"We Can Create Civic Mind"
Institutionalizing Civic Education in Thailand
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…a responsible member of a democratic state should adhere to the supremacy of the Dhamma – putting the importance on principles, truth, righteousness, virtue and reason; operating on the basis of what has been learned and verified against the facts; acting on views that have been extensively and clearly investigated and considered to the best of one's wisdom and integrity to be righteous and for the sake of goodness; on a general level, it means acting out of respect for established principles, laws, rules and regulations. (Phraphomkhunaphon, 2010)

PREFACE

"Words, especially organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to a reader than pages of summarized numbers." (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

Objective: This study aims to answer the questions: 1) How was the Project Citizen program able to reach its current level of impact? and 2) What is the future of the Project Citizen program in Thailand? The case study tells the story of the development of the Project Citizen program in Thailand under the leadership of King Prajadhipok's Institute (KPI). It captures the vision of KPI's leaders and chronicles their efforts to institutionalize civic education programs through the creation of strategic partnerships. The story begins in 2005, when the Center for Civic Education established a partnership with KPI to implement its first US State Department grant for Thailand, and looks beyond 2011, the end of the second State Department grant, with recommendations to strengthen civic education in Thailand.

Methodology: Research was conducted through individual interviews with KPI staff, KPI's institutional partners, government officials, and those impacted by the program. Twenty people were interviewed. (See Appendix A: Thailand Interview Questions; see Appendix B: Interview List)

Final Product: Designed as a case study, this is an intensive study within a specific context. The findings are presented as a single narrative story, told through the eyes and words of those who led and supported the efforts to establish and institutionalize the program in Thailand. The narrative includes key demographic information about Thailand, phases in the program's development, and anecdotes from those involved. Though not attributed, direct interview quotes are italicized. This approach attempts to "understand the experience as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it." (Sherman & Webb, 1988)

INTRODUCTION

Political liberty in a citizen is that tranquility of spirit which comes from the opinion each one has of his security, and in order for him to have this liberty the government must be such that one citizen cannot fear another citizen.

Charles de Montesquieu, The Spirit of Laws, 1748.

The interplay between political liberty and learning provides a framework for civic education in the 21st century. In identifying the mutual action that links the role of the citizen and the role of the government, civic educators are prompted to ask, "What information and knowledge, dispositions and values, and ultimately actions are required by citizens in order to attend to the public's business in the practice of democratic citizenship?" (Boggs, 1992). Civic education prepares the citizen for the acquisition of rights and the fulfillment of obligations in order to sustain a system of government in which "one citizen cannot fear another citizen".

On May 17, 2010, Wally Santana of the Associated Press photographed a simple sign posted on a Bangkok street; "Stop Killing - We Are All Thai." Active for over two months, the Red Shirt political protest in Bangkok, Thailand, pitted barricaded anti-government protesters against government troops. The Thai army had declared certain protest areas to be "Live Fire Zones".

While efforts to reform civic education in Thailand had existed prior to the political divisiveness in 2010, the conflict between the Red and Yellow Shirts brought national attention to the need for systemic reform. Defining the role of the citizen has become paramount in the reform efforts. However, the very term "citizen" is mired in both the country's emergence as a parliamentary democracy and the high level of reverence for the monarchy.

The word "citizen" in Thai literally translates as "force or strength of the city." However, there are other connotations. The word is also translated as "subject" with an inference of passivity and obedience. Historically, Thai nationals were born and governed as subjects of the monarchy. *It is their right to be active citizens, not subjects relying on the government only.* The third, and perhaps most neutral concept, is "people" which has little meaning and denotes neither an active or passive citizen. At the age of 15, Thais register for an ID card and are then identified as a Thai person. The word citizen also has a legal connotation which can be perceived as a negative to those who are not Thai nationals. *The universal conception of a global citizen [does not exist] for Thai; they are trapped in a nation state.*

Yet, efforts to strengthen civic education in Thailand are grounded in concepts of the "citizen" as a force in the city with a duty to work in society and as one who is active in the affairs of the community and country. In the Buddhist tradition of Thailand, stress is placed on responsibility over right. *We talk about the 38 good deeds in Buddhism; all of them are about some duty or responsibility toward others. Be grateful and respect parents, feed children, do good to our consort…it is the civic mind. We used to study social responsibility in school – no more.*

"Eighty-nine people died in the political violence between April – May 2010 in Bangkok. This, however, was not the first bloodshed in Thailand. Since the beginning of democracy in 1932,

there have been four bloodsheds, 11 coups d' etats and 18 constitutions. Why has democracy not succeeded in Thailand?" (Thaewanarunmitkul, 2010)   *The problem is we do not understand about democracy. We just understand about elections – not the value of how we treat one another.*

One citizen cannot fear another citizen.

WHAT WAS?

We might know the five Buddhist precepts, but if we do not live them … youth learn by doing; learn from experience and in activity to be good citizens. Good grades without goodness are not enough.

