

Country Report

Intellectual Disabilities

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Country : Thailand

Country Report of Thailand
Intellectual Disabilities
Department of Public Welfare
Bangkok , Thailand

I. General information of Thailand

1. Geography : Thailand ; situated in the middle of Southeast Asia and as a gateway to Indochina.

2. The Land : Thailand covers an area of 513,115 square kilometers. It is divided into four regions ; North , Central , North East and South.

3. Population ; The total population of Thailand by the year 2000 was approximately 61.8 million with an annual growth rate of 1.05 percent. The female population was 31.1 million whereas the male was 30.7 million. It was found that the population size in urban was different from that in rural . The urban population (Bangkok and Vicinities) was about 9.4 million or 15 percent of the total population. The rural population was about 52.4 million or 85 percent (Table 1) However , the population projection in the year 2001 to 2004 will increase from 62.9 million to 64.4 million (Table 2)

Table 1 Population of Thailand by region : 2000 : million

	<u>Year</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	2002	%
Total	61.8	100
Bangkok and Vicinities (6 Provinces)	9.4	15.2
Central	10.7	17.3
Northern	12.1	19.6
North- eastern	21.4	34.7
Southern	8.2	13.2

Source : Notional Statistical Office Office of the Prime Minister

Table 2 Population Projection by number : 2001 - 2004 : Thousand Persons

Population Number	year			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total	62,950	63,430	63,954	64,492

Source : Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board Office of the Prime Minister.

4. Capital : Bangkok is the capital of Thailand. Apart from being administrative center of Thailand, Bangkok is the biggest city in the country with a population of over 8 million. It has 1,500 square kilometers.

5. Government System : Thailand has been a democratic constitutional monarchy. The Current constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2540 is the landmark legislation for the administration in the country. The government administration consists of 3 divisions; the Central Administrative Service (15 ministries) ; the Regional Administrative Service (75 Provinces , 795 districts , 81 sub-districts) and the Local Administrative Service (75 provincial administration organizations, 1,129 municipalities , local administrative prescribed by law ; Bangkok and Pattaya, 6,397 tambon administration organizations.)

6. Health Status

Life expectancy / infant mortality and maternal mortality rates : A result of socio-economic development resulting in improved health intervention and advanced medical technology, infectious diseases were under control. This results in longer life expectancy of Thai people (74.9 years in woman and 69.9 years in man)

However, the progress of health status also results in lower infant and maternal mortality rates. In the year 1999, an infant death rate was 6.5 per 1,000 persons. While a maternal death rate was 12 per 1,000 persons. If we compared both rates the year 1998 , it was found that infant death and maternal death were increasing (Table 3). The reason might be that in the year 1999, the members of AIDS disease went up and caused many deaths.

Table 3 Statistic of infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate in Thailand : 1998 - 1999

	1998		1999	
	Number	Per 1,000 pop.	number	Per 1,000 pop.
Infant Death	4,353	4.9	5,000	6.5
Maternal Death	63	7.0	93	12.0

Source : National Statistical Office.

7. Socio – Economic Conditions

Literacy / Education / Unemployment Rates : The impacts of Socio-Economic development not only resulted in Health promotion but also uplifted a higher education rate of Thai people. According to the population census of National statistical Office from 1994 to 1995 it was found that a literacy rate was increasing from 93.5 percent in 1994 to 93.8 percent in 1995 while illiteracy rate was declining (Table 4)

Table 4 Literacy and Illiteracy Rates of the population in Thailand : 1994 – 1995

	1994	1995
Literacy rate (%)	93.5	93.8
Illiteracy rate (%)	6.5	6.2

Source : National statistical Office

As for the education, the average of school years of the population at 15 years of age and over increased from 5.7 years in 1990 to 7.8 years in 2000. This was increasing because the National Education Development Plan expanded the basic or compulsory education from 6 years to 9 years and 12 years respectively. Nevertheless the number of Thai students in elementary level (6 years) and secondary level (6 years) were still increasing from 1999 to 2000 (Table -5)

