

TDRI

Quarterly
Review

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Managing Policy Research <i>by Chalongphob Sussangkarn</i> | 3 |
| The Labor Markets: An Overview <i>by Srawooth Paitoonpong</i> | 6 |
| Summary of the 2001 Year-end Conference on Poverty Reduction Strategies <i>by Ryratana Suwanraks</i> | 17 |



Voices of the poor and academic research have confirmed that the poverty situation has worsened during the past few years. How do the poor conceptualize poverty? What are recommended strategies for poverty reduction? See related article on page 17.

Managing Policy Research*

Chalongphob Sussangkarn**

Although research is somewhat different from other pursuits, the keys for effective management of a policy research institute nevertheless have many characteristics in common with the effective management of other types of organizations. One needs to have an in-depth understanding about the products and functioning of the organization, the keys for bringing about success, and potential problems that require special attention. In this article, I shall set out some thoughts on these issues based on my experience from working at the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) for about 15 years, and in managing the institute for about five years. These experiences should be of direct use for those involved in policy research, and may also be indirectly applied to other types of organizations.

TDRI was founded in 1984. During the early part of the 1980s, the country went through a phase of structural adjustment, brought about by the world economic downturn in the aftermath of the second oil shock. While the country avoided a debt crisis and recession that afflicted many developing countries through out the world, many economic restructuring policies were undertaken, partly under the advice of international organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. During that period, many senior policy makers, together with foreign experts from multilateral organizations, saw the need for Thailand to establish a policy research institute, in order to carry out sustained research to support policy formulation. It was felt that most government agencies had to spend most of their time supporting the government on short-term and urgent policy matters, with little time to spend on in-depth research to support policy formulation. At the same time, most university researches are targeted at basic or applied knowledge, and there are ineffective linkages between research and policy formulation. The Thai university system also lacked sufficient flexibility to encourage good research, following very much the public bureaucratic system. Experiences in other countries also showed the potential benefits of having a policy research institute to support policy formulation, such as, for example, that in South Korea, where the Korea Development Institute (KDI) was established in 1971.

Under the support of the government and many senior policy makers, particularly Dr. Snoh Unakul who was then the Secretary General of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB, which is Thailand's planning agency), TDRI was set up as a private non-profit policy research institute with an initial capital grant provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). CIDA's support covered non-research expenses such as office rent, library, and non-research support staff, etc. The institute had to find alternative sources to cover research expenses, including that to cover researchers' salaries, and received generous support, both financially and in kind from many agencies, such as the NESDB, the Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation (DTEC, Thailand's agency to coordinate foreign assistance), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The main reason for setting up the institute as a private non-profit organization was to provide managerial flexibility, without having to abide by rigid rules and regulations of the public sector, including its rather low pay structure. This provided incentives for those with research expertise to come to work for the institute, including those Thai researchers that were working for various organizations abroad at the time.

As TDRI was established to carry out policy research, the ability to link from research to policy became very important. Without this, the value added from establishing the institute would not be that high. The key question then became how to link research to policy, particularly given that the institute is a non-government organization.

In the early days of the institute, the thinking was that the link from research to policy could be achieved through senior individuals directly associated with the institute who also had strong links to the policy making arena. For example, Dr. Snoh Unakul, the NESDB's Secretary General, also became the first Chairman of the institute's Council of Trustees; Dr. Anat Arbbhabhrama, the institute's first President, and Dr. Virabongsa Ramangkura, Director of the Macroeconomic Policy Program, were at that time advisors to the Prime Minister. After a while, it became clear that this approach to linking research to policy was not all that

* Originally published in *Thai in Chulalongkorn Review*, No. 48, July-September 2000, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

** Dr. Chalongphob is President, Thailand Development Research Institute.

effective. The main reason is that in the Thai context policy cannot be effectively directed from the top down without sufficient support from lower levels of policy managers. If the institute's research was not accepted by middle level policy makers, then it would be very difficult for the senior policy makers to push for actual implementation of the policy recommendations from the research. Thus, it became clear that a different approach was needed. The target of the policy research cannot be limited to those in the upper rungs of policy making, but needs to spread to those policy makers lower down, in order to generate a broad consensus on the research recommendations leading to actual implementation.

Getting senior policy makers who were directly involved with TDRI to accept the recommendations from the institute's research was relatively easy. However, getting acceptance from lower levels of policy makers who had no direct links to the institute, and who might not have seen much importance in having such an institute, was much more difficult. The key was to create a process where there was a feeling of joint ownership in the research and the policy recommendations stemming from the research. If, for example, a researcher produced a research report that he or she believed had good policy recommendations that should be implemented. If the researcher took the report to present to a policy maker and said that my ideas are highly beneficial for the country and you should implement them, then it was likely that after the researcher had left the room, the research report would simply end up on the shelf, or worse, in the waste paper basket. This is easy enough to understand. If the policy maker does not feel any ownership in the research, then it is difficult to expect him/her to push for the implementation of the recommendations from the research. Everyone needs to feel that they can come up with their own ideas, rather than simply implementing someone else's ideas. Therefore the process of research needs to stress the involvement of policy makers in all steps of the research, from beginning to end, so that the final research outcome appears as a joint product between the researchers and those who will implement the policy recommendations from the research.

An effective process whereby researchers and policy makers can jointly participate in research does not happen automatically or easily. It requires adjustments from both the researchers and the policy makers. From my own experiences, the ones that need to adjust most are the researchers. There are at least three limitations that researchers have to overcome in order to participate effectively with policy makers in research. Firstly, many researchers think that they know everything. In actual fact, researchers (the good ones) have strengths concerning the conceptual framework and analytical methods for research on particular problems. However, they usually have limitations in not fully understanding the constraints, complexities and trade-offs inherent in actual policy implementations. Thus, many policies recommended by researchers tend to be somewhat abstract or have an "ivory tower" nature, and are difficult

to implement. Secondly, many researchers come from a teaching background, and they have a tendency to regard those in the policy making bureaucracies as though they are their students, and in actual fact many bureaucrats may have been their students in the past. However, effective participation in research between researchers and policy makers requires that each side treats the other as intellectual equals. Researchers need to give credit to the policy makers for having better knowledge of certain aspects of the research than they do, and can thus contribute equally to the research, particularly on aspects of effective policy implementation. And thirdly, research as an occupation stresses the ownership of ideas. In academia, researchers carry out research to develop new ideas, write them up and publish them in books or journals with the names of the researchers appearing as authors of these ideas. Progress up the academic ladder depends on these research outputs. However, for policy research where the stress needs to be on joint ownership of ideas, researchers need to be particularly careful about claiming ownership of ideas. This does not mean they should never claim ownership, but they need to do it in a way that does not create an impression that all the key ideas came from the side of the researchers, which would create a feeling of inferiority for the policy makers. A stress on recommendations that were developed jointly is particularly useful, as this gives equal credit to the policy makers and will generate additional impetus to bring the policy recommendations to actual fruition.

Policy makers participating in the research need to adjust as well. They need to accept that what may come out of the research may not be what they would like to see or had in mind from the beginning. They must recognize that researchers can bring new perspectives to bear on a problem and generate new insights based on sound conceptual frameworks and analytical methods, leading to more prudent policy making. If policy makers simply want researchers to rubber stamp their own ideas, then there would be little value added from the research. At the same time, if researchers are simply content at becoming rubber stamps for policy makers, then public acceptance in their technical impartiality will quickly decline.

If researchers and policy makers can make mutual adjustments and work effectively together, then the research output tend to be better than what each side can achieve by themselves. There will be a blend of each side's strengths, and in this case one plus one becomes greater than two. This method of working together is what TDRI tries to encourage, and outcomes from the past experiences have been highly satisfactory in most cases. Obviously there will be cases where no consensus can be reached between the researchers and the policy makers. In such cases, one simply needs to accept the differences as best as one can. The key also is to make sure that the institute does not depend too much financially on any one particular source of contract research, otherwise that important source may begin to influence research recommendations and the impartiality of the research would be affected.

When discussing policy research, it is unavoidable to mention politics, as the political arena is where policy is made. In the case of TDRI, we have a deliberate policy to be non-partisan politically, as clear political leanings would inevitably affect research outcomes and eventually public acceptance in the impartiality of our research. This issue is considered to be of utmost importance, and it is a delicate matter that requires special attention from management. What can be done at the institutional level is to have clear rules and regulations about what the staff can and cannot be involved in politics. For TDRI, there are rules that no staff can be an advisor to individual politicians or political parties. However, being involved in policy research, it is difficult to avoid being involved with those who hold political positions, for example, as members of various policy committees. What is important is that the staff should not accept positions that are political positions, and in their involvement in various policy committees they should limit their comments and recommendations to those that are clearly based on technical knowledge that they themselves have expertise in.

The issue of political impartiality is obviously very delicate. It does not mean that one cannot have view points or give public comments that favor or go against one side of the political spectrum or the other. However, these viewpoints should have clear technical support, and should not be based on feelings or political leanings. It is also particularly important to understand that even technical opinions or the provision of factual information do not by themselves indicate impartiality. There are literally hundreds of issues and information of public interest, and the choice of what opinions or factual information to give, and the timing of such pronouncements, depend on each person's discretion as to what impacts he or she is after. Therefore, for an

individual to be publicly accepted as being impartial takes time, and depends on the track record of the individual. This issue reminds me of a book that I studied while still a student called "How to Lie with Statistics" which illustrated numerous ways of using factual information to give a distorted impression of reality.¹ In the current information age, the message in that book is now even more important, as those on the receiving end of information need to use careful judgment on what weight and credibility to give to each piece of information.

Finally, a critical key for success lies with the personnel. This is particularly so for a research organization, where institutional knowledge is accumulated in the brains of the research staff. Thus, high priority needs to be given to human resources development. While this is also true for other types of organizations, there may be a difference in that researchers should be thinkers by occupation and need to be managed flexibly. Putting researchers into a rigid managerial mold goes against the very concept of research, which needs people to explore various lines of thought in an open and flexible manner, possibly going astray at some point. Management needs to guide rather than regulate. Equally important, the research manager must be prepared to learn and develop himself/herself, so that he/she will gain an understanding of the subject matter that the research staff are engaged in, for without such an understanding it would be very difficult to provide appropriate guidance to the researchers.

ENDNOTE

- ¹ Huff, Darrell. *How to Lie with Statistics*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, August 1993 (Latest Printing).



The Labor Markets: An Overview

Srawooth Paitoonpong *

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives and Scope

This article provides an overview of the aggregate labor market of Thailand, covering its structure or composition, dimension and trends during 1996-2000. The period extends from the last of the boom years of the Thai economy before its crash in 1997, the crisis years that followed, and up to what appears to be the beginning of a slow economic recovery.

The data on employment in Thailand is obtained basically from a series of sample surveys (labor force surveys—LFSs) of the economically active population. This is supplemented with other secondary socio-economic data from both official and unofficial sources. The LFSs are carried out by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on a quarterly basis. In addition to the LFS and socio-economic data, the present study also makes use of information gathered through informal discussions with key informants, in order to gain further insight into the dynamics of the labor market, particularly during the economic crisis.

1.2 Seasonality and Employment Data

It should be emphasized at the outset that employment in Thailand is highly seasonal. The size and pattern of employment and unemployment vary from season to season, and thus a single set of labor force data from one season would not necessarily represent the employment pattern in another season. This fact should be always borne in mind when using and interpreting Thai employment data. To capture the seasonal variations, LFSs in Thailand are conducted on a quarterly basis, viz., in February and May, which correspond to the dry or slack agricultural season, and in August and December, which are, respectively, the wet (planting) and harvesting months.¹

For reasons of space and simplicity, this study uses data for two major seasons, the first round (February) to represent the dry or slack season and the third round (August) to represent the wet or peak agricultural season. In some cases, data for only the wet season (Round 3) — when the total employment is at its peak —

is presented. Data from these two major survey rounds also help reveal several other aspects of seasonal employment in Thailand.

II. LABOR FORCE

2.1 Population, Labor Force and Employment

The population of Thailand was a little over 62 million in 2000. The labor force, estimated at approximately 34 million (54.4% of the population) in the same year, was growing at declining rates (an annual average of 3.0% during 1980-1985, 2.9% during 1986-1990 and 1.5% during 1991-1995) mainly because of declining birth rates. With the population growth rate at about 1 percent per annum during 1995-2000, the labor force grew slowly from 32.7 million in 1996 to 34 million in August 2000, with an annual growth rate of 0.99 percent (Table 1).²

The size of the labor force was the largest in August 2000 (33.97 million), back to the level in the peak season of 1997 when the economy started to collapse. The slack-season labor force, on the other hand, steadily increased from 31.9 million in 1996 to nearly 33 million in 2000.

