

Summary Report

on

National Pilot Study

**Learning Reform Situation in the Pilot Schools :
Lessons and Policy Recommendations**

by

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National Pilot Study : Learning Reform Schools for
Developing Quality of Learners

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Report on Learning Reform Situation in the Pilot Schools : Lessons and Policy Recommendations

The Office of the National Education Commission (ONEC), in its capacity as the body responsible for formulating national education reform policy, has co-ordinated with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior and universities in carrying out a R&D Project on Whole-School Learning Reform for Developing Quality of Learners. It is therefore gratifying that, in similar recognition of the merit of the Project, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), has provided its support through technical assistance on a grant basis.

The National Pilot Study, with funding support from the ONEC and the ADB, has thus been carried out on a voluntary basis by 253 schools selected from among 3,800 educational institutions which have expressed their needs and readiness for whole-school learning reform, based on their actual experiences. The selection of the pilot schools was supported by agencies with jurisdiction over these schools, covering all administrative authorities, provinces, sizes and locations. All the 253 pilot schools offer basic education.

Following the first phase of self-development, 3 schools in the central region under ONPEC's jurisdiction withdrew from the Study due to internal problems. The remaining 250 pilot schools, continuing to the second phase, can be divided by jurisdiction and region as follows :

Region Under jurisdiction	North	North- east	Central	South	Bangkok	Total
ONPEC	37	32	50	21	2	142
DGE	13	26	17	13	4	73
Municipality	2	6	3	2	-	13
BMA	-	-	-	-	5	5
Border Patrol Police	-	1	-	1	-	2
OPEC	2	2	5	3	2	14
Religious Affairs Department	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total	54	68	75	40	13	250

Objectives

1. To encourage 250 pilot schools under jurisdiction of all agencies nationwide to implement whole-school learning reform, with emphasis on improving quality of the students;

2. To encourage the 250 pilot schools to take a professional approach to reforms of learning, assessment and administration to ensure whole-school internal quality assurance;

3. To encourage the 250 pilot schools to serve as reform nodes for further expansion or models for other schools, which could benefit from their experiences – both successes and failures – in whole-school learning reform; and

4. To enable the teams of academics / local researchers from teacher education institutions, supervisory units and NGOs, totalling 44 in number, to participate in the reform and learn from their collaborative efforts with the schools.

Conceptual framework and strategies

The National Pilot Study : Learning Reform Schools for Developing Quality of Learners observes the mandate of the 1999 National Education Act as well as the provisions of **Chapter IV : National Education Guidelines** as follows :

Conceptual framework

1. The learner-centred perspective is at the heart of education reform. All individuals are in fact capable of lifelong learning.

2. National legislation and policy on education can provide overall direction. Decision making on implementation to reach the desired goals, however, rests with the administrative authorities, and schools / educational institutions themselves. The goals may be diversified. Their commonalities, namely : the students' learning achievements and development in all aspects and at all stages of life, however, are mandatory.

3. Students must be allowed a significant role and involvement in self-development for attaining desired results. Responsibility for self-learning will enable students to be self-reliant. Through self-knowledge, they will be capable of developing themselves at their own pace and to their fullest potential and consequently enjoy learning.

4. Parents and community members near and far must be aware of the changes in the students' role in learning. They must also be ready to provide the necessary support in order to meet the latter's requirements.

5. As mentors of the students in their charge, self-development on the part of teachers is required for attaining desirable attributes as members of the society as well as professionals. Such development can be reached through a continuous acquisition of knowledge and skills so as to attune to intellectual advancement and social changes while upholding professional standards and ethics.

6. Principals, supervisors and other educational personnel play important roles in providing support for teachers. The principals, in particular, are required to provide academic leadership as well as moral support. Similar to the teachers, they are professionals who require continuous self-development.

7. Educators of teachers and other educational personnel also require further development of their quality. The reform of teacher education institutions should therefore be linked with school reform for collective learning, both from the theoretical and practical perspectives.

8. Learning reform, with an emphasis on achievements of stakeholders, should be governed by academic standards and should be subject to adjustment through participatory processes.