Table 5 Number of students by level of Education : Academic years 1999 – 2000

Level of education	Number	
	1999	2000
Pre-elementary	2,162,988	2,161,384
Elementary (6 years)	5,959,336	6,012,047
Lower- secondary (3 years)	2,371,475	2,329,650
Upper-secondary (3 years)	1,037,584	1,098,551

Source : National Statistical Office

Regarding employment , before the Economic crisis in 1997, the employment situation was good. The analysis that compares the employment situation in 1995 (Pre-crisis) with that of 1998 (crisis) indicates that total labour force increased from 32.7 million in to 33.1 million in 1998. Nevertheless, the labour force participation rate declined from 76.2 percent to 73.6 percent in 1998 during that period and also the unemployment rate increased from 1.1 percent to 3.4 percent within 3 years . In the year 2001, the unemployment rate was better than in 1998 because the unemployment rate declined to 1.6 percent (Table -6)

Table 6 : Employment and Unemployment in Thailand in 1995 , 1998 and 2001

	1995	1998	2001
Total labour force	33,211.9	33,140.8	33,211.9
Labour force	76.2	73.6	53.8
Participation Rate (%)			
Unemployment (%)	1.1	3.4	1.6

Source : National Statistical Office.

II Situation of People with Intellectual disabilities in Thailand

1. General Situation of I.D

In Thailand, according to the Ministerial Regulations No.2 (B.E 1994) issued in Pursuant to The Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act B.E 1991 the disabled person are classified as follows :

- 1) Impairment in terms of sight
- 2) Impairment in terms of hearing or communication
- 3) Impairment in terms of physical and locomotion
- 4) Impairment in terms of mentality or behavior
- 5) Impairment in terms of Intellectual or learning

Impairment in terms of Intellectual and ability means a person with abnormality or malfunction of brain or intelligent which causes inability of the person to learn through a regular education system.

As for the incidence of I.D person in Thailand Dr.Bunlu Siripanit and his colleges had studied the number of I.D in 1982 concluded that I.D persons were about 161 persons per 1,000,000. After that in 1988 The Rajanukul Hospital for the mental retardation had surveyed the retarded persons and reported that the incidence of the retardation was 2 percent among the population. The latest I.D study was the study of National Statistical Office in 1999 that showed number of I.D persons was about 149.3 person per 1,000. However the result of National Statistical Office study also stated that the number of I.D person could be found thirdly of all disabled person in Thailand at that time. The statistic of the Office of the Committee for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons also showed that the number of I.D , having registration from 1994 to 2002 (30 , April) , were 37,527 persons. At conclusion , according to these studies, they had showed the incidence of I.D persons in Thailand who are a learning disability group and a mental retardation group.

- Finding and Diagnosis of I.D

Finding and Diagnosis the I.D persons are the first steps of leading way to help the I.D persons. Those methods are conducted by a physician in a general or a mental hospital. According to the progress of the Health Care System, The public health Ministry has worked with people in the rural under the Primary Health Care system in which health care volunteers in every villages could help the disabled persons especially the I.D persons. By doing this , we can find a large number of I.D persons early for rehabilitation

The method of finding I.D person could be by screening metabolic disease, endocrine study, amniocentesis in pregnancy woman, or ultrasounding the fetus. After finding I.D persons the physicians have to diagnose an I.D person by the methods of testing I.Q , investing an adjusted or social behavior and studying the past symptoms before 18 years, However the diagnosis include the study of family history, psycho testing , developmental

screening test or laboratory testing etc. The early finding and diagnosis methods can help an I.D person to develop himself /herself to live with other people but the best way to cope with an I.D is to prevent the increasing number of I.D persons.

- Early Intervention

Early Intervention is a good way to help the I.D . If the physician finds an I.D when he /she is a child at age of 0-3 years, the physician must give a developmental treatment quickly and that treat must be continuing until she /he can go to school, Nevertheless an I.D would be successful in developing in quality of life , if the family is involved or participates in that activity or an I.D could get more medical services such as a rehabilitation medicine, or speech Therapy etc.

When an I.D can go to school. It is necessary for an I.D to have an education activity by means of early medical intervention. The early education intervention is a special education in pre – school, special school and integrated school. It can be said that special education is very important to promote the ability of an I.D by coordinating with the medical intervention.