Former Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva - April 22, 2011

The previous [education] policy was to improve people to be good qualified workers. Now, we need to emphasize the civic mind to be a good person. It is written in the reform plan to improve the quality of people through civic education. To do that, we will train students to meet six objectives: to obey rules, to respect others, to promote equal opportunity and liberty, to be able to help oneself, and to foster a respect for differences.

Earlier days it was in the curriculum called CIVIC DUTY, the Duty of the Citizen…be good, be good, be good. The link to Buddhism was to follow the five precepts, but duty did not translate into participation. Participation was volunteerism, go out and help … cleaning the park was an act of community service.

A tradition of volunteerism is focused on the temples, rather than for the good of the community. In most communities, the monk is a respected member of the community and the temple is the community gathering place; it is the sphere in which community issues are discussed.

It is a deferential society and it is difficult for Thais to step out of their given role. We do not ask the students for their opinions. Only the teacher has an opinion. A hierarchical structure exists; people defer to the richer, the smarter, and the more educated because that is karma. Until people feel comfortable challenging authority, there will not be the full flavor of a civic culture. There is a need for students to think analytically and critically; students will feel helpless until they are empowered to deal with societal issues. The norm has been a reliance on others to take care of issues. The most important person in the classroom is the teacher. Thai tradition has been very teacher centered, but as teachers become more open minded to receive voices from the students, the classroom will [include] *a more democratic atmosphere.*

However, it is changing; student clubs are focusing more on community service. Community service is a requirement in primary schools with at least 10 hours per year required outside the classroom or school. Ultimately, 60 hours are required in the primary grades, 45 in the lower secondary, and 60 in the upper secondary.

Reminiscent of previously required coursework, the integration of civic education emphasizes *developing a public mind through activities or duties such as helping the elderly, going to the temple, and caring for others.* Why are these important? *No one can stay alone; people must live together. The world is small. It is natural in Thai culture to live together in villages and exist in village relationships and extended families.* Buddha's teachings also instruct that we should have "metta" (kindness) and "karuna" (benevolent, merciful) "nam jai" toward others. Translated as "water of the heart," it could simply mean to be helpful and caring toward others.

In his 1988 work on the <u>Civic Imperative</u>, Richard Pratt stressed, "Civic virtue is not a matter of mere behavior; it is a matter of forming a civic disposition, a willingness to act, in behalf of the public good while being attentive to and considerate of the feelings, needs, and attitudes of others. It implies an obligation or duty to be fair to others, to show kindness and tact, and to render agreeable service to the community "(p17).

However, *civic education is developing consciousness of not just duty, but of being a responsible person - being a kind person, paying attention to what is happening around oneself, making it right because it is the right thing to do, electing someone because he can make a positive difference, not just voting* out of a sense of duty.

Beyond a duty of doing good through community service, in his examination of civic education through service learning**,** Brian Garman (1995) observed, "We become good citizens by practicing the art of good citizenship. Service learning provides the practice that will renew civic commitment to our community and nation."

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) defines service learning as a "teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities" (September 2008). Identified as one of the six promising approaches in the 2003 Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) and Carnegie Corporation report "Civic Mission of the Schools", service objectives, when combined with learning objectives, intentionally create an environment and activity that can prompt change in both the recipient and the provider of the service. CNCS concludes that the structured opportunities foster self-reflection, self-discovery**,** and the acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge.

Within the school setting we are still defining what it means to be a good citizen – is it understanding what democracy is, exercising responsibility, or being public-minded? Prior to the current reform there was a gap in our citizenship education. Now, the active citizen must perform the political function of voting. Additionally, he/she *must be alert in national affairs – active in his/her right to know. We found that the majority of students are not interested in the news. One cannot be an active citizen if one is unaware. The right to know is the first step in being an active citizen.* Secondly, citizens *must be part of the activities that involve more than*

themselves and their families. The citizen should be involved in various political activities at the community and national level.

Prior to a 2005 grant from the U.S. Department of State, the Center for Civic Education (CCE) had been engaged in a project that linked the south of Thailand with Malaysia in the Project Citizen program. Ultimately, political unrest in the south derailed the project in Thailand. Upon suggestion from the US Embassy, contact was initiated between CCE and Dr. Pimon Ruetrakul at KPI. KPI is a driving force in civic education. With its authority from a legal mandate by act of parliament, KPI is recognized as both an independent arm of parliament and as a government advisor.

As the former KPI Director of Training, Dr. Ruetrakul was looking for a curriculum to train youth about democracy. Introduced to the Center for Civic Education's Project Citizen curricular program, the resource material is designed for middle, secondary, and post-secondary students, youth organizations, and adult groups to promote competent and responsible participation in local and state government. The program helps participants learn how to monitor and influence public policy. In the process, they develop support for democratic values and principles, tolerance, and feelings of political efficacy. Entire classes of students or members of youth or adult organizations work cooperatively to identify a public policy problem in their community. They then research the problem, evaluate alternative solutions, develop their own solution in the form of a public policy, and create a political action plan to enlist local or state / provincial authorities to adopt their proposed policy. Participants develop a portfolio of their work and present their project in a public hearing showcase before a panel of civic-minded community members.