Generally, employment in the peak agricultural season is about 2 million or around 10 percent more than that in the dry season. During 1993-1999, employment was the highest in 1997, in both seasons. The difference between the employment in the two seasons, however, seems to have been decreasing and was lowest in 1999, though it increased again in 2000.

In 2000, peak-season employment was 33 million, or about 2.6 million more than in the slack season. This was a large increase from the average peak-season level of the previous four years, and close to the level in 1997. Slack-season employment demonstrated a similar pattern and was the highest in 2000, back to the level in 1997.

The difference in the size of the labor force between the slack and the peak seasons was not as high as the difference between the employment levels for the two seasons. The main reason for this is the different size of the "seasonally inactive labor force" which stayed out of the labor force during the slack season.

* Dr. Srawooth is Senior Research Specialist, TDRI's Human Resources and Social Development Program.

Table 1 Population by Work Status, 1996-2000

| | 1996 | | 1997 | | 1998 | | 1999 | | 2000 | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | R1 | R3 | R1 | R3 | R1 | R3 | R1 | R3 | R1 | R3 |
| | '000s | | | | | | | | | |
| Total population | 59,750.4 | 60,045.3 | 60,350.6 | 60,648.9 | 60,949.0 | 61,248.4 | 61,551.2 | 61,856.7 | 62,192.1 | 62,481.4 |
| 1. Total labor force | 31,898.4 | 32,750.0 | 32,000.2 | 33,560.7 | 32,143.1 | 33,352.9 | 32,810.2 | 33,210.2 | 32,994.3 | 33,973.0 |
| 1.1 Current labor force | 30,740.5 | 32,586.3 | 30,964.2 | 33,454.9 | 30,892.2 | 33,275.9 | 31,740.3 | 33,073.9 | 31,838.5 | 33,813.7 |
| 1.1.1 Employed | 30,099.2 | 32,232.3 | 30,266.3 | 33,162.3 | 29,412.9 | 32,138.0 | 30,024.5 | 32,087.1 | 30,420.5 | 33,001.0 |
| - At work | 28,088.3 | 31,760.4 | 28,308.9 | 32,714.5 | 26,958.5 | 31,460.9 | 27,675.6 | 31,209.7 | 28,089.0 | 32,197.5 |
| - With job but not at work | 2,010.8 | 471.9 | 1,957.4 | 447.8 | 2,454.4 | 677.0 | 2,348.9 | 877.4 | 2,331.4 | 803.5 |
| 1.1.2 Unemployed | 641.3 | 353.9 | 697.8 | 292.5 | 1,479.3 | 1,137.9 | 1,715.7 | 985.7 | 1,418.0 | 812.6 |
| - Looking for work | 119.6 | 110.1 | 179.5 | 96.4 | 402.8 | 476.2 | 475.8 | 326.0 | 355.3 | 283.7 |
| - Not looking/available for work | 521.6 | 243.7 | 518.3 | 196.1 | 1,076.5 | 661.6 | 1,239.8 | 659.7 | 1,062.7 | 528.8 |
| 1.2 Seasonally inactive labor force | 1,157.8 | 163.7 | 1,035.9 | 105.7 | 1,250.8 | 76.9 | 1,069.8 | 137.2 | 1,155.8 | 159.3 |
| 2. Persons not in labor force | 13,744.5 | 13,119.4 | 14,334.9 | 13,238.0 | 14,888.6 | 13,912.9 | 14,923.8 | 14,763.7 | 15,468.1 | 14,739.1 |
| - Unpaid family workers | 4,007.4 | 3,539.3 | 4,195.0 | 3,450.1 | 4,341.2 | 3,589.7 | 4,217.1 | 3,723.7 | 4,343.5 | 3,485.1 |
| - Students | 5,472.8 | 5,518.9 | 5,811.0 | 5,580.4 | 6,089.9 | 5,912.5 | 6,260.2 | 6,176.6 | 6,383.1 | 6,228.4 |
| - Too young/old/incapable of work | 3,379.0 | 3,377.4 | 3,463.0 | 3,517.1 | 3,660.6 | 3,623.7 | 3,694.0 | 3,799.0 | 3,820.2 | 3,854.0 |
| - Other | 885.2 | 683.8 | 865.7 | 690.3 | 796.7 | 786.8 | 752.3 | 1,064.2 | 921.1 | 1,171.4 |
| 3. Persons under 13 years of age | 14,107.4 | 14,175.8 | 14,015.4 | 13,850.2 | 13,917.2 | 13,982.5 | 13,817.1 | 13,882.7 | 13,729.6 | 13,769.2 |
| | Percentage | | | | | | | | | |
| Total population | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total labor force | 53.4 | 54.5 | 53.0 | 55.3 | 52.7 | 54.5 | 53.3 | 53.7 | 53.1 | 54.4 |
| Current labor force | 51.4 | 54.3 | 51.3 | 55.2 | 50.7 | 54.3 | 51.6 | 53.5 | 51.2 | 54.1 |
| Employed | 50.4 | 53.7 | 50.2 | 54.7 | 48.3 | 52.5 | 48.8 | 51.9 | 48.9 | 52.8 |
| - At work | 47.0 | 52.9 | 46.9 | 53.9 | 44.2 | 51.4 | 45.0 | 50.5 | 45.2 | 51.5 |
| - With job but not at work | 3.4 | 0.8 | 3.2 | 0.7 | 4.0 | 1.1 | 3.8 | 1.4 | 3.7 | 1.3 |
| Unemployed | 1.1 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 0.5 | 2.4 | 1.9 | 2.8 | 1.6 | 2.3 | 1.3 |
| - Looking for work | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| - Not looking/available for work | 0.9 | 0.4 | 0.9 | 0.3 | 1.8 | 1.1 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 1.7 | 0.8 |
| Seasonally inactive labor force | 1.9 | 0.3 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 2.1 | 0.1 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 1.9 | 0.3 |
| Persons not in labor force | 23.0 | 21.8 | 23.8 | 21.8 | 24.4 | 22.7 | 24.2 | 23.9 | 24.9 | 23.6 |
| - Unpaid family workers | 6.7 | 5.9 | 7.0 | 5.7 | 7.1 | 5.9 | 6.9 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 5.6 |
| - Students | 9.2 | 9.2 | 9.6 | 9.2 | 10.0 | 9.7 | 10.2 | 10.0 | 10.3 | 10.0 |
| - Too young/old/incapable of work | 5.7 | 5.6 | 5.7 | 5.8 | 6.0 | 5.9 | 6.0 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.2 |
| - Other | 1.5 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.9 |
| Persons under 13 years of age | 23.6 | 23.6 | 23.2 | 22.8 | 22.8 | 22.8 | 22.4 | 22.4 | 22.1 | 22.0 |
| Current unemployment (1.1.2/1.1) | 2.1 | 1.1 | 2.3 | 0.9 | 4.8 | 3.4 | 5.4 | 3.0 | 4.5 | 2.4 |
| Total unemployment ((1.1.2+1.2)/1) | 5.6 | 1.6 | 5.4 | 1.2 | 8.5 | 3.6 | 8.5 | 3.4 | 7.8 | 2.9 |

Notes: (a) R1 = February; R3 = August;

(b) Total labor force = Current labor force+Seasonally inactive labor force.

Source: Labor Force Survey Report, National Statistical Office, various years.

About 2.4 percent of the labor force was unemployed in the peak season and 4.5 percent in the slack season of 2000. If the seasonally inactive labor force was counted as being unemployed, the proportion of the unemployed would become 2.9 percent and 7.8 percent in the high and the slack seasons, respectively.

The remaining 28.5 million people (45.6% of the population) were not in the labor force. Of these, 13.8 million were less than 13 years of age and 14.7 million were 13 and over (working age).³ The latter included 6.2 million students (41.9%), 3.5 million family (household) workers, and 3.8 million who were too old to work.

2.2 Labor Force Participation Rate

Because the patterns were similar for the data of Round 1 and Round 3 (with the rates for Round 3 generally a little higher) only the rates for Round 3 are

presented. The male participation rate for the group aged 25 to 59 was relatively high (90% or more in most cases) and stable from 1989 to 1997. It then declined during 1997- 1999. The rates for males in the 15- 19 and 20-24 age groups had been decreasing slowly, mainly due to the expansion of the education system, while the rate for the 13-14 age group was decreasing and approaching zero (becoming less than 10%) in 1998 and 1999. This was likely to be due to the raising of the minimum working age to 15 years as stipulated by the 1998 Labor Protection Act, as well as increasing school enrolment.⁴

The participation rates of Thai women had been relatively high, especially for those in the 20-49 age group (more than 80% from 1989 to 1990). The rates for this age group declined very slowly to the level of 70-80 percent in 1996, and then declined further, especially for the 20-24 age-group, to 62.5 percent in 1999. The participation rate for the group aged 15-19 decreased

markedly from 72.2 percent in 1989 to 26.3 percent in 1999. Similar to the aforementioned decline in the male group aged 13-14, this decline too could be attributed to the expansion of educational opportunities.

In general, the labor force participation rates for all age groups and both sexes demonstrate a declining trend throughout the last five-year period. The economic crisis of 1997 did not seem to have a strong impact on participation rates, particularly during the high season, although there was some adjustment in the labor supply and employment in some economic sectors and along the urban-rural axis. For example, labor force in the construction sector decreased while there was an increase in other sectors during the period of crisis. The crisis contributed to the expansion of the male labor force in urban areas. The labor force in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area increased the most. Regionally, the North was the only region to register a decrease in the labor force during the crisis. The impacts of the crisis on the Thai labor force indicate that the lower the education level and the younger the workers, the larger the decline in employment (Srawoath et al. 2001, 166).

2.3 Education Levels of the Labor Force

In 2000, almost 70 percent of the labor force had only primary education, and about 10 percent had university education. This was, however, an improvement from 1996, for both levels (Table 2). During 1990-1998, the transition rate from the elementary to the lower-secondary level was about 80 percent, from lower-secondary to upper-secondary about 50 percent and from lower-secondary to vocational education 42.5 percent. In 1993, the labor force participation rate for the population not in school was the lowest (59.3%) for the population with vocational education and the highest (91.1%) for those with university education.

2.4 Unemployment and Underemployment

Unemployment

Unemployment measurement in Thailand is based on LFSs, partly because there are no unemployment insurance and unemployment registration schemes, which would normally give a fair estimate of unemployment in a country. The LFS defines the unemployed as "persons, 13 years of age and over who, during the survey week did not work even for one hour, had no jobs, business enterprises or farms of their own from which they were temporarily absent, but were available for work." The unemployed consist of those who had been looking for work and those who had not been looking for work due to illness or because they believed that no suitable work was available. This group also included those waiting either to take up a new job, or for the agricultural season to begin, or for some other reasons.

Unemployment in Thailand had been generally low, around 1 percent, particularly prior to the 1997 crisis. There are several reasons for the low open unemployment rate. First, a large proportion of the labor force comprises own-account workers (self-employed) and unpaid family workers, mainly in agriculture. According to the LFSs, self-employed and unpaid family workers accounted for 58.7 percent of the total employment in 1999. Second, as in many other developing economies, the informal sector plays an important role in providing employment opportunities for the labor force. Third, Thailand does not yet have unemployment insurance system, which would encourage workers to report their unemployment.