9. Application of research as an instrument for collective learning will lead to adjustment of standards and regulations, based on academic rationale. The research also effectively reflects actual needs of the society.

Strategies

Based on the above conceptual framework, the following strategies have been identified for effective implementation of the National Pilot Study :

1. A collaborative action research is conducted by the entire pilot school communities for readiness preparation during the transition period of education reform along the direction mandated by the 1999 National Education Act.

2. Based on the assessment of real situation, the pilot schools learn of the status and learning reform problems of the students as well as those of the schools.

3. The pilot schools construct bodies of knowledge on the following, based on the schools' own action research :

- R & D;
- Learning process and evaluation;
- School-based management; and

- Internal quality assurance.

4. Faculty staff of teacher education institutions provide support for academic affairs and research of these institutions by learning together with the teachers and principals of the pilot schools through the latter's action research.

5. The pilot schools, teacher education institutions and other agencies concerned, join efforts in developing networks through exchanges of learnings at levels of individuals, groups and organizations.

In sum, 3 interlinked approaches for implementation of the National Pilot Study have been adopted, namely :

- Whole-school learning reform;
- Collaborative action research for learning; and
- Effective learning through the PDCA Cycle.

All the 3 approaches observe the conceptual framework and principles elaborated in the provisions of Chapter IV of the 1999 National Education Act : **National Education Guidelines**, with emphases on the prime importance of learners, and their capacities for self-development and lifelong learning.

Implementation of the National Pilot Study through the 3 approaches, can also be linked with the teachers' 3 functions, namely :

- Organization of teaching-learning activities;
- Research; and
- Improvement of school performance.

These approaches can be linked with the 5 functions of the principals as well. They are :

- Management of academic and general affairs;
- Internal quality assurance;
- Capacity building for personnel;
- Enhancement of relations with parents and communities, and
- Activities for students' development.

Implementation of activities for whole-school learning reform therefore has the objectives of further improving what already exists and initiating innovations. The steps taken by no means interfere with the responsibilities of all parties concerned, but are, on the contrary, attuned to the day-to-day school life.

Implementation plan and operational phases

Based on the above conceptual framework, the National Pilot Study has been implemented in 2 phases :

