

Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission **ONFEC**



Ministry of Education

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Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission: ONFEC

Background in Brief

Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission (ONFEC) is one of the administrative units under the Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education responsible for providing education for out-of-school people in line with the education reform under the National Education Act 1999 and the Amended Act 2002. ONFEC is also responsible for general affairs of the Coordinating Committee for the Promotion and Support of Nonformal and Informal Education Commission.





The Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission was, in the past, derived from the status of the Department of Non-Formal Education developed through merging the Adult Education Division, under the General Education Department with the Centre of Educational Technology and the Centre for Educational Museums under the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. The Department was established on March 24, 1979. Later, in 2003, when there was restructuring of the Ministry of Education and its administrative system, all tasks of the Department were then transferred to the Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission (ONFEC) on July 7, 2003.





Main Tasks of ONFEC

The main tasks of the Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission could be categorized into 4 areas as follows :

1. Serving as the centre for promotion and coordination of lifelong education and acting as the Coordinating Committee for the Promotion and Support of Nonformal and Informal Education.
2. Enhancing capacity and creating lifelong learning opportunity of the out-of-school population, especially of the working-aged population.





3. Promoting and supporting participation of all segments in the society to take more roles in organizing nonformal education and informal education instead of the former role as provider only.

4. Promoting lifelong education through ICT system management and the use of educational ICT networks, namely distance education, science centre for education, educational radio and television stations, local radio, public library, museum, community learning centre and learning sources for upgrading educational level of the working-aged population and for lifelong learning of the general public.





Goals

Working-aged population will upgrade their educational level to at least secondary education so as to make them knowledge workers with moral values and ethics. They as well will have critical thinking with life skills and lifelong learning culture leading to the learning society on the basis of rendering support and participation among all segments in the society.





Target Groups

According to the strategy for nonformal and informal education reforms for promotion of lifelong learning, ONFEC target groups have been categorized into 3 major groups as follows :

1. Out-of-school-aged group who is considered as a marginal group in society, namely the disadvantaged ; i.e, people with disabilities, homeless people, excluded people, hilltribes, border people, children, people without nationality, women and young people or people who live far away in the remote rural areas with no service of educational unit while the Educational Service Area Office cannot provide them with formal education, such as indigenous hilltribes, etc.





2. Working-aged group, namely officers in the government organizations, workers in industries, factories and other agencies, including self-employed persons and general workforce; e.g. farmers, fishermen, small traders, housewife groups, etc.

3. Elderly group - the growing trend of population who needs to obtain informal education and other learning programmes necessary for self-adjustment and quality of life improvement so that they can live happily in the society as appropriate to their ages.

Apart from these, there are other particular groups, such as inmates, conscripts, policemen, Thai Muslims, community leaders, boy scouts, girl guides, Thai population living abroad, as well as general people who wish to learn continuously through their whole life.





Strategies for Implementation

Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission as one of the administrative units under the Ministry of Education responsible for providing, promoting and supporting nonformal and informal education for the out-of-school people has developed **Strategic Plan for Nonformal and Informal Education Reforms towards Lifelong Learning 2006-2008** called in brief **Nonformal Education Roadmap**. The Roadmap will be used by other organizations attached to ONFEC as a guiding framework for implementation to achieve its goals as follows:

Strategy 1 ➤ Directly approach various target groups of all areas.

Strategy 2 ➤ Put the emphasis on problem solving skills and life quality enhancement.





Strategy 3 ➤ Expand and develop various learning sources to provide more channels for all people to access learning opportunities.

Strategy 4 ➤ Promote and support participation and cooperation among partnership networks to conduct NFE activities across the country.

Strategy 5 ➤ Improve management system to place the emphasis on quality service provision.



Strategic Plan Framework
for
Nonformal and Informal Education Reforms
towards Lifelong Learning : 2006-2008

Strategy 1

Directly approach various target groups of all areas.

Strategy 2

Put the emphasis on problem solving skills and life quality enhancement.

By year 2008

The general public serves as the centre of learning activities, which could lead to creation of the knowledge-based society.

Working-aged population will upgrade their educational level to at least secondary education so as to make them knowledge workers with moral values and ethics. They as well will have critical thinking with life skills and lifelong learning culture leading to the learning society on the basis of rendering support and participation among all segments in the society.

Strategy 5

Improve management system to place the emphasis on quality service provision.

Strategy 3

Expand and develop various learning sources to provide more channels for all people to access learning opportunities.