In 2000, unemployment was approximately 1.4 million (or 4.5% of the current labor force) and 0.81 million (2.4%) in the slack and peak seasons,

Table 2 Employment by Education, 1995-1999

| Education Level | 1995 | | 1996 | | 1997 | | 1998 | | 1999 | | 2000 | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | R1 (Feb) | R3 (Aug) | R1 (Feb) | R3 (Aug) | R1 (Feb) | R3 (Aug) | R1 (Feb) | R3 (Aug) | R1 (Feb) | R3 (Aug) | R1 (Feb) | R3 (Aug) |
| | (million people) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Employment | 29.06 | 32.58 | 30.10 | 32.23 | 30.27 | 33.16 | 29.41 | 32.14 | 30.02 | 32.09 | 30.42 | 33.00 |
| Upper elemen. and Lower ^{a/} | 22.27 | 25.40 | 23.04 | 24.77 | 22.61 | 24.94 | 20.95 | 22.95 | 21.01 | 22.39 | 20.80 | 22.58 |
| Lower Secondary | 2.65 | 2.90 | 2.90 | 3.23 | 3.02 | 3.37 | 3.38 | 3.86 | 3.61 | 3.84 | 3.76 | 4.18 |
| Upper sec. & Vocational | 1.85 | 1.98 | 1.84 | 1.88 | 2.07 | 2.17 | 2.23 | 2.36 | 2.35 | 2.55 | 2.62 | 2.83 |
| University | 2.25 | 2.29 | 2.29 | 2.34 | 2.54 | 2.68 | 2.85 | 2.96 | 3.02 | 3.29 | 3.22 | 3.39 |
| Unknown | 0.03 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| | (Percentage) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Employment | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Upper elemen. and Lower | 76.7 | 78.0 | 76.6 | 76.9 | 74.7 | 75.2 | 71.2 | 71.4 | 70.0 | 69.8 | 68.4 | 68.4 |
| Lower Secondary | 9.1 | 8.9 | 9.6 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 10.1 | 11.5 | 12.0 | 12.0 | 12.0 | 12.4 | 12.7 |
| Upper sec. & Vocational | 6.4 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 5.8 | 6.8 | 6.6 | 7.6 | 7.4 | 7.8 | 7.9 | 8.62 | 8.59 |
| University | 7.7 | 7.0 | 7.6 | 7.3 | 8.4 | 8.1 | 9.7 | 9.2 | 10.1 | 10.3 | 10.6 | 10.3 |
| Unknown | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.05 | 0.02 |

Note: a/ Upper elementary = grade 5-6; lower elementary = grade 4 and below.

Source: Calculated from LFS data (NSO).

respectively (Table 1). The 1997 financial crisis caused unemployment to increase significantly. As can be seen from Table 1, the slack-season unemployment rate jumped from 2.1 percent of the current labor force in 1996 to 4.8 percent in 1998 and 5.4 percent in 1999. It should be noted that the number of unemployed persons is relatively higher in the slack season than in the peak agricultural season.

The age profile of the unemployed in 1999 indicates that during the slack season the largest proportion was in the 20-24 age group (26.5%), followed by the 25-29 (19.2%), and 15-19 (15.5%) age groups. During the wet season, the 20-24-year-olds still dominated the unemployed, but were followed by those in the younger age group (15-19) and then those aged 25-29. By sex, in 1999 the ratio of male unemployment was higher than that of female unemployment in both seasons. Before the crisis, however, the ratio of female unemployment was slightly higher than that of male unemployment in the slack season. In the peak season, the ratio of male unemployment was consistently higher than for females, both before and after the crisis.

When classified by education, 46.9 percent of the unemployed had elementary education or less in 2000, a considerable decrease from 62.1 percent in 1996. On the other hand, there was an increase in the proportion of the unemployed with lower secondary, upper secondary or vocational, and university education. During the slack season, the unemployment rate for those with only upper elementary education was relatively high, probably because they were largely from the agricultural sector and were waiting for the next farming season (Srawoath et al. 2001, 143). It was also noteworthy that the proportion of the university-educated unemployed peaked in Round 3 of 1997 (20.6%), declined to 12.9 percent in 1999, and increased again in 2000 to 19.2 percent.

Underemployment

As mentioned above, unemployment in Thailand has been generally low except since the 1997 crisis, and one of the major reasons is that a substantial number of those considered employed are underemployed, or work less than they could or wished. Officially, the underemployed are defined by NSO as those who work

less than 35 hours per week during the week of survey. In this study, however, underemployment is arbitrarily defined to include those who work less than 20 hours per week, in order to include only those who were really in need of more work.⁵ With this definition, the number of the underemployed dramatically increased from 580,700 in 1996 to 938,400 in 1998, 953,900 in 1999, and 982,700 in 2000. This increase could be attributed to the impact of the Asian financial crisis which caused widespread reduction of work hours (Table 3).

Generally, underemployment did not show seasonality. There was no trend or direction in the underemployment figures between 1995 and 1999. In 1995, 1997 and 1999, unemployment was greater in the slack season than in the peak season, while in 1996 and 1998 it was the other way around. In 1999, the number of the underemployed was approximately 862,700 and 953,900 in the slack and peak seasons, respectively. This level indicated a significant increase from the levels during 1995-1997. It was, however, less than the level in 1998 (Srawoath et al. 2001, 144). It was also observed that workers in the younger and older age-groups accounted for a considerable part of the underemployed. The underemployment rates were also larger for the female workforce, especially in the young age groups. Thus those aged 15-19 accounted for 23.1 percent of the total underemployment in the slack season and 22.9 percent in the peak season. This young group was followed by the older age group of 40-49 (13.8% in the slack season and 12.3% in the peak season), and then the 50-59 age-group (11.8% in the slack season and 14.0% in the peak season).

When classified by education, the majority of the underemployed had completed only elementary grades or less, which was consistent with the fact that most of the underemployed were young. In 1999, during the slack season, the percentage of the underemployed with elementary education and lower was as high as 73.2 percent (697,800 individuals), and was followed by those with lower secondary education at 17.7 percent (469,300), and upper secondary and vocational education at 7.1 percent (68,200). It should be noted that there had been no significant change in the educational pattern of underemployment, except for the significant increase (as high as 200,000) from 1995 onward in the number of the

Table 3 Underemployment* by Age and Sex, 1996-2000 (Thousand people)

| | 1996 | | | 1997 | | | 1998 | | | 1999 | | | 2000 | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Total |
| 13-19 | 91.54 | 87.33 | 178.88 | 140.14 | 121.44 | 261.58 | 191.48 | 169.15 | 360.63 | 151.81 | 154.12 | 305.93 | 179.14 | 175.54 | 354.68 |
| 20-29 | 50.07 | 38.01 | 88.08 | 41.08 | 53.74 | 94.82 | 81.24 | 82.28 | 163.51 | 84.85 | 67.69 | 152.54 | 73.20 | 79.65 | 152.85 |
| 30-39 | 40.66 | 55.56 | 96.22 | 55.79 | 59.46 | 115.25 | 71.90 | 56.92 | 128.82 | 81.80 | 69.32 | 151.12 | 60.17 | 74.27 | 134.44 |
| 40-59 | 68.98 | 85.75 | 154.73 | 72.30 | 99.81 | 172.11 | 90.42 | 121.24 | 211.66 | 113.84 | 137.35 | 251.19 | 112.64 | 133.06 | 245.70 |
| 60 and up | 40.24 | 22.54 | 62.78 | 37.69 | 39.91 | 77.60 | 38.51 | 35.28 | 73.79 | 59.39 | 33.70 | 93.09 | 57.67 | 37.36 | 95.03 |
| Total | 291.49 | 289.20 | 580.69 | 347.00 | 374.35 | 721.36 | 473.54 | 464.87 | 938.41 | 491.69 | 462.19 | 953.87 | 482.82 | 499.87 | 982.69 |

Note: *Working less than 20 hours per week.

Source: NSO, Labor Force Surveys, (Round 3) various years.

underemployed with elementary education, both in the slack and the peak seasons. In 2000, workers with elementary education or lower accounted for 70 percent of the peak-season underemployment.

Among the economic sectors, agriculture accounted for most of the underemployment — about 796,300 persons or 81.2 percent of the total peak-season underemployment in 2000. This was significantly high when compared to the levels in 1995 (277,100) or 1996 (435,800) for the same season. Of the other economic sectors, commerce and services, respectively, accounted for 84,600 and 52,800 underemployed.

During the crisis, underemployment increased in every sector except public utilities (electric, gas and water supply), in which it declined slightly (Srawooth et al. 2001, 166-167). A significant increase was evident in the mining and manufacturing sector, while the smallest growth was in the agricultural sector. Underemployment increased in every occupational group, though the increase varied widely, from the largest increment in the clerical (office workers) group to the smallest among farmers and fishermen.

The effect of the crisis in increasing underemployment was roughly equal in both the male and female workforce, but uneven between the rural and urban groups. While underemployment in rural areas rose by 55 to 70 percent, it increased much more sharply in urban areas — by a hefty 350 to 760 percent. The impact of the crisis on underemployment was also unevenly distributed across the regions. Bangkok had the largest increase in underemployment while the smallest increase was in the North. However, the crisis-induced underemployment in Bangkok was found to be of a shorter duration.

Unlike in the case of the other indicators, it was not the less educated or the young workers who suffered the worst impacts of the crisis-led underemployment. Instead, the largest expansion of underemployment occurred among the university-educated, and those in the 25-29 and 35-39 age groups.

III. EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE AND TRENDS

3.1 Employment by Age, Sex, Work Status and Education

In 2000, the proportion of female workers to male workers was 45:55. The average Thai worker is middle aged. The majority of workers were in the 40-59 age group. They accounted for 34.8 percent of employment. The second largest group was in the 30-39 age bracket, accounting for 27.3 percent of the total employment.

In general, during 1996-2000, the majority of the workforce consisted of self-employed workers, unpaid family workers and private employees, accounting for 30.1 percent, 26.9 percent and 31.4 percent, respectively. The proportion of unpaid family workers has started to decline since the crisis, from 30.3 percent in 1997 to

26.9 percent in 2000. The number of private employees declined first from 30.3 percent in 1997 to 28.1 percent in 1998 but bounced back in 1999 and 2000.

The trend during 1995 to 2000 indicates an improvement in the educational levels of workers. The proportion of those with only elementary education or lower decreased from 78 percent in 1995 to 68.4 percent in 2000, while the proportion of those with university education increased from 7.0 percent in 1995 to 10.3 percent in 2000. Similarly, the proportion of workers with lower secondary education increased from 8.9 percent to 12.7 percent, and of those with upper secondary education increased from 6.1 percent to 8.6 percent, during the same period.

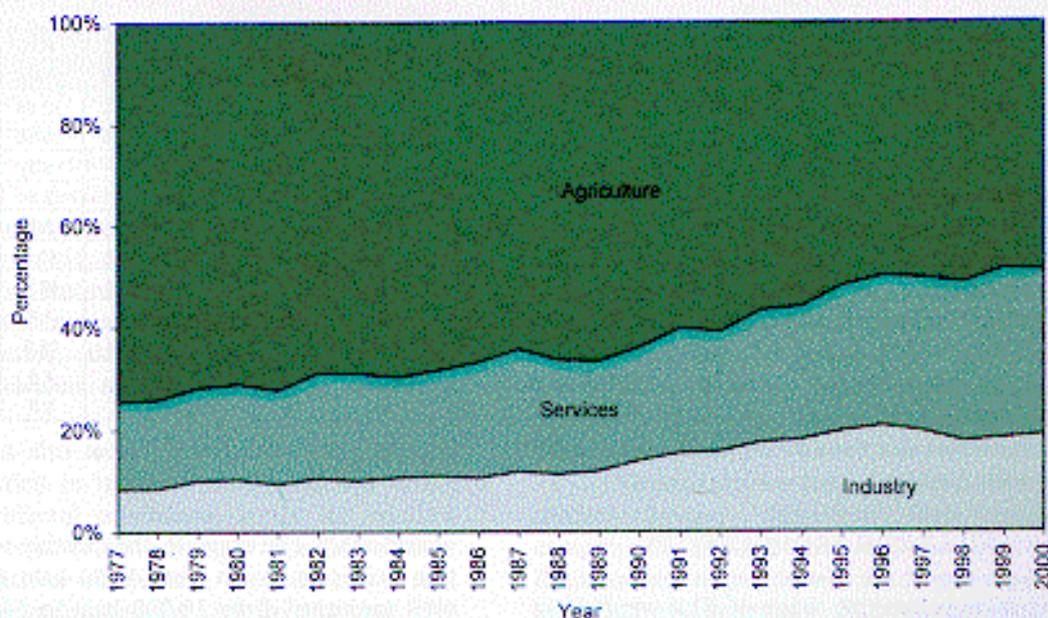
3.2 Employment Structure by Industry and Trends

In the peak season of 2000, almost half of total employment (48.5%) was in agriculture. Of the remaining, 15.2 percent were in services other than commerce, 14.8 percent in commerce, 13.7 percent in manufacturing, and 4 percent in construction. In the dry or slack season, the proportion of employment in agriculture decreased to 41.8 percent, while that in the non-agricultural sectors mostly increased, with the share of services reaching 16.3 percent, of commerce 16.1 percent, manufacturing 16.2 percent, and construction 5.2 percent.

