limited function and could not be used alone in a long-distance educational system. According to the same philosophy and theory, manuals or textbooks were essential components of all educational systems and had to be included in the new one.

As Planner A stated, radio is essential in that it can impart to its audience information about the environment in a broad scope and on a low-cost basis. It is texts or manuals, however, that provide basic knowledge and skills, or khit-pen capabilities. In a similar vein, the current chief of AED, an educator, opined that radio alone could be used only to interest people in studying the subject; the educational process had to be left to reading materials.

Once the planners decided to use radio and manuals in the radio education model, they also considered alternative channels. They finally came up with group discussion as a third component in the model. The selection of group discussion was largely based on the sociocultural characteristics of the Thai people and on economic assumptions as well as learning principles.

The planners cited family orientation, krengchai, and sanook as key aspects of the sociocultural characteristics accounting for the inclusion of group discussion in the model. According to the planners, Thais, especially those in the rural areas, live in a joint or extended family, with close social relationships and a high rate of interaction and exchange of ideas between family members and their neighbors. For radio education to succeed, it had to involve the participation of family members through group organization and discussion. Krengchai, a value that can be interpreted as acceptance of others as they are without the actual acceptance of their values or actions, helps to facilitate critical discussion of common problems among group members in that it creates a favorable environment for free exchange of ideas. As for sanook, the desire for pleasure with family or close friends, it helps provide opportunities for stimulating and enjoyable interaction among villagers.

The planners believed in theory that groups of correspondence students provide the necessary guidance and communication, in the form of student-teacher dialog, which are considered essential prerequisites in any educational strategy for developing khit-pen abilities.

The project proposal best summarizes the reasons for selection of the radio education model that was chosen:

Two important components in distance teaching are radio and correspondence education. Optimal results can be achieved when these two activities are used in an integrated way. Results in many countries show, however, that correspondence education without radio support can also be of great importance in many cases. . . . In general, it would be true to say that radio, unassisted, cannot teach by lecturing (long distance, unseen, and severely limited in its power to focus learner attention over a period longer than 15 or 30 minutes). Radio, however, can add three factors to the learning process; firstly, it can enrich subject matter through short, lively talks and a wide variety of other techniques (e.g., dramatization); secondly, it can discuss correspondence course exercises in particular subjects and help solve problems and learning difficulties; and thirdly, it can be used for oral drills (especially in language study). All these necessitate close correlation with written materials or courses. . . . A further problem with correspondence education is how to provide the necessary guidance and dialogic pupil-teacher communication, both of which are considered to be essential prerequisites in any educational strategy leading to the development of khit-pen abilities. . . . For this, two further elements are proposed: firstly, the creation of groups of correspondence students who will meet for discussion with a specially trained teacher once a month (and hopefully more often among each other) and secondly, through holding short residential courses (Adult Education Division 1974).

The planners realized that the organization of group discussions would involve a large budget for hiring the specially trained teachers and facilitators who would lead discussions, which violated the basic assumption of minimum government financial support for the inauguration of the RCE Program. However, in view of the fact that group discussion could be of the utmost benefit to out-of-school learners, the program planners decided to integrate it into the new radio education model anyway.

With the combination of three communication channels--radio, printed matter, and interpersonal group discussion--the

RCE Program was considered a unique distance-learning system. What was considered typically Thai and locally unique was the inclusion of group discussions into the model, a factor hitherto neglected in most radio education programs in such nations as Kenya.

The RCE Program was submitted by the Ministry of Education for the Cabinet's approval, and at its meeting of August 19, 1975, the Cabinet gave the green light. According to the original scheme, the RCE Program was to be launched as a joint venture between the AED, ETD, and PRD and involved a total annual budget of 18,245,320 baht (US\$912,261) for 1976, the first fiscal year.

Pilot Project Implementation. Once the decision was made to initiate the RCE Program, the subsequent planning process dealt with implementation. After careful consideration, the planners devised the idea of inaugurating the project on an experimental basis during the five-year period 1977-1981. As the project proposal spelled out, the RCE pilot project was designed to be continued and expanded later. It was launched to enable the examination of the relative effectiveness of various RCE learning methods and instructional media. Subjects of investigation included the comparative effectiveness of correspondence education in different subjects at various levels, both with and without radio support; the effectiveness of correspondence education, both with and without group activities; and the effectiveness of correspondence education in comparison to ordinary equivalency classes.

The planners decided to phase in the RCE pilot project over a five-year period. In this process, they apparently established operational priorities among the study programs at various RECs. Three such study programs were proposed for implementation: interest group, general education levels three and four equivalence, and functional literacy. The final project proposal, illustrative of the study program's priorities, stated that the pilot project would commence in 1977 with the introduction of an interest group study program at Ubol. In March 1977, according to the plan, Lampang was to start offering general education level-three equivalency correspondence courses, while Ubol was to initiate level-four courses.

It is not clear which criteria the planners used in arriving at the priorities they set. No available plans defined the criteria. All planners who were interviewed seemed equivocal on this point. However, based on the description of the RCE Program in the plans and the planners' comments, it

can be logically assumed that the following three considerations were the main criteria for establishing operational priorities among the study programs at various RECs: (1) readiness, (2) potential effectiveness, and (3) demand from target audiences. These criteria indicate that when the planners considered that a study program such as functional literacy was ready to start, that there was demonstrable audience demand at a REC, and that the program could be effective, it was implemented. Criteria such as these appear to be intuitive.

However, as one planner indicated, the RCE pilot project operated under numerous internal and external constraints, and thus it was difficult to establish and utilize solid empirical criteria in setting priorities. After examining the RCE pilot project's actual operations, the planner's statement appears to be valid.

As an example of the rationale for the study program priorities, the head of the RCE Central Office said that the selection of the interest group study program at the Ubol Center was based on the AED's experiences, indicating that the program could be very effective and economically operative and could involve participation by a large number of rural people. Regarding the use of the Ubol Adult Education Center, she said that it previously operated a regional teacher training center and required only minimal remodeling for purposes of nonformal education. Thus, the Ubol center was readily available for the RCE pilot project.

As may now be clear, all of the preceding decisions were made within the bureaucratic structure of the Thai administration, that is, within the AED. The most influential figure in the decision-making process was Planner A, who was then chief of the AED. He received immense support from staff at all levels who shared his khit-pen philosophy. Decisions were not made in a formal, authoritarian manner, as is often the case in rigidly bureaucratic organizations. The final decisions, according to one planner, resulted from a series of discussions and meetings between planners, which mostly took place in a friendly, informal atmosphere. Since all first-level planners knew each other well and had worked closely together, they could easily grasp what each other thought and did and quickly resolved any difficulties that arose. Planner A's friendly, pleasant personality aided a great deal in keeping things straight and on track to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Coordination Process

Given the decentralization of administration and the expansion of lifelong education projects to rural areas, an efficient coordination system became essential to the RCE pilot program. Coordination was crucial because the RCE Central Office had limited resources of its own and had to rely heavily on input from outside agencies.

The RCE Central Office was mainly responsible for coordinating activities. Staffed by six middle-level officials, the RCE Central office served as a link between concerned government agencies within and without the Ministry of Education. In addition, the ACRCE became involved in the coordination process by serving as a clearing house between the agencies involved: the AED itself, the ETD, and the PRD.

A small group of planners at the RCE Central Office performed their coordination function primarily by means of personal contacts, correspondence, meetings, seminars, and workshops. Although the coordination activities took place mostly within the bureaucratic structure, the planners used both formal and informal methods of interaction and communication to deal with other concerned authorities. In doing so, they came into frequent, close contact with officials at all levels and established a communication network of persons involved in RCE planning.

The following brief description of the coordination process may aid in better understanding how RCE's coordinated activities were planned. A small group of planners at the RCE Central Office oversaw the implementation of the RCE pilot project in accordance with the educational goals and policies that had been adopted. More specifically, they provided technical assistance to staffers at the RECs in the design, production, and evaluation of learning materials, curricula, radio programs, and group organization. They also supplied high-ranking policymakers within the AED with information and feedback. In discharging these responsibilities, they frequently had to visit the RECs, usually every weekend. They often paid visits to villages where interest-group participants were being organized. Such field trips took up most of their time and although they took turns visiting villages, they were often too busy to be able to do so. Instead, they sometimes required local staffers to submit written reports.

Apart from field trips, official planners at the RCE Central Office regularly met with local staffers, at which time

they reviewed program development in the field and related topics. When serious issues arose, the Central Office planners raised them at ACRCE meetings or at those of other concerned committees. In most cases, the middle-level planners brought problematic issues directly to their immediate superiors within the AED.

Occasionally, the Central Office organized seminars and workshops for training local staff and concerned persons as well as for exchanging ideas on matters of professional interest.

A group of six officials at the RCE Central Office were in constant contact with outside agencies for access to such resources as air time and communication equipment. The RCE Administrative Committee also functions as a coordination mechanism for the operation of the RCE. By means of meetings and discussions, several interdepartmental problems were solved.

Evaluation Process

During the course of this study, it became apparent that Thai planners used several evaluation methods to monitor the pilot project. Both immediate (or short-term) and long-term evaluation systems were designed by the planners.

A small group of officials at the RCE Central Office and others at RECs were heavily involved in the evaluation of the RCE pilot project. Because of limitations on its resources and time, a separate AED planning and evaluation section did not participate in the RCE evaluation. Numerous local experts and foreign consultants took part in the evaluation.

On the basis of personal interviews with planners and analysis of the project proposal and plans, the planners appear to have laid down definite short- and long-term planning schemes for evaluating the RCE Program. The planning of long-term evaluation involves the services of experts and the application of scientific research methods, whereas the short-term evaluation process is a routine procedure that uses both rational and intuitive methods of inquiry.

As was discussed with regard to the RCE preplanning process, the planners envisioned a long-term evaluation procedure when they decided to implement the RCE Program on an experimental five-year basis. Although they had not established an information base prior to the start of the RCE

Program in 1977, they planned to conduct a final evaluation upon completion of the pilot project in 1981, to be followed by a national seminar to assess the project's outcome. The final evaluation study was to utilize such scientific research techniques as sample surveys, field observations, and probably a small-scale field experiment. A team of local staffers was assigned to conduct the evaluation with the assistance of one foreign consultant, who was to be provided by the World Bank.

As was stated previously, the RCE pilot project was to be expanded, not terminated. The plan has been that when the Second National Radio Education Network is established in about 1982 and makes available enough air time for nonformal education programs, the RCE Program would develop into a full-fledged nonformal education scheme using the medium of radio. Accordingly, a series of formative evaluation studies was planned for the five-year period of experimentation. This was so that both the mid-term and final summary evaluations could be conducted during the period of expansion. The World Bank, which cosponsored the establishment of the Second National Radio Education Network, required these studies. Two local consultants and one foreign expert were provided to conduct the summary evaluation.

As for the short-term evaluation of the RCE pilot project, little scientific research was conducted. This was mainly because the planners at the RCE Central office were working under several constraints, particularly lack of qualified researchers and time and budget limitations. They relied on feedback from official field trips, inspection tours, meetings with appropriate officials, and seminars.

CASE STUDY TWO: INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA PLANNING

BACKGROUND

Whereas the previous case study deals with RCE planning at the macro level (for the RCE Program in general), this one is more specifically concerned with planning at the micro level (for instructional media). Since planning for printed materials, radio programs, and group discussions was done simultaneously, they are closely interrelated and are collectively treated here. The planning for all printed materials, radio programs, and group discussions was the result of macro planning for the RCE Program.

