

COUNTRY REPORT

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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1. General Information

Name of Country

Formal Name : Kingdom of Thailand

Short form : Thailand ; formerly Siam

Term for Nationals : Thai

Vital Statistics of Thailand

Area	513,115 sq.km ¹
Population (June 2000)	62.6 million ²
Population Growth (June 2000)	1.5 % ²
Population Density	120.17 persons per sq.km. ²
Urban Population	18.3 % ³
Rural Population	81.7 % ³
Life expectancy (2000-2005) <i>males</i>	68.15 years ⁴
<i>Females</i>	72.39 years ⁴
Infant mortality rate (1998)	4.5 per 1,000 livebirths ⁵
Maternal mortality rate (1998)	7.6 per 100,000 livebirths ⁵
Adult literacy rate <i>males</i>	97 % ¹
<i>Females</i>	93 % ¹
Compulsory Education	9 years ³
Unemployment Rate (1998)	2.98 % ³

Sources :

¹ world development Report, 1999/2000

² Asia Week, vol 26, No. 25 (June 30, 2000)

³ Thailand Internet Service Provider Club

⁴ Human Resources Planning Division, Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board

⁵ health information division Bureau of Health Policy and Planning

2. Situation of People with Intellectual Disabilities

2.1 situation of I.D. in general, Services for I.D.

1) Finding & diagnosis of I.D.

In 2000, there were about 600,000 intellectually disabled persons in Thailand. Intellectual disabilities are defined as cognitive impairments of a developmental nature, which are usually present at birth or infancy. An additional aspect of impaired cognition is that of reduced intellectual functioning. Cognitive functions may be disturbed by head injury, stroke (CVA), or other diseases involving the brain such as Alzheimer's disease. Following disease or injury impairments in functions such as judgement, memory, reasoning, problem solving, abstract thinking, concentration, sequencing, reading, computation, and generalization of learning may be evident.

There are five levels of intellectual disabilities: Borderline (Dull normal) IQ 69-84, Mild (Educable) IQ 52-68, Moderate (Trainable) IQ 36-51, Severe (Dependent) IQ 20-35, Profound (Dependent) IQ < 20.

To be diagnosed as suffering from mental retardation, an individual must meet three criteria: (a) have an IQ of 70 or below, (b) experience problems in daily functioning (e.g., be unable to take care of himself or herself), and show signs of the disorder before the age of 18. There are four levels of retardation: mild (IQ 50-70), moderate (IQ 34-50), severe (IQ 20-35), and profound (IQ below 20). (Holmes, 1997)

However, there are some problems with the measurement of intelligence revolve around sociocultural factors (eg., poor individuals or those from ethnic minorities may have had different experiences), the measurement of abilities that are relevant for functioning in the real world, and the presence of physical or emotional problems that interfere with intellectual performance. However, many of these problems can be overcome with individually administered tests.

2) Early intervention

Known social risk factors for poor intellectual development include intergenerational poverty, low levels of parental education and intelligence, unstimulating and non-optimal parent-child interactions. Additional biological risks include poor nutrition, low birthweight, and premature birth. Therefore, the preventive early interventions are useful for young infants and their families at multiple risk. The early intervention programs should be multidisciplinary, intergenerational, individualized for children and their families, and contextually embedded in local service delivery systems.

For patients with intellectual disabilities such as dementing illness, the course of illness will vary in its time frame and severity depending on each individual. Careful consideration of these individual changes at each stage of the disease must be addressed when discussing continued care for patients. Medical and care management are essential in providing appropriate care for persons with intellectual disabilities. Medical management includes treating all conditions that can be treated on a systematic basis. A specific concern in medical management is the careful monitoring of any medications that are utilized in order to treat medical conditions.

Care management techniques will vary throughout the course of illness and the patient's condition as the progression of disease will differ for each person, and it is for this reason that individual care plans are necessary. However, care management can be based on some major themes regardless of the patient's condition:

- The needs of each person should be assessed with unmet needs being documented and addressed appropriately.
- A person's level of function should be conserved and maximized.
- At each stage of any disease, appropriate support and interventions should be used.
- Care plans should take a multidisciplinary approach and utilize information from many sources.