In spite of the economic crisis, employment in manufacturing remained relatively stable during 1996-2000, accounting, on average, for about 16 to 17 percent of total employment in the first half of the year (slack season) and around 13 percent in the second half (high season). Employment in services and construction was less stable during this period. Employment in services increased from 14.3 percent in 1995 to 16.3 percent in 1999 in the first half of the year, and from 12.7 percent in 1995 to 15.2 percent in 1999 in the second half. This phenomenon reflects the capacity of the service sector to absorb excess labor during an economic downturn. The construction sector, on the other hand, saw a decline in employment during 1996-1999, from 10.4 percent to 5.2 percent in the slack season and from 6.7 percent to 4.0 percent during the peak season.

Long-term (1977-2000) employment trends for the three broad economic sectors⁶ are illustrated in Figure 1. They reflect the nature of the changes in economic activity — a shift away from agricultural and toward industrial and service sector employment in Thailand during the past two decades. Thus, the share of agricultural employment significantly decreased from 74.4 percent to 48.5 percent, while industrial employment increased from 8.3 percent to 18.4 percent and service sector employment from 17.2 percent to 33.1 percent. The speed of change was relatively slow for employment in agriculture with a growth rate of approximately 0.7 percent *per annum* from 1981 to 1996 (Srawooth and Kulaya 1998, Table 9). During this period, before the crisis, employment in industry showed

Figure 1 Shift in Employment Structure by Industry and Trends, 1997-2000 (Round 3)



Source: National Statistical Office.

an increasing trend, with an annual growth rate of 6.2 percent and an annual growth rate of GDP per worker of 3.8 percent. During the economic crisis, growth in manufacturing employment showed a small decline. On the other hand, employment in services showed a consistently increasing trend with an average rate of 4.6 percent, but with a lower annual growth rate of GDP per worker of only 0.8 percent (Srawoath and Kulaya 1998).

3.3 Employment Structure by Occupation and Trends

The occupational composition of Thailand has been improving consistent with economic development. Data from censuses and LFSs indicated that the proportion of high-level manpower such as professionals, technical workers and administrative, executive and managerial workers increased over time: from 2.9 percent in 1980 to 4.4 percent during the 7th Plan (1992-1996), and 5.7 percent from 1997 to 1999 for the professional category. The proportion of administrative manpower increased from 1.9 percent in 1980 to 2.6 percent during the 1997-99 period. In 1999, professional and technical workers accounted for 6.8 percent and 6.3 percent of the total employment in February and August, respectively (Table 4).

With a declining trend of employment in the agricultural sector, the proportion of farmers and related workers decreased from 72.5 percent in 1980 to 50.2 percent during the 1997-99 period. In 1999, the proportions of employment in agriculture during the slack and peak seasons, respectively, were 41.9 percent and 48.7 percent in spite of the expectation that agriculture would absorb the large number of workers who became unemployed as a result of the 1997

economic crisis. During the same period (1980-1999), the proportion of clerical workers increased from 1.7 percent to 3.9 percent, craftsmen and laborers from 9.6 percent to 16.6 percent, and service workers from 2.8 percent to 4.7 percent.

In the short-run, the occupational composition may fluctuate and/or deviate from the long-term trends, due to factors such as economic fluctuation, weather and political problems. As Table 4 shows, in spite of economic recession, the number and proportion of professional and technical workers and those in the administrative and management category continued to increase, while the number and proportion of agricultural workers decreased. The number and proportion of craftsmen and laborers also decreased. While the decrease in the employment of craftsmen and laborers seems to be associated with the impact of the crisis on the construction sector, it is not immediately clear why the number of professional and administrative workers increased in spite of the economic crisis, which has otherwise caused widespread lay-offs and unprecedentedly high unemployment. Aside from labor mobility, an explanation for this could be found in the survey definitions and the classification of workers under the two categories. By definition, the professional and technical workers category also includes semi-professionals such as traditional masseurs and masseuses, midwives, draftsmen, teachers and tutors, monks or preachers, actors, dancers and musicians. Some of these professions which are relatively easy to enter became safety nets for workers who lost their jobs during the crisis. An examination of the subgroups of this category revealed that out of the net increase of 198,300 in this category between August 1998 and August 1999, 126,900 were classified under other professional sub-

Table 4 Employment Structure by Occupation, 1995-2000 (Percentage)

| Occupational category | 1995 | | 1996 | | 1997 | | 1998 | | 1999 | | 2000 | |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | R 1 | R 3 | R 1 | R 3 | R 1 | R 3 | R 1 | R 3 | R 1 | R 3 | R 1 | R 3 |
| | (Feb) | (Aug) |
| Total (million people) | 29.06 | 32.58 | 30.10 | 32.23 | 30.27 | 33.16 | 29.41 | 32.14 | 30.02 | 32.09 | 30.42 | 33.00 |
| Total (%) | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Professional | 5.1 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 5.6 | 5.3 | 6.2 | 5.7 | 6.8 | 6.3 | 6.6 | 6.4 |
| Administrative and management | 2.9 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 3.0 | 2.5 | 3.3 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 2.8 |
| Clerical | 4.1 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.5 |
| Commerce | 13.2 | 11.2 | 13.0 | 11.7 | 13.6 | 11.8 | 14.8 | 12.5 | 14.7 | 13.4 | 14.9 | 13.0 |
| Agriculture | 40.9 | 52.3 | 40.4 | 50.2 | 39.5 | 50.6 | 39.6 | 51.3 | 41.9 | 48.7 | 40.0 | 49.0 |
| Transport, communications | 4.6 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 3.9 | 4.6 | 3.8 | 4.5 | 3.6 | 4.4 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.5 |
| Craftsmen and Laborers | 24.0 | 17.4 | 25.6 | 18.9 | 24.7 | 17.6 | 22.3 | 15.7 | 20.0 | 16.3 | 21.9 | 16.7 |
| Services | 5.2 | 4.2 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 5.1 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 4.7 | 5.4 | 4.9 | 5.5 | 5.1 |
| Other | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Source: Report of the Labor Force Survey (various years), NSO.

groups. Only a little over 40,000 were physicians and medical technicians, and 33,300 were professors, teachers, and others in the field of education. Indeed, much more work needs to be done to understand the short-term fluctuations of the occupational structure.

IV. WAGE AND LABOR PRODUCTIVITY

The average monthly wage of Thai workers in 2000 ranged from 3,375 baht for workers aged 15-19 to 10,450 baht for those aged 50-59. Data from the LFSs indicate that wage increased with age, except for those aged 60 and over. Wage also positively correlated to the education level, starting from around 4,000 baht per month for workers having elementary education or lower, to about 12,780 baht per month for those with university education. On the average, wage did not in-

crease significantly during the period from 1997 to 2000.

A survey in 1996 by the Wage Committee, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, provides data on wage by major occupation. The occupation with the highest average wage was production managers with an average monthly earning of about 30,000 baht, followed by other managers (29,300 baht) and civil engineers (27,195 baht). Construction workers seemed to have high wage with an average monthly earning of 12,840 baht. Within an occupation, however, the monthly wage varied considerably. For example, the monthly wage of production managers varied from 4,700 baht to 67,500 baht, civil engineers' from 10,000 baht to 60,000 baht, carpenters' from 2,500 baht to 16,000 baht (Table 5).

The impact of the crisis occurred less in terms of wage-price adjustment than in terms of quantity adjustment. The real monthly wages for all types of

Table 5 Average Wage by Major Occupation, 1996

(Baht)

| Occupation | Total | | | Monthly employee | | | Daily employee | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|---------|---------|
| | Average | Minimum | Maximum | Average | Minimum | Maximum | Average | Minimum | Maximum |
| Production Managers | 29,975.40 | 4,710.00 | 67,500.00 | 29,975.00 | 4,710.00 | 67,500.00 | - | - | - |
| Other Managers | 29,299.52 | 5,000.00 | 85,000.00 | 29,299.52 | 5,000.00 | 85,000.00 | - | - | - |
| Civil Engineers | 27,195.13 | 10,000.00 | 60,000.00 | 27,195.13 | 10,000.00 | 60,000.00 | - | - | - |
| Electrical Engineers | 25,038.33 | 14,560.00 | 50,300.00 | 25,038.33 | 14,560.00 | 50,300.00 | - | - | - |
| Mechanical Engineers | 21,428.03 | 7,250.00 | 54,800.00 | 21,428.03 | 7,250.00 | 54,800.00 | - | - | - |
| Computer Operator | 9,431.13 | 3,500.00 | 35,000.00 | 9,431.13 | 3,500.00 | 35,000.00 | - | - | - |
| Accountants | 11,289.47 | 3,000.00 | 39,252.00 | 11,308.48 | 3,000.00 | 39,252.00 | 165.37 | 145.00 | 240.00 |
| Secretaries | 13,922.38 | 3,770.00 | 42,744.00 | 13,922.94 | 4,200.00 | 42,744.00 | 146.00 | 145.00 | 147.00 |
| Clerical Workers | 8,888.82 | 3,000.00 | 58,000.00 | 8,943.82 | 3,000.00 | 58,000.00 | 168.07 | 145.00 | 349.00 |
| Electrical Workers | 6,615.95 | 2,670.00 | 21,820.00 | 6,962.25 | 2,670.00 | 21,820.00 | 192.53 | 135.00 | 369.00 |
| Welders | 5,135.33 | 3,770.00 | 7,400.00 | 6,700.00 | 6,000.00 | 7,400.00 | 193.21 | 145.00 | 250.00 |
| Steel Workers | 6,989.10 | 4,030.00 | 13,515.00 | 8,274.89 | 4,500.00 | 13,515.00 | 190.41 | 155.00 | 400.00 |
| Carpenters | 5,143.07 | 2,500.00 | 16,000.00 | 7,710.87 | 2,500.00 | 16,000.00 | 171.55 | 145.00 | 400.00 |
| Construction Workers | 11,683.60 | 4,380.00 | 15,090.00 | 12,836.00 | 4,380.00 | 15,090.00 | 316.40 | 261.00 | 369.00 |

Source: Survey, Wage Committee, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 1996.

workers declined only slightly during the crisis. Among all industries, transportation and public utilities were the only two sectors with increasing real monthly wages during the crisis. The largest reduction of real monthly wage occurred in the mining industry, where the real wages decreased more than 10 percent. The sector with the smallest reduction in real monthly wages was the construction industry, whose real wages declined by 2 percent during the crisis. The adverse effect of the crisis in terms of wage adjustment was moderately and evenly distributed across the occupation groups. The change of real monthly wage of all occupations varied between an increase of 0.25 percent and a decrease of 14.8 percent (Srawooth et al. 2001, 168).

In terms of genders, real monthly wages of males declined on average only less than 0.5 percent, while those of females decreased 0.9 percent in Round 2 (May) during the crisis. However, real monthly wages of females increased 0.6 percent and 0.5 percent in Rounds 3 and 4. The negative outcomes of the crisis in terms of real monthly wage reduction were larger in rural areas than in urban. The decline was 4.0 percent in rural areas, while in urban areas it was only 0.7 percent, at most. The impact of the crisis on real wages was unevenly distributed across the regions. Bangkok and the North were the only two regions where real wages increased, while the Central, the Northeast and the South experienced a decline in real wages (Srawooth et al. 2001).

The data also exhibit a moderate and impartial effect of the crisis in terms of wage reduction across groups with different educational levels. All workers experienced a reduction in real wages regardless of their education levels. For all workers, the reduction of real monthly wages varied between 5.7 percent and 13.9

percent. The crisis-induced real wage reduction affected workers aged 13-49, whereas older workers (50 and above) earned higher real wages during the crisis (Srawooth et al. 2001).

Labor productivity is roughly measured by the ratio of GDP per worker in each economic sector. The highest GDP per worker is found in the utilities sector while the lowest is in the agricultural sector. Labor productivity was affected by the crisis in every sector as shown by the declining trend of GDP per worker during the 1997-2000 period (Figure 2). Once the crisis is over, the utilities sector is predicted to recover most rapidly, while the construction sector and the agriculture sector are expected to stay at the low level of productivity throughout the projection period of 2001-2006 (Srawooth et al. 2001, Table 21).