The planning office for printed materials, radio programs, and group discussions was administered by RECs. Whereas the directors of the RECs were mainly responsible for overall RCE activities, the mass media unit was in charge of planning for all instructional media production and evaluation. All three components (printed material, radio programs, and group discussions) were planned for use in the three RCE study programs--interest group, functional literacy, and secondary school equivalency.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This case study examines how planning for printed materials, radio programs, and group discussions was executed to support the RCE program. The study focuses on the planning processes involved in the production and evaluation of printed materials and radio support programs, as well as in group organization and interaction.

METHODOLOGY

Three methods of inquiry were used in this study: documentation, personal interviews, and observation. Both

documentation and personal interviews were completed simultaneously with the study of the macro planning for RCE. Several documents used in the study of the RCE planning also proved helpful in the case at hand, particularly written plans, official documents, and reports. In addition, several reports secured from field operators were used extensively.

Several officials interviewed in regard to RCE planning also provided useful specific information on the planning of manuals. Interviews with local officials and nonofficials at the RECs provided much relevant information for this case study.

Personal observation, which was scarcely utilized in Case Study One, became necessary in this study of manual planning in order to determine whether what was planned and what was underway in the pilot project were in keeping with what was stated in the plans or by the officials. Together with personal observation, the content of manuals and radio programs was analyzed to determine whether the end product (the manuals) was in keeping with what had originally been planned. Several field trips to up-country provinces provided opportunities to observe planning in progress.

PLANNERS

As was described in Case Study One, a small number of AED officials was mainly responsible for the macro planning for the RCE Program. The same group of planners was also involved in the instructional media planning, but primary responsibility was shifted to another group of planners, most of whom were local government officials at the various RECs.

The academic backgrounds and personalities of the first group of planners were described in Case Study One. Suffice it to say that Planner A and a few ranking officials at the higher echelons of the AED were involved in the planning of various instructional media by providing policy and theoretical guidelines based on their khit-pen philosophies and basic learning process.

Six officials at the RCE Central Office were actively involved in the coordination of all instructional media planning activities, particularly in the production of manuals and radio programs. Their functions can be specifically described as follows:

1. Coordination. They were in constant communication with the RECs to ensure that reading materials and radio programs were being prepared and produced and that they conformed to the curriculum approved by the ETD.
2. Guidance. This group of second-level planners provided local officials at the RECs with strategic and practical guidelines for the planning of manuals and radio programs, and all helped to solve technical problems.

One foreign consultant, a British radio programming specialist, worked with Thai officials at the RCE Central Office. He came to work for the RCE Program under the Colombo Plan and was mainly responsible for writing radio programs on agriculture and providing advice on the use of radio in non-formal education.

Apart from the six Thai officials and one foreign expert, several officials from outside the AED were also involved in the planning of manuals and radio programs. Most of them were local specialists invited to assist in designing and evaluating the media content. Those involved in the planning of manuals, for instance, might be subject specialists from a university or local experts on special subjects. The planners of radio programming might be program specialists or experts from local radio stations or the Public Relations School. A few officials from outside the AED who served in such bodies as the RCE Administrative Committee also participated in all of the planning for production of manuals, radio programming, and group discussion by providing technical input and constructive criticism.

In addition to the work done at the RCE Central office, planning for the various instructional media was actively pursued at the regional level. Different planners could be involved in the various areas of instructional media--the production of manuals and radio programs and the planning of group discussions. In general, most of the regional planners were officials working at the four RECs. The directors of each REC played active roles in the implementation of the overall RCE Program at the regional level. Specific groups of officials at each REC were assigned to plan each communication component, especially reading material and radio programming.

The planning of manuals was the responsibility of a small number of subject specialists, tutors, and producers. Most of

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these officials had academic credentials in education or adult education at the baccalaureate or diploma levels and had some teaching experience. A few of them, subject specialists and tutors in particular, held master's degrees and had received some training in the writing and production of books.

The Mass Media Unit (MMU) was mainly responsible for the planning of radio programs. Each MMU had a unit chief, program producers, radio coordinators, recorders, and tutors. Most of these officials had academic backgrounds in adult education and some teaching experience. While no official as yet had formal academic training in broadcasting or communication planning, some of them had received in-service training or had taken short courses in radio programming. Apparently there was a shortage of radio program planners and specialists at all MMUs. As part of the World Bank contract, the AED planned to send its officials to pursue courses of study leading to doctoral degrees in communication planning.

Apart from officials at the RECs, many local residents and specialists were selected to assist in planning and producing both the manuals and radio programs. These adjunct planners consisted mainly of local school teachers, officials in other government agencies, and local media professionals.

Planning at the regional level for group discussions was somewhat different from that of producing manuals and radio programs. The planning process for group discussions involved local people who were not officials. These people were known as "group facilitators," "tutors," or "advisors." Their major functions were to organize the local people into discussion groups and then to lead the participants in discussions and problem-solving activities. The group facilitators gave the participants assignments and administered exams and also evaluated various RCE study programs. In general, a few officials at the MMUs designed the structure for group participation and coordinated their efforts with those of group facilitators in the field.

Most group facilitators were local residents who had lived for a long time in rural areas. They were respected by their neighbors, had some education, and enjoyed a relatively high socioeconomic status within the community. They usually were part-time local school teachers, local government officials, village headmen (pooyai-ban), subdistrict officers (kamnan), and local volunteers.

PROBLEM

As was described in the Case Study One analysis, Thai planners perceived educational problems to be interrelated and complex and a challenge for media-based nonformal education programs. The planners apparently perceived in advance that the problems entailed in the planning of printed materials, radio programs, and group discussion activities were inherent in the RCE Program itself. It should be recalled that the RCE Program was inaugurated on an experimental basis in order to test the relative effectiveness of radio and the other communication components in that program. On the basis of their lengthy observations in Africa and America, extensive background reading, and theoretical framework, the planners believed that radio could be used as an effective teaching instrument for the rural out-of-school population. But they needed to have empirical evidence as to how this type of nonformal education functioned in the Thai setting in comparison to other media. Armed with this evidence, they could then implement an improved radio strategy when the program was expanded. Accordingly, they enumerated the specific concerns of all planning for communication components as follows (Adult Education Division 1974):

1. What is the comparative effectiveness of correspondence education in different subjects at various levels, both with and without radio support?
2. What is the effectiveness of correspondence education as compared to ordinary equivalency classes?
3. What is the effectiveness of correspondence education, both with and without group activities?
4. What is the effectiveness of correspondence education, both with and without residential courses?
5. To what degree can the national curriculum be regionalized and yet still exploit economies of scale?

To address these concerns, the planners already had philosophical and theoretical frameworks in mind that served as useful guidelines for the development of manuals, radio programs, and other communication media. According to one reinforcement learning theory expounded by Planner A, the manuals and reading materials (or correspondence methods) could be used to teach functional curriculum or basic knowl-

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edge and skills to learners, while radio could be used to transmit information on the changing environment. Group activities could be used for reinforcement and support and to provide opportunities to develop skills so that individuals could bring themselves into harmony with the environment and thus ultimately attain happiness in life.

To empirical researchers, this theory actually spelled out a series of hypotheses that could be tested in the Thai setting. How well these hypotheses could stand the test remained to be seen.

Apart from the aforementioned philosophical and theoretical considerations, the planners wanted to tailor all instructional media--manuals, radio programs, and group discussions--to local cultural, social, and economic conditions so as to best benefit the participants. The planners considered it important to design subject matter to conform to local cultural values and regional situations, particularly in view of the decentralization of the nonformal education administration and lifelong education project.

RESOURCES

As was described in Case One, the overall RCE Program was planned and implemented on an experimental basis subject to the internal constraints of resource scarcity. When it came to the planning and utilization of manuals, radio programs, and group activities at the regional level, such internal constraints turned out to be acute, particularly with respect to lack of personnel. In addition, planning activities at the regional level were subject to external pressure as a result of the decentralization of administration. Under these circumstances, the planners reacted to and coped with immediate problems as they arose in the planning process.

Personnel

A brief description of the personnel situation will aid in understanding how personnel problems arose and how the planners coped with them. As one foreign consultant observed, there were three interrelated aspects of the personnel problem: too few staff, high turnover, and inadequate experience and training. The regional RCE offices were part of each REC's MMU. The number of approved staff positions for each unit was 18, but in 1980, even the largest unit had only 12 positions filled. However, the RCE Program work was not the

unit's only task, and so not all of the existing staff was available for the RCE Program. It was also observed that staff turnover was very high. For example, as of December 1980, of the total of 43 staffers working in MMUs around the country and at the RCE Central Office in Bangkok, 18 had joined during the previous year. In 1979, 20 staff members quit, transferred, or left to further their studies. One consequence of the high rate of turnover was the fact that much of the staff was inexperienced and frequently untrained.

RCE staff members at the RECs were mainly responsible for preparing materials, but they did not do all of it themselves. To expand the pool of specialists, the staff members and experts from outside agencies were contracted to write handbook lessons, manuals, and scripts for radio programs, but this arrangement did not seem to make the RCE staff's work easier. The time spent on recruiting, coordinating, following up, and checking outsiders' work was considerable.

Budget

The original plans for the RCE Program and its instructional media were based on the assumption that the costs would be covered by student fees and government subsidies. The RCE Program received only a small share of the World Bank's loans, and that funding was meant for technical assistance and training of RCE staff. As it turned out, only a small portion of the student fees was collected, and only a limited percentage of the government subsidies was received. The planners were thus faced with financial constraints. The hiring of a large number of specialists from outside agencies and group facilitators would obviously have been a heavy burden for the RCE Program. At the same time, there was a definite need for advisors, tutors, and resource experts if the RCE Program was to expand.

Organizational Structure

At the start of the RCE Program, certain RECs which were responsible for producing instructional materials and radio programs were still under construction. The regional planning offices had to cooperate with the PLECs, also under construction. This situation delayed the production of instructional materials and the development of the RCE Program throughout the country.

Communication Facilities

In rural areas, poor communications posed a serious problem for the distribution of instructional materials. For example, planning for group discussions required constant interchange between officials at the RECs and group facilitators in the field. The group facilitators and participants were supposed to receive manuals and reading materials and listen to radio broadcasts prior to any group meeting. However, owing to poor postal systems between cities and villages, communications between the RECs and the field operation were not as smooth as they should have been.

A serious problem lay in the distribution of printed materials. In the up-country provinces, the official line of communication usually does not reach beyond small urban areas near cities. This makes it extremely difficult to distribute manuals and other reading materials from urban RECs to out-of-school populations in remote areas. Local participants always complained about receiving manuals and reading materials very late, frequently after the radio programs were aired. To solve this problem, the planners employed village headmen and local subdistrict officers, who often came to the cities, to carry study materials from post offices to participants in the villages.

Another problem lay in the lack of equipment at the RECs. As a result, many manuals and radio programs had to be adapted from those already in use in other nonformal education programs.

Information Base

Although the planners did not establish an information base prior to the inception of the RCE Program, certain types of data were gathered at the central and regional planning offices to document program development and effectiveness. The information base consisted mainly of survey findings, transcripts of meetings and seminars, and observations made during official trips.

ENVIRONMENT

As is obvious from Case One, such environmental factors as cultural values and socioeconomic conditions had a strong impact on various aspects of RCE planning at the macro level, including problem definition, decentralization of the nonfor-

mal education administration, implementation of a lifelong education system, selection of the RCE model, and running and evaluation of the RCE pilot project. At the instructional media planning level, several such environmental factors evidently remained strong and frequently posed considerable problems for planners. Interrelated environmental factors--social, cultural, and economic--and the decentralized operational structure will be dealt with here, along with a brief description of the planning activities. This is to clarify the extent to which such environmental factors affected the planning process.