In order to improve the diagnosis and care of persons with intellectual disabilities, education and training are necessary. Specifically, both family caregivers and professionals must be made aware of diagnostic and practice guidelines in the area of intellectual disabilities. Care management and coping skills can be taught to care givers and professionals, as well, in order to elicit more appropriate care for persons with intellectual disabilities. These educational goals can be achieved by community-based programs for families and care givers and training on the diagnosis and treatment of intellectual disabilities, for professionals.

3) Education

The 1997 Constitution of Thailand stipulates that the government shall expand basic education to at least twelve years. Additionally, the 1999 National Education Act legislates that the government shall provide nine years of compulsory education. The disabled and the disadvantaged will also be provided with education according to their own potential. These groups including children with intellectual disabilities will be provided with basic primary and secondary education and other category of education necessary for their livelihood and their dignified return to society.

The education of the disabled is affected under the direction of the general Education Department is the Special Education, which is responsible for 6 government and 5 private schools for the intellectually disabled.

Special schools such as Rajanukul school, Wichutis school and Bangkapi school which provide inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities. However, these schools consistently fail to effect integration of students with society; the students lack social skills.

In a nutshell, the problem encountered by the rural disabled is no access to schooling. For this reason, and because Thailand's governments are beginning to respond, the focus of NGO and International NGO (INGO) activity is to encouraging the government to integrate the disabled.

4) Vocational training

For people with intellectual disabilities who live in Bangkok, they can received job training at Rajanukul school. And for people with intellectual disabilities who live outside Bangkok, there are a few centres such as Vocational Training Centre (Bangpoo) to train these people skills necessary for the employment. The people are trained in vocational skills: basket, mat or cloth weaving, pottery, animal husbandry (pigs or cattle), or growing plants.

5) Employment

Employment is necessary for all people to retain their self-worth. However, for intellectually disabled Thais nowadays, it is quite difficult to get a suitable job. Since Thai society still has a point of view that people with intellectual disabilities are unable to do things and to work normally. Other reasons include "family support" making work unnecessary. These people also are perceived as having very little opportunity of being trained for labour market. Some parents have to arrange for their children with intellectual disabilities to be employed, usually in a private company. Most of them are working in their parents' business (if they have one) or in their friends' companies. The special schools also try to help their graduates get job. Some of the more intelligent disabled can gain their job. Most of them, however, are unemployed.

Therefore, now there are some organizations such as Rajanukul Hospital Foundation under the Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Narathiwat Rajanagarindra and Rajanukul Hospital have launched a pilot employment plan for people with intellectual disabilities, to train these people skills necessary for employment. The fund will employ intellectually disabled people to work in different work stations of the hospital such as at the out-patient department, store or canteen. These people will be encouraged to rotate to other work stations in order that they will gain experiences in fields of work. And the officer will seek a suitable full-time job for each intellectually disabled person who has passed this program.

6) Financial assistance

There is a fund called 64 A Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons set up in the Office of Committee for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons to serve as the revolving capital for expenses incurred in the implementation and provision of assistance to disabled persons and support of the institutions providing medical, educational, social rehabilitation and vocational training; including the Center for Innovation and Education Technology and organizations concerned with disabled persons.

The Fund of Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons shall comprise the following moneys and properties

- 1) government grants
- 2) donated money or property from the public, juristic entities or organizations, both within and outside the country, or those derived from organizing activities
- 3) other income; The monies and other properties prescribed in paragraph two shall be put into the Fund without having to be remitted to the treasury as Government revenue.

In 1994 the government began a new small loans program whereby the disabled can start up small businesses.

