
The Role of Public Library in Thailand :

as the Learning Center for
Rural Communities

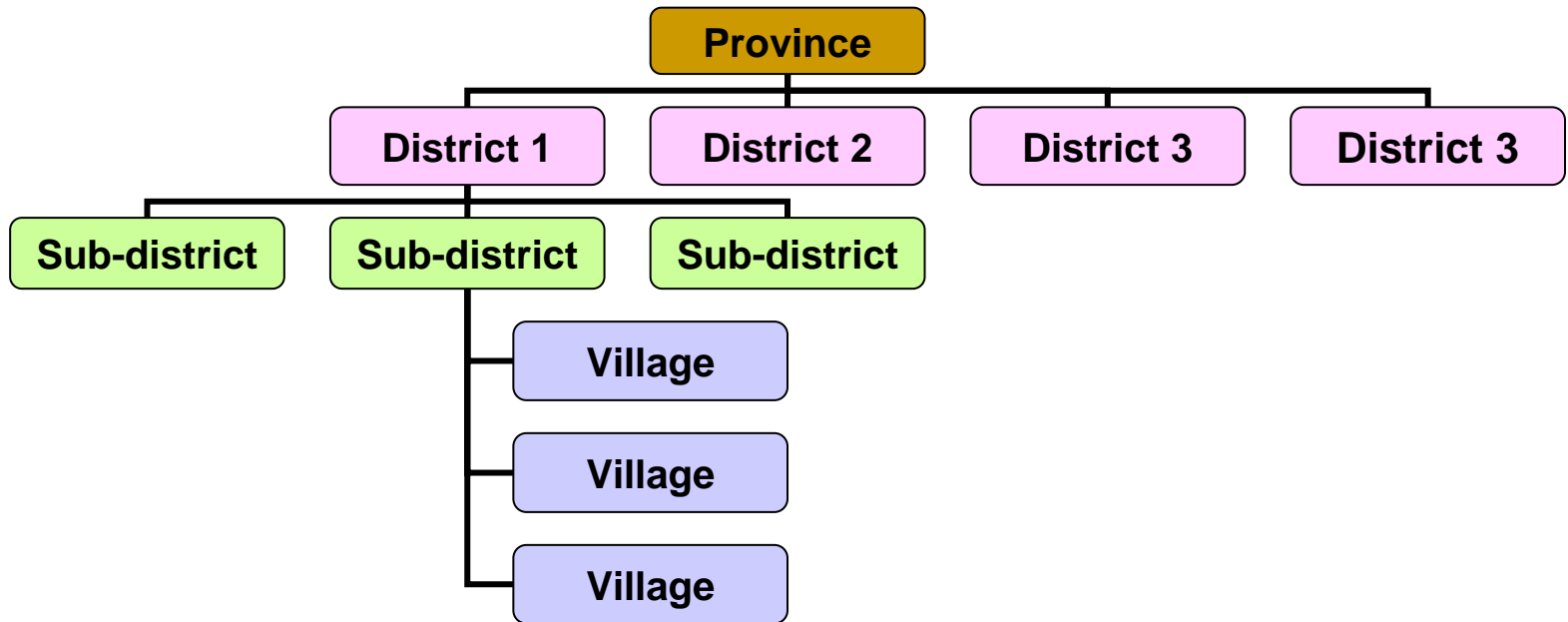
Thailand : Basic information

- Population size 62 million
 - Ethnics : Thai , Chinese and other
 - Literacy rate : 91.5 %
 - 9 year of foundation education
 - Administrative division : 76 provinces
 - 80 % of people have been living in rural area
 - Languages : Thai, English (Second language for elite)
 - *(From : The World Bank Group)*
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Channels of information distribution to rural communities

- Mass media : Television, radio, newspaper
 - internet
 - Government Authorities who work in the areas
 - Village broadcasting station
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Administrative Division