Social, Cultural, and Economic Environments

As was described in Case Study One, Thailand is quite homogeneous in regard to the basic characteristics of its people. Such cultural values as sanook, krengchai, karma, and the work ethic are shared by virtually the entire population. However, the country is more heterogeneous in such other respects as language, religion, village structure, social services, climate, and agricultural activities. In addition, Thailand is geographically diverse. Given these many divergent environmental factors, the planners found it extremely difficult to design and produce manuals and radio programs that would be functionally and locally relevant to the program participants and to do it within personnel and budgetary limitations.

The same problems also obstructed the organization of group activities. Take climate, for example. The best time to organize group discussion activities in Thailand is during the dry season when farm tasks are less onerous than during the rainy season. However, the dry season does not occur simultaneously in all regions. In the north and northeast, it runs from December to May, in the central region from January to June, and in the south from February to October.

Regarding village structure, in the central region there are few villages in the Western sense of the word. Houses are either scattered across the countryside or spread out along the banks of the canals. In the absence of a continuous-settlement village structure in this region, it is difficult to run the same type of group activities as in the other regions.

Language also poses serious problems for both group discussion and radio planning strategies. Although central Thai is the official language of the country and is understood by a

vast majority of the population, most villagers in the country use different dialects or languages in their daily lives. Central Thai is really used only in the central region, whereas in the north most people use the Thin dialect. In the northeast, the majority of people speak the Isan or Lao dialect; in the south there are significant numbers of people who speak Malay. Thus, there is a need to develop discussion materials, curricula, and radio programs in local languages and dialects, and this can probably be done most effectively at the regional level.

Decentralization of Administrative Organization

The decentralization of all nonformal education administration and planning and the expansion of lifelong education projects at the provincial level also affected the planning of instructional media. As part of the Fourth Education Development Project, RCE planning was turned over almost entirely to the RECs. As it happened, there was significant variation among the models for the preparation and use of manuals, radio programs, and group activities that were developed at the different regional centers. The following description of the planning activities illustrates the variations and how they were affected by the decentralization of administrative organization.

For example, the Ubon REC organized interest groups by following a single format utilizing radio programs, manuals, and group activities. Students were recruited and organized by group facilitators. Group facilitators were to employ a methodology designed to maximize student participation in problem-solving exercises, the main thrust being the separation of the group into smaller elements to discuss the problems in the manuals.

The northern REC in Lampang produced the greatest amount of instructional material. This REC set out to test four different combinations of teaching methods to determine the relative efficiency of the three radio correspondence media. The four models were:

1. radio programs, manuals, and group meetings with group facilitators;
2. manuals and group meetings with group facilitators;
3. radio programs and manuals; and
4. manuals only.

The first two methods involved group participation; the second two, self-study.

At the southern REC in Songkhla, most of the students were assigned to groups and followed the sequence of listening to a radio program, studying the manuals, and meeting weekly with group facilitators. Despite wide radio coverage, many students in the south were unable to listen to the broadcasts because of work.

The central REC in Rajburi also developed interest groups by following a single format, but one that differed significantly from Ubon's. Whereas in Ubon group facilitators were recruited from among full-time teachers, in Rajburi they were purposely recruited from a broad spectrum of the population and included community leaders, village headmen, community development workers, government officials, teachers, and other socially prominent people. This REC also had problems producing materials on time, which necessitated delivery of the manuals by Land Rover instead of by the postal service.

Education Policy

There is no doubt that the Thai government has long favored adapting a media-based learning system to a nonformal out-of-school context. Most of the nonformal education programs operated by the AED prior to the inauguration of the RCE Program were based on the use of manuals or printed matter, readings, and radio broadcasts. Such programs included, for example, functional literacy, newspaper reading center project, and mobile library units. As a result of favorable reaction at the national and ministerial levels, planning for the production of manuals and radio programs in support of various nonformal education programs was well on its way.

Local Participation

In this case study, two types of participation should be distinguished: (1) participation by local audiences in the planning process and (2) cooperation by people from outside the agency.

Because rural people were the target audience for manuals, radio programs, and organized group activities, their attitudes and feedback were considered by the planners. The audience's acceptance of the final product was deemed satisfactory for the implementation of the RCE Program.

At the same time, the Thai planners, particularly the subject specialists and program producers at the RECs, also had to gain the cooperation of outside experts and local writers to aid in designing and writing the manuals. Based on surveys and experience, the planners appear to have enjoyed the cooperation of both groups in the process of developing manual production.

Political Environment

Since the Thai government supported an education program to raise the levels of functional literacy and education among rural people, planning for all instructional media to serve such programs was to be encouraged and well financed. There appeared to be no political restrictions on the planning for manual production.

PLANS

For the planning of manuals, radio programs, and group discussions, similar plans have been developed and implemented by the Thai planners. Thus, all plans could be collectively described here.

At the national level, there is what appears to be a well-written strategic plan for the production and evaluation of manuals, radio programs, and group discussions. With such a plan, the reader envisions an ideal. With a certain amount of imagination, one could envision the workings of this plan when implemented in the field. However, what is written in the national plan and what actually takes place in the field are two different things.

The researcher found these two types of plans in connection with all the planning processes of manuals, radio programs, and group discussions. One of them may be called the strategic and operational plan, and the other, the implementation plan.

Strategic and Operational Plan

Strategy is used here with reference to the policymaking level, whereas the term "operation" refers to the action program level. Strategic and operational planning may both occur in a plan, or they may be separated into different plans. In the case of the RCE Program, both areas of planning for communication components are interwoven in the same plan.

There are three kinds of strategic and operational plans relevant to the planning of manuals, radio programs, and group discussion activities. They are:

1. RCE strategic plans, which were described in Case Study One;
2. curricula and course outlines for various study programs; and
3. handbooks for personnel training programs.

RCE strategic plans. The three documents on overall RCE planning that were described in Case Study One can also apply to the planning of manuals, radio programs, and group discussions. The strategic plans are: "Nonformal Education for National Harmony and Development: A Project for the Development of Locally Relevant Adult Education Programs" (also known as Project #4), "Use of Radio and Television for Nonformal Education Project," and "Radio Correspondence Education Project." Suffice it to say that these plans provide theoretical and strategic guidelines for the development and evaluation of the content of manuals and radio programming. For example, Project #4 specified that reading materials and radio programs be designed so that they develop the ability to think critically (or khit-pen) and promote necessary occupational skills among learners.

Curricula and course outlines. Curricula for RCE study programs were first developed by Thai planners to serve as a basis for the further development of manuals, as well as radio programs and group discussions. Along with curricula per se, outlines of various courses contained in the curricula were also prepared by the planners for this purpose. In preparing these curricula and course outlines, the RCE planners received technical input from officials at the ETD and its Education Technology Center. The curricula and course outlines served as useful plans for the production of manuals, radio programs, and group discussion texts and ensured that they were functionally complementary.

Handbooks. A series of handbooks was usually prepared by the planners for use in training local writers, designers, and program producers. Such handbooks spelled out, for example, rules of language usage and writing styles appropriate for local participants.

Implementation Plan

Most of the strategic and operational plans were developed at the RCE Central Office. What is referred to here as the "implementation plan" was in most cases produced out in the field in rural areas. The plans differ in form, content, and function. Most strategic and operational plans were formulated and carefully written by a group of official planners at the RCE Central Office; they were well organized and existed in a unified form. They served mainly as policy and operational guidelines for the implementation of the overall RCE scheme and its various study programs.

The implementation plans, on the other hand, developed primarily out of fieldworkers' day-to-day tasks, practical experience, and problem solving. The plans also resulted from field trips, meetings, seminars, and workshops. In the case of the planning of manuals, the implementation plan consisted of a memo, time schedules, work guidelines, official reports, or a network schedule. All of these scattered items were produced by government officials at the RECs, particularly those who were subject specialists. However, many other nonfieldworkers from outside the agency (especially subject experts) and selected local writers were involved from time to time in the processes of planning for manuals. These documents appear to be useful, practical guidelines for field operators to employ in their work.

As with the implementation plan for manuals, the implementation plan for the production of radio programs can be described as consisting of radio checklists, network schedules, work guidelines, official reports, time schedules, and memos. Whereas all of these scattered items were primarily the work of government officials at the RECs, particularly those in the MMUs, many other fieldworkers and planners at the RCE Central Office were also involved in the planning processes.

The same can be said of the implementation plan for group discussion activities. Field operations provided most of the sources for the implementation plan, and they included intuition, observation tours, daily work, practical experience, survey experiments, meetings, workshops, and seminars. These scattered plans were primarily the work of regional planners at the MMUs, local group facilitators, and resource people, as well as participants and others.

There may be a big discrepancy between strategic and operational plans and the actual implementation plan. One major reason for this may be the fact that the strategic and operational plans were written by planners at the RCE Central Office well before the implementation of the RCE pilot project and hence now seem narrow in scope. At the field operations level, problems arose frequently, and only the planners in the field became familiar with them and learned how to handle them. Under such conditions, it would be difficult to frame a plan well in advance at the RCE Central Office that would cover all specific details and contingencies.

PROCESSES

Media Development Process

The planning processes involved in this case study resulted from the planners' earlier decisions regarding the RCE pilot project and the issue of differential instructional media functions in the learning process. As was previously described, the planners were primarily concerned with the comparative effectiveness of various instructional media within the local social, cultural, and economic environments. Accordingly, the planners, especially those at RECs, were actively involved in the development of instructional media to promote learning capabilities among Thais in rural areas.

In the process of planning for instructional media development, the planners took into consideration two major criteria:

1. In keeping with the khit-pen philosophy and the basic learning process, the three instructional media were designed to function in a complementary manner so that manuals would provide basic knowledge and skills, whereas radio and group discussion activities would provide supporting data and information on changes in the environment.
2. All instructional media had to be tailored to meet the needs and interests of the rural out-of-school population in various parts of the country.

In an attempt to make the instructional media functionally relevant and complementary, the planners agreed that a curriculum for each study program (e.g., literacy program and interest group) first had to be developed and used as a guide-

line for producing manuals and radio programming and for planning group activities.

As it turned out, the planners found it extremely difficult to design and produce instructional media to meet all of the above criteria and educational objectives. From the start of the preparation of instructional media, they were faced with both internal and external constraints ranging from shortages of funding and personnel to inadequate communication facilities and air time and the decentralization of administration. The shortage of personnel at the RECs was most acute in the area of media preparation. Accordingly, a major part of the planning processes involved the planners in recruiting and training qualified personnel in various fields to help in preparing manuals, lesson books, radio programs, and group activities. The following description of the planning activities will help to clarify the personnel recruitment and training processes.

As regards the preparation of manuals, there were severe limitations in the form of a dearth of subject specialists, book designers, and writers. At each REC, there were some official specialists who were directly in charge of preparing manuals on different subjects for the RCE study programs. Since there were too few of these officials to handle the demanding task of manual preparation, assistance was sought outside the RECs. The planners had two options: either they could invite experts on specific subjects from a university or college to help in preparing the manuals, or they could select designers and writers from the general public to handle the task. In both instances, before being entrusted with their assignments, outside specialists were usually given orientation courses to acquaint them with basic writing styles and relevant regulations.

According to one planner, the recruitment of experts usually worked out well because most outside experts on particular subjects were known in educational circles and were willing to accept an invitation to write manuals. Lecturers from such institutions as Kasetsart (Agriculture) University and teachers' training colleges were invited to write manuals and reading materials.

