

Final Report

on

Development of a Training Guideline and
Conducting a Refresher Course for the
TAO Instructors from Provincial Offices in Thailand

submitted to

International Labour Organization, ASIST – AP

by

Aniruth Thongchai

Department of Civil Engineering, Chiang Mai University
Chiang Mai, THAILAND

December, 2001

1. Background

In January 2001, the Technical Training Institute (TTI) of the Public Works Department (PWD), Ministry of Interior (MOI), Thailand, started a two year training program for all technicians of the 6,747 local administrative organisation of the new governance structure, the Tambon Administrative Offices (TAO).

For this purpose, and in cooperation with the Department of Rural Technology of the Faculty of Science and Technology of the Thammasart University, Bangkok, ASIST-AP developed for the Tambon Administrative Offices (TAO) a ²*Guideline for Local Planning, Appropriate Technology and Employment for Community Development in the Kingdom of Thailand.*² The guideline was supplemented by Thai re-runs of the ²*Training Modules on Labour-Based Road Construction and Maintenance*² on VCD.

In order to improve and update the guidelines, to assess the organizational set-up and to explore ways to further promote the adoption of the concepts described in the guideline, ASIST-AP had evaluated the first cluster of training sessions. On the basis of this assessment, a completely revised second edition of the guidelines was developed, building on the inclusion of the evaluation findings and different studies previously undertaken in Thailand. This second edition of the TAO Guideline appraises two elementary concepts in Sustainable Rural Infrastructure Development viz. Local Planning and Labour Based Technology.

During a meeting at the PWD in July 2001, the TTI of PWD agreed on the contents of this guideline and expressed their intention to include them in their training courses for the Tambon Administrative Officers, starting in January 2001. Full comprehension of the concepts by the Tambon Administrative Officers will rely on proper training by updated trainers.

A one-day Refresher Course was therefore planned and conducted on December 21st, 2001, for the 30 PWD provincial officers that have previously been trainers for the TAO technician training courses. For this refresher course, ASIST -AP engaged two national consultants to give lectures on concepts and objectives of the revised Guideline as well as to prepare sets of presentation sheets for facilitating future training and introduce them to the participants of the Refresher Course. One of the consultants was assigned to concentrate on the concept of local level planning while the other consultant was to concentrate on the concept of Labour Based Technology.

Furthermore, since October 1, 2001, the newly instituted Ninth National Development Plan was set with the aim to reduce poverty to less than 10% in five years, promote local development and create 300,000 jobs and new jobs annually. With the process of decentralization and capacity building being accelerated, the TAO would seem to be the obvious focal point of the National Development Plan. Considerations should therefore be given to developing the capability to effectively applying the four concepts of Local Level Planning, Labour Based Technology, Small Scale Contracting and Infrastructure Maintenance Strategies within the TAO.

Since PWD has been and will continue to be providing technical advice to the TAO for some time in the future, a series of meetings with key of persons within PWD was set

up. The objective of these meeting was to find out whether and how PWD can be supported by ASSIST-AP in their role of technical advisor to the TAO.

2. Presentation of Contents on Labour Based Technology in the Refresher Course

Training Materials

A set of power point presentations together with a brief instruction set was prepared for facilitating future training by the trainers. The presentation consists of 32 slides presenting point summaries, tables and figures that highlight contents of the Guideline. Copy of the slide presentation and instruction set was prepared as hand-outs for all participants.

Training Program

The one-day training program consisted of one session in the morning and one session in the afternoon. The morning session was conducted by Assistant Professor Narong Luengbootnak (Khon Kaen University) from 10.00-12.00 and covered contents on Local Level Planning. The afternoon session was conducted by Dr. Aniruth Thongchai (Changmai University) from 13.00-15.00 and covered contents on Labour Based Technology.

Participants

29 engineers and senior technicians from regional and provincial PWD offices and Rural Road Division (RRD) were invited to attend the refresher course. The actual number of turn-up was only 21. Most of the participants had extensive experiences in PWD Labour Based Road Construction Program.

Responses from the Participants

A questionnaire sheet was issued to each participant to obtain feed back on the Labour Based Technology presentations. A total of 16 questionnaire sheets were returned. Following conclusions can be made from analyzing the returned questionnaires.

- The majority of the participants (15 out of 16) feel that the most useful aspect of the presentation is "Local Resource Utilization in Infrastructure Projects" Overall ranking of the various topics is as followings:
 - Resource Utilization in Infrastructure Project (15)
 - Steps in Designing and Planning an Infrastructure Project (10)
 - Considerations in Implementing Labour Based Construction Project (8)
 - Project costing (6)The aspect on Project Costing was ranked unsatisfactory due to inadequate details.
- All except one participant indicate that the time allowed, level of difficulty and adequacy of details of the presentation are about right. The only unsatisfying response indicates that the time allowed was too short.

- All but one participant had experiences in the PWD Labour Based Construction program.
- The participants were asked to rank the level of possibility of four approaches in which Labour Based Technology could be applied by TAO. The results is as follows:

Approach	Ranking by Participants			Indication
	High	Med.	Low	
1. TAO implement, the project themselves using force account procedure	5	6	5	Medium
2. TAO engage contractors with provision of specific clauses in contract documents to ensure local labour employment	6	8	2	Medium
3. TAO employ contractors with specific provisions built in to the design of infrastructures to facilitate application of Labour Based Technology	9	5	2	High
4. TAO engage local villagers to provide free labour for infrastructure works	0	2	14	Low

Present Status of PWD

The Thai government departmental structure is presently in the process of reorganization. The new structure will be in effect round the end of next year. Under this new structure, the present PWD will be undergoing major changes. From a discussion with Dr. Maitree Srinarawat of Rural Road Division (RRD), it seems that major parts of PWD will become a core of the new department named “Department of Town Planning and Development” within the Ministry of Interior. The present RRD of PWD will join with the division of Accelerated Rural Development (ARD) to become a new rural road division within the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The name PWD will be erased from the Thai Government organization structure thus causing serious concerns to many PWD staff.