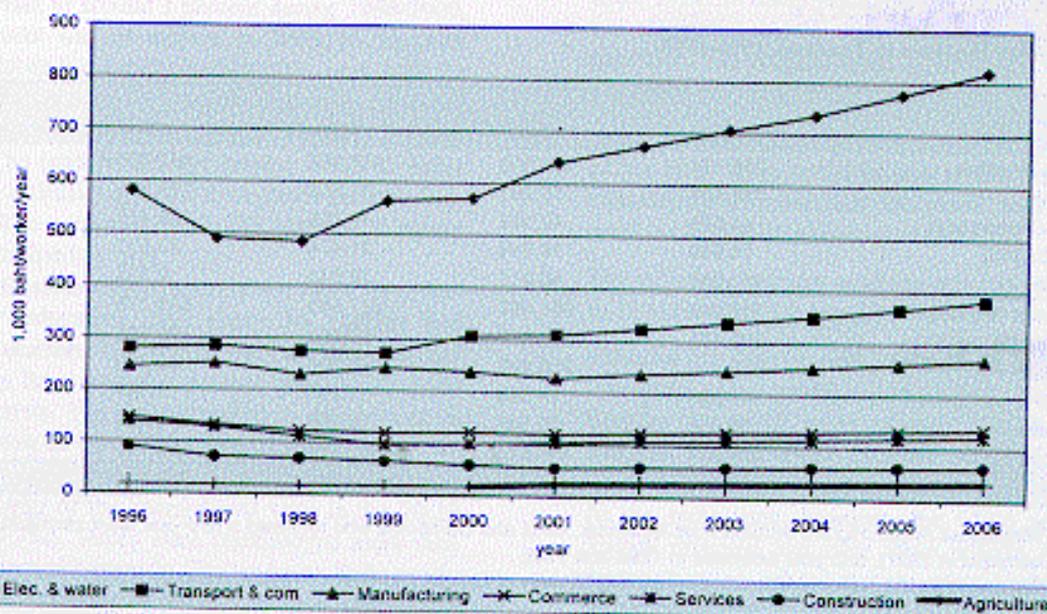
V. LABOR MIGRATION

5.1 Internal Migration

In 1995,⁷ some seven million or about 15.6 percent of the working-age population (aged 13 and over) of 45.2 million were migrants.⁸ Of these, 5.7 million or about 81.7 percent were in the labor force. The proportion of male-female migrants was 55.9:44.1. However, a larger proportion of female migrants were not in the labor force, and they accounted for 68.5 percent of all non-labor force migrants. Obviously, male labor-force migrants outnumbered female labor-force migrants.

Surprisingly, for the country as a whole, only 19.3 percent internal migrations were rural-to-urban, compared to urban-to-rural migration of 31.6 percent.

Figure 2 GDP per Worker by Economic Sectors, 1996-2006



Rural-to-rural migration was the largest type of internal migration accounting for 38.6 percent. For Bangkok, however, rural-to-urban migration comprised 75.1 percent of the total migration.

Regionally, the Northeast accounted for the largest number of migrations, a total of 2.5 million, or 35.9 percent. Bangkok had 1.1 million migrants, or about 16.2 percent. In the Northeast, male migrants outnumbered female migrants by 62.1 percent to 37.9 percent. In other regions, the ratio was close to 50:50.

By 2000, the number of working age migrants had increased to 11.9 million, an average increase of more than 10 percent annually. Of these, 9.2 million or 77.3 percent were in the labor force. Bangkok alone accepted 13.5 percent of migrants. This was, however, a decline from 16.2 percent in 1995.

5.2 International Migration

a. Thais working abroad

In the past decade, many Thai workers went to work abroad for better pay. Of the total 202,296 individuals migrating for work abroad in 1995, 134,524 workers or 66.5 percent went to East Asian countries, most of them to Taiwan. Of the rest, 46,257 (22.9%) worked in the ASEAN countries, 19,987 (9.9%) in the Middle East and 1,528 (1.3%) in Western countries. Brunei was the destination for the majority of Thai workers headed for ASEAN countries, while Israel and Taiwan were the most preferred in the Middle East-Africa region and East Asia, respectively (Srawooth et al. 2001, 147-149). The number of Thai workers migrating overseas declined to 183,671 in 1997 but rose again to 191,735 and 202,416 in 1998 and 1999, respectively.

From 1990 to 1995, the share of the Middle East and Africa as a region absorbing Thai labor decreased markedly from 43.5 percent to 9.9 percent, and that of

the Western countries from 9.7 percent to 0.8 percent. On the other hand, the share of East Asia increased significantly from 19.4 percent to 66.5 percent, while that of the ASEAN fluctuated over the same period (Srawooth et al. 2001). In 1999, the proportion of Thai workers migrating to East Asian destinations increased to 88.5 percent. Taiwan again was the preferred destination, absorbing 115,096 or about 64 percent of Thai workers headed to East Asia.

The Thai government does not impose restrictions on the Thais working abroad. Thus, major factors determining the flow of Thai workers are, the economic and political situation in the host countries, their policies and relationships with Thailand. During the economic crisis, Thai workers found it harder to get a job abroad and some had to come back to Thailand. In the past, tension between Thailand and Saudi Arabia due to the unsolved murders of Saudi Diplomats in Thailand has resulted in the cessation of Thais migrating to that country.

b. Alien workers in Thailand

Legal immigrants

There were 102,767 legal alien workers in Thailand in 1999 (Table 6). These included skilled and semi-skilled foreign workers who were granted permanent residence under the Alien Act, and temporary workers under the Immigration Law, Article 12 or Article 7, and under the Investment Promotion Law. The majority of legal alien workers (49,976 persons or 48.6% of all legal alien workers) were temporary workers under Article 7 of the Immigration Law. The permanent alien workers totaled 19,361 or 18.8 percent. Since the economic crisis, the total number of legal workers has decreased from 164,313 in 1997 to 102,767 in 1999. The number of temporary workers permitted under Article 12 of Immigration Law decreased by 66.7 percent. However,

Table 6 Alien Workers in Thailand, 1996-1999

| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | (Persons) % Growth 1997-99 |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Legal Alien Workers | 316,174 | 164,313 | 116,657 | 102,767 | -20.92 |
| Permanent | 121,521 | 15,291 | 21,853 | 19,361 | 12.52 |
| Article 7 (Temporary) | 44,998 | 42,162 | 48,288 | 49,976 | 8.87 |
| Article 10 (BOI) | 18,609 | 18,049 | 21,474 | 23,637 | 14.44 |
| Article 12 | 131,046 | 88,811 | 25,042 | 9,793 | -66.79 |
| Illegal Migrant Workers | 717,689 | 961,467 | 987,889 | 663,776 | -16.91 |
| Registered (1) | 293,652 | 293,652 | 90,403 | 99,996 | -41.65 |
| - Myanmar | 256,492 | 256,492 | 78,904 | 89,336 | -40.98 |
| - Laos | 11,594 | 11,594 | 1,231 | 1,164 | -68.31 |
| - Cambodia | 25,566 | 25,566 | 10,268 | 9,496 | -39.05 |
| Non-registered (2) | 424,037 | 667,815 | 897,486 | 563,780 | -8.12 |
| Total | 1,033,863 | 1,125,780 | 1,104,546 | 766,543 | -17.48 |

Notes: 1) Registered illegal migrant workers from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia who received a two-year work permit in 1996 (held constant in 1997), one year extended in 1998 and 1999.

2) Estimated by the National Security Council and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (various years).

Source: Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (Sub-Committee on Solving the Problem of Illegal Workers).

the number of permanent work permits, and temporary permits under Article 7 and under the Investment Promotion Act increased 12.5, 8.9 and 14.4 percent, respectively.

To encourage foreign investment, in June 1997, the Ministry of Interior, with the approval of the Cabinet, declared that the quota of general aliens who could be granted residency, should not exceed 100 people for each nationality. The scheme grants residence permits only to aliens who have invested in a business in the country and bring in at least 10 million baht. After three years, the total number of aliens to be granted residency is to be limited to 5,000 persons. Currently the Ministry of Interior allows all aliens who have over-stayed in Thailand to apply for such a residence permit under the same conditions.

Illegal Immigrants

Immigrants who had worked and stayed in Thailand before June 1995 were allowed to register for temporary permits under Article 17 of the Immigration Law. Nationals of only three countries, viz., Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, were granted permits. The occupations or production activities in which these immigrants are allowed to engage were limited to manual or unskilled work. However, by 1999, of the estimated 663,776 illegal migrant workers, only 99,996 or 15 percent had registered. Most of the registered workers were migrants from Myanmar (amounting to 89,336 persons or 89% of the total). The remaining registered workers came from Cambodia and Laos.

The total (estimated) number of illegal migrant workers decreased from 961,467 persons in 1997 to 663,776 persons in 1999 (Table 6). In 1999, non-registered migrant workers were estimated at 563,780, compared with 99,996 registered workers. From 1997 to 1999 the number of illegal migrant workers dropped by 16.9 percent, while the number of non-registered migrant workers dropped by 8.1 percent. Illegal migrant workers from Laos decreased significantly (68%) followed by those from Myanmar (41%) and Cambodia (39%). The decrements were due to the repercussions of the economic crisis and the government policy to stop the flow and sent back illegal foreign workers.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Thai labor market is highly seasonal reflecting the dichotomy and the flexibility of movement between the urban and rural sectors. During the financial crisis period of 1996-2000, the labor market had undergone some change. The labor force estimated at 34 million (54.4% of the population) in 2000, was growing at declining rates to around 1 percent during 1996-2000. The employment was 33 million in 2000, in the peak season. The labor force participation rates were high for both sexes. The rates of Thai women had been relatively high, especially for those in the 20-49 age group (more

than 80%). The rates for all age groups and both sexes demonstrated a declining trend throughout the last five-year period. The economic crisis did not have a strong impact on participation rates.

In 2000, almost 70 percent of the labor force had only primary education, and about 10 percent had university education. Unemployment in Thailand had been generally low, around 1 percent, particularly prior to the 1997 crisis. The rate increased to 4.5 percent in 2000, as a result of the 1997 financial crisis. About 47 percent of the unemployed had elementary education or less. The majority of the unemployed were in the 20-29 age group (45.7%). Males were unemployed more than females. Underemployment in Thailand was high, nearly a million. The majority of them had only elementary education. Most of the underemployed were in the agricultural sector. During the crisis the underemployment increased in almost every sector except public utilities.

About 48.5 percent of employment was in agriculture. During the crisis, employment in manufacturing remained relatively stable, accounting for 13 percent in the wet season and 16-17 percent in the dry season. There might have been some movement within the sector. Employment in services increased during the crisis. Long-term employment trends indicated a shift away from agricultural toward industrial and service sectors. In terms of occupation, the proportion of high-level manpower (professional and managerial personnel) increased over time.

The average monthly wage of Thai workers ranged from 4,000 baht for those with elementary education to 12,780 baht for those with university degree. During 1997-2000, wage did not significantly increase. The impact of the crisis occurred less in terms of wage adjustment than in terms of quantity adjustment. Changes in real wages were uneven between genders, different time of the year, and across the regions.

The Thai labor is mobile. About 15.6 percent of the working-age population were internal migrants. The Northeast accounted for the largest number of internal migration. In case of international migration, there were about 202,416 Thai workers working abroad in 1999. The number of legal alien workers was 102,767 in 1999 while the number of illegal migrant workers was estimated at around a million in 1998 and declined to 663,776 in 1999.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The NSO has been carrying out the LFSs since 1963. The survey was carried out in three rounds each year from 1984 to 1997, and in four rounds since 1998. In some years, one or more rounds were not conducted due to other survey commitments of the NSO. The August round is, however, conducted every year.

- ² Aside from slow population growth, the slow growth of the labor force could be due to the extension of educational services and increased school enrolment, as well as economic slowdown.
- ³ The official minimum working age has been raised to 15 years since 19 August 1998.
- ⁴ Effective 19 August 1998, Section 44 of the Labor Protection Act, prohibits employers from hiring workers under 15 years of age. Yet, there were 208,879 workers under 15 years of age in 1999, of whom 37,791 or 18.1 percent were wage employees. At the same time, however, the Child and Youth Survey revealed that over three million more students attended school in pre-primary through to secondary grades in 1997 than in 1992 (World Bank 1999, 10).
- ⁵ Ammar and Orapin (1998), for example, used this definition and classified this group as being "severely under-employed" and persons who work less than 35 hours (but more than 20 hours) per week as being "moderately under-employed."
- ⁶ The three-sector grouping is obtained by dividing the non-agricultural sector into the industrial sector, consisting of manufacturing, mining and construction, and the service sector, comprising public utilities, commerce, transport and communication, and services (United Nations 1968, 67).
- ⁷ The year 1995 is arbitrarily chosen to represent a period before the crisis although it could not be ascertained if it was a normal year.