- Education for I.D persons

In addition to providing health care for I.D persons, Thai Government admitted the importance of education to continue the development of I.D. Towards this end, the Rehabilitation for persons with Disabilities Act B.E.2534 (1991) entitles I.D persons to compulsory education, special education, occupational education and higher education. In 1999 , the government promulgated the National education ACT B.E 2542 (1999) to protect the people's rights of education. All disabled persons including I.D persons could enroll to school which are special schools and integrated or inclusive schools for basic education in 12 years without any charge.

Moreover, the results of promulgation of the Education ACT gives an opportunity for disabled persons because in 1999 the government proclaimed as "the year of education for persons with disabilities." As part of the country's national policy, signs reading "Any disabled person who wishes to go to school, can do so." At present, there are 28 special schools for I.D children which 4,743 I.D children can enroll and then 3,353 I.D children could go to integrated school.

- Vocational Training

A special vocational training has been provided to prepare persons with disabilities at age of 14-40 years for employment. The OCRDP under DPW has provided 17 vocational training courses e.g dress-making, radio and television repair, barbering ,hair-cutting, ect. And also in those training courses include a self-management and social skills. There were 8 vocational training centers and a vocational development center(shelter workshop);graduated form the centers could work in workshop to improve their vocational skills. For those trainees who have not attended any school or have not finished their education of primary or secondary level, DPW in collaboration with the Non Formal Education Department of The Ministry of Education arranged non formal education course for those in centers. In 2002, the 1,042 persons with disabilities have been trained and more than 50 percent of them could worked in industrial sewing.. For an I.D, it may be difficult to take any course in the training center because of his/her limit of learning and necessity of having a care person with him/her. To get rid of such barriers of I.D vocational training ,DPW has cooperated with the Rajanukul Hospital to train the intellectual disabled persons in residential care of DPW. However, DPW also launched the Mushroom Training program in 1999 in Ubon Ratchathani province .This program provided advising and training in field of mushroom farming for people with disabilities in the northeastern included I.D persons to have opportunities for their jobs.

- Employment

The Ministry of labour and Social Welfare issued a ministerial regulation on employment of persons with disabilities in 1994 , in accordance with the Rehabilitation for Persons with Disabilities Act B.E 2534 (1991). This regulation requires an enterprise with more than 200 employees to hire one person with disabilities in any position. Any business not wishing to do that have to make an annual financial contribution to the Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. If the employers hire a person with disabilities, they can deduct double the actual cost of hiring for tax purposes. After proclaiming the regulation of employment 1994, DPW have put an implementation on providing career guidance and job placement services for people with disabilities until 2000. It was found that 7,550 people with disabilities were employed in the enterprises, And if we considered the employment only in 2000, there were 450 enterprises advertising job vacancy for 1,050 positions. The 582 people with disabilities had been employed in the enterprises by that year. However, when looked at the employed Group, especially an I.D person, there were 4 persons who could work as a cleaner or an office personal.

As for some people with disabilities who can not work in any enterprises, there will be a service that is interest-free loan for small enterprise investment from the Fund for Rehabilitation. If someone want to take up self-employment he/she can loan 20,000 baht with no interest and should pay back in 5 years. In 2000, the 89.8 million baht fund had been lent to 4,624 persons. Most of them have invested in trading, farming and selling lottery tickets. Up From the beginning years in 1995 until 2000 , there were 248 persons of I.D. , having loaned the money for their businesses from total number 16,040 persons ; farming and trading.

This year (2002) the government has paid attention to the employment of people with disabilities . In order to help the disabled to work more, the government has proclaimed "The Vocational Years of the People with Disabilities 2002" to promote much more employment in enterprise or independent occupations (self-employment).

- Financial Assistances

Financial Assistance' is a social service under the OCRDP's responsibilities. It can devide into 3 categories.