PWD under the new name will no longer be responsible for road construction in rural areas and the TTI which will still be part of PWD new structure will no longer be giving training in road construction. It, however, will still be conducting technical training to engineers and technicians of the Ministry of Interior, including the TAO technicians.

Economic Stimulation Budget

In October 2001, the cabinet has approved a framework for a social work program to be part of the economic stimulation budget framework for the year 2002. The total sum allocated for the program is 8,500 million baht. Agencies responsible for coordination of the program are the National Economic and Social Development Bureau (NESDB) and the Department of Local Administration (DOLA). Details of the program are included as ANNEX 1. PWD has submitted projects on reinforced concrete road construction adopting Labour Based Technology in village areas while applying for the budget. The projects were approved in principle. However, according to the budgeting criteria, the projects will have to be planned and proposed by benefiting community organizations or the community organization in cooperation with the TAO. Implementation of the projects will also be the responsibility of the community or of the community in cooperation with the TAO. PWD will only be playing the role of facilitator or technical advisors.

Possible Involvements by ILO

The framework of the social work program of the economic stimulation budget seems to have opened up a new dimension for possible ILO involvement in employment generation through rural infrastructure development in the context of Thailand. It can be anticipated that a large number of communities will be working on the incorporation within their TAO to prepare local development plans and identify employment generating infrastructure projects according to the economic stimulation budgeting guidelines. With the ILO expertise in this area, a selected number of communities could be assisted by ILO to come up with suitable projects acceptable by the NESDB project reviewing committee. The success of these selected communities can then be replicated or used as development model for other communities and thus significant impact on employment generation could be created.

ILO can initiate the process by working through TTI in their TAO technicians training program next year. By being involved in the planning and by observing some of the training that will take place early next year, a number of TAO that is willing to cooperate can be identified. ILO could work with the selected TAO in preparing local development plans and prioritizing project proposals, but also through to the project implementation phases if the projects are approved for budgeting.

Since infrastructure projects of TAO will mostly be executed on contract basis, ILO expertise on Small Scale Contractor administration and procurement, as well as Contractor Development would be very valuable for the TAO in developing the capability to efficiently apply Labour Based Technology through small scale contractors.

Discussions were made with Mr. Comerone Lorgtrailers, the TTI Director, and Mr. Thiraphan Thongpravati, PWD Chief Engineer responsible for the TTI, about the possible involvement of PWD in this exercise. Both persons seem to have keen interests and are very positive about the idea. Additionally since DOLA will be responsible for coordinating the program, they should be requested to be involved in the process to ensure good cooperation in the local level. Initiating the contact with DOLA could be done through ILO contacts within PWD since they are in the same Ministry.

ANNEX I: Social Work Program for the Special Economic Stimulation Budget, Year 2002

Objectives

- To generate employment for villagers of the local communities.
- To strengthen grass root economy which could result in poverty reduction.
- To promote participatory development processes within the communities, which will lead to self-reliance and sustainable development.

Target Areas

A total of 8,435 communities or TAO (including municipalities within Pattaya and Bangkok Metropolitan Area)

Time Frame for Submitting Proposals

- Within November 2001, 400 areas
 - Within December 2001, 1,800 areas
 - Within January 2002, 1,500 areas
 - Within February 2002, 1,500 areas
 - Within March 2002, 1,500 areas
 - Within April 2002, 1,735 areas
- Total 8,435 areas**

Guidelines for Preparing Project Proposal

- Projects must be proposed by community organizations or community organizations together with their Local Administrative Organization.
- Project must create employment and generate income according to the requirement of the community organization. The project may be managed by the community organization by it self or together with the Local Administrative Organization.
- Projects must result from participatory meeting between the Local Administrative Organization and the community.
- Projects must yield benefits to the community as a whole.
- A body to be responsible for managing and maintaining the project assets must be clearly identified.
- The project must give emphasis on utilization of local labourers and materials and use simple technology.

- The time frame for project implementation should be within year 2002.
- The project must have measurable indicators on its direct and indirect benefits.
- The total project budget should not exceed 1 million baht per tambol.

Steps in Project Reviewing and Approval

- Participatory meetings are set up between the community organization and the Local Administrative Organization to prepare local development plans and prioritize project.
- District committee reviews and screens project proposals.
- Provincial committee reviews and screens project proposals.
- National committee on special budget for economic stimulation reviews and approves projects

Budget

- Meetings at provincial level: use loan budget for economic reform.
- Meetings between Local Administrative and Community Organization: use regular TAO budget.
- Project implementation: use the specially allocated fund in the economic stimulation budget. A total allocation for nation wide is 8,500 million baht.

Responsible Agencies

- National Economic and Social Development Bureau (NESDB) and Department of Local Administration (DOLA) are responsible for the coordination of project monitoring and implementation.
- SOFO and NGO or local community institutions are to provide technical support in organizing community participatory meeting.

Benefits

- Generation of local employment and income.
- Provide opportunities for the community to participate in local development process
- The economic stimulation budget is used according to community requirements.
- Self reliance is developed within the community with the assistance of government agencies.
- Government administrative procedures can be adapted to incorporate community participatory process.

- The process of preparing local development plans can be adapted to give considerations to the community as being a focal point.
- Building strength of the Local Administrative and Community Organization to be able to take major roles in the new government decentralized structures.