

# Case Study on Education Program at Loh Yo village

Hill Area Development Foundation (HADF)

## **1 Introduction**

### **Background**

Since 1986, the Hill Area Development Foundation (HADF) has implemented its hilltribe community development work in Mae Chan-Mae Salong basin in coordination with the main governmental organizations in the area: the Non-formal Education Center and the Hilltribe Development Center of Chiang Rai which began its pioneer project in 1985

In the first five years (1986-1990), there was no other development organizations in the area. The HADF's activities then were mainly:

- \* To basically educate hilltribe for the oncoming change caused by outside influences both political and governmental
- \* To prepare basic education program according to the curriculum of Non-formal Education Department
- \* To develop agriculture system based on soil and water conservation
- \* To encourage the conservation of natural resources
- \* To give basic health services such as handing out medicines, giving Information on primary health care and generally increase the quality of life in hilltribe villages
- \* To create a coordinating environment between the HADF's health personnel and the community, and hoping that they would share knowledge, and together, find the right direction in community development.

The HADF's activities in the following phase (1991 until present) have focused on creating a local organization network to protect the Mae Chan-Mae Salong basin. This area includes five main or pioneer hilltribe villages that the HADF covers in the first year of implementation. It has now encouraged the agriculture system based on natural resources conservation, and land management to 28 surrounding hilltribe villages in Mae Chan and

Mae Salong basins in 2 sub-districts: Pa Tueng in Mae Chan district and Mae Salong-nok in Mae Faluang district, Chiang Rai province.

In working with the village organization to develop the quality of life, especially the basic education and the education for people, the three main target groups are:

- 1) male village committee group and the man group
- 2) female village committee group and the women group
- 3) Youth group

The experiences of providing educational activities for hill area community shared by the HADF and the Non-formal Education Center of Chiang Rai should be gathered and disseminated to the public and those interested in the future.

## **Objectives**

1. To study the background/starting point of education program at Lo Yo village as well as the Thai literacy of hilltribe students and adults since the start of the program in 1986 until present.
2. To set up a study plan for hilltribe students and adults at Lo Yo village and continue the education program for other hilltribe communities.

## **Implementation**

In making case studies of Thai literacy in hilltribe, the following steps are taken:

1. A seminar attended by a committee for the case study, advisors and representatives from funding bodies in UNESCO is set up to make guidelines and steps in making case studies.
2. A workshop for hilltribe youth group of Lo Yo village is set up to provide an opportunity for hilltribe youth groups age 7-35 years who have studied Thai since

- 1986 to share ideas and thoughts in the education program.
3. A workshop for village men committee group and women group of Lo Yo village, age 27-50 years who have studied at the village study center, is set up to gather ideas in the education program since 1986 until present.
  4. The HADF's field staff and hilltribe youth group at Lo Yo village have gathered data about education by the following methods:
    - 4.1 Interview individuals who have studied with the HADF's education program since 1986 until present and those who quit untimely.
    - 4.2 Talk with Lo Yo students age 7-14 years who have attended elementary school at neighbouring villages.
    - 4.3 Interview the HADF's staff who organized the education program at Lo Yo village in 1986-1989
  5. The HADF has gathered information about the development of education program at Lo Yo village since 1986 up to the present and from various documents such as the HADF's half annual reports.

### **Target group**

The target area in this case study is Lo Yo village (Akha tribe) situated at Moo 19, Pa Tueng sub-district, Mae Chan district, Chiang Rai province.

The target group in this study comprises of 3 sections:

1. hilltribe students age 7-14
2. adult villagers age 15-35
- 3 village committee group both men and women age 27-50.

Funding bodies in conducting the case study

1. The UNESCO Thailand provides the money for information gathering and

conducting the case study in the amount of B 50,000.

2. Terre Des Homme and Bread For the World provide the money for staff payment in gathering the information.

### The Background of the Hill Area Community

Thailand's highland communities generally mean hilltribe settlements high up in the mountains of the northern part of Thailand. They have their own languages, cultures and beliefs unique to each different tribes.

### The Description of Hilltribes in Thailand

## **1.1 Population/the history of hilltribe settlement**

The hilltribes population in Thailand are now estimated to be 60,000. They live scatteringly in about 20 provinces mainly in remote highland areas or along the northern borders. Some tribes such as Lawa, Khamu, Tin have settled in Thailand for several hundreds of years. Others have emigrated since a century ago or sooner than that. And there still are those who have not yet settled and moved across the borders for most of the time.

Each tribe lives in different height. They stay in different sizes of independent groups scattered throughout the areas.

## **1.2 Social and political description**

In hilltribe society, one of the leading characters is the shaman. He has high status and is on the top hierarchy of the social class. Thus he is much revered by hilltribe villagers and possesses real power. The second hierarchy are senior villagers and community leaders. Each community has its own leader. In the present, more than half of hilltribe villages are under the local administrative system. They have rights according to Thai laws and receive Thai citizenship with household registration and identity cards.

## **1.3 Religion and beliefs**

Hilltribe people used to belief in animism. But now they start to convert to various religions, i.e.Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and other beliefs such as Kuan-Yin. However, they still perform traditional rituals according to their tribal animism.

## **1.4 Education**

In the past, the education and transfer of knowledge to the younger generation are basically done by parents, elders and community leaders. Learning by doing had been the norm of life. At present, the inheritance of traditional culture values from the past generation has been decreasing, partly due to the educational system and schools. Most of hilltribe children now study in school or get non-formal education provided by governmental and non-governmental organizations. The adults gain knowledge through the influence of the mass media.