2.2 Flow chart of Service Delivery System

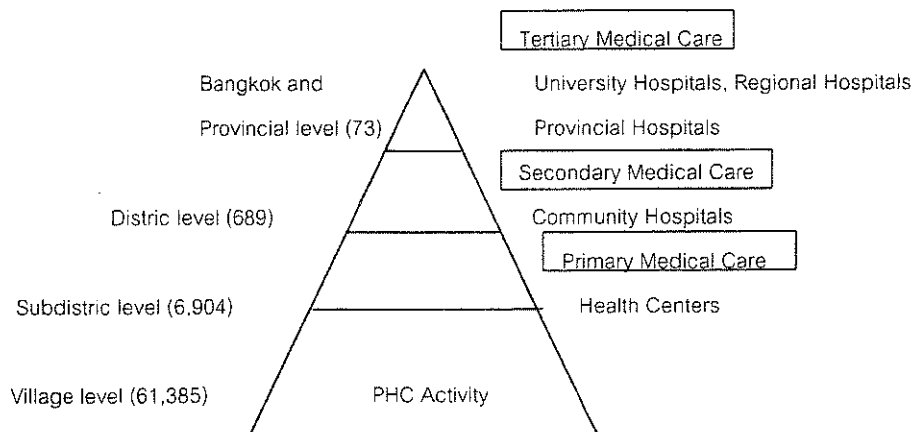


Chart 1 Health Delivery System in Thailand

Source: *Technology and Development*, No. 11, 1998

2.3 Laws concerned with I.D.

The rights of persons with intellectual disabilities are protected by a combination of special legislation specifically dealing with disability matters, and general legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts)

The general legislation applies to persons with different disabilities will respect to education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court of law, right to privacy, property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, employment, independent living, and participation in decisions affecting them.

According to the government, the "Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act A.D. 1991 (B.E. 2534) has been, enacted after the adoption of the Rules. Laws concerned with I.D. are as follows:

- ☆ Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act A.D. 1991 (B.E. 2534)
- ☆ Ministerial Regulation No.1 A.D. 1994 (B.E. 2537) on the Employment of Disabled and the Contribution to the Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons
- ☆ Ministerial Regulation No.2 A.D. 1994 (B.E. 2537) on Designation of Type and Criteria of Disabled Persons
- ☆ Ministerial Regulation No.3 A.D. 1994 (B.E. 2537) on Provision of Medical Rehabilitation Service and Expenses for Nursing Care and Equipment

2.4 Organizations of persons with intellectual disabilities

There is a national umbrella organization. Legal provisions mandate the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations are always consulted when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations take place at the national level. The government financially supports existing or new organizations. Persons with intellectual

disabilities participate to a very limited extent in Government, judicial authorities and political parties but to a great extent in legislature and NGOs. The organizations have the role to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with intellectual disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with intellectual disabilities, contribute to public awareness, provide services, and promote/organize income generating activities.

Co-ordination of work

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The committee includes representatives of the Ministries of Finance, Health and social Affairs, Employment, Housing, and representatives from organizations of persons with disabilities, and from other NGOs. The Government expects the co-ordinating committee to participate in policy development and to perform other tasks such as recommend, consult, and encourage policy and activities concerning the rehabilitation and development of disabled people. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had effects such as improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more accurate planning, more effective use of resources, and improved promotion of public awareness.

2.5 Governmental Agencies concerned with I.D.

Rajanukul Hospital

Rajanukul Hospital is the government provision of services for people with intellectual disabilities. Today it is the largest hospital of its kind providing 610 beds and working cooperatively with many governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Tel : (662) 245 4696 Fax : (662) 248 2944

Srithunya Hospital

Tel : (662) 526 3342 Fax : (662) 525 0491

Somdet Chao Phraya Hospital

Tel : (662) 437 7061 Fax : (662) 437 5456

Mental Health and Child Guidance Center

Tel : (662) 245 7798 Fax : (662) 245 7834

Nitichitawej Hospital

Tel : (662) 441 9029 Fax : (662) 889 9083

Yuwaprasart Waithayopatum Child Psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (662) 394 1846 Fax : (662) 394 1845

Suan Prung Psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (053) 276 750 Fax : (053) 271 084

Nakonsawan Psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (056) 341 281 Fax : (056) 267 1160 ext. 130

<http://203.157.0.2/mdh/nakornsawan/index.htm>

Northern Child Development Center

Tel : (053) 890 237 Fax : (053) 219 953

Prasimahaphodi Psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (045) 312 549 Fax : (045) 312 547

Nakhon Ratchasima Psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (044) 242 646 Fax : (044) 259 187

Khon Kaen Neuro psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (043) 221 767 Fax : (043) 224 722

Nakronphanom Psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (042) 593 110 Fax : (042) 593 109

Suansaranomya Hospital

Tel : (077) 311 508 Fax : (077) 240 565

Loei Psychiatric Hospital

Tel : (042) 814 889 – 98 Fax : (042) 814 891

2.6 Non Governmental Organization (NGO)

The family, relatives, and communities have traditionally been a cornerstone in looking after the welfare of their intellectually disabled members. However, in the past few decades various NGOs are serving the growing needs of the disabled. Some agencies initiated rehabilitative programs long before the government assumed such duties. In 1982, the Thai National Council of Disabled Persons was established and included : The Association of the Blind, : The Association of the Deaf, : The Association of the Disabled, and the Association of Parents of the Mentally Retarded. In unity there is strength.