The process of selecting subject specialists, however, was frequently difficult. The selection process usually commenced with a publicity campaign to induce as many qualified people as possible to apply for the assignments, followed by a test to screen suitable persons. Those selected for the

assignments then attended a series of training courses in the production of manuals. The planners at both Bangkok's RCE Central Office and at the RECs served as resource persons at training sessions and a series of training manuals was prepared. Only those who had taken training courses were allowed to design and write manuals for the RCE programs. A roster of selected individuals was maintained so that new personnel could be added or substitutes could be easily arranged when necessary. Most of the subject specialists chosen were from provincial secondary schools, local government agencies, private enterprise, and professional groups.

During the selection process, the planners frequently found it difficult to attract suitably qualified people to local areas for the assignments, and many of those who were finally selected to be specialists frequently failed to show up for their assignments. Some critics went so far as to say that the training courses for outside specialists involved a large slice of the budget and thus made the RCE Program very costly; they also stated that these outside specialists proved to be incapable of writing suitable manuals and reading materials for local people in rural areas.

The outside specialists were paid with Thai government funds to design and write manuals and reading materials on their subjects of expertise. They were to use the completed curriculum for each RCE study program as a guideline so that the contents of the manual would be functionally relevant to the learning principle on a given topic and in keeping with other writings. At the same time, both designers and writers were instructed to simplify their subject matter and writing styles as much as possible so that the final products would be comprehensible to rural people.

Manuals for the various RCE study programs were not always satisfactory. Whereas the invited outside specialists were criticized for using language and style that were too difficult to understand, local writers were frequently found to be lacking in writing ability and knowledge of their subjects. The writing of manuals was also subject to time and budgetary constraints.

For many reasons, the planners often failed to produce new RCE program manuals on schedule and had to resort to using outdated material to salvage the project.

In preparing radio programs, the planners also relied on the RCE staff at the RECs. However, the number of RCE radio

producers at RECs was relatively small and they lacked technical know-how and experience to handle the job. To provide in-service training for these staff members, assistance was sought from other government agencies (i.e., the PRD's Public Relations School).

At first, training courses were held at various RECs in the provinces. It was not always convenient, however, for resource people from the Public Relations School to travel from the headquarters in Bangkok to conduct courses in the provinces. Later, a group of RCE staff was sent to attend a training program at the Public Relations School in Bangkok.

Lack of qualified resource people for the training courses was also a problem. Because the RCE Program was so innovative, only a few program producers were well enough equipped to prepare radio programs and instruct trainees. These few individuals were already occupied with their regular work in other government departments.

The RCE planners occasionally engaged foreign and local program specialists to help in supervising the production of various radio programs. As a result of the scarcity of program specialists in Thailand, it was not always convenient to seek technical assistance from them when the time of need arrived.

The RCE radio programs in most cases were easily developed and recorded. They were not produced by following a universal program planning procedure such as the sequence of scientific audience survey--conceptualization--thematic formation--script writing--programming--and pre- and post-testing. They consisted mainly of dramas, "magazines," and panel discussions. The "magazine" format, designed primarily for the general public in rural areas, has been very popular among participants. The program consisted of a central theme and specific topics combined with several short human interest items and music.

At the time of this writing, the planners were exerting greater effort to improve and modernize the RCE radio programs and to make them functionally and locally more relevant to the learners. Improvements included increased use of local languages or dialects, as well as simplification of subject matter and wording. More importantly, a systematic method of program development was adopted which utilized audience surveys and pre- and post-testing of the messages.

Since group discussion was considered an important aspect of instruction, the selection and training of "group facilitators" (also known as "group organizers" or "teachers") constituted a major planning process. In the selection process, the planners at both the national and regional levels tried to recruit group facilitators from among local residents. To attract large numbers of local people for the job, a publicity campaign was usually conducted locally as part of the recruitment planning process. The Thai planners also established criteria for group facilitators. Such criteria include, for example, having the respect of the local people, long-term residence in a community or village, knowledge, ability, willingness to sacrifice and work for the village, and a relatively high level of income and education. Personal interviews were an important part of the selection process. Those chosen as group facilitators were usually capable of organizing their own groups of students.

Both full- and part-time group facilitators were accepted. Volunteers were eagerly sought by the RCE planners. Those who were usually recruited as group facilitators included full-time local school teachers, village headmen, subdistrict officers, professionals, and volunteers.

Once the group facilitators were chosen, a special training course was given to familiarize them with the RCE Program and its teaching methods. RCE planners at both the national and regional levels served as resource persons. A series of instructional manuals on relevant subjects was prepared by the RCE planners for these training courses.

The group facilitators' responsibility was to organize participants. Since they were supposed to be familiar with the people in a community, it was not supposed to be difficult for them to persuade villagers to participate in group discussions on topics of mutual interest. By means of personal visits, most villagers were expected to be persuaded to take part in discussions.

Official planners at the national and regional levels also helped group facilitators to organize discussion groups. They usually employed a multimedia publicity campaign involving both face-to-face communication and mass media. It commenced with a series of meetings with ranking district officials, subdistrict officers, and village headmen to inform them of RCE activities and to seek their cooperation, as well as to publicize the study programs among the public. Then radio spots were aired, followed by posters and leaflets in

the villages. At the same time, groups of facilitators travelled to the villages to take the pulse of the local populace and to try to persuade them to enroll in the programs being offered. When the campaign was over and people had registered for the programs, discussions were held.

Discussion among students was originally designed to supplement the use of manuals and radio programs.

Media Evaluation Process

The Thai planners used fact-finding and evaluation methods to determine program and literature content and their effects, but they were mainly indirect and unscientific. Before writing and producing the programs and literature, REC planners conducted surveys of the needs, interests, and education of local audiences so that they could tailor program content to the participants and their environment. Such fact-finding involved travelling to villages, talking with local people, and conducting random surveys of audience needs. During the media preparation process, the planners pretested their materials among target audiences. These tests, however, were not conducted regularly, nor were they based on sophisticated scientific methodology.

The planners frequently held meetings, workshops, and seminars for both writers and citizens' groups in a bid to improve and modernize their programs and literature. They also received feedback from official reports, inspection tours, and observation in the field. Occasionally they conducted sample surveys of printed media effects among audiences in rural areas.

Special mention should be made of the procedures for organizing the discussion groups. Prior to the start of the planned group discussions on specific topics, the planners usually conducted sample surveys of the needs and interests of the local people. The process involved travelling to the villages and talking with the residents. During discussions, group facilitators usually evaluated the effectiveness of the discussion methods by means of assignments and exams administered to the participants. After the discussions, the facilitators evaluated the meetings, mainly by using questionnaires or soliciting comments from participants. Many problems related to group discussions came to the attention of the planners at the regional and central offices by way of official reports and meetings with concerned persons and committees.

Chapter 5

ANALYSIS, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter contains a comparative analysis of the planning activities involved in the two cases; it also includes a summary of the patterned relationships of the processes of communication planning that were involved at all levels of the planning for Radio Correspondence Education. Finally, conclusions are presented in a series of hypothetical statements with general implications.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

PLANNERS

Upon examination of the two case studies, it appears that a small group of government officials at the AED's central office was actively involved in the planning of the RCE Program at the national level. At the regional level, numerous officials and others, primarily at the RECs, were in charge of planning for the three instructional media--printed matter, radio programs, and group discussions. At both levels of planning, the role of one man, Planner A, who at that time was chief of the AED, was extremely important. Using his khit-pen philosophy and his theory of the basic learning process, he successfully laid the theoretical groundwork for the implementation of the RCE Program and thus came to be known as the RCE "architect."

The planners can be classified according to their career and functional responsibilities. They may be designated as government officials, both within and without the AED, foreign experts engaged by Unesco, the Colombo Plan, and the World Bank, and nonofficials drawn from local communities. On the basis of their functional responsibilities and status in the planning process, they may be classified into three levels: high- or first-level planners; middle- or second-level planners; and low- or third-level planners. The planners may be described as follows:

High- or first-level planners

The first-level planners comprised high- and middle-ranking officials within the AED who played an active role in the planning process, along with a few foreign experts and consultants. A small number of officials from outside the AED was also involved.

AED officials. The AED officials were those few ranking officials who were directly and regularly involved in RCE Program planning. Five planners stood out: the division chief, two heads of the Technical Section, the head of the Nonformal Education Development Project Section, and one service official. It is mainly because of their positions that the five high-level planners became involved in the RCE and media planning processes. The AED itself was upgraded to the status of Department of Nonformal Education, and Planner A is now its director-general.

In terms of academic and professional qualifications, all five planners had strong backgrounds in education and pursued advanced studies abroad. Three planners obtained their doctoral degrees in education in the United States, whereas one received a master's degree and for a time was enrolled in a Ph.D. program in that country. Most planners had extensive experience in teaching and educational administration and were highly familiar with local situations and problems. One planner completed doctoral work in education planning at Harvard University. Others had only minimal academic and professional experience in planning or communication planning; they attempted to rectify their deficiencies through study, research, and interacting with other planners.

Functionally, the high-level planners were engaged in three important planning activities for the RCE Program and its affiliated communication strategies:

1. Providing a philosophical and theoretical framework for the planning of the RCE Program and its communication media strategies. The RCE "architect" (Planner A) was the key thinker who devised the conceptual framework for the RCE Program and its media planning processes. His popular khit-pen philosophy was widely adopted as a basis for planning the overall RCE Program and communication strategies, as well as for many other nonformal education projects. At the initial stage of the planning process, Planner A led groups of planners on observation trips to foreign

countries in order to find a model of radio correspondence education appropriate to the Thai setting. His deep concern over the various functions of radio and other communication media had a profound impact on the planning processes. The new AED chief (Planner B) is another scholar who provided a theoretical basis for the RCE and media planning processes. Since all the planners were graduates in the field of education, they knew how to apply learning theory to the planning of communication media such as radio and the written word for Thailand's rural population.

2. Framing policy, objectives, and guidelines for the overall planning of RCE and its communication media strategies. In their positions, the high-ranking planners were already at the policymaking level within the AED. Thus, they were involved in formulating policy, objectives, and plans, not only for the RCE Program and its media strategies, but also for other nonformal education programs.
3. Drawing up a general long-range strategic and operational plan for the RCE Program and its affiliated communication media programs. One aspect was the framing of the proposal for Project #4. This plan clearly spelled out the general and long-range strategies and operations of the RCE. The high-level planners' strategic plans sometimes did not exist in written form; they developed out of group discussions and seminars and were then accepted by the planners involved.

Foreign consultants. Several foreign consultants were engaged by the World Bank and the Colombo Plan in the RCE planning process from its early stages. These consultants provided significant input into the RCE Program's strategic and operational planning processes.

Officials from outside AED. A few ranking officials from other departments became involved in the policymaking and planning processes, but on a small scale. These planners served in such bodies as ACREC. Generally, they were responsible for devising policy and operations guidelines, serving as interdepartmental liaison, and providing recommendations and possible solutions to problems.

Middle- or second-level planners

The middle-level planners were primarily a small group of officials within the AED, along with a few foreign experts. Here again, the AED officials played an active role in the planning process.

AED officials. It was not difficult to find middle-level AED planners; they were all from the RCE Central Office in Bangkok. At the time of the study, there were six staff members plus a typist.

Most of the middle-level planners had strong academic credentials in education and had pursued advanced studies and training abroad.

These middle-level planners at the RCE Central Office had two functions:

1. Coordination

This was their most important function; there were two phases:

Internal coordination. The RCE Central Office served as a link between the field operation and the high-level planners in the AED and the DGE. Internal coordination was achieved primarily by means of field trips and meetings.

External coordination. The RCE Central Office dealt mainly with the "supplier" agencies whose representatives were usually already on several coordinating committees. Interdepartmental coordination was achieved by convening the appropriate committee, in particular the ACRCE, and the Regional Administrative Committee on Nonformal Education.

