Capability and partnership

ICT strategy developed for the Royal Thai Government

Thailand has undergone significant social, political and economic changes over the past 50 years. The process of democratisation was followed by a period of economic growth and a significant increase in the literacy rate, a precondition for human development. Following the Asian economic crisis and a slump in the value of the currency, it became clear that Thailand had to take steps to further modernise and engage with the global knowledge-based economy.

Reform of the education system and a focus on the use of technology to improve education access and outcomes are seen as central to the advancement of Thai society and have been enshrined in the Education Act (1999).

While Thailand received a range of donor assistance initiating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at the national, regional and district levels, what was missing was an overarching strategy document that would provide linkages between these projects and national policy. The Capacity Building for Thai Educational Reform (CABTER) program funded by AusAID under the Thailand-Australia Capacity Building Facility was an excellent vehicle for an intervention that would have a direct influence on ICT and its capability to change teaching and learning practices in classrooms.

Initiative

The first stage of the Thailand-Australia Capacity Building Facility aimed at assisting the Royal Thai Government to develop strategies for learning technologies.

As part of the project, CCI Australia generated potential strategies by bringing together Australian experience in ICT, information about educational provision in Thailand and knowledge of the possibilities within emerging technologies that might offer cost-effective opportunities for the provision and use of learning technologies.

In generating these potential strategies, the focus was on the educational applications of the technologies in promoting student-centred learning rather than the technologies themselves. This focus was maintained by referring to the experience of Australia and other countries that have also attempted to use ICT to support educational development.

In developing the 190-page strategy plan in partnership with the Royal Thai Government, CCI Australia worked in the Office of the Prime Minister in 2000 to ensure that the strategy would meet Thai needs by analysing existing Thai curriculum documents, reports and strategy plans. Capacity building was central to this exercise in that it involved a ‘partnership’ and ‘working together’ approach between the Thai officials and CCI consultants.

CCI Australia’s ownership by Australian Education Ministers allowed it to source top ICT and research specialists in the Australian States and Territories to deliver the project. The consultancy team was drawn from CCI Australia, the Victorian Department of Education and the Australian Council for Educational Research.

If you would like to know more about this project, please contact international@curriculum.edu.au

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