The first KPI Project Citizen training occurred in December 2005 for KPI staff and three representatives selected from Ministry of Education recommended schools in each of the country's four regions. Utilizing a training-of-trainers model, representatives from that first training were selected to conduct training with 10 to 12 additional schools in each region.

Project Citizen encourages a step-by-step approach to explore the community, identify the problems, and recognize the authority figures to contact, etc. It is important to get kids involved in the community in a way that will be useful in life. By empowering kids in a hierarchical society in which people tend to defer to others, the program forces them to interact with authority figures and to move those in authority to take action. In a culture in which people do not want to challenge or inconvenience others, students are empowered to make changes in their own communities.

Associate Director of the Center for Civic Education, Dr. Margaret Branson (2006) reminds us, "To capitalize on adolescence as a prime time for civic learning, schools and communities need to work together. They must afford young people opportunities to learn firsthand about governance in a democratic society—both in their school and in their community."

WHAT IS?

Thai people would like to participate in democracy, but they do not know how. Project Citizen is a way to participate. Ten years ago we began to talk about public participation and focused on public policy, but we did not know how to influence and participate through public policy. We are on the right track with the focus on public policy through effective, tangible steps. Thai society can see the light in participating in a democracy. However, *public policy is not the end product; personal empowerment and community engagement is.*

Branson (2006) maintains, "Acquiring essential information, understanding the values and principles of democracy, developing civic skills, and forming civic dispositions take time. Those essential components of civic education cannot be accomplished in the one or two hours per week that many schools allot to learning for citizenship. Neither can they be achieved in a single 'cram' course at the end of secondary school."

Outlined in the ten-year (2010 to 2020) Strategic Plan for Education Development by the Committee for Education Reform are four strategies for civic education:

1. Civic Education for students and the youth at the levels of basic education, vocational education and higher education both formal and non formal education;
2. Civic Education for adults, families and the community which focuses on curriculum building and training regarding "citizens and democracy in the community". All activities aim at problematic solving in the community through practical activities;
3. Civic Education for raising the awareness in Thai society through various mass media to reach all Thais nationwide; and
4. The linkage of public and private networks in order to synergize power and expertise to achieve the ultimate goal in civic education.

Though "Civic Duty" had existed as a required Thai course, according to the Strategic Plan, the content of the course was viewed as too academic and too difficult for students. It was perceived as boring and ineffective at fostering good citizens.   The theoretical framework did little to promote respect for self, others, rules or responsibility. *Students must take part in the society, in the village, see what the problem is, examine the problem, and participate with people in the community. The students have to sit together - analyzing the problems. Students cannot do anything unless they get involved with those who are in a position of responsibility.*

When we talk about civic education in the classroom, *if children can recite the right answer, but the reality of their lives is different or contrary to what is taught, they will only remember the core content for the test. If we are looking out the window, we have to ask what is the relationship between the subject matter and the student's life – his/her life as a citizen? Though the goal exists to improve math and science in basic education, there is a renewed interest in the role of social studies and how it contributes to the life of the student. Civics is one of the five subsets in social studies, along with geography, history, religion and economics. When we start asking questions about what students are learning in civics and how it links to society, and considering what has happened in Thai politics, we have an opportunity to improve*

social studies. Attention had waned from social studies, but now a senior group is talking about core values in civic education.

While the Strategic Plan outlines specified goals and objectives, the Plan also clearly recognizes that civic education is not a traditional Thai course. "Civic education is not teaching by describing; teachers must implement activities and learning through critical thinking. Learners can see the link between being part of the problem and part of the solution."

Civic education comprises only 10% of the 1200 hours of instruction in basic education. While one recommendation from the reform effort suggests that "citizenship" is not a subject, but should be integrated into every subject, the problem is to help the teachers understand what it is and how to teach it. Additionally, the Plan recognizes that teachers lack awareness in the self-development process to become citizens and that they lack the skills in daily routine to promote the public mind, personal sacrifice, and public responsibility. Significantly, resources are inadequate for promoting civic learning.

The Strategic Plan echoes much of what was recommended in the 2003 report "Civic Mission of the Schools" as six promising approaches to civic education:
1. Provide instruction in government, history, law, and democracy.
2. Incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events into the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important to their lives.
3. Design and implement programs that provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction.
4. Offer extracurricular activities that provide opportunity for young people to get involved in their schools or communities.
5. Encourage student participation in school governance.
6. Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.