### **1.5 Occupation**

The hilltribe people earn their livings from agriculture by growing rice, maize, and opium. Some ethnics used to grow such plants only for subsistence, but now they market their produces. Moreover, some raises livestock for ritual activities or household consumption. Some villages also have cottage industries for self-utilization or for sale. This includes spinning and weaving, cloth making, silver ornaments, silversmith, and blacksmith. The opium growing has been decreasing as hilltribe people realize the danger of opium growing and trades.

### **1.6 Major situation in hilltribe community**

Each community in the hill area is in different situations. To the outsiders, the hilltribe people are the log poachers and forest destroyers, opium growers or security threats. In real life, they face many major problems such as:

#### **1.6.1 Thai citizenship**

The application for Thai citizenship is the most important thing of hilltribe people as it affects life security and thus reflects other way of living i.e. land holding, education, residential security, community development participation, and local administration. The

hilltribes are discriminated in the society and some are exploited.

### **1.6.2 Land rights**

The population of hilltribe people has been growing. The claiming of land and land buying in the hill area by the lowlanders become an issue of concern. Most of hilltribe people have no land rights certificates and feel insecure to do the permanent agriculture in their farm plots as they are afraid that the government will eventually remove them.

## **3. General Description of Lo Yo village**

### **Location of the village and community profile**

Lo Yo village belongs to Akha tribe. The village is located at hill slope in the area of Moo 19, Pa Tueng sub-district, Mae Chan district, Chiang Rai province. It is situated at 950 metres above mean sea level and surrounded by the mixed deciduous forest. The overall population of the village is 247 with 121 males and 126 females from 44 households. The home plot of the villagers is about 20 rai. The boundaries of the village are as follows:

- north: Hego creek and one kilometre from the Hego village
- east: Mae Chan Noi stream and one kilometre from the Kieu Satai village
- south: Hahu creek at two kilometres from the village
- west Ruam Chai village

From the discussion with the elderly people, this place used to be the settlement of Ulo Akha tribe 30-40 years ago, who resettled out of the hinterland later. The present villagers at Lo Yo has moved in since 1971 under the leadership of a person named Lo Yo. The name of the village has been called after his name even though he already moved to other village.

The villager comprises of two groups of Akha, namely Ulo Akha and Lome Akha. The custom of both are not so different, with the exception of head dress of women, which clearly differentiates either group. From the point of view of the religion, 34 households are Christians and 10 households are Buddhists. The relationship between the villagers is kinship type of unity and mutual assistance.

The major occupation of the villagers is growing semi-permanent upland crops such as upland rice, maize, soya bean, ginger and home lot vegetables for subsistence purpose rather than marketing. The popular perennial trees grown are temperate fruit trees like peach, plum, lychee, and pear. During rainy season, the villagers will bring the surplus of vegetables to sell at Mae Salong market which is 6 kilometres far from the village to increase the family income.

The secondary occupation of the seven youths in the village is seeking work out of the village as labourer like dish washing the restaurants in Chiang Mai, growing vegetables and livestock raising at Thai-Malaysian borders.

The major concern of villagers is about Thai citizenship. Even though they were born in Thailand and stayed here for many years, they were not regarded as legal Thai due to many factors, especially the communication by using Thai language that the villagers still have a lot to improve.

The limitation of farmland is another problem. The slope area is too steep for step planting of upland rice. There are only one percent of the villager land for upland rice. The farming in the steep slope resulting in the decreasing yield of upland crops. The villagers do not have sufficient rice for household consumption. The introduction of contour planting has improved the land fertility, but it takes times to rehabilitate the land. Insufficient rice production is still the first priority of Lo Yo village and of other hilltribe villages in this area.

## **4. Education in Lo Yo Village**

### **Background**

1984

Most of the hill tribe villagers in this area could not communicate to the government officials with fundamental Thai. As there were not any agencies to provide the educational services to the villagers. They wanted to have teachers to teach the children and adult students as a permanent basis.

1985

The Hill Area Development Foundation (HADF) in collaboration with Chiang Rai Non-formal Education Centre, Chiang Rai Hilltribe Development and Welfare Centre, Chiang Mai Tribal Research Institute, and group leaders of hilltribe people in the area of Pang Sa village conducted the socioeconomic survey of hilltribe villages in Mae Chan-Mae Salong watershed and found that the villagers wanted to learn Thai language and know the governmental policy towards hilltribe people.

1986

HADF and the above-mentioned agencies started the Education for the Hill Area Development Project (1986-1989) funded by Local Development Assistant Programme of Canada.

During January and April, HADF has provided the staff who conducted the survey to teach the schoolday children and evening school for 4 months. Since May, the personnel from HADF has worked as "teacher" in the Lo Yo and other villages.

The role of village teachers and assistants

## Village Teachers

Most of village teachers are low land people who have chances to graduate from the universities and are interested in working in hilltribe villages and learn the way for hilltribe community development by recognizing the cultures and traditional values of the ethnics, and wanting to exchange the information with the hilltribe group representatives.

## Village teacher's assistants

Village teacher's assistants are young people from village's youth group who are interested in doing the community work for their village. They finished their study in the village under the non-formal curricular programme. Their main duties, in collaboration with the village teacher, concern with the educational administration and hilltribe community development. Sometimes, they work as translators during the administration works and during the meeting of the villagers, and become the focal point for cultural exchanges between hilltribe people and the lowland people. Moreover, they help the village teacher assimilate into the hilltribe community in the appropriate manner.

From 1986 to 1991, there were one village teacher and one assistant conducting educational activities. Since then, there has been a major change as the Chiang Rai Non-formal Education Centre has sent the volunteer hilltribe teacher to work in the village.

## Educational activities (1986-89)

The village teacher used the curriculum set by the Non-formal Education department to educate two groups of students: 5-14 years old in the day time school and 15 years old up in the evening adult school.