- ⁸ Defined, according to the labor force survey, as those who changed their place of residence within the five years preceding the survey date.

REFERENCES

- Ammar Siamwalla and Orapin Sopchokchai. 1998. Responding to the Thai Economic Crisis. Paper prepared for UNDP/Thailand, presented at the High-level Consultative Meeting on Policy Response to the Economic Crisis and Social Impact in Thailand, Bangkok, 22 May.
- Srawooth Paitoonpong and Kulaya Thanapura. 1998. *Occupational Forecast, Part I: Two-digit Level*. USU/CID, Thai Skill Development Project. Bangkok: Thailand Development Research Institute.
- Srawooth Paitoonpong, N. Thongpakde, J. Uchupalanun, and C. Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya. 2001. "Growth, Poverty Reduction and Adjustment to Crisis—Thailand." In *Labor Markets in Transitional Economies in Southeast Asia and Thailand*. Phnom Penh: Cambodia Development Resource Institute.
- United Nations. 1968. *Methods of Analysing Census Data on Economic Activities of the Population*. Population Studies, No 43. New York.
- World Bank. 1999. *Thailand Social Monitor: Coping with the Crisis in Education and Health*. Bangkok: Thailand Representative Office.



Summary of the 2001 Year-end Conference
On
Poverty Reduction Strategies*

Ryratana Suwanrak**

“We may not be able to eradicate poverty in all dimensions and senses of the word, but we can eradicate the kind of poverty that will turn into problems, so that poverty does not equate to inadequacy, deprivation and despair.”

*H.E. Mr. Anand Panyarachun
2001 Year-End Conference, closing remarks*

During the First to the Seventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (1961 - 1996), Thailand enjoyed the average annual economic growth of 6.8 percent. Within this period, the country's poverty incidence was reduced from 57 percent of the total population to 11.4 percent, or 6.8 million people in 1996). However, since the 1997 economic crisis, the poverty incidence has been steadily rising, from 12.9 percent in 1998 to 15.9 percent in 1999, or 9.9 million people. (Porametee and Pattama 2001; NESDB 2001a).

Even though the numbers showed a steady reduction of poverty incidence prior to the 1997 economic crisis, a number of poor people still feel that they were pushed into severe state of deprivation during such period. Issues of injustice and unequal treatment toward the poor, or among different groups of the poor, are often cited. Criticisms toward the government's approach to poverty reduction include:

- Too much reliance on economic growth where measurement of poverty has been based on income alone
- Implementation of certain policies that push some poor people into structural poverty
- Failure to promote fair income distribution.

Since the recent economic crisis, Thailand is faced with high debt and fiercer trade competition. Degradation of natural resources remains, and a number of social, economic and legal structures require reform for recovery and sustainability. The government is finding itself with less resources to handle the rise in

poverty incidence and other dimensions of poverty that are not shown in the numbers.

The 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies” was organized with the following objectives:

1. To present background research as input for debates on appropriate poverty reduction strategies
2. To exchange views and experiences on effective poverty reduction strategies among representatives from diverse groups
3. To seek recommendations on appropriate poverty reduction strategies.

Five hundred and eighty-two participants attended the conference, from the public sector, the private sector, the people's sector (NGOs), civil society organizations, and the poor. Thirty-four papers were distributed at the forum. Five group discussions were organized. Experiences were shared, options debated and most importantly, the voices of the poor were heard.

VOICES OF THE POOR

It was the intention of the co-organizers to involve the poor in the conference as much as possible. The conference started with a plenary session where the life of Mr. Prajak was presented in the form of a video. The video traces problems of his poor family, including his wife and daughter who migrated to Bangkok with him,

* *The conference was jointly organized by the Chai Pattana Foundation, the Community Organizations Development Institute, the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, the Bureau of the Budget, and the Thailand Development Research Institute, during November 24-25, 2001, at the Ambassador City Jomtien, Chon Buri.*

** *Ms. Ryratana is Assistant to the President, TDRI.*

and of his parents and brothers who are still in Ubon Ratchathani. The problems of Prajak's family revolve around the lack of stable income, high debt, little access to formal credit, change of life style due to government rules and regulations, and lack of power to negotiate with the government.

A panel discussion among representatives of the poor followed. This was based on a research conducted by representatives of the poor themselves. Studies were conducted in 10 communities, two in the urban area and eight in the rural area. The studies identified 1) characteristics of being poor, 2) causes of poverty, and 3) alternative solutions out of poverty. Research teams from the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) and the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) conducted separate study on poverty situation at the locality.

Characteristics of being poor

Box 1 shows characteristics of being poor from the Poor's Point of View. Box 2 shows aspects of poverty in the view of academics and activists. Somchai (2001b) notes that the poor tend to emphasize factors that are close to their everyday lives and easy to understand. Most of these characteristics can be classified as 'causes,' 'effects' or both, of poverty. Characteristics of being poor as viewed by academics and activists are not in conflict with those of the poor, but go beyond to cover other structural dimensions that could be explained as causes of poverty. Common characteristics of poverty both in the views of the poor and academic and activists deal

Box 1: Characteristics of Being Poor: The Poor's View

1. General economic characteristics: Not enough to eat, low/insufficient/uncertain income, too few earners in the household, high expenditure.
2. Debts and assets: Indebtedness, no land to use for agriculture, no assets, poor house condition, lack of household appliances.
3. Occupations/personal characteristics: Making ends meet, mostly work for others, unemployment, no or low education, no job skills, old and having no one to depend on, poor health or being disabled.
4. Household characteristics: Large family with too many children, children posing burden, illness in the house.
5. Behavior: Struggle for survival, over consumption and consumerism, buying lottery, being drunk & lazy, non-socialize & self-separation, faking poverty to get assistance.

Source: Summarized from presentation of surveys of the poor by representatives of the poor, 4-5 October 2001, Pattaya, cited in Somchai (2001b).

Box 2: Academics' and Activists' Points to Consider for Poverty Reduction

1. Income and expenditure
2. Distribution of capital and income
3. Assets and capability to consume
4. Indebtedness
5. Basic needs, health, education
6. Basic services, electricity, clean water, safety in life and assets
7. Social capital
8. Living standard relative to expectation
9. Acceptance and respect from society
10. Choices and opportunities of personal life and of family
11. Voices to be heard
12. Spiritual

Source: Summarized from a seminar at the Thailand Development Research Institute, December 22, 2000, cited in Somchai (2001b).

with income, assets, indebtedness, basic needs, health, and education. Additional aspects of poverty as viewed by academics and activists encompass social, economic and political structural dimensions, such as social acceptance and respect, social capital, basic public services, rights to be heard, and (unequal) distribution of capital and income.

Causes of poverty, as viewed by the poor

Causes of the poverty in views of the rural poor and the urban poor differ in details and refer back to their living patterns, that is, being in the agricultural sector in the case of the rural poor, and lacking permanent residence and being unskilled migrant/laborer in the case of the urban poor.

Causes of poverty, as viewed by the rural poor

Some behavior and life patterns that attribute to poverty are: disrespect for self, lack of confidence, lack of protection, being drug/cigarette/gambling addict, lack of information, education and managerial skills leading to unsuccessful investment, imitation of consumption and production patterns without thorough contemplation, expenditure exceeding income due to high spending, cultivation for sale rather than family/own consumption, lack of savings both in monetary and non-monetary terms, greed, selling off land (to send children for higher education, yet children are unable to work at the locality nor find decent job due to economic situations).

Government policies have contributed to poverty, such as the government's promotion of agricultural production for both the domestic and export markets. This requires investment in new technology. Moreover, through this approach, there have been a shift to cash crops and a shift from cultivation for family consumption and selling the excess, to commercial production. With these shifts, along with deforestation and natural

resources degradation, the rural poor have had to face higher production cost while the price of produce remains low. Although the government has provided monetary support, this has come without sufficient educational/technical support. An example of this is where the government has provided support in the production and not the marketing aspects, thus paving way for injustice where people with higher resources and knowledge reap the benefits in the marketing of the produce.

The rural poor face the lack of arable land, inadequate land, or loss of land. Worse still, they are unable to live on forest resources as before and have had to use money to buy almost everything. A number of rural poor remain in poverty for their inability to pay off debt, having to make new credit every year. At the same time, social capital, family coherence and the use of local wisdom decrease.

The rural poor often lack the education and experience in group/organizational management, thus do not have group organization to help solve the community/village problems. Some ad hoc groups have been organized only to receive external funding, and some groups are organized by the initiation of public agencies and are thus not sustainable after the assistance has ended.

The rural poor also state that databases of the villages are constructed by public agencies and not the villagers. It therefore lacks participation by the villagers. As a result, planning by the people does truly not exist and production and development targets remain determined by outside influences, e.g., policies or public officials.

Causes of poverty, as viewed by the urban poor

Failure of rural development and being forced out of homes/shelters are two major causes of poverty for the urban poor, for most urban poor are rural migrants who settle down in deserted plots of land. Being forced out of their homes affect their earning and living patterns

significantly due to high cost for new shelter and having to move away from sources of income. Other causes of urban poverty include: inability to make ends meet, lack of investment capital, lack of access to formal credit, having to rely on informal credit with high interest, and relatively higher cost of living, especially higher utility costs.

Like the rural poor, the urban poor state that lack of knowledge in investment, management and marketing lead to failure in business operation. They agree that some people put themselves into poverty through drug abuse, gambling and alcoholism. However, while the rural poor state public policies as part of poverty causes, the urban poor point out more clearly to the economic situation. This particularly includes higher rate of unemployment and, interestingly, the fall of middle-class into the poor group and taking up the life style and job patterns of the poor group, resulting in fiercer job competition among the poor.

Solutions out of poverty from the viewpoint of the poor

Overall, most solutions out of poverty proposed by the urban poor and the rural poor are similar. At the individual and family level, they state the need for attitude change toward self-reliance. Both the urban and the rural poor view that reduction of expenses by cutting unnecessary expenditures and finding additional sources of income by taking on a second job are important. Both groups recognize the need for savings and stress the need for quitting drugs, alcohol, and gambling.

The rural poor stress attitude change with regards to agricultural cultivation, that is to shift back to the old lifestyle of family consumption first and selling the excess rather than cultivation to get rich. They also stress a change in production methods for the reduction of production expenses.

The urban poor stress the ability to learn new technology and improve knowledge in order to adapt to the fast changing lifestyle and further their career

Shifting back to the old lifestyle of family consumption first and selling the excess is a solution out of poverty as proposed by representatives of the poor.



development. Such enhancement in their skills should gradually improve their earnings and eventually help resolve the problem of being forced out of the land they encroached to make shelter and living.

At the community level, both the urban and rural poor stress arrangement of community welfare suggesting that there should be community cooperation in organizing groups, such as saving groups. The rural poor emphasize a wider variety of groups, such as group for savings, job development, housewives' group for additional income and natural resources conservation group. The urban poor stress assistance for children and the elderly, while the rural poor refer more to welfare in terms of cooperation credit.

The rural poor propose restructuring of the production and marketing system within the community via group planning, assessing demand and supply, and producing to serve its community first. They stress networking among the communities to exchange knowledge and increase negotiation power in order to attain the best buying and selling price. In addition, the learning process of the community needs to be encouraged via surveys to provide better understanding of the community. The rural poor also state that cooperation in natural resources management will lead to sustainability.

At the government/policy level, both the urban and rural poor state amendment of laws and support from the government to enhance the capability of the poor. Issues involved, however, noticeably differ.

The rural poor require promulgation of the community forest act, support of the community enterprise act, and amendment of laws that violate community rights and for fair distribution of resources. They also propose direct budget allocation to the community based on the people's community planning, and stress that the community must have knowledge of all information that concerns itself, that is, databases of public agencies must be revealed to the community. With regards to capability enhancement of the poor, the rural poor stress the change of public officials' role from implementation to facilitation and support. Areas where support is needed are continuing learning process within and among the communities, data collection using of local wisdom, and educational system to serve the community.