Strategy 4

Promote and support participation and cooperation among partnership networks to conduct NFE activities across the country.



Activities of ONFEC

NFE activities conducted by Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission are categorized into 3 main areas: continuing education, literacy promotion and basic education equivalency programme.

1. Continuing Education

Continuing education is the educational programme provided for those who need to continue their learning after completing basic education or is the education that people can learn continuously any time as they need. Continuing education programmes under this category are as follows :

1.1 Education for vocational development is the activity organized in terms of economic vocational knowledge and skills consistent with the conditions of each region and local area to equip the learners with particular skills and expertises to increase products or to decrease production costs. In addition, the activity also intends to provide the learners with knowledge and skills on account system, marketing, and complete-cycle management in performing modern occupation, self-employment or group employment through the use of appropriate technology to achieve career development more effectively.





This includes **vocational skills training** based on the learners' needs, both general learners and learners with disabilities, **vocational development group activity** provided to the learners of the same occupation through group process, everyone in which has the chance to learn and exchange experiences from one another, **vocational skills training through the use of technology** organized for those who have already had occupation to enable them to learn how to use technology for their career development, such as account system, marketing, increasing product or decreasing production costs , etc.

1.2 Education for life skills development is the activity organized for developing life skills of the people and making them see their own value, namely family study, narcotics, democracy, natural resources and environment, physical health and hygiene, moral values and ethics, etc. These activities will be organized in various forms; e.g. camp, contest, study visit, etc.

1.3 Education for community and social development is the activity organized to respond to the policy and needs of the public for social and community development, namely organization of the community learning process, knowledge management in the community, modern technical knowledge; i.e. English, computer, learning via community internet, activities for promoting local capital policy.





2. Literacy Promotion

Literacy promotion is the education provided for those who cannot read and write simple Thai national language. Most of them live in the rural remote areas and have collapsed into illiteracy due to not using Thai language in their daily life. The activities being organized are teaching Thai language in parallel with the local language for the ethnic groups to enable them to achieve literacy standard of various levels.





3. Basic Education Equivalency Programme

This programme is organized in accordance with basic education curriculum which is the core course of the country. Its contents and learning-teaching methods are designed to suit the background of the learners who are adults with some certain knowledge and experiences. Of them are:

3.1 Nonformal education learning method in which the learners' knowledge and experiences can be transferred or accredited to enable them to further their education according for to the curricular criteria through self-study by searching for knowledge from various sources and doing assignments, such as project plan, quality of life improvement activity, supplementary learning, and group participation activity among friends and meeting with NFE teachers.

3.2 Distance education method which the learners learn from various kinds of technological media with their own learning plan. They need to contact the teacher constantly through ICT instead of group activity participation.










3.3 Educational level equivalency accreditation method in which the learners' knowledge and experiences from working or from informal learning can be evaluated for equivalency of various basic education levels without undertaking the learning course.





ONFEC DATA

Number of ONFEC Personnel

	<i>Government Officer</i>	
	Male	173
	Female	548
	Total	721
	<i>Teacher/Instructor</i>	
	Male	1,197
	Female	1,483
	Total	2,680
	<i>Permanent employee</i>	1,555
	<i>NFE volunteer teacher</i>	4,573
	<i>CLC facilitator</i>	7,405
	Grand Total	16,934

Community learning centre	=	7,603
➤ “Chalermrajgumari” public library	=	75
➤ Ratchamankalapisek library	=	1
➤ Provincial public library	=	72
➤ District public library	=	699
Total	=	847

Source : Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission (2005)

❖ Literacy rate		96.0%
<i>(Age 15 and over can read and write : 2003 est.)</i>		
❖ Male		97.5%
❖ Female		94.6%
❖ Population (2005 est.)	65.44 million	

Sources : <http://www.boi.go.th/thai/how/demographic.asp>

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/th.html>

❖ 2005 annual budget		3.58 billion baht
❖ 2006 annual budget		4.14 billion baht
		(15.57% increase)
❖ 2007 annual budget (est.)		5.26 billion baht
❖ 2008 annual budget (est.)		5.68 billion baht

Source : Budget Section, ONFEC (2006)

Estimation of NFE Learners Classified by Educational Level for the Fiscal Year 2005 - 2008

Target	Target Group	Target beneficiaries (million)				
		Total	2005	2006	2007	2008
50 per cent of the workforce have completed secondary education level 2004 = 37% 2005 = 40% 2006 = 43% 2007 = 46% 2008 = 50%	Out-of-school people					
	• Age 15-59 in the workforce who have to gain education	13.593	0.544	3.233	4.331	5.485
	• Primary level					
	• Lower secondary level	1.341	0.201	0.390	0.383	0.367
	• Upper secondary level	6.903	0.046	1.656	2.317	2.884
		5.350	0.297	1.188	1.631	2.234