## **1. Daytime school**

The students of 5-14 years old attend the class during eight to twelve o'clock in the morning. This school hour may be adjusted to suit the season. In the rainy season, the school children will have to help their parents on farm and the school hour has to start from six o'clock and finish by ten o'clock. Without class in the afternoon, the village teacher and assistant pay visits to the villagers or farmlands, collecting basic information and preparing the class for evening adult class and the class in the next day.

The curriculum for teaching daytime classes has been adapted from parts of the two curricula:

1.1 The curriculum of the Education Center For Hill Area Community, under the Department of Non-formal Education which the department has implemented since 1981.

1.2 Elementary curriculum for hilltribe students set up by the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn university.

## **2. Evening class for adult**

This class composed of villagers age 15 upward who come to the village education center every evening. This regular event is pretty impressive. Because evening is the time when the village is very quiet and dark due to the lack of electricity, the gas lamp at the center is the only brightest light indicating the place where those who want literacy are heading for. The center is not only the school for the villagers, but also the place where they set up village meetings. Normally, the evening class begins at 8.00 pm and finishes around 10.00 pm and mostly the schedule is flexible depending on the season and the village festivals. During the local festivals such as new rice festival or

swing festival, villagers attend the festivals and skip class. The teacher has to cancel the class and go visit individual villager. In doing this, the teacher can learn about the community and local language while villagers practice Thai language. The education center uses the following curricula in teaching villagers:

2.1 The basic adult curriculum for hilltribe (1977) written by the Department of Non-formal Education.

2.2 The curriculum of the Education Center for Hill Area Community

**3. Education process for people uses educational media to educate people in many issues. It consists of the following 3 parts:**

3.1 mobile video and television. The foundation's staff, or either the village teacher or teacher's assistant will educate and entertain villagers by using educational programs on VCR machine and translating the program into certain hilltribe languages so that villagers clearly understand the content of the programs being shown.

3.2 posters and pamphlets. The teachers use posters and pamphlets to educate adult students, the village committee group and villagers on conservation and basic health care.

3.3 meetings among village committee and villagers who are interested. The meeting provides an environment where village committee, villagers and teachers can exchange ideas on general issues as well as education and community development.

Thanks to the following reasons, both youth and adults groups attend their classes

regularly:

1. They realize the need of formal Thai education. No organizations have ever set up any school for hilltribe villages in the Mae Salong area including Lo Yo village before. When the HADF sent teachers to the village in 1986, it was the first effort to educate hilltribe villagers in the area.

Actually, they badly needed the service. So they came to class regularly and barely missed it. Even when the weather was bad, the evening rain were pouring like mad or the wintry chill covered the hill, when they saw the light of the gas lamp shining at the school, soon they would be heading for the class.

2. The teacher and the assistant have planned the lessons well. Prior to the implementation of teaching in the hilltribe villages, the HADF had organized the four weeks intensive orientation for the teacher and the assistant. The instructors came from both the governmental and private sectors, namely: Chiang Rai Non-formal Education Centre, Chiang Rai Hilltribe Development and Welfare Centre, Chiang Mai Tribal Research Institute, RIT, lecturers from the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Education at Chiang Mai University, and the expertise on collaboration with the villagers. The first three weeks are spent for class works and the final week is for on-the-job training in the hilltribe villages under the HADF's programme to practice what they learned and reach the common conclusion.

The above-mentioned orientation programme will help the teachers and assistants prepare themselves to adapt to the community and to their colleagues and learn the details on education activities, agricultural extension, health promotion, group working, assertive skills, etc.

3. The hilltribe villagers are enthusiastic in applying for Thai citizenship. A group of

villagers reside near the Haw Chinese community at Mae Salong commented that nearly thirty years ago they did not know that their living places are on the Thai territory and thought that the land belongs to China because the Haw Chinese community was a large settlement and self-governed. Most of the villagers, especially males, learned to speak Mandarin to communicate with the Mae Salong Haw Chinese. They learned later from the military troop that the areas were in Thai territory. The hilltribe people and the upland Haw Chinese had to learn Thai and the hilltribe policy of Thai government. Primary school was set up at Mae Salong to provide formal education for the children of Haw Chinese and nearby hilltribe people. The hilltribe children who live far away have no such opportunity. When teachers were sent here in 1986, the children and parents and adult students are all eager to learn Thai. They fully participated in various educational activities.

Since November 1991, the HADF has changed the role of teacher's assistant. The teachers attached to the village under the programme of the HADF, in collaboration with the hilltribe volunteers of Chiang Rai Non-formal Education Centre, employed the Curriculum of the Center of Education for Community in the Hill Area (1981) and Basic Integrated Curriculum for Community in the Hill Areas (1977) of the Department of Non-formal Education in Thai language teachings.

## **5 The Need and Importance of Education in Hill Area Community**

### **5.1 The Need and Importance**

The hill area community largely consists of people who are hilltribes. Their problems which are many and complex can occur among their own community and be afflicted to them by outside influences. They have been assisted in many ways by governmental and non-governmental organizations for quite a long time, but in the matter of education, it is still scarce and not yet in harmony with their way of living, cultural background and requirements.

The idea and practice of organizing education for hilltribes in the present is quite complex and reflects the attitudes of those who provide it. For example, those who have prejudice against hilltribes try to educate and change them into Thai. The education method used to achieve this objective is teaching Thai language to hilltribes, instil the Thai patriotism and values of lowlander's way of life. The practices of enrolling hilltribes children in boarding schools outside their villages or taking village leaders to sightseeing in Bangkok obviously belong to this attitude.