The curriculum design of citizenship education should adhere to the positive attributes of an effective program(s). Outlined in the Education Commission of the States and National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) November 2003 draft paper "Young People's Citizenship Competency in Their Nation, Community and School" (Torney-Purta & Vermeer), the report recommends:

- incorporating strands of civic preparation in designated courses and across the curriculum, through schooling and related community experience,
- including as appropriate didactic instruction, experiential learning, issue-centered classroom discussion, peer interaction outside the classroom,
- emphasizing meaningful learning and authentic engagement,
- expecting students to reason about the support for their own positions and reflecting about their experience in and outside the classroom,

- evaluating students in a developmentally appropriate way based on what they can write about issues or their skills in interpreting information, not just multiple choice tests about easily measured facts,
- connecting to the world outside the classroom not only what's in the textbook,
- allowing different opinions to be expressed not expecting one right answer for every question,
- empowering students to solve problems, and
- making links between subject areas, for example, not necessarily isolating learning to read from reading about their communities and nation.

While the Strategic Plan and Civic Mission of Schools report provide a conceptual framework for civic education in Thailand, the framework is meaningless without an organizational structure and commitment to support implementation. *One obstacle is to bring those in the field of civic education to a shared vision.* The role of KPI in fostering both a structure and a vision has been articulated by Dr. Borwornsak, KPI's Secretary General. As Germany's oldest organization to promote democracy and political education, support has been provided by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Foundation) in Thailand to engage and prompt a variety of civic education stakeholders to move from a "plan" to implementation.

The strategies within the ten-year plan are designed to *create a model of civic education that is indoor (schools), outdoor (community) and in the mass media (reporting on the activity).*

The indoor is Project Citizen.

The incentive for program expansion is the conflict between the Red and Yellow Shirts. However, we cannot do a lot with those involved in the conflict; our efforts should be concentrated on the youth, with more emphasis on Project Citizen. In 10 or 20 years, the politics of the masses will not be like this; the rule of law will be upheld.

Throughout Thailand, various models of civic education concepts, resources, and/or program implementation exist. *Project Citizen is approved by the Prime Minister.*

To move the project forward, some schools are selected while others are voluntary. Only 10% of the schools are involved; our expectation is that 35% of the students will become participating citizens through Project Citizen. It is being done both in a course and as an extra-curricular activity. The goal is that 100% of the teachers will become active civic education role models and 35% of the Thai people will become good citizens through this concept.

The process of implementing public policy can be the foundation of democracy. The process of influencing that implementation raises awareness of the constitution and brings that constitutional knowledge to the grass roots; the suggested public policy should not be in conflict with the law. Though changing or implementing public policy is a time-consuming process, if it does not happen, the students have not failed. The key word is learning. Even if the students have failed to change policy, they have learned many concepts. Students have learned problem and need analysis, information processing, and information presentation. The students'

community proposal is evaluated by identifying both the advantages and disadvantages of the suggested policy. The importance of the action plan is a learning process that can be used in the future – sharing and contributing to community problem solving. Additionally, the project includes a review session to examine the achievements and obstacles during the process. That review session is a time for personal reflection.

Project Citizen can be conducted both formally and informally. In the formal class, whether it is an elective Civic Awareness course or in a mandatory Civic Duty course, the program can be implemented. Likewise, some schools use the formal course to introduce the civic education concepts and offer an informal extra-curricular club that focuses on the Project Citizen process. For the club, *creating awareness in the community about the problem is part of its action plan. While changing or implementing public policy might be difficult and a long-term goal of the project, the students can create an awareness campaign as a short-term goal that focuses on activities with publicity by the local media and the creation of brochures or posters.*

The formal comes through school policy for the integration of civic education concepts in every lesson in every department. The informal is the integration of civic education concepts into various activities organized by the school and community – inside and outside of the school. The concepts include rights and responsibilities, duties, and participation.

The effectiveness of implementation is being monitored through lesson plans and projects or activities that the teachers have incorporated into the classroom. Student knowledge of the civic education concepts is evaluated as one element on course-specific scoring rubrics, while student behavior is observed and the atmosphere of the class assessed. Teacher effectiveness is assessed through a biannual submission of a portfolio submitted for Position Classification. The portfolio includes a self-evaluation of "what I did as a teacher in civic education." Initiated in the current fiscal year, teacher accountability includes the documentation of action according to guidelines provided by the Civic Commission.

When we review the number of schools involved, the number of students who have completed the program, and the number of teachers who have changed their training in civic education, we are seeing that students are moving beyond rote learning to a new model of learning. Project Citizen is not just civic education, it is reading, writing, and listening. Schools are reporting that because of the program, students are going on to better schools. Students are being accepted to their target schools because of what they have learned and what they have experienced.

One of the ways [to support the formal and informal integration of civic education throughout Thailand] is by using a best practice model. By visiting outstanding schools to see what and how they [implement the concepts], then translating that practice into lessons for others to learn from, more schools can see a successful model of civic education. A national meeting is another opportunity. Education leaders can be invited to talk about their best practices, and then ask those in attendance to take those lessons back to their schools. In the unitary structure of

Thailand, if the Ministry of Education decides that all schools will teach something, it will be taught. The impact of Project Citizen in both Basic Education and Vocational Education has been felt throughout Thailand. Likewise, the support for program implementation from the Bangchak Petroleum Public Co. has been critical in expanding the program in high needs schools.