In view of their liaison function, this group of middle-level planners could thus be called "coordinators."

2. Guidance

The middle-level planners at the RCE Central Office were also engaged in formulating regular operating policy and practical guidelines, primarily for officials in the field and targeted to the operations of

such education programs as interest groups and functional literacy. Certain officials were assigned to handle this on a regular basis.

Foreign experts. One foreign specialist was involved on a continuing basis in the RCE Central Office's short-term and regular planning activities.

Apart from the AED officials and foreign experts described above, there were a few government officials from outside the AED involved in the program planning, mainly as committee members, but their roles were too insignificant to be described here.

Lower- or third-level planners

The lower-level planners may be grouped into local government officials and local nonofficials or leaders.

Local government officials. They were the officials working at the RECs, particularly in the MMUs. Their primary functions were the preparation and distribution of programmed texts, reading materials, and assignments for rural participants and the maintenance of communications with field officers and learners. Hence their title of "facilitators."

Local nonofficials and leaders. A number of qualified people and local community leaders such as village headmen and volunteers were involved in program planning by providing technical input into the production and evaluation of study programs. They also served as group "facilitators."

Planners' philosophies, models, theories, and images

The preceding description of the planners' academic and professional backgrounds and functional responsibilities may aid in better understanding how RCE planning was worked out and the extent to which the planners' personal characteristics influenced the planning process. Careful examination of both cases reveals that Planner A's khit-pen philosophy and basic learning theory were widely applied to the RCE planning process at all levels. Also utilized in the planning were radio-based nonformal education models from foreign countries, as well as an indigenous one. Along with the aforementioned basic learning theory, quite a few other education and communication theories were used explicitly or implicitly in the planning process; they included such concepts as the so-called reinforcement learning, balance, two-step flow of information,

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and two-way communication theories. Since these theories were not directly concerned with planning per se, they may be termed theories in planning rather than theories of planning.

No theories of planning were explicitly used in the overall planning processes of the RCE Program and its media strategies. Certain basic assumptions were made with regard to cost-benefit methods: maximum use of existing resources, minimum provision of government financial support, and potential involvement of large-scale audience participation. Planning methods were applied mainly by intuition and in response to real world situations, rather than on the basis of theoretical, model, or methodological scientific approaches with support of empirical evidence and a data base.

In addition to the aforementioned philosophies, theories, and models, personality also greatly influenced overall planning for RCE. Planner A was regarded as a knowledgeable, pleasant person who was loved and respected by his colleagues. As chief of the AED at the time of this study, he created a friendly atmosphere conducive to the free exchange of ideas among his subordinates. He did not discharge his duties in a formal, authoritarian manner. Several of the ranking planners had similar personal outlooks. Most planners were socially aware and deeply concerned with improving the quality of life of people living in rural areas. Because of their common outlook and close working relationships, the planners were able to easily grasp Planner A's ideas, and came to share his khit-pen philosophy and concept of the basic learning process. Following several meetings and discussions, the AED chief and other planners decided upon the ways and means of applying theory and philosophy to actual conditions. Thus, RCE was viewed as the result of the collective ideas and concerted actions of groups of planners, rather than as the achievement of any one person. Planner A's personality did count a great deal in that it helped to create a friendly environment conducive to group discussion and action between colleagues, which in turn led to widespread adoption of the khit-pen philosophy and theories.

Application of philosophy and theory in planning

What follows is a description of how philosophy and theories in planning have been used in the planning processes, beginning with the popular khit-pen philosophy. The term khit-pen may be roughly defined as a combination of people's many capabilities--including critical, rational thinking and problem solving. The idea is that, with these capabilities,

one will know how to adapt physically and mentally to one's changing environment so that one can attain happiness in life. Happiness itself is considered in khit-pen philosophy to be the ultimate goal of man.

One salient feature of the khit-pen philosophy is that its content is highly consistent with basic Thai cultural values and characteristics. The philosophy emphasizes the fulfillment of an individual's own needs and interests in order to attain happiness in life and live in harmony with one's environment. In a similar manner, the basic characteristics of the Thai people center on the individual and his or her present relationship to the environment. This congruity largely accounts for the widespread application of the khit-pen philosophy to the RCE Program and several other nonformal education programs with rural target audiences. The khit-pen philosophy and the sociocultural and economic environments became a strong combined force that influenced planning for the RCE Program at all levels.

The khit-pen philosophy is not only consistent with the external environment, but also functions in parallel with the theory of the basic learning process and with the RCE and other action programs at the operational level. The following description of each component may aid in clarifying the functional relationships between the khit-pen philosophy, basic learning theory, and the RCE Program. These functional relationships are diagrammed in Figure 2. The diagram is constructed along a continuum with varying levels of abstraction and moves from problem definition through philosophy, value system, and applied theories to implementation action.

The continuum starts at the top with the khit-pen philosophy. The philosophy has as its goal for all nonformal education programs the training of people in thinking, rather than in "practicing"; this is so that they can make their own decisions and can attain happiness in life by living in harmony with the changing environment. Thus, every AED nonformal education program is geared to training khit-pen people in critical, rational thinking and problem solving. Practice-oriented education programs are left to other government agencies.

According to the originator of the philosophy, training in rational, critical thinking has to be based primarily on the process, not on the content, of the training program. What follows is the "learning process" proposed by the originator himself. This learning process, referred to here

Level of Abstraction

Problem Definition

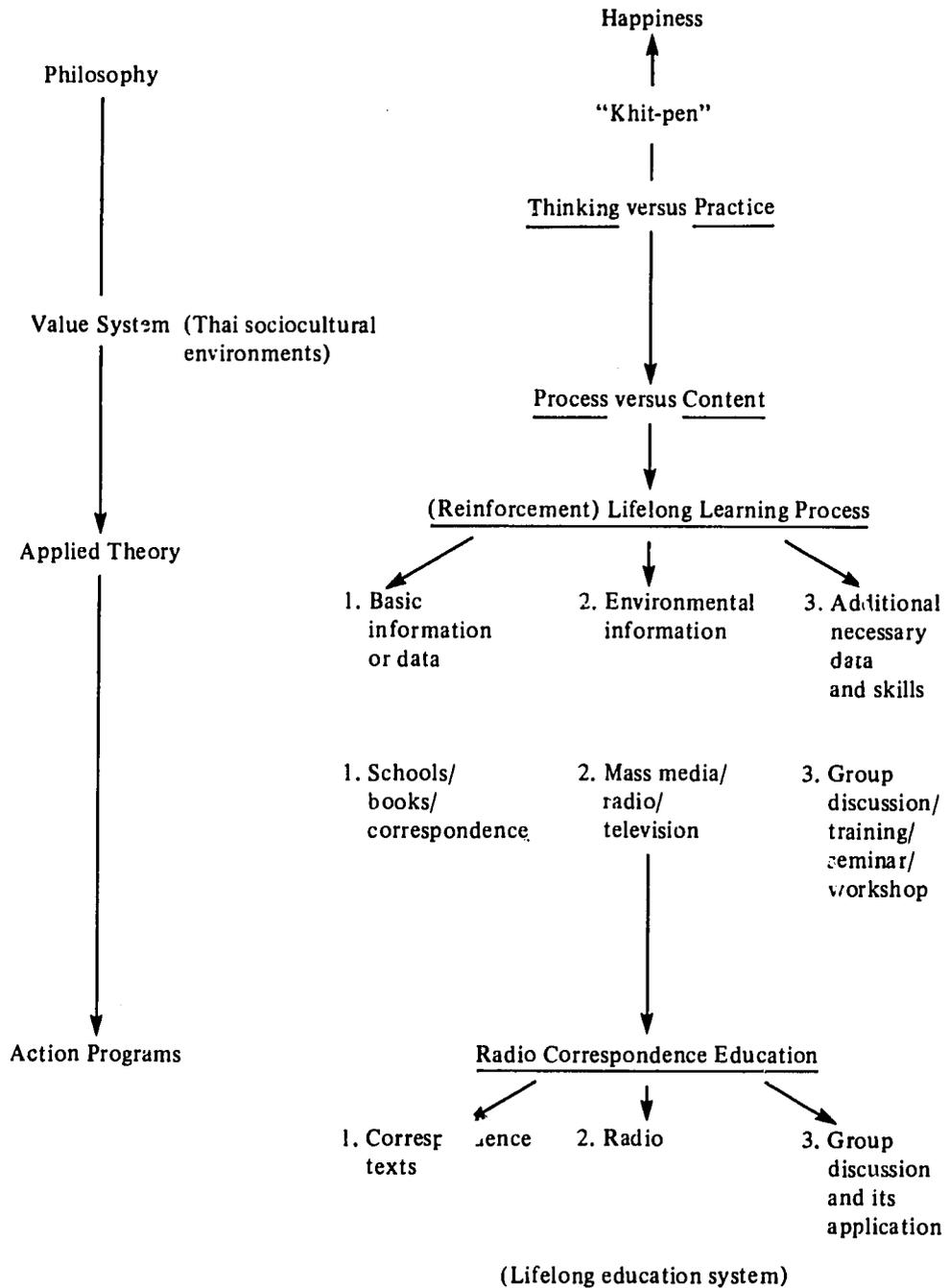


Figure 2. Functional Relationship Between Philosophy, Theory, and RCE Action Program

as "reinforcement learning process," has three functional stages: (1) provision of basic information and skills; (2) provision of environmental data; and (3) provision of additional necessary information and skills to enable one to use the data and skills provided in stages one and two in order to adapt to the changing environment.

At this stage, the functional activities of various communication components, referred to here as functional communication theory, are called upon to aid in implementing the reinforcement learning process. As was proposed by Planner A, correspondence methods and books (not to mention schools) can be used to perform the initial function of the teaching cycle, that of providing basic information. Mass communication media, such as radio, can be relied upon to perform the second function, that of providing data on the changing environment. The third function, that of providing additional support information, can be performed by such educational activities as tutoring, group discussion, and workshops. Upon completing the learning cycle, people will in theory become engaged in a process of lifelong education.

At the level of implementation, most AED nonformal education programs have been designed to encompass all three functions of the learning process and their corresponding communication media activities. As a matter of fact, the entire nonformal education system evolved into a lifelong, or continuing, education system. In the case of the RCE Program, all communication components--radio, correspondence methods, reading materials, and group discussions--were integrated into the program to perform all three teaching functions. Analysis of the subject matter indicates that the media are being used as intended.

As can be seen, such theories in planning as the reinforcement learning and functional communication theories have been explicitly used in applying the khit-pen philosophy to the RCE Program. When the RCE Program was implemented in the field, still other theories in planning were involved--the balance theory and the principles of two-step flow of information and two-way communication. However, these theories have been utilized only implicitly and certain planners may be unaware of them. The balance theory, for instance, was applied when the radio support and group discussion strategies were designed to provide information to local participants so that they could come to know themselves and their environments and could then successfully adapt. In one sense, the khit-pen philosophy is a balance theory involving man himself and his

thinking, or cognitive space, and the environment. It is assumed that insofar as one can reconcile oneself to the environment, one can attain happiness (or equilibrium) in life.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

After comparing the two cases, it appears that the planners defined educational problems for both the macro (overall) RCE planning and the micro (instructional media) planning in a parallel, consistent manner. Using the khit-pen philosophy and its related basic learning theory, the planners devised general educational objectives and defined the problems at both levels to suit the local social, cultural, and economic contexts.