For the urban poor, land is not considered much as capital, but rather as residence and security. The urban

poor require such laws as the slum act, land allocation and establishment of funding for residence. They need development of managerial skills via learning through practical experience (e.g., promotion of savings groups and let the people manage, prepare accounting statements, and conduct preliminary audit). The urban poor also require the promotion of job development groups and establishing of funding for job creation and support.

Conclusion from the poor's views

From the poor's view on poverty, the following points can be derived for policy implications.

1. *Relative poverty.* This refers to being poor when compared to others or being poor as measured by both monetary and non-monetary terms (such as knowledge, education, skill and opportunity). Despite evidence of the rapidly improving living standard of the Thai people over the past 40 years, representatives of the poor still view that overtime the middle-income people fall more and more into being poor (see Table 1). Any future poverty reduction policies, therefore, cannot ignore the distributional aspects, where at the heart of the matter lies unequal benefits (or losses) from the past development process (Somchai 2001b).

2. *Structural poverty.* This refers to a family that is likely to remain in poverty for the following generation, or a person to remain poor without visible chance of getting out of poverty due to structural problems (be it economic, social or political). Two examples that can lead someone to into structural poverty are: lack of collateral for formal credit thus having to resort to loan sharks, and lack of arable land due to state evacuation for dam construction or forest conservation on one's farmland. This indicates that unequal distribution of positive effects from development and government policies are partly factors pushing the already poor or the not-so-poor into structural poverty. Specific policies are needed both for prevention and cure.

3. *Identification of Target Groups.* Distinction between the rural and urban poor implicates the need to categorize the poor into specific groups. Due to differences in the nature and causes of poverty of the various groups, solutions to their problems cannot be the same. Being urban and rural poor is one category. Other dimensions of poverty need to be studied and taken into account as well.

Table 1 Economic Status and Changes over the Past 30-40 years

| Region | Ratio of Poor: Middle Income: Well-to-Do | | |
|-----------|--|--------------|--------------|
| | | Year 1991 | Year 2001 |
| Northeast | 10 : 90 : 0 | 70 : 15 : 5 | 70 : 15 : 5 |
| North | 10 : 85 : 5 | 40 : 40 : 20 | 60 : 30 : 10 |
| Central | 25 : 60 : 15 | 50 : 40 : 10 | 50 : 40 : 10 |
| South | 10 : 80 : 10 | 40 : 45 : 15 | 50 : 35 : 10 |

Source: Representatives of Poor (CODI/TDRI meeting during 2-4 September 2001, Nakhon Nayok), cited in Somchai (2001b).

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The five group discussions cover significant issues with regards to poverty reduction:

1. Economic development and poverty reduction
2. Strategies on creating opportunities and capabilities of the poor
3. Strategies on strengthening the community and capabilities of the poor
4. Social protection strategies for poverty reduction
5. Public sector reform strategies for poverty reduction

Group 1: Economic Development and Poverty Reduction

The questions dominating the discussion:

- Why is the problem of poverty still serious despite 40 years of development?
- Does the macroeconomic development framework play role in this? If so, where did it fail?

Thailand's prominent framework for economic development is the capitalist system. This relies on market mechanisms: price of products and allocation of resources are dictated by the market, the public or individuals are owners of production resources and state intervenes only when necessary. The objective of Thailand's economic development is to maintain continuous economic growth with sustainability and equality. Policies used are predominantly financial and monetary measures (flexible or contract), free international trade and finance, with emphasis on the industrial, service and urban sectors.

With regards to basic structure and philosophy in economic management, the group agrees that market mechanisms do not automatically lead to equal distribution of positive effects from development. This is due to lack of readiness of organizations, institutions, and rules and regulations. In the past, state intervention was utilized to reach a specific goal, and there were times when such intervention has generated negative repercussion on the poor. Promotion of competition may not have helped the poor as one may have expected, for the poor are usually not strong enough to enter the competition in the first place. Development via such system is also likely to lead to destruction of natural resources in which the poor seek shelter for self-reliance. In short, capitalism that relies primarily on market mechanisms has high risk, as power structure within such a system does not automatically facilitate the poor.

The group also agrees that economic growth helps reduce poverty, but growth alone is not enough and is not the only factor in poverty reduction. At the moment, the role of economic growth in poverty reduction has subdued. Therefore, although economic growth should still remain a development target and for business and political necessity, additional macroeconomic measures

to reduce poverty need to be in place. High growth, however, may not be highly necessary provided that existing resources are allocated for poverty reduction first and employment is fully promoted. In this case, sufficiency economy is an alternative solution.

The need for additional measures in poverty reduction rather than relying solely on growth and existing programs is confirmed by Warr (2001). The Ninth Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006) targets poverty incidence by the end of the plan, or 2006, at 12 percent of the total population, the growth rate of real GDP during the plan at 4 to 5 percent, and inflation at 3 percent. Past statistical relationship between poverty reduction on the one hand and growth and inflation on the other, indicates that even if these growth and inflation targets were achieved, they would imply no reduction in poverty incidence relative to the level of the beginning of the Plan. For the targeted reduction of poverty to be accomplished, additional policies are thus needed.

Income distribution and poverty incidence were also discussed, where coordination policies and measures are needed for both. Reform for a more direct tax structure, taxation on unused land or advanced tax structure for people with many plots of land and decentralization of fiscal power to local communities are options for income distribution strategies. However, these measures tend to solve more of the income distribution problem than the poverty problem.

The group recognizes the importance of knowledge and information in poverty reduction. The learning process, both at the individual and community levels, can be learnt from the community's experience. There is also a need to develop accurate and timely national databases that include both physical capital and natural resources capital. Analytical methods of the poverty situation must take into account human capital, social capital, physical capital, and natural resources, in other words, the kinds of capital that are essential to capacity and opportunity development of the poor. In addition, development of science and technology as well as research and enhancement of managerial skills are important, and correct and accurate poverty indicators are also required.

One key strategy of poverty alleviation is sound and efficient macroeconomic management as macroeconomic stability is a supporting factor for income generation with low risk of volatility. Porameteer and Pattama (2001) recommend that in macroeconomic design and implementation, the following conditions should be taken into consideration:

- Effect on the poor must be taken into account.
- In cases where various alternatives for stable macroeconomic environment are available, the one that provides optimal benefit to the poor must be selected.
- Should there be a conflict between the overall economic objectives and benefits of the poor, the overall economic objective has to be maintained and additional measures to provide

social safety nets and protection for the poor need to be simultaneously implemented.

The group stresses differences between long-term and short-term strategies. In the long run, increase of productivity and alleviation of negative effects from nature, such as flood and climate, are important. The group also voices concern over utilization of resources during the present economic difficulty. Transfer of resources under direct management of the poor needs to be implemented with care, and capacity building and managerial skill enhancement must go hand in hand with the transfer of resources. At the same time, a good monitoring and evaluation system must be put in place.

Group 2: Strategies on Creating Opportunities and Capabilities of the Poor

The group discussed problems of capital, water, land, access to credit, the role of the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), and creating opportunities and capabilities through community learning and grooming natural community leaders.

Water resource management and land management have been major problems affecting the poor in Thailand. Lack of water and arable land has deprived the poor of investment capital and of having a source for self-sufficiency. Unfairness in water allocation and land distribution is likely to aggravate the poverty problems into social conflicts. In the case of water resource management, for instance, Thailand has no laws, rules or regimes with regards to water allocation. Water rights are not specified, and surface water is under an open regime. People with more resources, power and labor thus have greater access to water, leading to inequality and unfairness. In addition, water shortage has made competition for water fiercer, particularly between highland users and lowland users on the one hand and national power structures on the other. The lack of law regulating competition for water and no recognition of the rights of highland users are likely to broaden into national security issues (Mingsarn 2001).

Thailand's water management policy emphasizes more on the requirement of water resource rather than its allocation. Mingsarn (2001) recommends that ownership of land and water resource should be separated, and water rights should be given to users. Granting of water rights should be done in grouping, with compensation payment to the group whenever water is drawn for use. This payment is to be taken to indemnify the poor. It is also noted that under the existing structure where rights of water users are not specified, collecting water fees that are equivalent to the opportunity cost would have a negative impact on the poor rather than solution. This is because the poor generally lack adequate accompanying factors of production, e.g., land, thus are unlikely to use water most efficiently. Accordingly, the poor is likely to be driven out of production should water be charged.

Land management and lack of arable land is another major problem for the poor. Currently, the number of landless farmers stands at 500,000 house-

holds, while the number of farmers who fully or partly rent the land has increased to 1.5 million households. The total land rental amounts to 14.85 million *rai*, and the land mortgage with unspecified period and specified period are 14.6 million *rai* and 200,000 million *rai* respectively. Meanwhile, the soil erosion problem spreads to over 108 million *rai* (Sopon 2001).

Existing policies on land management and allocation cover land rental control, land tax, land bank to assist farmers to repurchase their land, and educating farmers on preservation of soil fertility and water qualities. These policies, however, are still unsuccessful due to lack of continuity, unity, effective monitoring and evaluation system and management. The following measures are recommended to solve land-related problems:

- Accelerate the act of community forest.
- Solve the problems of land rights and land titling in the conservation area.
- Improve the land tax system (e.g., using advanced tax structure) for fair distribution of land ownership.
- Accelerate land reform through the Land Bank.
- Solve land mortgage problem by the Revolving Fund.
- Establish land information system.
- Encourage public participation in land resource management.
- Improve soil fertility.

Another problem with regards to the poor's opportunities is access to credit. More often than not, the poor do not meet the criteria for formal credit. Although the amount of liquidity channeled into villages is likely to increase every year (via the BAAC, commercial banks, special projects and other additional funds), the amount of credit received by the poor is still limited. More often than not, the poor do not have collateral or do not meet the criteria for formal credit. They thus resort to informal credit, such as cash loans from relatives, advanced purchase of goods, having lender using one's land until the debt is paid, and using pre-paid employees' wages and prices of products as loans. It is interesting to note that a significant amount of these loans is for daily or seasonal consumption. Formal credit to the poor can therefore be improved with the understanding that the rural poor have unpredictable source of income and their wages only cover daily expenses, thus borrowing is unavoidable. It is recommended that assistance from the government be given in form of consumption loans, educational welfare, free medical care, and grant aids for the disabled. Small investors should be given not only low- or no-interest loans but also advice and information on career development improvement of performance (Prayong 2001).

The BAAC is a major government's lending channel to the rural community. To best benefit from rural development, the BAAC is taking on a new role,

To best benefit from rural development, the BAAC is taking on a new role, from being a specialized financial institution into a Rural Development Bank.



from being a specialized financial institution into a Rural Development Bank. The new objective of the bank is to provide more diversified financial services which will focus on increasing employment opportunities in rural areas through increased labor productivity, supporting the integration of production, processing and marketing for value-added products. This should enhance the community income and promote the rural people's learning process.

With its new role, the BAAC will adopt a new management approach emphasizing more on performance agreements and assessments at both the policy level and at the operational level. Emphasis will be placed on the BAAC's performance in enhancing the quality of life and improving living standards of the rural people rather than financial return of the BAAC. Amendment to the BAAC Act is necessary to expand the scope of operations to cover providing financial assistance to community enterprises, rural enterprises and local authority, such as the Tambon Administrative Organizations and Municipality. The BAAC will also strengthen farmers' involvement with the bank, develop databases on agriculture and village level product and services, and support community master plan development (Ennoo 2001).

Besides the external and structural factors, solving poverty problems largely depend on the poor themselves: how they view themselves and the world around them. Study found that stories of success among the poor in terms of poverty reduction is the ability to independently generate new knowledge, a process that must go beyond individual knowledge to community knowledge. Through the community learning and action process, natural community leaders with local wisdom will be formed. These leaders need to have skills in management and in leading a community to change. This is done through the process of creating a community where people participate and know how to think properly, conduct community planning independently, develop commitment at the community level by way of taking action, and link with other communities to learn from and share experiences with them. In this regard, the role of the government is to support grouping, organization

and networking among the communities for sustainable creation of the intellectual force (Opert 2001).

All in all, the group concluded that problems that hinder the poor's opportunities and capabilities are:

- The poor being regarded not as individuals but the collective poor
- Unreliable and inconsistent information from the government
- The 'middle man' system, which needs to be revoked
- Lack of equality.