History of public library

- 1916 Public reading rooms
 - 1949 Public library regulations were promulgated
 - 1952 Provincial public libraries, district public libraries, and mobile libraries
 - 1973 Public library is under the Adult Education Division of General Education Department.
 - 1979 Public library was transfer to the Department of Non-Formal Education
 - 1992 Public library is community information centre for promotion of community learning and activities, as well as for development of community learning network.
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Public Libraries can be classified into 3 sizes and the followings:

- Large- size public libraries
 - Provincial public libraries
 - Rajamangalapisek Library, Klai Kangwon Palace, Prachuap Khiri Khan province

 - Middle – size public libraries
 - Chalemrajagumari Public Library

 - Small – size public libraries
 - District and sub-district libraries
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Tasks of the Current Public Library

Learning Center

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graph TD; A[Learning Center] --- B[Informal Education]; A --- C[Non - Formal Education Center]; A --- D[Local Information Center];
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Informal Education

Non - Formal Education Center

Local Information Center

Main Activities of Public Libraries

- Community Information Center
 - Community Learning Center
 - Center for Community Activities
 - Developing Learning Network in Community
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Public Librarians Standard

- Head Librarians into the government organizations (library) equal to **sub-division level or higher** must have one of following qualifications:
 - Master degree in library science or information science and have at least 5 year experience related to library performance.
 - Bachelor degree in library science or information science and have at least 10 year experience related library performance.
 - Bachelor degree in any field and have to pass the course training related to science or information science and have at least 10 year experience related to library performance.



Public librarian standard (2)

- Head Librarians into the government organizations (library) equal to **sub-division level** must have bachelor degree in library science or information science and have at least 5 year experience related to library performance.
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Public librarian standard (3)

- **Head librarians** must have one of the following qualifications:
 - Master degree in library science or information science
 - Bachelor degree in any field and have to pass the course training related to library science or information science and have at least **3** year experience related to library performance.
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Additional Roles of Public Librarians in Thailand

- the supporters in studying, teaching activities
 - cooperators and coordinators
 - survey the needs of community in order to plan for good quality service.
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Software Used in Public Library

- Public Library Service (*PLS : Educational version*)
 - ❑ Storage of bibliographic information of books, other media, user profile, as well as circulation information.
 - ❑ Printing barcode sticker and library user card
 - ❑ Providing password system and preparing statistical report
 - ❑ Providing backup system
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Electronic Library Project

- To develop provincial public libraries to be electronic libraries
 - To disseminate information related to the King's Project in every provinces via Internet
 - To provide electronic media for self learning.
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Public library as the Distant Learning Center of Thaikom

- to extend education service to rural area and develop the equality of educational standard countrywide
 - The scope of service covers both formal and non-formal education but emphasize the target groups in rural areas.
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Research Conducting Related to Thai Public Library Works

- Most are master theses in Library and information science
 - Performance of Public library
 - User studies
 - Library worker studies.
 - History and development of public libraries.
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Patterns of Library Service Delivery to Rural community and Problems

- low level of authority of public libraries
 - lack of good planning and management
 - lack of adequate budgets
 - Non professionally trained personnel and
 - Inadequacy of appropriate library resources.
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Facing Barriers of Public Libraries in Thailand

Waste of foundation education investment
in Thailand

“Relapse into illiteracy”

Lack of

“Systematic information center”.

Facing Barriers

- The administrators assigned to plan and supervise public libraries are usually educators and not trained in library and information science.

equate “literacy promotion” to “ library promotion ”

Facing Barrier of Public libraries in Thailand

- Public library status
 - Personnel problem
 - The lack of reading culture among rural populations
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Conclusion and recommendations

- Structure framework : to deemphasizes library activities in favor of educational activities
 - Public librarians have to have proactive role
 - Librarians should have “knowledge” about their own communities both sociological and psychological aspects
 - To cooperate closely with other government authorities in the same community
 - To have more cooperation with communities to find their real needs
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ขอบคุณมากค่ะ
(Thank you very much)