Another attitude views that these people are a pathetic bunch and deserve free education. Schools are set up in the community and children further their higher education by receiving scholarships. Their attitude holds that hilltribes are not self-reliant and need education in much the same way as they need other helps. The practices of free education and those with the purpose of changing hilltribes into Thai people result in creating the false hope in hilltribes in the same way that happened to upcountry people. They hope that education will help them find good jobs and then they will not be looked down on or discriminated against by Thai people. And the only kind of education that help them reach this goal is the formal education.

With this situation in mind, the need to organize education in hill area community should be met not only as widely as possible, but the quality of the curricula should be seriously considered. The learning method and teaching materials should be designed specially to meet the requirement of their problems, way of living, culture and other differences of ethnic background. The purpose of education in this case is not only to learn, but also to apply their learning and to develop the quality of life of both individuals and the community.

## 5.2 The State Policy Concerning Hill Area Community

In the beginning, the implementation of state policy concerning hilltribes focused on certain problems. Later, the policy was written in a clearer detail solidly held upon as a guideline for implementation.

The background of the governmental organizations whose activities concerning hilltribes can be described as the following. In 1952, the border patrol police in their field work found that a large amount of hilltribes living in remote areas of Thailand were poor and illiterate. They proposed that something be done to assist these people. As a result, the government at that time set up a committee to work on hilltribe welfare and clearly identify that the objectives of the committee were to conserve and help hilltribes in the urgent matters such as giving shelters, food and clothes. The attitude of the first attempt by government emphasised on providing aids which is still unchanged till now.

During 1952-59, there was a global awareness on the danger of narcotics and drugs. The Thai government issued a ban on using and selling opium in 1959. Hilltribes whose main income came from opium were directly affected by the ban. Therefore, the government had to find measures in helping and developing hilltribes community. A committee for hilltribe welfare was set up in 1959. The scope of work of the committee was to set up self-help welfare estate for hilltribes. Unfortunately, the estate faced many problems since it was originated without the thorough plan and consideration. The committee had not had the experience of setting up a welfare estate for hilltribes before. The main objective of the estate is to provide a place for hill people to live together because in this way, it is easier to control them. However, the committee began to make a study to gather more information about hill tribes to use in setting principles and implementing the task of helping them. The committee perceived that in order to improve the economic and social situation of hilltribes' way of living, it is necessary to make a study of their current way of life, customs, tribal beliefs, dialects, agriculture methods. The result of the study was used in planning and implementation of hilltribe development works and eventually to achieve the expected objectives set up by the government.

In 1963, many subcommittees for hilltribe welfare were appointed in different matters including education, health, vocational training, broadcasting as well as a research center for hilltribes welfare. However, the overall progress was slow.

In 1966, the policy guidelines concerning hilltribes welfare were more clarified. The then chairman of the committee for hilltribes welfare commented in a document about hilltribes in Thailand that "the government have no policy to force hill people to give up their traditional way of living. They have full rights to continue their religious and traditions. The only expected duty is to be loyal to the monarchy and act in the frame of Thai laws. The government will do their best to improve the economic and social situation of hill people. The government prefer to have them live peacefully with Thai people more than to destroy their identity. But any hilltribes who wish to change the their identities into Thai will be granted the wish."

In 1968, the committee for hilltribe welfare changed its name to hilltribe committee. No other progress had been made. In 1969, nine subcommittees for hilltribe welfare were appointed. Their policy and implementation were presented clearly and in detail. It stated that military forces were to be used to crack down ethnic minorities and communist hilltribes. The short term policy stated that "officers be stationed in dangerous hill area as soon and thorough as possible. After the military forces were used, civil officers, police and soldiers should quickly rehabilitate hilltribes and used civic action as psychological strategy to instil the loyalty to the royal Thai government and the country. The long term policy was to help hilltribes settle permanently in the mountainous areas, give up opium growing and find substitution crop, stop logging and be good citizens of the country."

Although the policy concerning hilltribes in this period is quite thorough, it is not clear cut enough. The basic rationale is to solve short term problems for the government more than focus on the quality of life or the need of hilltribes. Until 1976, the policy denoted

attitude that hilltribes were causing problems. The committee for hilltribe affairs which was newly appointed in 1976, mentioned the policy focusing on encouraging hilltribe villagers to be responsible and self-reliant citizens. The gist of the policy was as follows:

1. To use group integration as a policy in hilltribe welfare and development
2. The objectives of the policy is to help make hilltribe good citizens and self-reliant
3. To accelerate the work of hilltribe consensus
4. To decrease the growth of hilltribe and Thai highland population by implementing effective family planning
5. To form the following committees in all levels for hilltribe affairs:
  - \* the committee for hilltribe affairs (central administrative level)
  - \* the provincial committee for hilltribe affairs

Development areas were set up under the main supervision of the Department of Public Welfare and its coordination with other organizations. In other highland areas, mobile working units were set up to build good relationships with hilltribe villagers and to alleviate problems in hilltribe villages. Meanwhile, the mobile units also gathered basic information to use in setting up new development areas in the future.

In 1981, a hilltribe development policy was included in the National Economic and Social Development Plan and implemented since the fifth plan (1982-86). The policy was held as a masterplan for all concerning organizations. The hilltribe development policy or guidelines had not been mentioned at all in the first to fourth national development plans. It was included in the masterplan for the first time in the fifth national development plan. The hilltribe problems later received more attention from the government and were divided into 7 parts including those of population, social and economic, land right and administration. The guidelines were listed as follows:

1. To slow down the growth of hilltribe population and encourage permanent settlement.

2. To help accelerate the recovery of natural resources.
3. To increase the basic health and hygiene services including nutrition and formal education.
4. To help hilltribe to be good citizens and self-reliant.
5. To accelerate the process of hilltribe development and encourage their participation.