Currently, the desire exists to give people a voice.

However, Thailand also needs the concepts of democracy; Project Citizen is a process. Teachers have to be able to provide the knowledge and concepts of civil society. It is important that the teachers know the concepts of good citizenship so that those concepts are integrated into their lesson plans and classrooms. We know that not 100% of the teachers understand the concepts. They lack the confidence to present the information and that affects the success of the implementation. The starting point is the social studies department; the information can begin there and spread to other departments. Though, there is a lack of programming.

The Social Studies Center is examining how teaching and learning is related to life. We want to develop alternative standards-based texts that support student development activities and student clubs. Project Citizen provides a clearer idea of how a concept can fit into life. It is not an abstract, but a concept that can be applied. Another approach includes the introduction of the Center for Civic Education's Foundations of Democracy series.

The strength of the Foundations of Democracy series is in the four pillars; these concepts are exactly what Thailand needs in promoting democracy.

The series consists of curricular materials for use with students from kindergarten through twelfth grade on four concepts fundamental to an understanding of politics and government: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice. The multidisciplinary curriculum draws upon such fields as political philosophy, political science, law, history, literature, and environmental studies. The Authority curriculum helps students distinguish between authority and power, learn how to choose people for leadership positions, analyze benefits and costs of authority, and evaluate, take, and defend positions on the proper scope and limits of authority. Privacy deals with the importance of privacy in a free society, the benefits and costs of that privacy and its proper limits. The Justice curriculum teaches students the difference between distributive, corrective, and procedural justice while evaluating, taking, and defending positions on issues of justice. Responsibility guides students through a process of learning how to choose among competing responsibilities, how to assign and accept responsibility, and how to evaluate the benefits and costs of being responsible.

The beauty of the series is the methodology – the case studies and activities make it one of the best texts for teaching civic education. While Foundations of Democracy exists as a separate program, we need to blend it with the Project Citizen process. One strategy includes the use of Foundations as a tool for follow-up contact with those teachers already trained in Project Citizen.

Project work is one outcome of what we hope to accomplish – bringing life to the classroom; the value of a project is real. Lauded as a teaching approach designed to engage students in their own learning, project-based learning emphasizes activities that are long-term, interdisciplinary, student-centered, and integrated with real world issues and practices. The Buck Institute of Education (2007) defines standards-focused project-based learning "as a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks."

RMC Research Corporation (Kraft, 2005) identified the following 17 components or attributes of project-based learning:

1. allows for a variety of learning styles
2. "real" world oriented - learning has value beyond the demonstrated competence of the learner
3. risk-free environment - provides positive feedback and allows choice
4. encourages the use of higher order thinking skills and learning concepts as well as basic facts
5. utilizes hands-on approaches
6. provides for in-depth understanding
7. accessible for all learners
8. utilizes various modes of communication
9. assessment is congruent with instruction, i.e. performance-based
10. students are responsible for their own learning
11. students have ownership of their learning within the curriculum
12. projects promote meaningful learning, connecting new learning to students' past performances
13. learning utilizes real time data - investigating data and drawing conclusions
14. the learning process is valued as well as the learning project
15. learning cuts across curricular areas - multidisciplinary in nature
16. teacher is a facilitator of learning
17. student self-assessment of learning is encouraged

The components, when viewed through the lens of promoting a civic skill set, can be applied to provide students with an opportunity to critically think about, explore, and experience civic and political life.

In her discussion of civic competencies, Lennon (2006) suggested that civic skills include "evaluating sources of information, political issues and candidates; working with fellow citizens and public officials; and developing a plan and implementing it." United States Congressman Lee Hamilton (2004) elaborated, "We need to learn and to teach the techniques of a healthy democracy – participation, consensus building, compromise, civility, and rational discourse." The implication by Boggs and Hamilton is that civic education should be both participatory and action oriented.

Promoting civic education in the community is viewed as a strategic grass roots approach. The strategy includes training the trainers who will work directly in the local education districts. That approach has been employed by the Political Development Council (PDC). For the work in communities, PDC assembles those to be trained and KPI conducts the Project Citizen training without the inclusion of portfolios and public showcases. Then, the trainees return home to work in the provincial communities with youth groups, not schools. Out of 126 PDC members, a majority have been trained. Those trained are eligible for PDC project implementation funds. Currently, 30 youth groups are being trained in the south.

Additionally, Project Citizen has been introduced in Adult Education training for community education leaders working at the Community Education Centers within 50 districts in the Bangkok area. The appointed leaders are encouraged to transfer the concepts of the project to their districts. Thus far, 600 teachers in Adult Education have been trained by KPI. *The goal is to raise awareness of citizen responsibility and of duty, what they can do and what to accept within the framework of the Thai legal system, the constitution. When the topic of recent demonstrations was raised, the training emphasized that those who come to demonstrate should not violate others' rights within the framework of the constitution.*

In highlighting the significance of adult civic education, David Boggs (1992) insisted, "Civic knowledge arises out of the interconnection between reflection and action."