In keeping with the khit-pen philosophy, the planners expanded the general goals of nonformal education programs from mere eradication of illiteracy to include attainment of happiness and improvement of the well-being of rural people by helping them to adapt themselves to their environment. However, given the fact that more than 80 percent of the Thai population live in rural areas and have less access to educational services in comparison to the urban citizenry, the planners perceived the problem as a complicated, interrelated, and challenging situation that required an integrated nonformal education program as its solution.

Based on their practical experience in the field, as well as on their philosophical and theoretical thinking, the planners at the AED conceived of media-based nonformal education programs, such as the RCE, as a solution. In view of the uniqueness of Thai cultural values and the existence of regional differences, the planners deemed it appropriate to decentralize the work of the RCE Program while expanding the administration of nonformal education to rural areas.

At the micro level, the experimentation of the RCE pilot project presented the problem of determining the relative effectiveness of the three RCE instructional media--manuals, radio programs, and group activities. From the perspective of basic learning theory, the planners wanted to learn whether the three instructional media would help improve rural participants' learning capabilities so that they could attain the universal goal of happiness in life.

It appears that the processes of problem definition at both levels had been worked out, consciously or not, by the planners at the AED in a mixed manner that was both rational and intuitive. In the initial stage, basic decisions were made in a rational manner, but later some of the detailed planning tended to be done piecemeal.

When the planners envisioned the RCE Program, these were their major objectives:

To increase the quality of educational opportunity of people living in rural areas and to help promote rural development through correspondence-based functional and relevant school-equivalence programs (Adult Education Division 1974).

RESOURCES

Analysis of the two cases revealed a similar pattern of resource planning activities and constraints. When the overall RCE Program was originally conceived, one basic assumption in the planners' minds was that the RCE scheme would require optimum utilization of existing facilities and services and minimum additional government financial support. Moreover, the planners had to rely on needed resources that were mainly beyond the control of the AED and were also in short supply. Under such constraints, a major responsibility of the planners was marshalling available resources, maximizing their utilization, and devising alternative methods of solving immediate problems of resource shortages. In general, planners at the RCE Central Office managed to do this by using liaisons to gain the cooperation and support of outside agencies.

Prior to the inception of RCE, planners had to make special arrangements with the PRD through cabinet approval to secure radio air time. As it turned out, however, only a small amount of air time could be made available by the PRD, so this essential resource had to be obtained from the armed forces radio stations.

It had originally been planned that the RCE Program would be launched with government financial support. When the Ministry of Education decided to seek loans from the World Bank to finance the establishment of administrative organizations for nonformal education in regional and provincial areas, however, a portion of the RCE investment, in particular that for office construction, personnel training, and technical assistance,

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was then drawn from the World Bank's fund. The Thai government was still responsible for other aspects, such as officials' salaries and preparation and production of radio programs, manuals, and other necessary materials. The planners also considered it desirable to incorporate the RCE organizational structure plan into the parent project funded by the World Bank. That mammoth undertaking involved the establishment of the RCE Central Office in Bangkok, four RECs, and several PLECs throughout the region.

At the regional level, resource shortages occurred and posed a serious threat to the planning for manuals, radio programs, and group discussions. The personnel problem was probably the most acute. It resulted from shortages of staff at the RECs, high turnover, and lack of trained, experienced personnel. To remedy this situation, the planners relied on persons from outside the RCE Program to serve as subject specialists in writing manuals and scripts, producing radio programs, and acting as group facilitators and organizers. Accordingly, a major part of the planning processes involved the recruitment and training of such personnel to acquaint them with RCE work and education policies.

Budget limitations also presented a problem because insufficient payment was received from participants. Thus, certain planning activities, such as hiring of more group facilitators, could not be made at some of the RECs.

ENVIRONMENT

Comparison of the two cases clearly indicates that the environmental factors of cultural values and socioeconomic conditions within Thailand had a strong impact on various aspects of RCE planning at all levels. Along with the planners' khit-pen philosophy and basic learning theory, the social, cultural, and economic environment influenced the formulation of educational goals and the definition of the problem, the decentralization of the administration system for nonformal education, the establishment of a provincial life-long education system, the selection of the RCE model, and the experimentation on and development of manuals, radio programs, and group activities.

Some of the basic Thai characteristics and values that were regarded as having implications for program planning are:

1. Sanook. The desire for pleasure with family members or close friends.
2. Krengchai. Acceptance of people as they are without actually condoning their values or actions.
3. Karma. A large majority of Thais believe that a person's social and economic position in life is the result of his "karmic balance" from a previous life. It is often felt that what an individual does in this life cannot greatly alter the present situation.
4. Work ethic. The Thai does not consider work to be an end in itself, but rather to be a means to certain specific and concrete goals, such as provision of the basic necessities of life.
5. Family relationships. The extended or joint family is extremely important. Older family members enjoy considerable respect and authority.

These and other values were recognized and considered in planning and program development. One of the planners' major concerns was the creation of a media-based nonformal education system that by its very nature would be in keeping with the real needs, values, and characteristics of the mass of the population.

By way of illustration, after a lengthy trip to foreign countries a group of Thai planners decided that alien RCE models should not be employed because of their incompatibility with the values of rural people. Instead, an indigenous model was devised that included both manuals and group activities that were considered relevant to such Thai values as sanook and krengchai.

The values and characteristics described above were considered different from Western ones in that they center on the individual and his relationship with a limited and inflexible environment, whereas Western concepts focus to a greater degree on society at large and the relationship between institutions and a changing environment. Accordingly, the Thai planners felt a strong need for the creation of a lifelong education system that would help individuals to adapt themselves to their immediate environment. Such a lifelong education system would provide structural settings for the operation of the RCE Program at the provincial level, particularly with regard to the production of manuals and radio programs and the planning of group activities.

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Whereas Thailand is homogeneous in the values and basic characteristic of its people, it is quite heterogeneous with regard to the social, cultural, and economic conditions that prevail in the country's four regions. In addition, there exists a wide range of inequalities in such areas as home environment, basic education, migration, provision of government services, and security. Given these regional differences and inequalities, Thai planners concluded that standardized nationwide nonformal education programs would not be the most effective way of improving the quality of life for the general population. They felt a strong need for a concerted research and development effort at the regional and local levels and for formulation of flexible, locally relevant programs. These considerations led to the decentralization of nonformal education administration and provided regional settings for the preparation of RCE instructional media. Because of the decentralization of the RCE administration, a good system of coordination and liaison was needed to link the RCE Central Office to the RECs and PLECs, as well as to other outside agencies.

The social, cultural, and economic environments evidently exerted a stronger influence on the RCE Program at the local level. They frequently posed a serious problem in the preparation of instructional media and group activities. This was particularly true in the case of regional geographic differences. It was often found that the RCE instructional media were not well received by participants because the materials were perceived as irrelevant to the learning situations. Tailoring the instructional media to suit local conditions became a formidable task. To cite a good example of this, people in the four regions use at least four dialects, in addition to central Thai. In designing materials accessible to all participants in all regions, the planners had to produce at least four versions of the same materials. Another example comes from group activities. Usually, groups of participants were organized at schools or other public places. It frequently happened that such meeting places were inconvenient for people in remote areas. As a result, group meetings were held at the homes of village headmen or group facilitators, or even at temples and marketplaces.

Apart from social, cultural, and economic conditions, other environmental factors had favorable implications for RCE planning. This is particularly true of education policy. The Fourth Five-Year National Economic and Social Development Plan for the years 1977-1981, the Ministry of Education's education policy guideline dated December 26, 1977, and the Education Reform Foundation Committee's general guidelines all indicate

strong support for development of nonformal education programs utilizing mass media, especially radio, to provide the rural population with greater educational opportunities. As a matter of fact, it was these favorable educational policies that prompted high-ranking officials at the Ministry of Education to seek loans from the World Bank, as well as to secure greater financial support from the Thai government.

The political climate was no less favorable. Because of the Thai government's policy of accelerating the process of rural development and of gaining the support of local people, the planners found it easy to implement their schemes.

PLANS

As one Thai planner put it, "Call it a plan or something else, it is just nothing if it has never been used or functional."

Perhaps that planner is right. The plan, then, can be best considered according to its function. From that viewpoint, three types of plans were used in designing the RCE Program and its instructional media. Not only were they used for different purposes, they were also written by different groups of planners.

The Project Proposal

Entitled "Nonformal Education for National Harmony and Development: A Project for the Development of Locally Relevant Adult Education Programs" and referred to as "Project #4," this proposal, written in English, was used mainly in securing loans from the World Bank. Dated August 1974, the plan was written by a group of high-level planners at the AED. The content of the plan was broad, for it included the parent project for the development of locally relevant nonformal education programs, which involved establishment of the RECs, PLECs, and the RCE Central Office. The project proposal was divided into three parts which dealt with: (a) summary of the aforementioned construction projects; (b) description of the organizational background, philosophy, and problems of nonformal education programs in Thailand that led to the conception of the proposed projects; and (c) description of the proposed development projects themselves, along with their objectives, justifications, and breakdowns of staff, technical assistance, and financial requirements.

The Operational Plans

These plans were designed primarily as guidelines for the operation of the overall RCE pilot project. There exist three plans of this type. The first operational plan, referred to here as the "missing" plan, is believed to be the first plan ever written by a group of middle-level planners within the AED. These pioneers were headed by a young educational supervisor who had participated in the observation trip abroad during the search for an appropriate RCE model. The plan became "missing" after its submission to the high-level planners. Little is known about its practical implications. Then there were two operational plans written after the completion of the Project #4 master plan. The first of these, entitled "Use of Radio and Television for Nonformal Education Project," was quite broad in scope and covered the use of both radio and television for all manner of nonformal education programs operated by the Ministry of Education; the focus, however, was on the RCE Program. This operational plan was produced mainly by the man who first headed the RCE Central Office. Its impact on the RCE Program's operation was minimal.

The current operational plan, dated 1978, resulted from the joint efforts of many planners, particularly those at the RCE Central Office. Entitled "Radio Correspondence Education Project," it served as a guideline for operating the RCE pilot project during the five-year period from 1977 to 1981. The plan focuses on the operation and phasing of the RCE pilot project, its target audiences, structural organization, and staff requirements.

With regard to operations, phasing, target audiences, and organizational structure, the latter two operational plans were based mainly on the master plan. They are similar in content, except that the current one is updated and much more relevant and practical than its predecessor.

Field Implementation Plan

The aforementioned plans were consistently worked out, carefully written, well organized, and in a unified form. Plans produced at the field level, however, were somewhat different. They came in many forms and under many names. Their sources included intuition, routine fieldwork, practical experience, field trips and inspection tours, and attendance at meetings, seminars, and workshops. Regardless of name, be it official report, work schedule, field trip report, survey report, or seminar report, all were used as plans in the field

operations, mainly in the working processes of low-level official and nonofficial planners. By their functions, all of these reports were definitely plans.

PROCESSES

It appears that the RCE planning processes at the macro (overall) level and the micro (instructional media) level corresponded and overlapped. All of the planning processes can be integrated and described in a sequential manner, starting with the selection of an appropriate RCE model and the designing and evaluating of the RCE pilot project at the macro level and progressing to the preparation and evaluation of instructional media at the micro level.

All the planning processes were based on the khit-pen philosophy and basic learning theory proposed by Planner A and his colleagues. They were also greatly influenced by Thai cultural values and socioeconomic conditions in the country. After defining the problem as the existence of an education gap between urban and rural areas, a group of high-level planners began a long search for an appropriate RCE model. They finally ended up with an indigenous model that comprised three instructional media--manuals, radio programs, and group discussion. The same group of planners then decided to test the relative effectiveness of the three media in the learning process.

After the testing, another group of planners at the RECs prepared manuals, radio programs, and group activities to support the RCE operation. During this process, they were involved primarily in the recruitment and training of such personnel as subject specialists, program producers, and group facilitators to aid in planning the instructional media.