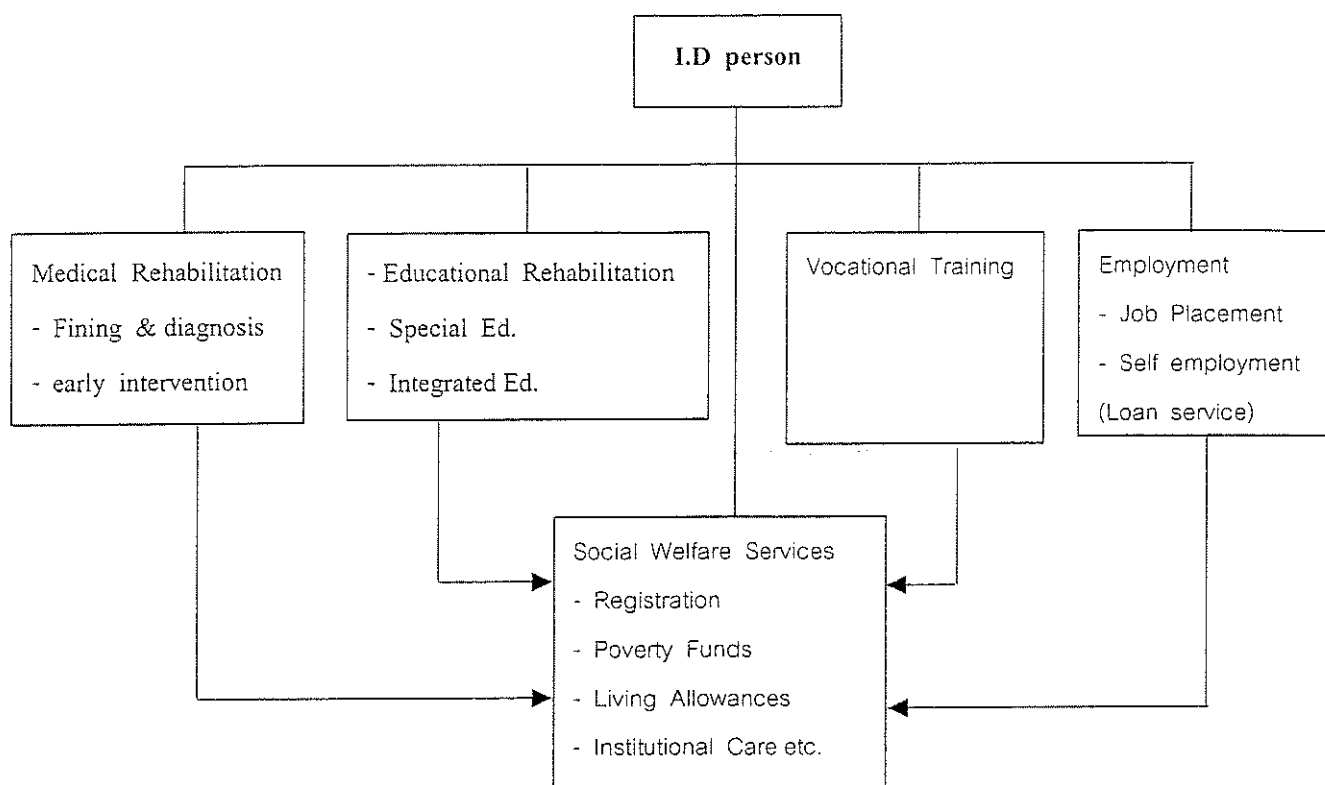
1. Poverty fund for assistance the family of people with disabilities being in difficulty. They could received 2,000 baht per time for the expenses of living, going to medical or vocational services etc.

2. Living allowance for people with disabilities who have severs disabilities. They could get 500 baht per month through their living. Nevertheless living allowance had given to people with disabilities in Bangkok and in rural (75 provinces). In 2000 , the 550 I.D persons (form total 25,500 persons) can received allowances to encourage their families to continue taking care of them instead of putting them in the residential care of DPW.

3. Assist the devices free of charge for people with disabilities for social or medical rehabilitation such as wheelchairs, artificial hip, eye lenses replacement and others.

The funding for assistance are from the government budget and donation from public.