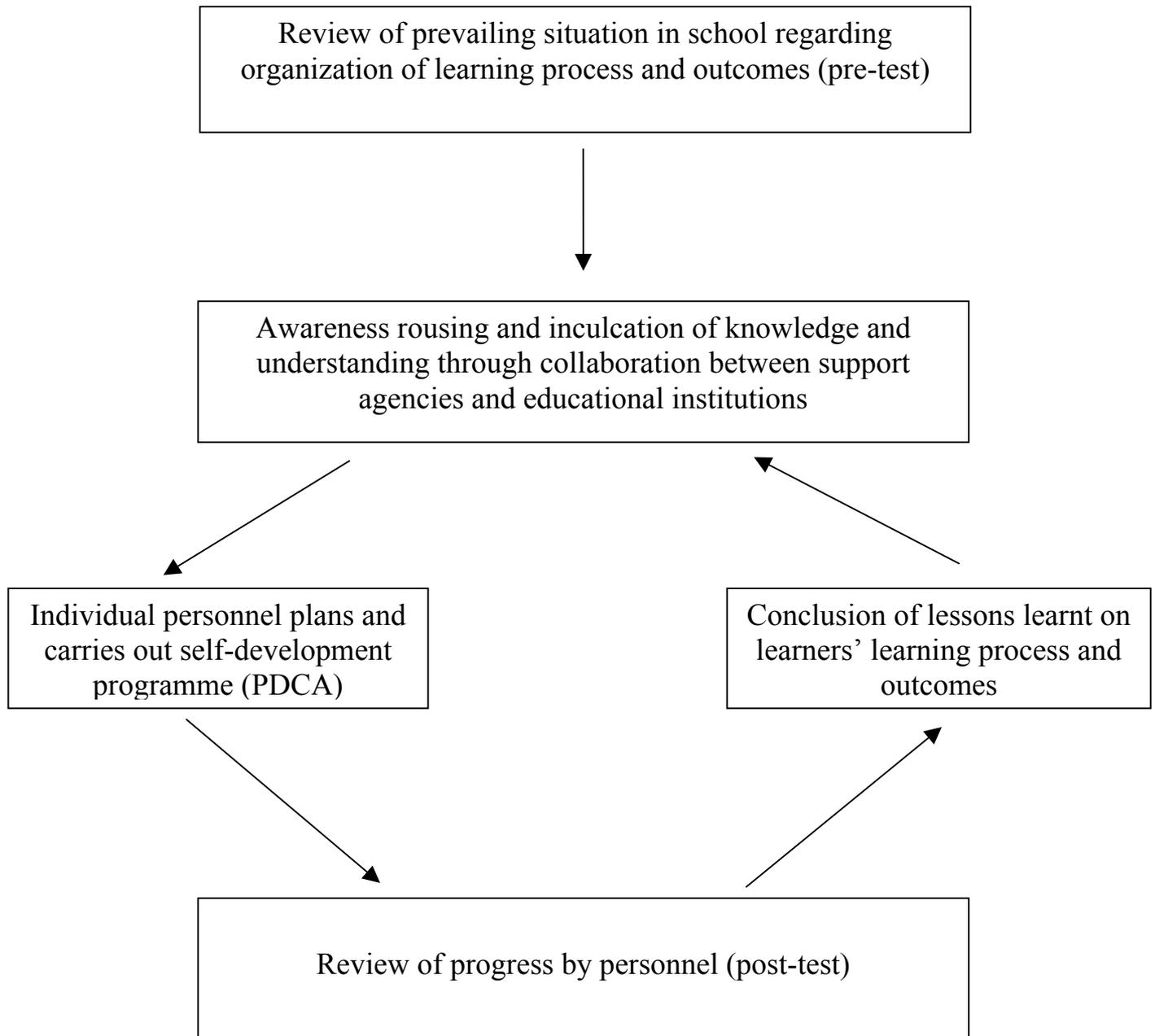
Phase I (January – April 2001) : reform period for self-development for teachers and principals through studies, study tours, training sessions, practical work, discussions and exchanges of learnings, organization of internal supervision system etc. In the process of self-development, each school has attached importance to identification of the desirable direction and strengths of the school personnel as well as those of the community, for availability of alternatives for whole-school learning reform in accord with the social and cultural context of the community where the school is located. The main activities of a pilot school at this stage therefore involve awareness building of joint responsibilities, self- evaluation and personnel development. These are carried out through a variety of methods to suit the school's own convenience and specific needs.

Phase II (May – October 2001) : period for initiating reforms of process of organizing teaching – learning activities, assessment of teachers, SBM administrative process adopted by municipalities and whole-school internal quality assurance, with the common objective of improved student learning. In carrying out the reform of these aspects, each school benefits from an action research through the PDCA Cycle, with prime importance attached to assessment which precedes planning. The PDCA Cycle is to be repeated several times. In the assessment, the standards based on the criteria set by the respective authorities are availed of, for comparison with the external standards and criteria set by the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assurance (ONESQA).