The planning processes at both the macro and micro levels involved evaluation of the planning activities conducted by local staffs and one foreign consultant. The evaluation was done on short- and long-range bases and employed both simple, intuitive methods and scientific methods such as sample surveys and content analyses. Formative and summative evaluation were also conducted and were followed up with a seminar to review the planning results.

The entire planning process was carried out with the internal constraint of resource scarcity and was based on such rigid assumptions as maximum use of existing resources and

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minimum use of additional government funding. Accordingly, the RCE Program had to rely on an efficient coordination system at its Central Office to gain the cooperation of outside agencies. A group of six officials performed the coordinating function. Given the decentralized nature of the RCE Program and the nonformal education administration, the coordination mechanism was very important.

Major segments of the planning processes took place within the Thai bureaucratic organization with Planner A at the helm. A series of decisions also resulted from several meetings and discussion between official planners at the AED who had worked together for a long time and who knew one another well.

SUMMARY

Judging from the comparative analysis of the planning processes at both the macro and micro levels, the RCE planning processes were guided and shaped by two major factors: (1) the planners' philosophy of khit-pen and basic learning theories and (2) Thai cultural values and socioeconomic environment.

It was found that those two factors, in combination with the planners' personalities and the organizational setting, greatly influenced various aspects of the planning processes, including problem definition, the search for and adoption of the RCE model, project experimentation and evaluation, reorganization and coordination of the nonformal education system and its administration, and instructional media production and evaluation. Although the planning for RCE was done without set theories or principles as bases or guidelines, it was founded on certain assumptions: for example, that maximum use would be made of existing resources, that there would be a minimum of additional government financial support, and that there was potential for large-scale audience participation.

The RCE Program appears to have been planned, consciously or not, in a system-oriented manner. The entire planning process comprised several systematically interrelated components. In light of the conceptual framework of the General System Theory (GST) as proposed by Wedemeyer (1977), the entire process of RCE Program planning can be broken down into four general phases: problem definition; preplanning; five-year experiment or pilot, 1977-1981; and implementation, starting in 1971 (see Figure 3). Evaluation, which served as a feedback mechanism, unified the phases. Within this conceptual framework, RCE planning can be summarized here.

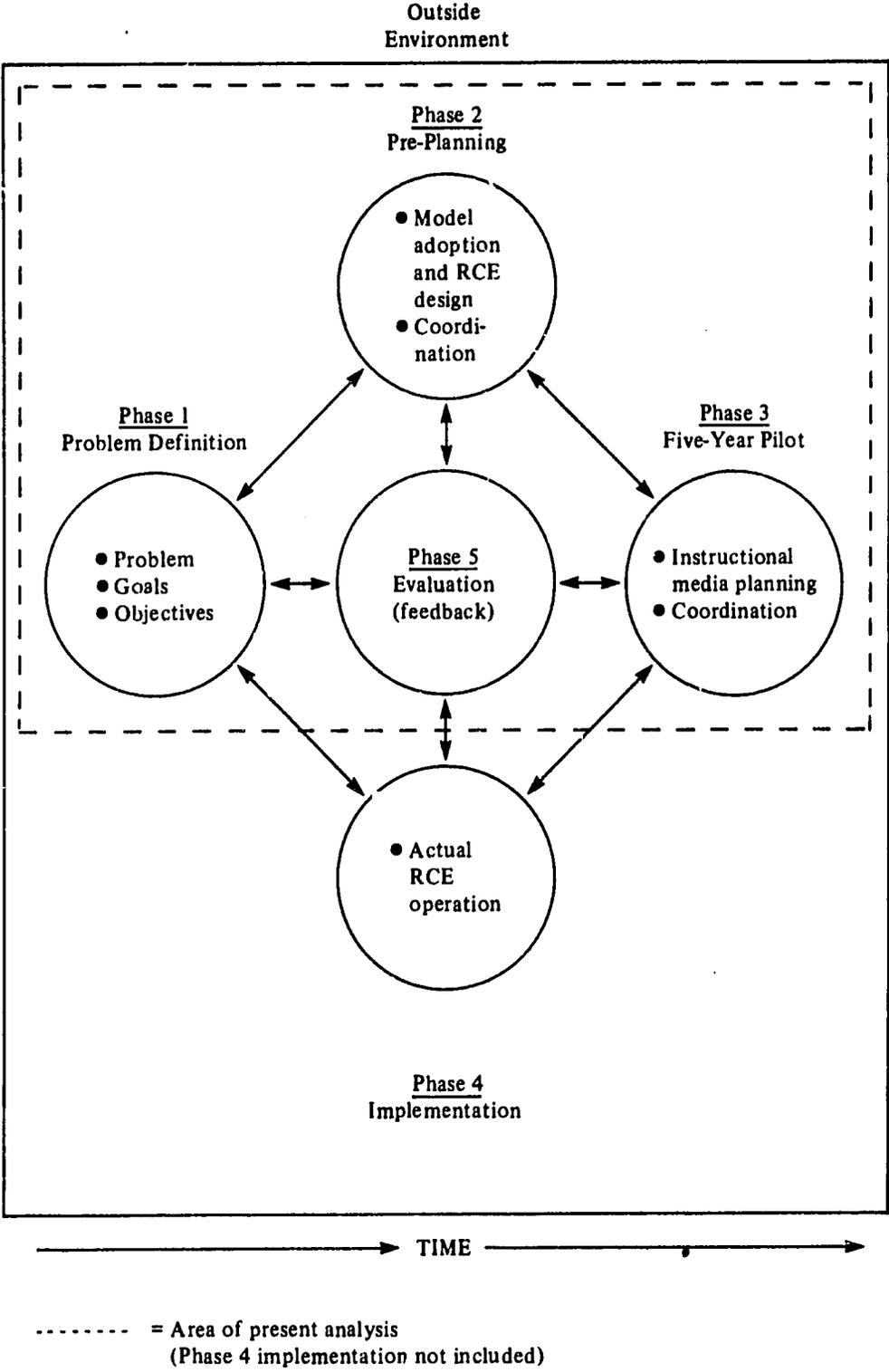


Figure 3. The Overall RCE Planning Process

Phase One: Problem Definition

The planning for the RCE Program was done by a small group of government officials at the AED under the leadership of Planner A. These official planners shared several outlooks. It is noteworthy that most of them grew up in rural areas and thus were quite familiar with local socioeconomic and cultural conditions. They studied abroad for advanced degrees and thus were theoretically oriented. The aforementioned characteristics were closely connected with the planners' interest in applying the khit-pen philosophy and the basic learning theory to RCE planning; also involved was their deep concern for the local socioeconomic and cultural environment of the planning program.

Planner A considerably influenced the planning process, mainly by means of his khit-pen philosophy and pleasant personality. Although a series of decisions was made in a bureaucratic organization with Planner A at the top echelon, it was not done in a formal, authoritarian manner. Since all the ranking planners knew each other well and worked closely together, they could easily grasp what each other thought and quickly resolved any difficulties that arose.

Using the khit-pen philosophy and sociocultural sensitivity orientation as a frame of reference, a group of Thai officials became involved in the planning of the radio-based nonformal education program. They were faced with the longstanding problem of the urban-rural educational gap and perceived it as a complex, interrelated, and challenging phenomenon which originated in the basic formal school system and which urgently called for solution by means of a broad, integrated nonformal education program. These high-ranking official planners conceived of media-based nonformal education programs such as RCE as appropriate solutions to the problem. The RCE Program was conceptualized in parallel with the idea of a much larger, long-range nonformal education development project involving the decentralization of nonformal education administrative structures and the establishment of lifelong education systems in various provinces throughout the country. This nonformal education development project was planned so that the new set-ups would also provide structural facilities and contexts for the implementation of the RCE Program in all four regions of the country.

Phase Two: Preplanning

Once the problem was defined, the planners moved on to the second stage, preplanning. During the period spanning roughly 1974 to 1977, a group of ranking Thai planners was engaged in the search for, and design of, a radio-based non-formal education program to benefit the out-of-school population in rural areas. The planners spent most of this time searching for an appropriate model. The process took them on a long observation trip to African and American nations and also involved extensive research and study. After a lengthy search, the planners decided that, given the characteristics of Thailand's people and the uniqueness of their cultural values, along with the wide variations in socioeconomic conditions in rural areas, they should design an indigenous RCE model, rather than simply adopt an alien one.

The planners' khit-pen philosophy and basic learning theory, as well as Thai cultural values, argued for the inclusion of group discussion as an essential component in the RCE model. As Planner A stated, group discussion could be used effectively to supplement reading materials by providing additional support skills and information. Accordingly, the Thai planners decided to integrate group discussion into the RCE model and in so doing, differentiated it slightly from existing foreign models.

In addition to group discussion, the Thai RCE model utilized manuals and radio programs which were commonly used in many foreign models. The Thai planners found these two RCE components well suited to the Thai environment and national character, as well as in keeping with the khit-pen philosophy and basic learning theory. As Planner A put it, reading materials could be used in any RCE program to provide learners with functional curriculum, basic knowledge, and skills, whereas radio could be utilized as a channel for providing useful information on the changing environment so that individuals could adapt themselves to their surroundings and so attain happiness in life. The planners also regarded radio as an appropriate means of extending educational opportunities to larger segments of the out-of-school population in remote areas on a relatively low-cost basis.

Following the same line of philosophical and theoretical reasoning, the planners decided to experiment with a new RCE model, primarily to learn how the three instructional media components functioned within the Thai cultural, social, and economic contexts. More specifically, the planners wanted to

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see whether manuals, radio broadcasts, and group discussion were indeed functioning in the complementary manner espoused in the khit-pen philosophy and their basic learning theory, and whether they were in keeping with Thai cultural values and the socioeconomic environment.

Phase Three: Five-Year Pilot

During the third stage, the implementation of the five-year pilot project, the planners were faced with internal constraints resulting from the scarcity of such resources as organizational structures, communication facilities, personnel, and financial support. RCE Program planning was based on such rigid assumptions as maximum utilization of available resources and minimum involvement of additional government monetary support. Under such circumstances, the planners had to utilize resources and technical input from outside the AED in the most efficient manner possible. Fortunately, when the RCE pilot project was running, the Nonformal Education for National Harmony and Development Project (also known simply as "Project #4") was devised and jointly undertaken by the Thai Ministry of Education and the World Bank. As a response to variations in local cultural values and socioeconomic conditions, Project #4 provided for the establishment of four RECs as part of the systematic decentralization of the adult education administration and the expansion of lifelong education systems into provincial areas. These centers provided facilities and structural organization for the RCE Program's operation throughout the country. Given the structural setting, the planners had to design and implement an efficient coordination system; this was done by a small group of officials at the RCE Central Office.

During the course of the pilot project, the planners also engaged extensively in instructional media planning at the RECs. As was the case with problem definition, adoption of an RCE model and the design and decentralization of the nonformal education administration, the planners adhered to the khit-pen philosophy and basic learning theory, and also looked to local cultural values and geography as guidelines when they developed the content of manuals, radio programs, and group discussions. As the planners stated, all three instructional media had to be designed in such a manner that they not only functionally complemented each other with regard to the basic learning process, but were also relevant to the rural out-of-school population. The planning of instructional media was mainly done at the RECs and involved local officials and such people as village headmen and community leaders.

Phase Four: Implementation

Since the RCE program was only at the experimental stage, its actual implementation has not yet taken place. It is, however, planned that after the end of the pilot study, the RCE program will be expanded to a nationwide level with the Thai government assuming heavier responsibility for financing the project. It was also anticipated that by the time the actual implementation took place around 1983, the new National Educational Radio Network (commonly known as the Second Radio Network) would be completed, thus providing enough air time for nonformal education programs, including the RCE Program. By then, the air time constraint that posed a serious problem for the RCE program would be entirely solved.