2. Flow chart of service delivery system



3. Laws concerned with I.D

- The Rehabilitation for Disabled Person Act B.E 2534 (1991)

The Rehabilitation for Disabled Person Act B.E 2534 is the first Thai law dealing with people with disabilities. This landmark Act was the result of a co-operative effort of the government, the private sector and organizations of people with disabilities. As for the law, the main principle aimed to protect the rights of people with disabilities and gave opportunities to them to access through medical, education vocational and social rehabilitation. This act also establish a National Committee for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons and The Fund of Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. Another important of this act is a provision for the legal participation of people with disabilities and their organizations.

- The constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, 1997

The Thai constitution is the highest laws of the land. The latest constitution was adopted in 1997 and was the first to include specific provision for persons with disabilities. Those provisions are persons with disabilities being equal to all people, being received

public facilities by the government, having a good quality of life and having ability to depend upon themselves.

4. Community – Based Rehabilitation programs

This approach is important because some disabled persons in remote area or in rural are not accessible to rehabilitation service in institutions. In addition if they are to be rehabilitated in the institutions, they have to be away from their families. This will affect the family life of the disabled persons and even more affect the children. Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is an appropriate way to enable people with disabilities to stay at home or live with their families and communities.

In this connection, the Ministry of Public Health, the Sirindhorn National Medical Rehabilitation Center, has used the concepts and guidelines of CBR from the WHO, and adjusts to suit the situation in Thailand as appropriate. The CBR concept has also been promoted among public health personal and agencies that concerned. In 1992, the Sub-Committee on Community-Based Rehabilitation, appointed under the Committee on Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons, is responsible for the implementation of CBR Programs. In 1994, DPW in collaboration with Save the Children Fund organized training courses for welfare Office to have basic knowledge of CBR. The training officer will train the relatives of the disabled, the committee of villages and other agencies. Nevertheless the DPW has cooperated with the Christoffel Blinden Mission (CBR) in Chiang Mai province in the North and expanded the project in Ubon Ratchathani province (in the Northeast) in order that the families and communities should take care of the disabled person. Moreover the disabled under those projects included the disabled in 4 type (physical, sight, hearing and intellectual) except for the mentality.

In support of these CBR activities to help persons with disabilities live with their families, the government provide a monthly subsistence allowance of 500 bath for each person with severe disability during the life time.

5. Government agencies concerned with I.D

5.1 The Ministry of Public Health : To provide medical services and rehabilitation medicine and other services e.g. occupational therapy for I.D persons in a special hospital (mental retardation), a general hospital, a regional hospital and a district health office (in provinces).

5.2 The Ministry of Education : To provide a special education and an integrated education for an I.D up from a compulsory level to a secondary level or higher. Now there are 28 special schools and 2,105 integrated schools for I.D.

5.3 The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (Department of Public Welfare) :
To provide social welfare services for I.D persons as follow;

- Registration service
- Poverty Funds for I.D persons and their families, having difficult in living
- Living allowances for I.D persons with severe disabilities 500 baht per month
- Institutional Care for I.D neglected or homeless at Pak Ked Home for Mentally Disabled Children (3 institutions: babies, girls, boys)
- Vocational Training services
- Job Placement services
- Community Based Rehabilitation (in rural)
- Loan services for independent occupation 20,000 baht per person
- Allocation of budget to support organizations(GOs. And NGOs) projects dealing with medical ,educational, occupational and social rehabilitation for I.D persons
- Legal affair consultation

Those responsibilities which have been mentioned above are act according to The Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act B.E 2534 (1991).

5.4 Others : The Bangkok Metropolitant Administration , universities, teacher school etc.
: To provide an education service for intellectual disabled children.

6. Non-governmental Organization (NGOs.)

There are approximately 10 NGOs. , dealing with the activities and issues concerning to I.D in Thailand . Those NGOs. are;

- (1) National Council on Social Welfare of Thailand under Royal Patronage
- (2) Council of Disabled People of Thailand (DPI.-Thailand)
- (3) Christian disabled children Foundation
- (4) The foundation for the Welfare of the Mentally Retardation of Thailand under the Royal Patronage of Her majesty the Queen
- (5) Foundation for the Welfare of Mentally Retarded Children
- (6) Sataban Saeng Sawang Foundation