In the hilltribe development program, there were some changes in hilltribe development work. The National Economic and Social Development Board was assigned the central organization in hilltribe development work. It coordinated the policy and all programs of related organizations in hilltribe and/or development for Thai highlanders. It also acted as a coordinating agency for all relating committees.

In 1982, the government appointed a national security commission on hilltribes and opium affair (1982). It had revised the existing administrative and political policies and measures. As a result, it recommended implementation in 3 levels namely; national, ministerial and provincial levels in tackling hilltribe and opium problems. The secretariat organizations in the national, ministerial and provincial levels were the National Security Council, the Department of Public Welfare and the chief of provincial office respectively. The director of the Hilltribe Development and Welfare Center acted as the secretary-assistance. The organizations of all 3 levels had the responsibilities of making recommendation and coordination plan.

The national security commission on hilltribe and opium affair (1982) presented the objectives and policies in solving hilltribe problems and opium growing in 3 parts: administration, opium growing and using, and social and economic development. Its main content was "...to help hilltribe people build the consciousness of being Thai citizens and a part of Thai society...encourage crop substitution instead of opium...encourage substitution occupation that help them to be self-reliant, increase health and hygiene services including nutrition and education...develop and help them according to local problems"

In 1982, the government, through the national security council, commented that the development and problem-solving for hilltribes had so far been the work done by many organizations such as the military, narcotics board, the Royal Forestry Department and environmental agencies, the border patrol, the administrative organizations, the Department of Public Welfare, the education and development agencies including the development NGOs and religion organizations. As a result, a masterplan was written in order to solve the problems of environment, narcotics crop and community development in hill areas. The objectives of the masterplan was to help solve hilltribe problems by acting as a coordinator for various programs of many government organizations to create a systematic implementation in hilltribe affairs. The roles and responsibilities of the committees for hilltribe affairs in district and provincial levels were clearer defined. The areas of implementation were clearly set up. The masterplan was expected to help make the work of solving hilltribe problems in the future a lot easier.

### 5.3 The Policy and Development of Hilltribe Education

The education for hilltribes have existed for several decades. Some missionaries travelled to hilltribe areas to educate them as well as to teach them about Christianity. After the compulsory education law had been enforced, primary schools under the Department of Formal Education was set up in hilltribe community in 1944. In 1953, a boarding school for hilltribe students were set up. The border patrol police has set up their primary school in hilltribe community in 1956 which the border patrol police also worked as teachers and used the curricula of formal education. The Department of Public Welfare had set up a temporary school under the hilltribe development and welfare center in 1965. The center's temporary school recruited public health care officials and agriculture officials to teach in the school before it had its own teachers. Later, the Department of Non-formal Education had set up its experiment study center for hill area

community in 1980 and had volunteers worked as teachers and educational consultants.

In the beginning period, the government had not realized the urgency of education in hilltribe community. The state policy about solving problems in hilltribe community did not at all mention the matter of education. In 1952, the state policy concerning hilltribes began to pay attention to giving helps on basic needs to hilltribe people. When the problems about opium intensified, the government had issued policies only to solve these problems, but the issue of improving the hilltribes' quality of life was not mentioned. The state policy in education was first introduced in 1963 when a subcommittee for hilltribe affair concerning education consisted of representatives from various government agencies was set up. The director-general of the Department of Formal Education chaired the subcommittee. In 1966, it gathered information to plan an education program and presented the first proposal of hilltribe education program. The core of this proposal was that "teaching methods in hilltribe community should be different from other schools because the education for hilltribe is not only to teach but also to create trust in the Thai government for security reason. Special curricula should be developed and the teachers should be specially trained to handle the situation.

In the beginning period, the education for hilltribes was free education. Though it is written in the program that the schools should be different, in practice, the new methods and curricula were not yet written. The education in the following period was not improved either. The only changes had been that the subcommittee for hilltribe education was merged with the health care subcommittee in 1969. And in 1973, the work on the education for hilltribes had been clarified in the following details:

1. Guidelines for hilltribe community development in education and health care should be made and proposed to the subcommittee. The proposal will be made into a policy to be assigned to concerning government organizations.

2. An experiment about the education program should be made. The task will not be in the sole responsibility of any ministries but worked out by the subcommittee and passed to the concerning government organizations.
3. To give advises and supports to provincial subcommittee for hilltribes and other government organizations working on education, health care and rehabilitation of opium addicts.

Then in 1980, the Department of Non-formal Education did an experiment about an education program for hilltribes which was the education program for hill area community approved by the subcommittee for hilltribe affairs concerning education. Around this time, the National Education Committee had approved of the principle of the education program for hill area community. In other words, since 1981, the education for hilltribes had received more attention. The National Education Committee had agreed on the following policy of hilltribes education "firstly, guidelines for compulsory education for hilltribe community should be sought out to make it work practically and effectively. Secondly, a development plan for education in hill area community should be made. The first phase should focus on compulsory education, non-formal education such as schools for adults and vocational studies which new curricula be written according to their local environments. And also to extend the education for hill area community as widely as possible with the purpose of solving the economic, social and national security problems."

Later, the education for hill area community was included in the fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1982-86). The content included was "to develop and help hill area people to be good citizens and independent people". The method used in achieving the above goal was to educate them and strengthen the knowledge for building up their own better lifestyle. Encourage them to be patriotic and take up Thai values in being good Buddhists and be loyal to the Thai monarchy. And finally, to expand the area of giving helps in health care, compulsory and non-formal education as widely as possible.

The policy of the National Security Committee concerning problems in hilltribes and opium growing (1982) states that "...to extend the compulsory education to hilltribe community to ensure their consciousness of being Thai citizens or a part of Thai society so that they will not cause security, economic, social and political problems to Thailand.

In the past years, apart from many government agencies, some private, religion as well as community development organization have played crucial roles in organizing local education for hilltribes community in their own different ways.