Phase Five: Evaluation

Although evaluation of the overall RCE program and its instructional media was planned and undertaken periodically in various ways over the course of the pilot project, the most important review was scheduled for the conclusion of the pilot project in 1981; it was to be in the form of a final summative evaluation and was to be followed by a national seminar. This final summative evaluation, to be conducted by a foreign consultant and local staff, would serve as the basis for later implementation of the actual RCE Program. Evaluation of, and feedback from, each phase was related to all the other phases. In this manner, the entire planning process could be improved. It was also planned that once the RCE Program was actually implemented, a series of evaluations would be periodically undertaken.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the objectives of this study was to draw analytical conclusions about the patterned relationships found in the case studies of communication planning. It is hoped that these findings and principles contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of communication planning.

Major findings are presented here in the form of hypotheses. It is hoped that readers may discern similar patterned relationships in the components of other planning processes so that these hypotheses may be tested. They are tentative and far from all-inclusive. Some of the hypotheses were drawn by means of inferential methods.

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A significant aspect of this case study of communication planning is that its findings may confirm those of other studies on this subject. If verified by other studies, the hypotheses may yield generalizations applicable to actual communication planning. More specifically, these findings may serve as guidelines in the planning of similar media-based nonformal education programs.

The findings are listed according to the study's six areas, although several fit more than one category.

Planners

1. Utilization of a specific philosophy and specific theories in planning is related to the cultural values and socioeconomic conditions in the country.

As this study shows, the khit-pen philosophy and basic learning theory were applied to nonformal education development projects and the RCE Program mainly because the basic learning theory and the concept of khit-pen were consistent with Thai cultural values and socioeconomic conditions. Both khit-pen philosophy and the basic learning theory were intended to provide individuals with the ability to think locally and solve problems and with the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to enable them to live in harmony with their environment. Most of the cultural values and basic characteristics of the Thai people as described in this study centered on the individual and his relationship to a limited, inflexible environment; this contrasted with urban, Western ideas, which focused on society at large and the relationship between institutions and a changing environment. More specifically, the Thai is prepared to accept his environment as it is and to enjoy himself as much as possible within that environment, once he has acquired khit-pen abilities.

It logically followed that any foreign theory, model, or image that was deemed inconsistent with the characteristics of the people and local cultural values would likely be rejected. The radio-based nonformal education models from African and American countries were cases in point.

2. The acceptance of a philosophy and theories in planning is related to the planners' personalities and status in an organization.

Personality was frequently cited as an important factor in the acceptance and utilization of philosophies and theories

in the planning of several education development programs. Planning for the RCE Program was no exception. The fact that Planner A (the "architect" of the RCE Program) was at the top echelon of the AED and that he had a pleasant personality and was respected by the entire staff were considered major reasons for the acceptance and utilization of his khit-pen philosophy and his basic learning theory in the RCE planning. Planner A's influence on decision-making processes within the AED was not formal and authoritarian. Decisions were the result of discussion and meetings with the entire staff. They were usually conducted in a friendly, informal atmosphere. Planner A received immense support from his staff; his subordinates shared his philosophy.

3. The degree to which philosophies and theories in planning are interrelated, coherent, and relevant to educational goals determines their applicability and utilization.

As this study shows, the khit-pen philosophy and the basic learning theory were expounded by Planner A and his staff in a coherent, logical manner with regard to objectives and functions. They both focused on providing individuals with khit-pen abilities and the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to enable them to adapt to changing environments and thus to attain happiness in life. They provided a basis for setting the goals of the AED's nonformal education programs.

4. To the extent that theories of planning are stated in a plan, they are helpful in obtaining the cooperation of outside agencies, as well as in implementing the action program.

In the case of the RCE planning, although no specific theories of planning were explicitly stated, certain basic assumptions regarding cost-effectiveness were made in the project proposal for obtaining funding from the World Bank. These assumptions included: maximum utilization of available resources, minimum use of additional government financial support, and potential for future large-scale audience participation. As it turned out, loans were secured and the cooperation of outside agencies was also obtained. Moreover, most of the stated assumptions were validated during the implementation of the RCE pilot project. The RCE Program extended educational opportunities to a large segment of the adult out-of-school population in remote areas, and did so on a low-cost basis.

5. The efficiency and effectiveness of the communication planning process can be increased by differentiation of the

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planners' roles, status, and planning function within the organization.

In this study, most of the planners were government officials within a bureaucratic organization and thus could be ranked according to authority, status, and function. They were continually engaged in the planning of the RCE Program. During the course of the planning process, the AED set up the RCE Central Office to handle the overall planning. It was staffed by six officials. These factors probably accounted for the successful undertaking of a five-year pilot project with a relatively small staff and scarce resources.

Problem Definition

6. The correlation between problem definition and program objectives determines their applicability to the implementation action program.

Using the khit-pen philosophy and their practical experience, the planners defined educational problems and then formulated objectives tailored to Thai culture and socioeconomic conditions. It was logical to establish the relationships between problem definitions and program objectives on more than one level. The khit-pen objectives served as useful guides in the planning and implementation of the RCE pilot project and certain other media-based nonformal education programs.

Resources

7. Shortages of resources needed for planning and implementation reduce the scope and function of the planning activities and of the media-based nonformal education program itself.

A salient feature of the RCE planning process was that it was carried out amidst shortages of needed resources. The scarcity of resources posed a severe constraint on planning activities: not only did it limit the scope and function of the planning and the action program, it also delayed the planning and program schedule. For example, owing to the unavailability of air time in certain parts of Thailand, a radio support program could not come on stream as scheduled; this caused delays in all nonformal education programs. The RCE pilot project itself was reduced in scope and function and was also delayed because of shortages of funding, personnel, and air time.

8. Effective organizational decentralization is directly related to the development of locally relevant media-based nonformal education programs.

The overall RCE Program was designed to reach the rural out-of-school population. To achieve that end, the administrative structure had to be decentralized. The AED and DGE were planning Project #4 at the same time. Project #4 provided for the establishment of four RECs and more than 20 PLECs throughout Thailand. The planners considered it profitable to incorporate the RCE Program into the larger development scheme and to operate the two projects in tandem, with the RCE Program utilizing the RECs as its local headquarters. When the PLECs were established in all the provinces, the RCE Program could expand its operations into the rural areas served by the PLECs.

Environment

9. The sociocultural and economic environments must be considered in the planning of any locally relevant media-based nonformal education program.

As this study demonstrates, the basic characteristics and cultural values of the Thai people strongly influenced RCE planning. The entire system of nonformal education was restructured, and the content of all RCE media, as well as the choice of RCE model, was influenced by these factors. Thus, for any media-based nonformal education program to reach the mass of the population in rural areas it has to be tailored to the target audience and its needs.

10. To the extent that environmental factors favor communication planning, they also enhance the applicability and utilization of the plans themselves.

Although the planning of RCE and its radio support strategy was done subject to the internal constraints caused by scarce resources, it was facilitated by the educational, political, and social environments. All national educational and political policies and public attitudes favored the use of radio as a teaching tool in Thailand's nonformal education programs.

11. A society's socioeconomic structure can hinder the planning processes of media-based nonformal education programs.

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Thailand's social structure, particularly at the local level, placed limitations on many aspects of planning, especially with regard to subject matter and theoretical bases. The fact that Thailand is heterogeneous in geography, climate, language, cultural values, village structure, and occupational activities, caused difficulties for the planners in their tailoring of content and teaching methods to fit target audiences, particularly those in remote areas.

Plan

12. A plan's continuity, consistency, and functional relevance are directly related to its utility and applicability to the operation program.

There exist many plans that were written by different authors for various purposes, for example, funding, policy, and operational guidance. Whereas they may be continuous and consistent, they are not necessarily functionally and locally relevant to problems arising in field operations. As a result, the more spontaneous, frequently unwritten plans that evolved in the field often proved to be more practicable than theoretically based ones for field operators to use.

Processes

13. The success of the planning process is directly related to the consistency and systematicness with which decision making is based on theoretical criteria.

Although at this time RCE cannot claim to have succeeded, its planning process was consistently done in a systematic manner by a small group of planners. Decisions were usually the result of open, friendly meetings and discussion between ranking planners and were based on the khit-pen philosophy and sociocultural considerations. The planning processes were interrelated and ranged from problem definition to adoption of model, coordination, and evaluation.

14. Efficiency of liaison directly affects access to communication resources needed for the planned activities.

A coordination system was planned and implemented at the national, regional, and provincial levels and involved all government agencies that provided communication resources for the RCE Program. The coordination system consisted of committees representing the AED, the PRD, and ETD. The latter two provided air time and technical assistance for the radio pro-

grams and textbook production, respectively. The coordination system was designed to facilitate the planning office's utilization of communication resources provided by outside agencies. Since the AED had to rely heavily on resources that were already in short supply, a good liaison with supplier agencies was essential to the survival and growth of the RCE Program.

15. The degree to which the effectiveness of a communication program is regarded as essential in the planning process is directly related to the development of adequate evaluation and feedback mechanisms within the system.

The RCE Program was operated as a pilot project to test the relative effectiveness of various communication components--radio broadcasts, manuals, and group discussions. As a result, several evaluation mechanisms were implemented and included official reports, inspection trips, regular meetings, surveys, experiments, workshops, and seminars. The communication strategies--radio broadcasts and group discussions--were also designed so that the planners could receive feedback and the results of evaluations.

16. The various communication components functionally reinforce one another in the teaching process and increase the learners' knowledge and skills, as well as their need for participation.

In the case of the RCE Program, the communication components--radio broadcasts, correspondence methods, textbooks, and group discussions--were used experimentally in the hopes that they would all contribute to the participants' knowledge and skills. The planners tried to design the content of the communication components in such a way that they would be functionally related and thus would reinforce each other in the learning process. The content was also designed to attract new participants.

17. The more locally and functionally relevant the content of the communication components, the greater the likelihood of its acceptance by the target audience.

This overlaps slightly with hypothesis 13 (above), but the emphasis in this case is on the subject matter and its relevance to the locality and function it serves. It was a rule of thumb that any communication component designed to reach rural people had to convey information relevant to their immediate surroundings and useful to their occupational activ-

ities in order for it to win their acceptance and cooperation. The Thai planners attempted to achieve this by decentralizing RCE planning, modernizing the radio support programs, revising the curricula and textbooks, and improving discussion methods by giving greater consideration to such factors as differences in dialect, traditions, and career opportunities in the villages. Evidence to support this hypothesis is as yet unavailable.

18. Feedback and evaluation mechanisms improve the quality and utility of the communication components.

It is obvious that many of the existing communication components such as programmed texts, reading materials, curricula, and radio programs were slightly revised for use in the RCE Program. They may have been outmoded or unsuited to the rural out-of-school population. However, by means of feedback from the participants and evaluation by local planners, the learning materials could be improved.

19. When participant surveys are conducted, analyzed, and heeded, the utility of the subject matter is broadened and audience participation is increased.

The RCE Program was launched without the establishment of a solid empirical data base. It was founded primarily on the theoretical and practical guidelines devised by high-ranking official planners and the criteria of existing nonformal education programs. During the operation of the pilot project, participant surveys were conducted periodically to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication components and the program itself. At the local level, random surveys of audience needs and interests were conducted prior to the start of group discussion activities in the interest group study program. Evidence indicated that, as a result of such audience surveys, the group discussion program attracted local people's attention to, and participation in, the program.

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