- (7) Saint Gerard Children's Rehabilitation Center
- (8) Parent's Association for the retarded
- (9) Association for the retarded of Thailand
- (10) The foundation of the Tidametratum Udontani Diocesan

For example: an I.D NGOs. to show is

“ Association for the Retarded of Thailand”

Address : 18 Soi Sawat-amnuayvate Pradipat Rd, Phayathai Bangkok Thailand

Telephone : 02- 2714724

Objectives : 1. To promote relationship between organizations in order to gain knowledge and exchange ideas for helping the mental retarded persons

2. To promote the vocational training and the educational rehabilitation

3. To conserve rights and benefits of the retarded persons according to the law

4. To protect the mental retarded persons

5. To coordinate and participate in activities under taken by the Rajanukul Hospital,

other foundations, organizations and associations related to the mental retarded (national and international)

6. Not involve in any political movement

Activities: 1. Disseminating information on prevention and treatment for the M.R persons to the public

2. Providing counseling service on training, rehabilitation and the law concerning to the

M.R

3. Training the M.R children in 2 center in Bangkok

However, the Office of the Committee for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, Department of Public Welfare, takes a role to allocation of budget to support various non-organization projects.(According to the Disabled Persons Act. B.E 2534) These supports are form the Fund of Rehabilitation for Disabled Person and the office started to grant form 1998 to 2001. It was found that 24 of I.D projects were done by the NGOs. and could receive 1,373,210 baht . The results of those projects could help I.D people both in the Bangkok and the provincial areas.(Table- 7)

Table-7 Number and Amount of I.D projects getting the budget from 1998-2001

Year	Number	Amount of Budget
<u>Total</u>	24	1,373,210
1998	1	25,000
1999	14	509,090
2000	3	252,900
2001	6	586,250

Source : Office of the Committee for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons

7. Activities of international organization

In the field of I.D development, the governmental organizations; the Rajanukul Hospital ; the ministry of Education ; Department of Public Welfare and the non-governmental organizations are in co-operation with the JICA or other Japanese NGOs in order to develop an I.D knowledge, improve social service and train officers or staffs. At the part of employment, Department of Public Welfare also collaborate with the I.L.O to help the disabled persons to get more employment under the program of promoting the employer. The Thai and The Japanese Government are also working together to establish Asian and Pacific Center on Disability in Thailand. This center will act as an information center for person with disabilities and agencies concern as well as a region co-operation center for the Asian-Pacific region.

III Outline of The Office of The Committee for Rehabilitaion of Disabled Persons

Department of Public Welfare

- The Responsibilities of the Department of Public Welfare (DPW.)