Source : Thai education reform roadmap for the fiscal year
2005 - 2008 : Office of the Education Council (2005)



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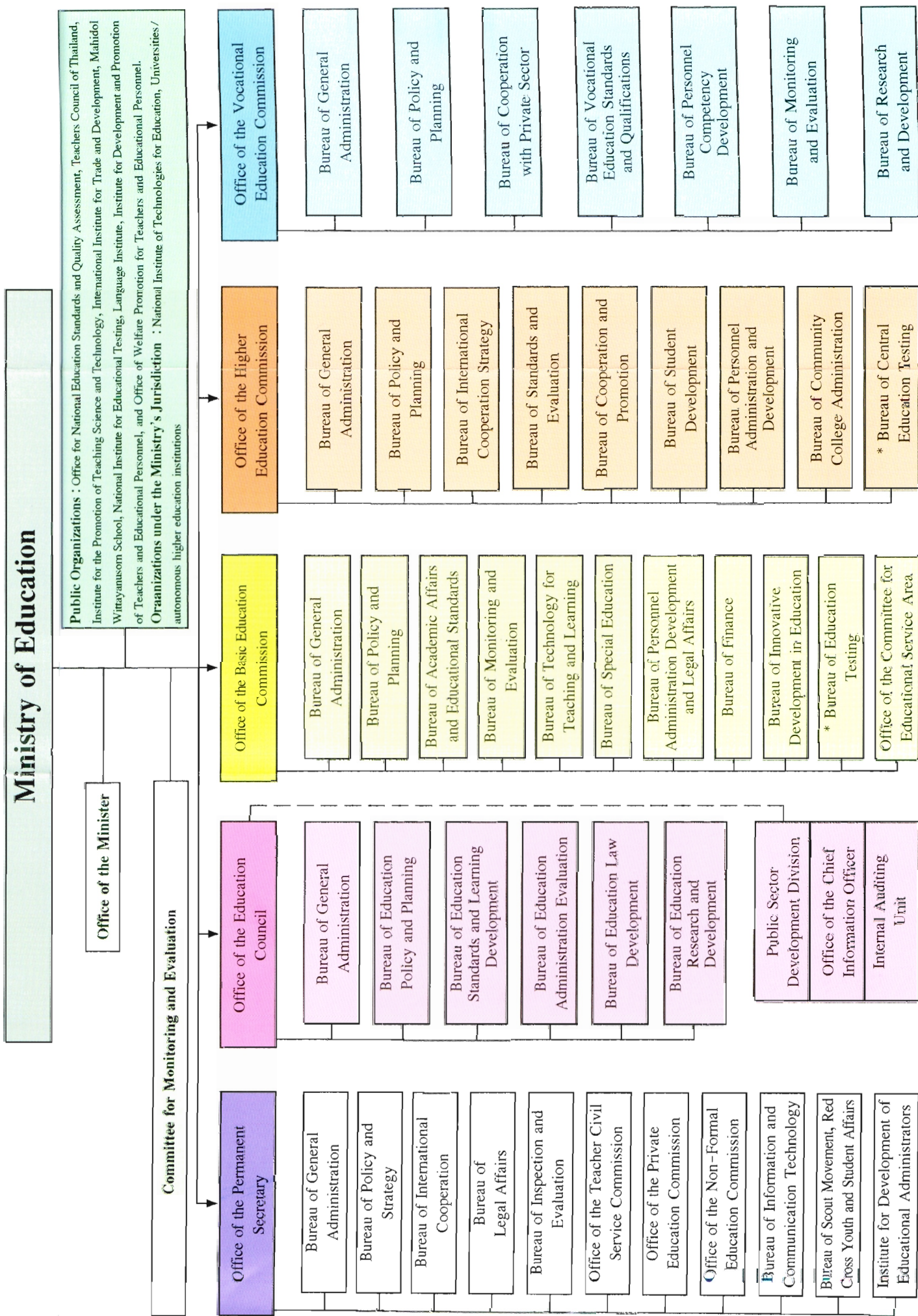
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Notes : * This will be dissolved after announcing the Royal Decree of Establishing the National Institute for Educational Testing

Organization of the Office of the Non-Formal Education Commission : ONFEC