## **6 The Education Program and Curricula in the Target Area**

The curricula used in Lo Yo study center since 1986 comprises of the curriculum of the study center for hill area community and the curriculum of adult education for hilltribes written by the Department of Non-formal Education. The details of these two curricula are described as follows:

### **6.1 The curriculum of the study center for hill area community**

It was used in an experimental project during 1980 to 1986 (in the fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan, 1982-1986). After the experimental project ended, the Department of Non-formal Education had expanded the curriculum to its current system which can be concluded as the followings:

#### **The policy**

The education policy given to hilltribes should have the form of a mixture between formal and non-formal education. Its method and content should be flexible to the local requirements and situations. It should also be in accordance with hilltribe culture and not causing damage to its cultural integrity. The implementation should be decentralized and

hilltribe villagers should participate in decision makings. The content of the curriculum should be designed and written with the help of relevant governmental organizations which focus on the improvement of the quality of life and the inculcation of positive attitudes toward life and society.

### **The goal**

The goal of this curriculum is to develop the method of basic level non-formal education that goes along well with the education needs in the elementary study of hilltribe people according to the following conditions:

1. hilltribe people must play a role in developing their own education systems and the implementation of the project.
2. the education activity must proceed together with the development in other matters such as health care, agriculture or any other issues provided they improve hilltribe community.

### **Objectives**

1. To develop an education method with the following qualities:

- \* flexible in its learning schedule, teaching method, materials and meet the requirement of the community.
- \* focusing on the development of individuals, groups and the community.
- \* let the community share the decision making process in planning, management, improvement and evaluation of the education project.
- \* incorporate the work on education development with health care, agriculture, community development and other services from relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- \* encourage cooperation among villagers and working personnel such as village teachers, local government officials in each village groups.
- \* its budget should be less than the amount used in other educational activities in

the same level.

2. To develop the curricula and teaching materials that meet the requirements and social and cultural conditions of hilltribe community.

3. To develop an effective method of monitoring the field works both in the academic and management areas by focusing on self-monitoring of the HADF's staff in each village groups and the method of monitoring by government officials from the district and provincial offices.

4. To develop a training method used before and during the implementation, focusing on the skill of working in hilltribe villages. It includes the training of villagers, the village committee and the project's staff which will help them in planning and evaluating the project.

5. To develop the effective cooperation among national and local organizations concerning the community development work.

6. To develop a good monitoring and evaluation system in every level focusing on the accuracy of information used in planning and implementation.

When the experiment project ended in 1986, the evaluation showed that the curriculum of the study center for hill area community was quite good for hilltribe people. It is proposed that the curriculum be taught to other hilltribe villages. But due to the government's lack of budget, the extension of this project to other hilltribe villages would be very, very slow. An idea was then proposed to develop a village volunteer program to replace village teachers. The volunteers would come from villagers and the teachers could move to set up study centers in other villages where people were illiterate. In this way, the education project can cover wider areas and achieve its goal quicker. The most

important achievement is that local people play a crucial role in their own education and community development.

The component of the curricula consists of 2 main parts. The first part is skill development which is important as a tool for learning. The other part is the enhancement of life and social experiences of which contents are developed from local situation, way of living and real problems occurred in hilltribe communities. These two parts are required to be studied together. The ratio of study hours is set up as a guideline for teachers.

Table 6.1 shows the study hours in the elementary level of the curricula for hill area community

Year	Thai language (hours)	Mathematics (hours)	Life and social experiences (hours)
pre-aptitude for Thai language			
1	Thai language	200	MathematicsI 250 400
2	Thai languageI	250	MathematicsI 118 620
3	Thai languageII	200	MathematicsII 106 700
4	Thai languageII	200	MathematicsII 106 700
5	Thai languageII	200	MathematicsIII 110 740
6	Thai languageIII	150	MathematicsIII 110 740
	Thai languageIII	150	
total	1,400	700	3,900

Since the students in this course may not have knowledge of Thai language, a pre-aptitude for Thai language is a must. The course could last 200 hours or less depending on the

learning ability of the students. Then the subjects of mathematics and life and social experiences are taught. The study hours of these subjects are arranged to have a total of 1,000 hours per year. It takes about 6 years or 6,000 hours to complete the elementary curricula. However, any students can finish the elementary study in less than 6 years if their learning ability is good. When they pass the "evaluation process", they will receive a certificate equals to the sixth grade from the Department of Non-formal education of the Ministry of Education.

The teaching materials of the subject of life and social experiences is only developed for 80% or 3,120 hours, the other 20% or so called 20% curriculum (780 hours) will be designed by teachers and students according to local circumstances. Its objectives and study time will be set up according to local requirements.

The objectives of the local 20% curriculum is to set up an opportunity for students to create their own topics according to their interests and skills including to improve their quality of life, their families and community. The curriculum is quite flexible according to different local conditions. In short, this curriculum focuses on local circumstances and the students' real experiences.

**Table 6.2 The weekly study hours**

Year	Numbers of hours per week		
	Thai language pre-aptitude	Mathematics	Life and social experiences
	25	-	-
1	7-8	4-5	15-16
2	6-7	3-4	15-16
3	5	2-3	17-18
4	5	2-3	17-18
5	3-4	2-3	18-19
6	3-4	2-3	18-19

### **The teaching materials**

The teaching materials in the 1981 curricula of the study center for hill area community can be divided into 3 main subjects, namely Thai language, mathematics, and social experiences as described in the following detail;

#### **Thai language**

##### 1. Thai language 1 (700 hours)

- the first 200 hours is to prepare students for basic Thai language study since most hill tribes do not use Thai language in daily communication.