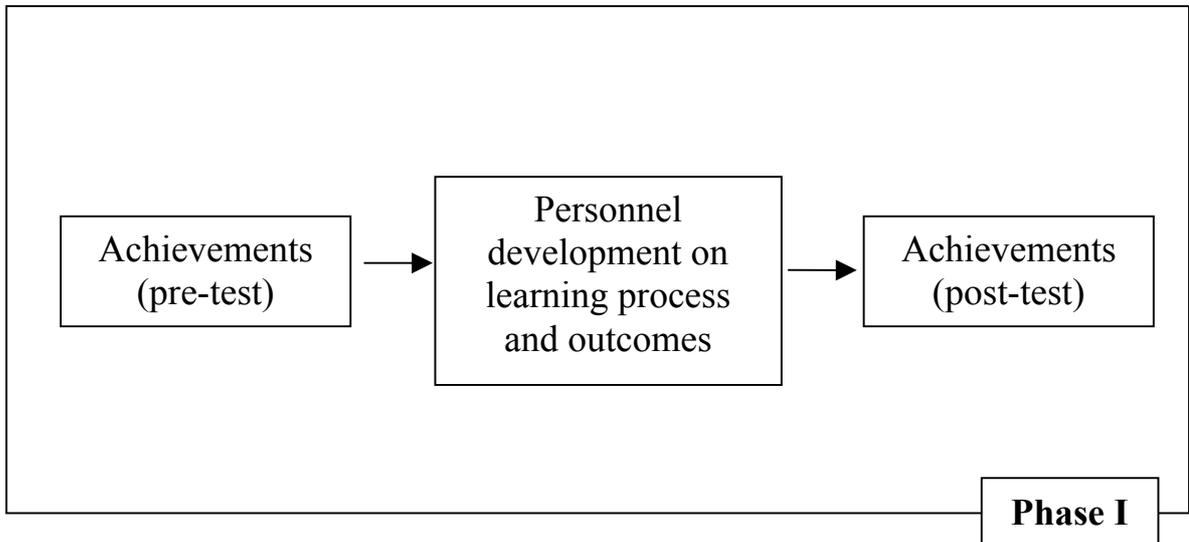
During both phases of operation, each school has identified/designated internal change agents. These are teachers with exposure to the reform spirit advocated by the National Education Act e.g. national teachers, master teachers, spearhead teachers and those well recognized for their outstanding achievements including principals with strong academic leadership. Besides, the National Pilot Study has provided 44 teams of academics/local researchers serving as colleagues and friends who assist the principals and teachers. These academics/researchers take joint responsibilities and make collective efforts for implementation of the latter's self-development plan as well as action research for whole-school learning reform.

The above steps and implementation process can be presented in the following figure and research conceptual framework.

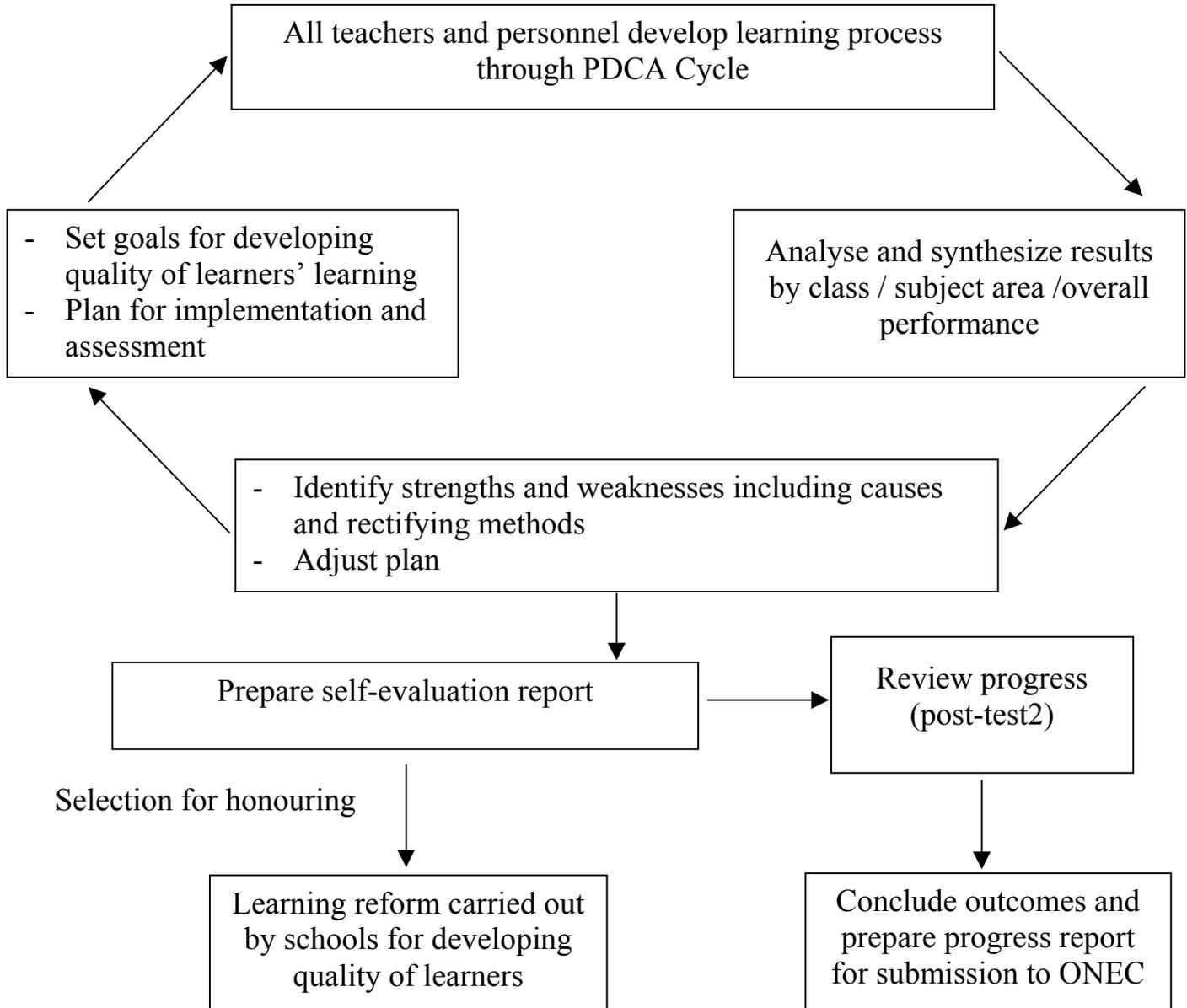
Phase I : Schools develop all personnel on learning process and learners' learning outcomes (Jan – Apr 2001)