NGOs which concerned with intellectually disabled are as follows;

Association for Strengthening Integrated National and Health Development Activities of Thailand

Activities : Provision of a clinic and counseling service.

Address : 101 Pinklao-Nakhon Chaisi Rd. , Chimphli, Taling Chan, Bangkok 10170

Tel : (662) 448 6050

Fax : (662) 448 6462

The Foundation of Encourage the Potential of Disabled Persons

Activities : To promote and encourage the health, education, employment, and dignity of northern Thailand's disabled persons

Address : 195/197 Ban Tanawan Moo 8 Tambon Sanpheeseu Amphur Mueng Chiang Mai 50300

Tel : (66 53) 240 935 Fax : (66 53) 240 935

E-mail : assist@loxinfo.co.th

Foundation for Children's Development

Activities : 1. To study and disseminate information on problems and impacts on children to the public ;
2. To support communities, individuals and concerned agencies in organizing child development activities.

Address : 143/109-111 Pinklao Phatthana Village, Borom Ratchachonnani Rd., Arun Amarin, Bangkok Noi, Bangkok 10700

Tel : (662) 433 6292, 435 5281, 884 6603

Fax : (662) 435 5281

Foundation for Handicapped Children

Activities : 1. Providing welfare, assistance, and care ;
2. Providing training and education ; and
3. Research and document work.

Address : 546 Soi Ladprao 47, Bang Kapi, Bangkok 10310

Tel : (662) 539 9706, 539 9958

Fax : (662) 539 2916

Hotline Center Foundation (HCF)

Activities : 1. To provide counseling on mental, physically, and life problems ;
2. To promote education and research into rights and equality ; and
3. Home visits and disseminating information.

Address : 145/6 Hotline Villa Building, Viphawadi Rangsit 20 Rd., Ladyao, Bangkok 10900

Tel : (662) 276 2950-1 Fax : (662) 691 4057

Moh Chao Ban Foundation

Activities : 1. Disseminating information on health care through various media ; and
2. Campaigning for solutions to health problems.

Address : 36/6 Soi Pradiphat 10, Samsen Nai, Phayathai, Bangkok 10400

Tel : (662) 278 1616, 278 0481

Fax : (662) 271 1806

National Council for Child and Youth Development

Activities : 1. To act as a center for coordination with all organizations working on children and youth; and
2. Supporting and lobbying for the protection of children's rights.

Address : 618/1 Nikhom Makkasan Rd.,
Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400

Tel : (662) 255 9922 Fax : (662) 254 7219

National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand

Activities : 1. To promote and coordinate with government and the private sector regarding issue of social welfare and social development ;
2. Operating loving-kindness Fund ; and
3. Rehabilitation of the disabled.

Address : 257 Mahidol Building, Ratchawithi Rd.,
Phayathai, Bangkok 10400

Tel : (662) 246 1457, 245 6838

Fax : (662) 247 6273

Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH)

Activities : Providing health and academic support in various aspects, especially among the underprivileged in society.

Address : Ruamprasong Building, 3rd Floor,37
Phetchaburi Soi 15 Rd., Bangkok 10400

Tel : (662) 653 7563-5 Fax : (662) 653 7568

Help Age International *

Activities : Providing financial support to government and private agencies which deal with the elderly to assist and develop the quality of life of underprivileged and elderly people.

Address : Faculty of Nursing, Chiang Mai University,
Muang, Chiang Mai 50200

Tel : (66 53) 894 805, 221 294

Fax : (66 53) 894 214

Mc Kean Rehabilitation Center

Activities : Curing leprosy patients, and helping the disabled and underprivileged.

