

THAILAND

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THAILAND REPORT
on
EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES
AND UTILIZATION OF ICT IN
SPECIAL AND WELFARE SCHOOLS AND CENTERS.

(1) Policies and measurements for utilization of ICT in the education of children with Disabilities.

The Royal Thai Government has stipulated policies and missions to develop people with disabilities by formulating the following laws and visions:

1. **The Disabled's Potentials Rehabilitation Act, B.E. 2534 (2001):** to develop and rehabilitate the disabled's potentials in 4 aspects: medication, education, occupation and work force, and society.

2. **The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2540 (1997),** “All individuals shall have equal right to receive basic education of not less than 12 years which is provided on a nationwide basis and shall be of quality and free of charge. “Unjust discrimination against people from different race, nationality, language, sex, age, physical state or health, personal status..... is prohibited”. “Persons with physical disabilities or handicapped shall have right to access the facilities and supports from the government.”

3. **The National Education Act, B.E. 2542 (1999).** Persons with all kind of deficiency and disabilities shall have the rights and opportunities to receive basic education specially provided free of charge at birth or at first diagnosis.

4. **The Ministerial Regulations, B.E. 2545 (2002):** The disabled have right to access the facilities, media, services and other forms of educational aids.

5. **The Prime Minister's visions :** The Prime Minister of Thailand, Lieutenant Dr Taksin Chinnawat, has stipulated visions and procedures for provision of education and development of the quality of life of the underprivileged disabled that all parties shall enable the disabled to be on their own, survive them from being a burden of the society and support them with sign language, IT experts, especially the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology should do researches and support the development of ICT use for the disabled by emphasizing the access to information and news. Education should be provided appropriately for each type of disabilities.

6. The Plan on Needs of Computer and Program for Welfare and Special Schools, and the Regional and Provincial Centers of Special Education.

The Head of the Planning Group of Welfare and Special Education Provision, Planning Division, Department of General Education, and her staff analyzed and established “the Plan on Needs of Computer and Program for Welfare and Special Schools, and the Regional and Provincial Centers of Special Education” which was first used in budgetary allocations, year 2004, and it allowed more disabled in the state service access. The plan consists of:

6.1 A set of Micro Computer for administration, and teaching and learning in schools and centers which includes one computer, a power supply, a table and a chair, and a printer.

(Remark : There should be 8 sets for administration and 20 sets for teaching and learning/a school.)

6.2 Five program computers for:

6.2.1 The blind;

6.2.2 The partially-sighted; (magnifying letters)

6.2.3 The students with communication deficiency.

6.2.4 The students with learning deficiency and autism.

6.2.5 The mentally retarded.

6.3 A scanner with OCR program.

(2) Utilization of ICT to overcome difficulties due to a disability

The department of General Education, Ministry of Education has established centers of special education in 13 educational regions and 63 provinces in 1997 and 2002 to cooperate with 43 special schools in 35 provinces in rehabilitating and educating the disabled. The centers also provide the 0 - 12 year old disabled with 3 types of education in line with the National Education Act, B.E. 2542: formal, non-formal and informal education. The state supports them with budget for educational materials which are developed from ICT as follows:

1. Materials for the blind :

1.1 Multimedia computer.

1.2 Braille display computer.

1.3 Magnifier for the partially-sighted.

1.4 Braille printer.

2. Materials for the deaf :

2.1 Computer for speaking and listening practice.

2.1.1 F.M. speaking practice equipment.

3. Materials for the mentally-retarded :

- A set of physical potentials testing instruments;

- A set of computer for the mentally-retarded.

4. Materials for the physically handicapped: wheelchairs to be used with a set of physical potential testing instruments.

(3) Research and development of ICT- based assistant technologies;

(4) Education software related research and development;

(5) Augmentative and alternative communication devices.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn initiated the ICT Project to conduct a research on production of the disabled-aid equipment which helps in communication as follows:

1. OPA: communication aid for the verbal disabled.
 - 1.1 Opa 2.3
 - 1.2 Opa 3.2
2. PRASAI: communication aid program for the verbal disabled.
3. KRADAN LIKHIT : reading and writing aid
4. CAI for Early Intervention
5. The development of steering motor for wheelchair project.
6. The Development of PAL Television hardware with closed Thai-English caption
7. The Picture Vocabrurary Program

(6) Training of Teachers for the Utilization of ICT

The Ministry of Education has stipulated vision, master plan on information technology for Education and communication which is comprised of 4 strategies :

1. The usage of ICT for development of learner quality;
2. The usage of ICT for educational administration and services;
3. The personnel production and development;
4. The expansion of ICT Structure for Education.