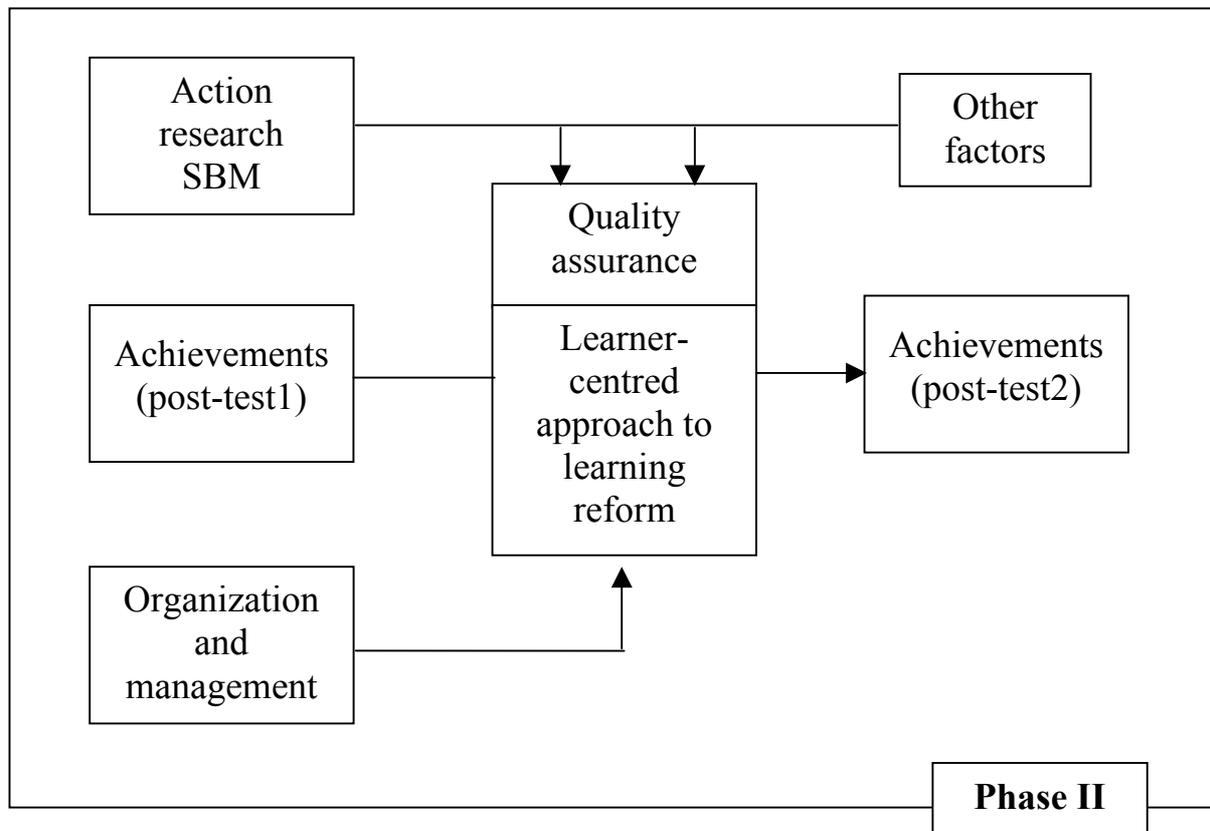
The above implementation chart can also be presented by a research conceptual framework as follows :