- the other 500 hours focus on building skills in listening and speaking Thai, the students

are required to practice on pronunciation and the meanings of Thai words as well as compare the meanings of Thai words to those of their languages.

## 2. Thai language 2 (400 hours)

This subject focuses on the practice of more listening and speaking as well as basic reading and writing.

## 3. Thai language 3 (300 hours)

It focuses on building skills in more using of Thai language including long sentences, easy writings and basic Thai poetry writing.

## **Mathematics**

1. Mathematics 1 268 hours

2. Mathematics 2 212 hours

3. Mathematics 3 220 hours

The content of mathematics

### **Mathematics 1**

1. Introduction to mathematics
2. Amounts and numbers less than 100
3. Addition that have results less than 10
4. Subtraction of numbers less than 100
5. Amounts and numbers less than 1,000
6. Addition of amounts less than 3 figures
7. Subtraction of numbers more than 1,000
8. Addition, multiplication

9. Subtraction, division
10. Weight
11. Volume
12. Length
13. Money
14. Day, month, year, time
15. Geometric and shapes
16. Fraction
17. Mathematical problems

## **Mathematics 2**

1. Amounts and numbers more than 1,000
2. Addition of amounts of several figures
3. Subtraction of amounts less than 10,000
4. Multiplication
5. Division
6. Time
7. Weight
8. Volume
9. Area
10. Area
11. Money and counting
12. Fraction
13. Decimal points
14. Mixed mathematical problems
15. Point, line, radiant and angles
16. Polygon, rectangle, circle
17. Plane, parallel lines, symmetric shapes

### **Mathematics 3**

1. Amounts and numbers more than 100,000
2. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division of integral numbers
3. Angles
4. Fraction
5. Length and parallel line measurement
6. Decimal points
7. Triangle
8. Fraction
9. Percent
10. Rectangle
11. Decimal points
12. Circle
13. Equations
14. Perimeter
15. Volume
16. Direction and map
17. Chart, graph, matching, ordinal numbers

### **Life and social experiences**

The content of this subject is divided into 19 units to provide students with general knowledge of daily living:

1. Domestic affair including family membership, chores, finances, tools, household responsibilities.
2. Living in a community; knowledge of one's community, village committee, local culture, tradition and beliefs.
3. Food; food selection, cooking, food preservation.

4. Health, hygiene, contagious diseases.
5. Parenting; childcare, pre-natal care, family planning.
6. Crops; crop selection, crop growing, the nature of crops, agricultural tools.
7. Soil; soil quality, types of soils, soil maintenance.
8. Forest, the importance of forest, water resources, wildlife, forest conservation and resuscitation.
9. Opium; narcotics, poppy growing, the danger of opium smoking.
10. Farm animals; the nature of farm animals, livestock raising and the extensive method.
11. Commerce; basic skills in commerce, trading, loan.
12. Careers other than farming; local jobs, services, job training.
13. Local handicrafts; hilltribes handicrafts, wickerwork, dressmaking, painting, sculpture and wood-carving.
14. Local technology; technology for making handicrafts, farm machines.
15. Natural phenomenon; thunder, light, atmospheric electron, lightning, and how they happen.
16. The unique culture of hilltribes; precious things to be preserved, local songs, music and dances.
17. Thailand; Thai ways of showing respects, religion, holiday, national heritage, Thai monarch, good citizenship, geographical data, Thai people, the neighbouring countries.
18. Communication; news and events, communication and transport, the relay of message.
19. Government agencies; how to contact them, the jobs and responsibilities of government agencies concerning hilltribes affairs.

## 6.2 The 1977 basic level adult curriculum for hilltribes

The Department of Non-formal Education began its adult curriculum for hilltribes in 1974

(in the third National Economic and Social Development Plan 1972-76) and improve the curriculum in 1977. This adult curriculum for hilltribes is designed with the objective of not only teaching Thai language to hilltribes, but also putting in materials in other community development issues that ranging from daily activities to hygiene, citizen rights and duties, conservation, the danger of opium smoking, substitution crops for opium, commerce and other jobs in a community, etc. In this curriculum, the department sent volunteer teachers to make visits in hilltribes community. At Lo Yo village, the foundation also use the adult curriculum for hilltribes and adapt the teaching condition to suit villagers. Village teachers organize their educational materials and activities at the village study center. The Thai course occupies 250 study hours. Those who finish the course will receive a certificate equal to fourth grade. Hilltribes villagers can attend and finish the course in fairly short time. The curriculum is deemed quantitatively effective and well developed in its philosophy, content, teaching materials and evaluation. The teachers must be trained in using the teaching, monitoring and evaluation methods of this curriculum.

## **7 The Development of Hilltribes' Education Process**

Hilltribe community has its own process of acquiring the knowledge about their social activities and the knowledge of nature which are different from townspeople. Their learning process in many issues concerning their daily activities can be divided into 2 main parts namely; the traditional way of learning and the modern one.

### **7.1 The traditional way of learning**

In the past, the hilltribe people's way of learning is much in harmony with their way of life. Their living including the agricultural system and their beliefs is quite relative to the geographical condition, culture and tradition

Their way of learning is mostly by practice and by the use of physical senses more than by rote. An obvious evidence is the practice of annual rites such as the swing festival. This famous festival is originated with the belief that it will bring about the fertility of their crops. Akha people have their own division of labor. Young men and women are responsible for the task of making the village swing while the senior villagers are giving comments and suggestions. Young people learn by watching their old ones perform the ceremony to pay homage to the deities after the swing is completed. After the ceremony is performed, Akha boys and girls all have fun playing the swing and at the same time, learning how the ceremony is performed in the Akha way.