In the local community many will attempt to solve problems themselves, combining the work of the private sphere and civil society to resolve issues without the government. Part of the training explains how to use and influence policymakers and public policy to resolve problems. Currently, under the direction of Mr. Supanat, KPI's Director of The Office of Promoting Politics of the People, *KPI is conducting a five- province pilot using Project Citizen in the community. Whether applied in the school, university, or community, we need to explain more about this concept. For the vocational schools, the Ministry of Education schools, the Political Development Council, the Education Council, and local administration offices, this is the light, the tool, the way for people to participate in democracy. We talk a lot about public participation, but we do not know how.*

Likewise, Project Citizen has been introduced in higher education at the undergraduate level. Rajabhat University in Lampang requires successful completion of the project within a compulsory course required for graduation. *Based on the concept of civic citizenship, the course, "Civic Education," examines the meaning of citizen, duty, privacy, responsibility and justice – and proper behavior in a democratic way of life.*

The priority is to encourage the next Thai generation to be more critical. Shapiro (2011) suggests, "A good citizen questions, informs himself or herself, thinks issues through, reaches conclusions, and participates in public life. A good teacher helps students to understand that controversy is the lifeblood of democracy, to learn how to inquire into past and current controversial issues that are meaningful to them, and to participate in public life."

WHAT COULD BE?

The role of the education system is to actively engage school children in the constitution.

The key in Thailand lies in actualizing the constitution, gaining confidence and understanding, and being empowered by the articles to secure the rights that are promised, as well as addressing and participating in the community to both recognize and resolve community problems.

Thai people lack constitutional literacy, even the well-educated. They know their rights, but they do not adhere to democratic principles. That explains why the military can come back to stage a coup. How do we educate the well-educated? It is an important challenge for Thailand. The middle class in Thailand does not have democracy by plight and fight; the Americans fought the British for the means and ends. He who harms democracy harms the whole of society. In Thailand, democracy did not come with the fight of the middle class, but rather from the military. It was a fight between the monarchy and the military/civilian officials. The middle class enjoys privileges from the state. There are those who think, as long as my pocket is full, I can accept a dictator or democracy.

Torres (October 9, 2006) observed "At the beginning of the 21st Century, democracy is in the midst of a particularly major shift in its development. All kinds of leaders are realizing that the traditionally distant relationship between citizens and government is inadequate for solving public problems. They are recognizing that the usual formats for decision-making often waste public resources, create unproductive conflict, and fail to tap citizen potential. They are attempting many different civic experiments -- some successful, some not -- to help citizens and governments work together more democratically and more effectively."

On April 23rd, 2011, the Thai Minister of Education, Mr.Chinnaworn Boonyakiat, presided over the opening ceremony of the Training of Core Speakers of Democratic Education in Educational Institutes conference organized by the Ministry of Education Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education. The Minister informed the attendees that the Thai democratic system should be strengthened by educating citizens on five factors: self-reliance, mutual respect, regulation obeisance, public devotion, and problem solving with intelligence.

"The Minister went on to say that the essential key equipment in achieving the goal was to educate target groups through the learning process, such as in Germany where two former countries were integrated through the learning process in its schools. This was also case of Japan after World War II. Even though Thailand has never faced such a serious crisis when compared to others, it is also necessary here to create a learning process through education. Thai schools have provided democratic education to Thai students for a long period of time. The next phase must be to cover the aforementioned five factors which will encourage Thais to become good citizens who are proud of themselves." (MOE, April 26, 2011)

The Ministry had also organized an April 22, 2011 seminar on "Synergy for Civic Education" in order to encourage all education stakeholders to recognize the importance of civic education.

Now that a national strategy for civic education exists that includes parent involvement, community involvement, and curriculum reform, we need to move from learning and discussing about civic education to implementation.

To achieve the desired impact within the education system, *pre-service and in-service teacher training is necessary to advance civic education.*

We need to find a leader – some schools where the principal is very active, where the teacher is active. Not only from the elite schools, we need to identify a variety of schools with different models that others can learn from. Within the 225 service areas, we need to work with five pilot schools at a time, investing the energy to make it happen so that others can see and learn how it happened. The existing structure includes 100 to 250 schools in each Education Service Area (ESA); a Teacher Supervisor at the ESA is assigned to work at the school, classroom, and teacher levels. Within an ESA team will be a social studies specialist. *In the school and in the classroom what needs to change is how civic education is taught and learned. To do that, the Ministry of Education and ESA's need trained trainers. We need training skills in communication, presentation and coaching.*

The recognition of being a citizen begins in the classroom. In addition to a level of knowledge, we need evidence of being a citizen; this evidence includes – okay, you are different from me, but that's okay. We can live together. Disagreement is good, but civility is necessary.