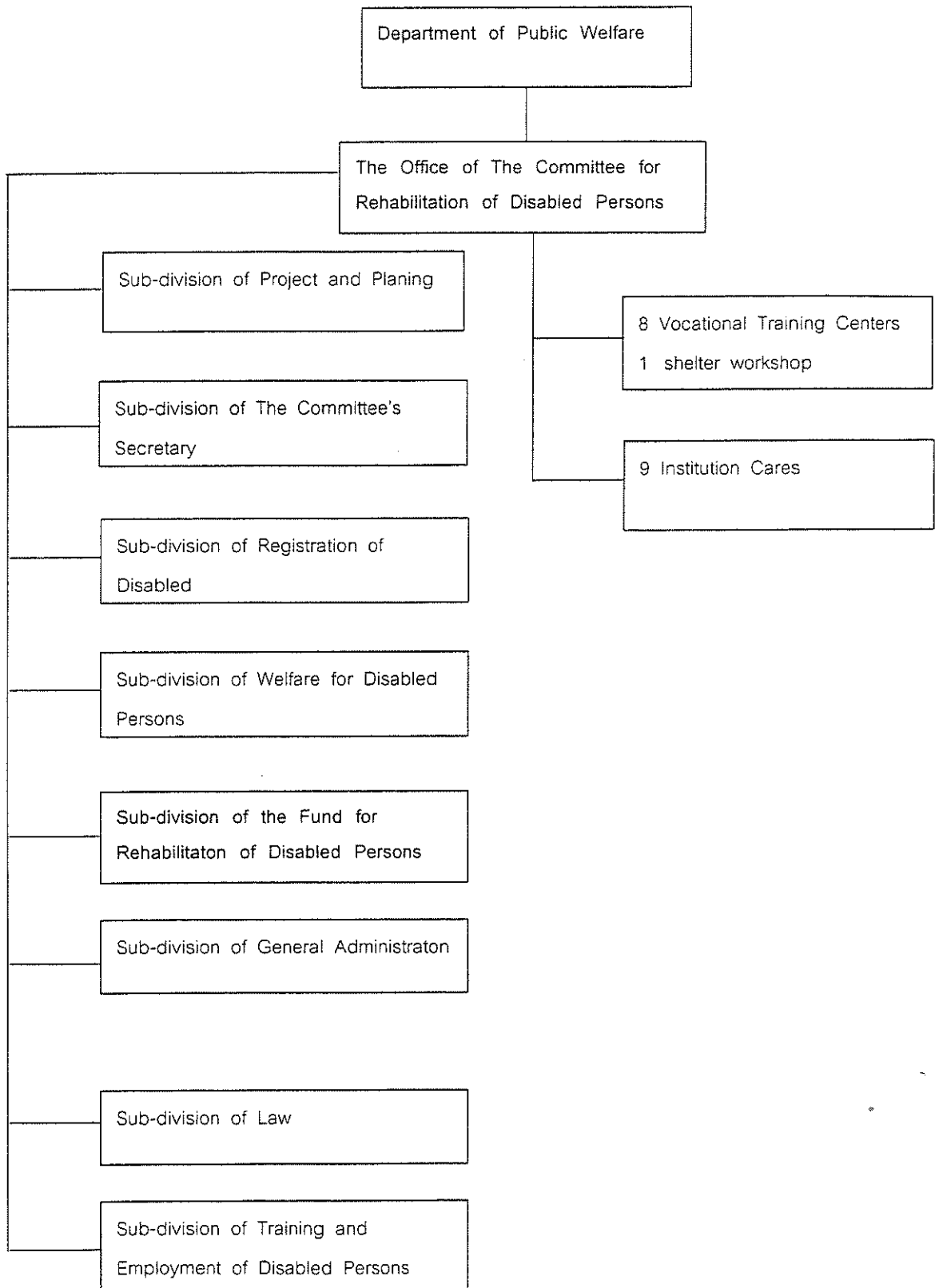
1. Providing social services to people in need, that are children , women, older persons, people with disabilities , homeless people, disaster victims, impoverished farmers, hilltribe people, poverty stricken families, and so on ;
2. Promotion and supporting social services to private sector ;
3. Developing the country's social welfare;
4. Recommending social welfare policy to national policy-makers ;
5. Conducting social welfare studies ;
6. Acting a focal point and a coordination center on social welfare information.

- The major roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Committee for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons.

- * Acts as a secretariat of the Committee for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons
- * Acts as the national focal point to coordinate with organization that working on the disabilities issues
- * Acts as a center of registration office, providing registration services for persons with disabilities, specifying their disabilities and promoting their legal rights according to the regulations
- * Acts as a center of social welfare for persons with disabilities, coordinating and giving full support to the activities managed by provincial Public Welfare Offices in order to achieve the project effectively
- * Acts as an Information Center of the disabilities issues

The Social Welfare Services providing are consultant services , assistance welfare service (poverty fund, living allowance , assistive devices and institutional care in 9 institutions) , vocational training in 9 institutions, CBR services, job placements , loan services, allocation of budget to various organizations and legal affair consultation services.

Organization chart



My Responsibilities

I work as a social worker in the Office of the Committee on Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. I am involved in the loan application for the people with disabilities who want to start their own businesses include an I.D person. I also consider the projects, proposed by the organizations ; GOs and NGOs, concerning the medical, educational, vocational and social rehabilitation and ask for the financial support form the rehabilitation fund under the Rehabilitation Act. 1991. The projects involve a range of activities including medical, educational, vocational and social rehabilitation of the persons with an intellectual and learning disabilities. Finally, I make a follow up and evaluation the above projects and the loan to take up self-employment of the disabled.