The hilltribe's way of learning is also relevant to the spiritual way. They perform an act of healing through a trance. They call the person who perform the trance "Apiyipa". When a family member is sick, the clairvoyant is called to perform the trance to identify the cause of sickness. They believe that people are ill mainly because their souls are trapped in the spirit's world, some are trapped in a cave or a deep stream. The trance healer has to communicate with the spirit world and bring the message to the present world. They may have to perform the rite to ask for the forgiveness of their ancestor's spirit and the forests and mountains deities, and ask for the permission to bring the ill person's soul back to his body. During the trance which usually preformed in the evening, the ill person's relatives and neighbors including children are present to express their hope of the ill person's recovery. The attending of this ritual is also a way of learning and perpetuating their own tradition.

In addition to the learning process among the people in the community, the passing on of knowledge in the domestic level is quite significant as well. In a household, mothers are responsible for the task of raising their children. When the children are older than five, boys will be in the care of their fathers and mothers will take care of the daughters. Children learn by sharing daily activities and household chores with their parents. For example, girls are assigned the jobs of carrying water, clean the house

and do other menial tasks while boys are encouraged to go hunting, work in the family plot or practise wickerwork or carpentry. The learning by accumulating experiences is one of the natural ways of learning.

## 7.2 The modern method of learning

In the present, the traditional way of learning is combined and enhanced by modern media such as, radio, television and the exchanges of ideas and experiences between the HADF's staff and the villagers. Certain activities such as trainings, workshops, seminar and meetings also play an important part in the villagers' learning process.

Radio program received more attention from hilltribes, especially the program in hilltribe languages broadcasted by radio station 914 which belongs to the National Security Command stationed at Mae Chan district, Chiang Rai province.

Audio-visual program is the activity supported by the HADF. The program is a mobile educational program which the HADF's audio-visual staff bring to visit hilltribe villages once a month.

The exchange of ideas and experiences between the staff and the villagers is the method used most frequently in the education system. In the village study center, the staff teaches by using the teaching materials prepared by the Department of Non-formal Education, but practically, the staff have to improvise teaching methods by mixing the teaching materials in the right combination with the prevailed knowledge of the community or so-called "local wisdom".

Finally, the HADF set up a regular program of trainings, study tours and meetings and seminars for villagers in the following issues:

- soil and water conservation and highland agriculture

- hilltribe community development which tries to reinforce the strength of grassroots organization
- natural resources management

## **8 The Effect of Thai Language Literacy**

Since 1986 until now during which basic Thai language courses are taught to hilltribe people, they have learned many new things which have certain effects on themselves, their family and their community at large as concluded in the following description.

### **8.1 The effect on individuals and their family**

The hilltribe people who have studied Thai since 1980 have new experiences from their Thai literacy. Before they can read and write Thai, correspondences among family members have to be carried out verbally and passed on through personal communication or radio broadcasting in hilltribe languages from radio station 914, a government broadcasting under the National Security Command, which has its main station at Mae Chan district, Chiang Rai province. When they can read and write Thai, written correspondences become more popular and convenient. Moreover, communication with government and private agencies is easier. Lo Yo village headman gets more recognition when he contacts government agencies especially in the matter of Thai nationality application for hilltribe villagers thanks to his Thai literacy.

### **8.2 The effects on the agriculture**

Traditionally, hilltribe people earn their livings by growing crops and raising livestock for domestic consumption. The method used in growing crops is slash and burn. The period of soil fertility in an average plot of land is 3-5 years. After that, it is burned and deserted until it recovered. This method brings about some problems for example, the wrong way

of burning land causes the loss of trees around the plot and sometimes the fire gets out of control and burns through a very large area.

The villagers' lands usually have high slope. In rainy seasons, the soil's surface is washed away and results in the loss of soil fertility. So the long term productivity is decreasing.

Hilltribe villagers solve this problem by practising sustainable crop-growing and by not using chemicals. They learn these things by reading relevant writings, attending workshops and by studying from those who successfully use this method. They do their own experiments. The result is positive so far. The accumulating soil surface and humus in their plots of land result in the increasing yields.

By growing fruit trees, they increase their productivity in the long run and hence their financial stability to the family. The fruit trees also indicate the period of land use which is useful for applying for the land rights document.

### 8.3 The effects on community organization

Thai literacy has an indirect effect on local social life in causing group organization

#### **Women Group**

Traditionally, Akha women are expected to carry out domestic tasks. They are refrained from expressing comments and making decision on community works. This condition is caused by Akha's way of life in the past. Akha used to live in the wild, often ravaged by ethnic militiamen or plunderers. Akha men were enrolled into fighting squad. They regularly organized meetings in the evening to plan their defense strategy and draft soldiers and porters carrying weapons. Akha women, on the other hand, spent most of their time at home and hardly went outside. Akha women, therefore, were not used to attend

meetings or outside activities because of their harsh surroundings.

When Akha villagers began to attend evening Thai language lessons, women gatherings were not regarded outlandish any longer. After that, women began to attend village meetings and soon they set up women groups. Women groups increased their role from village level into regional and wider network. Akha women have found the courage to express their ideas and comments and act as Thai- Akha interpreters in meetings. The women groups also increase their role and are active in many issues including conservation and culture preservation. They also learn of Thai social changes.

### **Village committee and leader groups**

Hilltribe villagers' attitude toward politics have changed. In the past, village headmen usually are senior persons who know tribal traditions well and can solve problems and disagreements among villagers. But now the situation is more complex as the community is affected by outside changes as well. Village headmen have to possess more potentiality to adapt well to the changes occurred. The leaders are expected to have a command of Thai language since they have to contact Thai government agencies regularly and attend village and sub-district meetings.

Hilltribe villagers in Lo Yo village elect their headman who have potential to adapt to the present situation. They also appoint a village committee to oversee village activities such as local education and the study center.