Address : 69 Moo 8 Tambon Pa Daet, Muang,
Chiang Mai 50000

Tel : (66 53) 277 049 Fax : (66 53) 282 495

Project for the Better Life of Children in Wiang Phing

Activities : 1. To assist and develop neglected and underprivileged children to grow up with healthy minds and bodies, and positive intellectual, emotional, and social relations.
2. To promote, suport, and protect children according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Address : 6/12-1 Suriwong Rd., Tambon Haiya,
Muang, Chiang Mai 50100

Tel : (66 53) 201 695, 431 704

Fax : (66 53) 201 695

Recovery of the Handicapped Project

Activities : 1. Rehabilitation treatment ;
2. Support for handicapped children to attend classes with normal children;and
3. to provide occupational support to the handicapped.

Address : Primary Health Care Building, Bua Yai
Hospital, Bua Yai distric, Nakhon
Ratchasima 30120

Tel : (66 44) 461 623 Fax : (66 44) 461 663

* international organization

2.7 Multinational Organizations

The following is a list of some multinational organizations in which Thai health personnel could network and cooperate on the issues:

- Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002
<http://www.dpa.org.sg/DPA/ESCAP/agenda.htm>
- Disabled Peoples' International
<http://www.dpi.org/index.html>
- Japan Down Syndrome Network
<http://infofarm.cc.affrc.go.jp/~momotani/dowil.html>
- Mental Disability Rights International (MDRI)
<http://www.wcl.american.edu/pub/humright/development/disabi/infoen.htm>
- World Association of Persons with Disabilities
<http://wapd.org/nographics/index.html>
- Disability Information and Resource Center (DIRC)
<http://www.dircsa.org.au/>

3. Outline of My Organization

3.1 Function

As an open university, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University subscribes to the principle of life-long education, aims to improve the quality of life of the population, seeks to upgrade the educational and professional qualifications of working people and strives to expand educational opportunities at the tertiary level for those who have completed secondary education and also for the general public.

Within the general framework of these goals, the University has set the following objectives:

- a) to provide and promote academic and professional education to enable people to upgrade their educational qualifications in response to individual and social needs;
- b) to promote research for application in national development; and
- c) to provide educational services to society, through the dissemination of knowledge, thereby promoting personal development and professional competence.

To provide students in every region of Thailand with educational services, the University has, with the cooperation of central and regional educational institutions and other government agencies, set up Study Centers. Study Centers are 3 types: 1) Regional Study Centers 2) Provincial Study Centers 3) Special Study Centers

3.2 Organization Charge

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University differs from other state universities with regard to its academic structure. The University is not organized into faculties and departments; instead, these coalesce and form "schools" representing major study areas. Each school is responsible for the planning of the curriculum and the provision of instruction in the group of subjects it supervises. The establishment of the various schools is in accordance with career and professional development.

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University established “*the School of Health Science*” for the following objectives:

- 1) To provide continuing education for in-service health personnel to promote personal and professional development, thus enabling them to render more efficient services in accordance with the National Health Development Policy.
- 2) To produce bachelor level nursing and public health personnel to meet the country's health-care needs.
- 3) To raise the health level of individuals, families, and society by providing them with health knowledge and information.
- 4) To carry out research in nursing and public health and to provide advisory services and research support in these areas to interested individuals and agencies.

School of Health Science organizes its courses into four level: master's degree level; bachelor's degree level; certificate level; and continuing education level.

3.3 My Responsibility

- To produce instructional media such as text books, workbooks, video-cassette, and radio and television programs in the area of Occupational Therapy (such as in the topic of “Medical rehabilitation in local communities”).
- To give instructions and training for health personnel who care for disabled persons.
- To be a lecturer of School of Health Science at intensive training sessions and tutorial sessions at regional and local study centers throughout the country.
- To provide advisory services and research support in the area of Occupational Health and Occupational Therapy to interested individuals and agencies.

SOURCES ;

Technology and Development, No.11,1998

world development Report, 1999/2000

<http://www.circ.uab.edu/cpages/Eipath.htm>

<http://www.dredf.org/symposium/thailand.html>

<http://www.infothai.com/disabled/contents.html>

<http://www.rs.mahidol.ac.th/eng/service/law/law2.htm>

<http://www.moph.go.th/ops/bhpp/hos1.html>

<http://www.moph.go.th/ops/bhpp/ou.html>

http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/thailand/rapport_1.html