Solutions to these problems lie in an increase in the poor's ability to solve their own problems and a prerequisite for this is the ability to gain access or obtain allocation of resources.

Group 3: Strategies on Strengthening the Community and Capabilities of the Poor

Prateep (2001) views that the main reasons for unsuccessful attempts of poverty reduction are as follows:

1. National policies are not coherent nor in line with the local capability and demands.
2. Government officials lack adequate understanding of budgetary constraints which prevents multilateral and people-focused plan for centralized management.
3. Agencies' goal is to achieve targeted activities rather than promoting the learning process and human development gained from such activities.
4. The poor has limited access to public information and social services.

The group agrees that active participation and placing the poor at the center of the poverty reduction strategies is an important prerequisite of a successful poverty reduction scheme. The central question, therefore, is what needs to be done in order to attain this type of participation from the poor as part of the poverty reduction strategy.

The group points out to adjustment of thought, of the system, of activities and of the law. The goal of development or the meaning of being successful should be set at being happy and secured rather than being rich or wealthy. At the same time, the various dimensions of poverty and the poor need to be understood in order to tackle the problems effectively.

With regards to adjustment of the system, the public sector should reform at the central and local level, with decentralization of development activities, human resource allocation and budget to the community level. People's politics and network should be established for self-improvement and in order to counter the unfair structural power and corruption. At the same time, fair allocation of resources, be it water, land or credit, to the community must be promoted. System of work and the rules and regulations established by the agencies should be adjusted to correspond with the community's way of life. Moreover, cooperation among agencies involved need to be established to create the true "people's state."

To adjust development activities, promotion of joint learning throughout the development process is needed. The media should be utilized to create awareness with the right attitude. The spirit of generosity should be created and nurtured in the community. Communities must be given the opportunity to establish their own databases and manage the various funds so that the problems are tackled at their roots. To promote the learning process, trainers must be developed and leaders be promoted and maintained. Communities should be encouraged to enhance their capability in community development and problem-solving skills. Skill and knowledge development of local administrators as well as promotion of role and ability of local academic institutions to take part in strengthening the community are equally important. In short, activities should not be viewed as an end in themselves but as means and tools for change in the way of thinking and the way relationship of parties involved are set. This is to enable the community to become a true center of development and poverty reduction.

For the people-centered approach of poverty reduction to materialize, laws with regards to people participation need to be promulgated. Public participation in law proposal or amendment should be promoted. Laws with regards to communal rights can be used as a catalyst. In addition, educational syllabus should be adjusted to promote analytical thinking, while men and women should have equal role in community development.

Group 4: Social Protection Strategies for Poverty Reduction

Social protection programs can be classified into four schemes: social insurance, labor protection, public assistance and social security related services (Worawan 2001). The group agrees that social protection should be regarded as the basic rights for the people. The questions raised are: 1) whether social protection should be in place as prevention or cure, and 2) whether social protection should be universal or targeted.

With regards to the first question, because all individuals have a chance to become poor unexpectedly (either from unemployment or sickness), insurance policy should be in place as a safety net. This includes health insurance, unemployment insurance and financial management schemes (e.g., provident fund). For the elderly, savings should be promoted with some assistance in form of government contribution. Social protection strategies should be planned in advance. The government cannot neglect the roles of communities in providing social safety net or protection, as communities are able to reach the right target groups effectively, have relatively complete information on the needy and their needs when compared to the government. In planning social protection strategies, however, one cannot neglect social assistance. This is because there are poverty problems of certain poor groups that cannot be prevented beforehand (e.g., being born poor and/or handicapped thus unable to work).

Equal role of men and women in community development is viewed to facilitate poverty reduction.



With regards to the universal coverage vis-à-vis targeting coverage, the group recognizes the necessity of both in different situations. For instance, health insurance or unemployment insurance should be universal. On the contrary, assistance to the ultra poor needs specifically designed sets of social welfare.

Other issues discussed cover the amendments of rules and regulations for higher efficiency. In many cases, receiving public assistance requires house registrar for identification and record. This pushes the marginal poor out of the formal assistance scheme, while ironically, more often than not; they are among the groups that need help the most. At the same time, a social warning system needs to be developed. Awareness must also be raised that actual providers of social protection are taxpayers and not the government. A note of concern is made that too much social protection may destroy generosity and a spirit of helping one another in a family.

The Social Security Office plans to launch the unemployment insurance (UI) program this year (2002). Administration of UI should be institutionalized with a UI commission being set up. Moreover, as the Thai labor market is highly dynamic, concerns should be carefully given to the design of eligibility conditions, types of insurable employment, the contribution or premium rate, the benefit period and replacement rate, and penalties of fault and misuses (Worawan 2001).

Group 5: Public Sector Reform Strategies for Poverty Reduction

Orapin (2001) lists the following problems of the previous public sector's efforts to reduce or eradicate poverty:

1. Redundancy and duplication in poverty reduction programs, as many programs are introduced and designed by different organizations or committees. Some programs are politically motivated, resulting in the broadening of objectives and goals so that implementing agencies can attach their own projects within the policy framework.
2. The allocated budget not reaching the targeted poor
3. Complex budget execution process leading to budget being approved and transferred at the end of the budget year, resulting in a rush to finish the project with less satisfactory performance quality
4. Centralized budget decision and allocation obstructing integration of related development projects at the provincial level, leading to inefficiency, ineffectiveness and redundancy
5. Highly bureaucratized system hindering public officials from efficient project implementation and public services

6. Public officials adhering to rules rather than quality of services due to the lack of a performance-based evaluation system
7. Ineffective monitoring and evaluation system as well as limited budget and lack of skilled evaluators
8. Lack of clear understanding on the part of local authorities with regards to their roles and function in poverty reduction programs.

Public sector reform for services to effectively reach the target groups with performance-based evaluation system and flexible management system will facilitate the success of poverty reduction programs. Public sector reform plan covers the following elements: bureaucratic structure and responsibility, budgetary system, human resources management, and rules and regulations.

The Performance-based Budgeting is another promising solution to past problems and inefficiency in the implementation of poverty reduction programs. It should be able to realize objectives of poverty reduction programs due to the requirement for clarity in specifying strategic areas, objectives, strategies, and linkages among government agencies. Within the new system, budget appropriation will be based on outputs and planned outcomes. To make the Performance-based Budgeting work to its full benefit, a systematic and effective monitoring and evaluation of performance is crucial. Coordination and cooperation among agencies involved both at the policy and implementation levels are also important. Moreover, additional techniques are needed in order to effectively set up a policy and to identify strategic areas (Bureau of the Budget 2001).

The group discussion concludes that with regards to the public sector's role, there are four major areas of concern for successful poverty reduction programs.

1. *Policy determination.* Policy planning should be long-term with enough flexibility to adapt to a changing environment for full efficiency. Decentralization policy should be stressed.
2. *Clear determination of target groups and problems.* Specific groups of the poor who are not covered in government schemes should be focused, potentially by having laws to recognize the rights of the poor to public services and social protection.
3. *Structural reforms.* Focus should be given to reform the budget system, educational system, public sector management, rules and regulations in order to attain efficiency, flexibility, with adherence to principles and self-sufficiency.
4. *Monitoring of public sector's operation and budget allocation for higher efficiency.* Past experiences show that budget allocation for poverty reduction has been ineffective, with only 1.6 percent of the budget reaching the poorest 20 percent of the population.

The group views that “empowerment” is the most important strategy of poverty eradication. Empowerment here covers two dimensions. The first dimension is the empowerment of the people, by providing opportunity for self-development and the ability to think independently, take action, and set life purposes. This will enable the poor to get out of the vicious cycle of poverty. The second dimension refers to the empowerment of the public sector. This includes decentralization of decision-making power to the locality so that officials at the local level can work jointly with the people to solve problems without having to wait for instructions from the central authority. To reach this goal, rules and regulations need to be relaxed via output budgeting. At the same time, the public sector should change their role from being instructor or operator, to being supervisor for promotion of social justice as well as facilitator and problem solver for the people. Last but not least, to ensure the effective system, comprehensive key performance indicators of public sector budgeting and operation must be developed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Poverty problems have become more complex both in terms of the nature of the problems and in terms of the conceptualization of people suffering from poverty, where there is the feeling of deprivation with no hope for a better life, and the feeling of being treated unfairly and powerless. The dynamism of poverty, relative poverty, structural poverty and injustice in resource allocations, all these are inseparable issues that need careful, specific yet coordinated analysis for effective policy planning and implementation.

The complexity of the poverty problem and its multi-dimensional feature require both universal programs and specific programs targeting the different groups of the poor. Most important of all, special attention should be given to the “ultra poor” as they normally do not participate in village programs and are likely to be overlooked by either the people-centered approach to poverty reduction or social protection schemes. Long-term and sustainable assistance to the structurally poor is another area where government invention is urgently needed.

REFERENCES

- Amara Raksasataya. 2001. Theory on Poverty and Thailand's Macro Approach to Poverty Reduction. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Ammar Siamwalla. 2001. Social Capital and Poverty. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Bureau of the Budget. 2001. Budget Modernization and Poverty Alleviation. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI). 2001. People's Strategies for Reducing Poverty: From View of Communities. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Ennoo Suesuwan. 2001. BAAC and the Enhancement of the Potential and the Opportunities for the Rural Poor (Under BAAC's New Mission and Role in Rural Development). Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Medhi Krongkaew. 2001. Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Ultra Poor in Thailand. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Mingsarn Kaosa-ard. 2001. Poverty and Water Resources Management in Thailand. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB). 2001a. Framework of Directions for the Poverty Reduction Strategy 2002-2006. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- _____. 2001b. Past to Present Work on Community Strengthening. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- National Economic and Social Development Board, Social Project Division. 2001. Social Protection for the Underprivileged and the Poor. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Opart Panya. 2001. Poverty as Viewed by the Poor Who Used to Be Poor: A Learning Community Approach to Poverty Eradication in Thai Society. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Orapin Sopchokchai. 2001. Public Sector Reform to Eradicate Poverty. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Paiboon Wattanasiritham. 2001. People's State: Synergy of Efforts from All Units in the People Sector and All Units in the Public Sector for Social Development at all Levels. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Poramatee Vimolsiri and Pattama Teanravisitsagool. 2001. Macroeconomic Policy Management and Poverty Reduction. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies,” November 24-25. (in Thai)

- Prateep Verapattananirund. 2001. Poverty Reduction Scheme by the Poor: The Initiation of Poverty Alleviation. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Prayong Netayarak. 2001. Credit Accessibility of the Poor in Rural Thailand. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Somchai Jitsuchon. 2001a. Development and Poverty. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- _____. 2001b. What is Poverty and How to Measure It? Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Sopon Chomchan. 2001. Land Resources Management and Poverty. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Srawooth Paitoonpong, Pimonpan Isarabhakdi, and Jaijin Plywej. 2001. An Assessment of the Implementation of Rural Development Program under the Prosperity Decentralization Policy Committee during the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) 2001a. Economic Development Strategy and Poverty Reduction. Summary of Results from Group Discussions of Group 1 at the 2001 Year-end Conference on Poverty Reduction Strategies, November 24-25. (in Thai)
- _____. 2001b. The Poor: From View of Villages and Communities Study. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- _____. 2001c. Public Sector Reform Strategies for Poverty Reduction. Summary of Results from Group Discussions of Group 5 at the 2001 Year-end Conference on Poverty Reduction Strategies, November 24-25. (in Thai)
- _____. 2001d. Social Protection Strategies for Poverty Reduction. Summary of Results from Group Discussions of Group 4 at the 2001 Year-end Conference on Poverty Reduction Strategies, November 24-25. (in Thai)
- _____. 2001e. Strategies on Community Strengthening, Participation and Partnerships for Poverty Reduction. Summary of Results from Group Discussions of Group 3 at the 2001 Year-end Conference on Poverty Reduction Strategies, November 24-25. (in Thai)
- _____. 2001f. Strategies on Increasing Opportunities and Capacities of the Poor. Summary of Results from Group Discussions of Group 2 at the 2001 Year-end Conference on Poverty Reduction Strategies, November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Warr, Peter. 2001. Economic Recovery and Poverty Reduction in Thailand. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- Worawan Chandoevhit. 2001. Social Protection and Unemployment Insurance. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)
- World Bank. 2001. Poverty and Public Policy. Paper prepared for the 2001 Year-end Conference on "Poverty Reduction Strategies," November 24-25. (in Thai)