One classroom approach is to integrate "Deliberation in a Democracy." As a tool for engaging students in a decision-making process, deliberation can become a key ingredient in classroom discussion in which students consider relevant facts from multiple points of view, converse with one another to think critically about options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions, and understandings.

"Deliberative democracy strengthens citizen voices in governance by including people of all races, classes, ages and geographies in deliberations that directly affect public decisions. As a result, citizens influence--and can see the result of their influence on--the policy and resource decisions that impact their daily lives and their future." (Torres, October 9, 2006)

The Center for Civic Education's Elements of Democracy (2007), suggests "The democratic idea of participation has a moral element embedded within it. It requires the norms of moderation and willingness to compromise. To be successful, democratic participation also requires persistence and the sacrifice of time and effort for the public good."

KPI's outreach, collaboration, and professional relationship-building has created a civic education network that reaches throughout Thailand. That network is poised to seize the language of the national education reform to both foster and engage a new generation of citizens. In time, *perhaps there will be more colored shirts, not just red and yellow.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. While tackling how to implement the Strategic Plan's policy recommendations for civic education, stakeholders are also struggling to define **what** is civic education?   As previously noted, *one obstacle in implementation is bringing those in the field to a shared vision.* Drawing upon one example, Tufts University in Medford, MA, employs civic learning outcomes to identify what individuals need to be effective active citizens. Those outcomes include the acquisition of

- civic knowledge to develop intellectual abilities to engage in building democratic societies,
- civic skills to demonstrate proficiency in the skills of active citizenship through training or experience, and
- civic values to possess motivations, values, and ethics to effectively participate in building democratic societies.

"An effective active citizen is a person who understands the obligation and undertakes the responsibility to improve community conditions, build healthier communities and address social problems. He or she understands and believes in the democratic ideal of participation and the need to incorporate the contributions of every member of the community." (Tisch)

When education stakeholders engage in the review and development of resource materials and programs dedicated to support the civic mission of the schools, it is imperative that attention be drawn to enhancing not only students' civic *knowledge*, but their civic *skills* and *dispositions* as well.

The movement toward standards-based curriculum may well help to articulate the civic knowledge that should be both taught and learned in the classroom. Likewise, the integration of community service / service learning could become the basis for drawing attention to civic skill acquisition. However, depth in civic learning also necessitates the fostering of civic dispositions or values.

Lennon (2006) introduced that civic dispositions or motivations for behavior "include things like a belief in liberty and equality, tolerance for diverse beliefs and commitment to the common good." Arguably, can dispositions be taught, encouraged, or assessed as part of the education process?

The Character Education Partnership insists that an educational aim is to graduate students of "good character who are intellectually prepared, civically engaged, and compassionate members of the community."   Funded by the United States Department of Education, the partnership prepared a draft paper in 2003 on "Pathways to Civic Character: A Shared Vision for America's Schools."   The Partnership identified the following as attributes of "citizens of character":

- value and demonstrate honesty, personal integrity and respect for others;
- act toward others with empathy and caring;
- exercise leadership for social justice;
- work to counter prejudice and discrimination
- resolve differences in constructive ways;
- think critically and creatively about local issues, state and national affairs, and world events; and
- contribute time and resources to building community and solving problems.

For it is in the process of learning – be it project-based or in service – that students must be provided with the opportunity and expectation to apply the civic knowledge, to work for the common good, to articulate those attributes which promote respect for human dignity and diversity, and to foster individual responsibility to work for justice and peace.

TASK (INDOOR) – cross referenced to the "Elements of Systemic Implementation of Civic Education"

#1. Standards - Development and establishment of content and performance standards in civics and government

#2. Curricular framework - Development and adoption of a K-12 curriculum framework in civic education

DISCUSSION QUESTION

What should be considered and implemented to enhance civic learning in Thailand?

2. Though the interview questions were intended to provoke a broader discussion about civic education in Thailand, interviewees consistently referenced the impact of the Center for Civic Education's Project Citizen program in helping to shape civic understanding in schools and communities throughout Thailand. However, while noting the benefits of the program, it was also reinforced that *it is difficult for teachers to find the time to make the fit in the curriculum. Teachers are asking the Ministry of Education to make Project Citizen a requirement.*

TASK (INDOOR) – cross referenced to the "Elements of Systemic Implementation of Civic Education"

#3. Required courses. Formal requirement for instruction in civics and government in the school curriculum

#4. Curricular materials. Provision of instructional materials aligned with the standards and curriculum framework

DISCUSSION QUESTION

How should civic education be integrated or included in the required Thai curriculum? What materials and/or programs are needed to support curriculum development in civic education?

3. Fundamental to the efforts to advance civic education in Thailand has been KPI's role in partnering, organizing and/or providing teacher training on the Center for Civic Education's Project Citizen program and Foundations of Democracy series. However, the majority of those interviewed also cited the need for additional training for new participants and follow-up for those previously trained.

James Noonan (2010) noted, "Policymakers may think that they know what to do and how to do it – and, in fact, they may be right – but they are not the ones teaching the children. The success or failure of any education reform, including citizenship education, relies on the talents and discretion of thousands of teachers. Of course, this is not new nor is it unique to citizenship education. It is also easier said than done." Citing Tyack and Cuban's Tinkering Toward Utopia (1995), Noonan concludes "when educators view reform demands as inappropriate, they are skilled in finding ways to temper or evade their effects."

Continued teacher training and follow-up will be paramount in Thailand's reform effort.

TASK (INDOOR & OUTDOOR) – cross referenced to the "Elements of Systemic Implementation of Civic Education"

#5. Teacher education. Establishment of pre-service and in-service education programs to develop the capacity of teachers to provide high quality instruction in the use of the instructional materials in order to promote attainment of the standards

#6. Leadership and network training. Establishment of training programs to enhance the capacities of leaders of civic education programs in … networking, implementation, curriculum development … related to systemic implementation of civic education

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Who are the target groups to receive training and how can a regular and systematic schedule of training and follow-up be established?

4. Repeated references to a mandate to integrate civic education across the curriculum added another element to the interviews. Simply asked, if everyone has a responsibility to integrate, ultimately, who is responsible? School districts throughout the United States have asked the same question. The end result has been as assumption that civic education concepts were both taught and learned across the disciplines.

In 2006, as representatives of the Center for Civic Education, Dr. Suzanne Soule and Ted McConnell presented "A Campaign to Promote Civic Education: A Model of How to Get Education for Democracy Back into U.S. Classrooms in all Fifty States" at the International Conference on School Reform: Research and Practice.

In the research Soule and McConnell identified "In the elementary grades, civic learning used to be woven through the curriculum. Today, slightly more than one-third of teachers report covering civic education-related subjects on a regular basis. Two-thirds of twelfth-graders scored below "proficient" on the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress in Civics (NAEP), conducted in 1998, a test of civic knowledge that is administered to students nationwide approximately every eight years. Only 9% of NAEP respondents, for example, could list two ways a democracy benefits from citizen participation."

In their conclusion, Soule and McConnell positioned that "civic education should be seen as a core subject. Well defined standards and curricular requirements are necessary to ensure that civic education is taught effectively at each grade level from kindergarten through twelfth grade."

In this, Thailand has an opportunity to accomplish what is still lacking in American schools – a commitment from a broad spectrum of stakeholders to create and implement a model of civic education.

TASK (INDOOR & OUTDOOR) – cross referenced to the "Elements of Systemic Implementation of Civic Education"

#7. Assessment. Establishment of assessment programs to determine student (and community) attainment of standards

DISCUSSION QUESTION

When and how should civic learning be assessed in Thailand?

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Thailand Interview Questions:

1. What does it mean to be a "citizen" in Thailand?
2. How does one engage as a citizen in Thailand?
3. How do we foster citizens who respect the "other," respect the rules and take responsibility for the society?
4. What is the goal for initiating comprehensive civic education in Thailand? (National Civic Education Campaign)
5. How does the initiative integrate both formal and informal civic learning?
6. What are the objectives and/or milestones that could signify positive movement toward that goal?
7. What infrastructure exists to support the initiative?
8. What impediments exist that either interfere or derail comprehensive reform of civic education?
9. Is there, and if so what is, a/the relationship between fostering a Thai civic culture / civic development and moral development through Buddhist faith?
10. What will civic culture look like in Thailand ten years from now?

Appendix B: Interview List - April 18-30, 2011

King Prajadhipok's Institute
 Prof. Dr. Borwornsak Uwanno, Secretary General
 Supanat Permpoonwiwat, Director, The Office of Promoting Politics of the People
 Dr. Pimon Ruetrakul, Academic Expert

Political Development Council
 Dr. Tossapon Sompong
 Pratana Thongrak, Training Officer

National Education Council
 Dr. Sudhasinee Vajarabul, Deputy Secretary General
 Ms. Siriporn
 Ms. Sopana, Director

Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education
 Dr. Benjalug Namfa, Inspector-General
 Dr. Chalermchai Phanthalert, Academic Officer

Bangkok Institute for Non-Formal and Informal Education
 Kittiya Rassamepong, Vice Director
 Laddarat Phouphetkaew, Teacher

Bangchak Petroleum Public Company Limited
 Chongprode Kochaphum, Division Manager: Environment and Community Relation

Boonyawat School, Lampang
 Ms. Benjawan, Director
 La-iad Sukajit, Teacher

Rattanakosinsompoch Bangkhen School, Bangkok
 Ms. Arecrat, Director
 Ms. Saewaluck, Teacher

Rajavinit Secondary School, Bangkok
 Ms. Angsana Wisaisamonket, Teacher

Rajabhat University, Lampang
 Mr. Chalermchai Sukajit, Assistant Professor

Embassy of the United States of America
 Kenneth Foster, Counselor for Public Affairs