Phase II : Schools develop learning process and system of internal quality assurance for developing quality of learners (May – Oct. 2001)



The above implementation chart can also be presented by a research conceptual framework as follows :



In conducting the collaborative action research during both phases, the pilot schools have availed of academic support from a total of 44 teams of local researchers who also participate in the collective learning. These teams of academic advisers/researchers comprise :

- 30 teams of Rajabhat Institutes;
- 11 teams of Faculties of Education of universities;
- 2 teams of ONPEC educational supervisors; and
- 1 team of academics/development workers of an NGO (Foundation for Children).

Parents and community resource persons also contribute to the Study through such mechanisms as school boards, parents' associations, groups of village wisemen and other community organizations.

At the central level, 4 consultants specializing in learning, instruction, administration, assessment/quality assurance and school reform, have provided the pilot schools with academic support through the local researchers. The consultants also participate in the collective

learning enabling them to analyse the conditions and factors conducive to whole-school learning reform. Findings of the action research in the 250 pilot schools have been synthesized for presentation of models of whole-school learning reform, those for SBM, internal quality assurance, support to local researchers for whole-school learning reform and whole-school reform.

In their research, the consultants have availed of the following 4 main methods of work :

1. Review of relevant documents, namely : action plans and reports on achievements during both phases; those on the collaborative action research of all the 250 pilot schools together with those of the 44 teams of local researchers;

2. Joining the local researchers for visits and observation tours, on sampling basis, to schools in the 4 regions; and

3. Organization of local forums before launching the Study, after the first phase of operation and at the completion of the second phase, totalling 7 forums which have enabled the consultants to collect information from the oral and written reports of the schools and the local researchers. Indepth interviews of all parties concerned as well as focus groups interviews have also provided useful information.

Summary of outcomes of the National Pilot Study

The findings of the R&D on the reform methods of transforming the schools to become places where the students can enjoy learning and at the same time develop themselves to become competent persons with moral values have indicated the high feasibility of whole-school learning reform, on condition that collaborative efforts are exerted by all parties concerned, both within and outside the schools.

The National Pilot Study on Learning Reform Schools for Developing Quality of Learners confirms the principles and guidelines for whole-school learning reform, with emphasis on developing the learning capacity of students and all concerned, particularly teachers and principals, leading to effective teaching and learning as well as assessment. It also requires school management with internal quality assurance, to be attuned to quality control from outside.

While engaged in the action research, each pilot school has been advised and encouraged to decide on the methods of work itself, to plan and take responsibility for implementation of its own reform measures. Each school has also been allowed complete freedom in revising these measures until they truly meet its needs and suit its particular context.

Outstanding features of the whole-school learning reform under the National Pilot Study are :

1. Emphasis on the whole-school reform, starting with the self-study of all parties concerned;
2. Unity in principles and concepts, but diversity in practice;
3. Flexibility for necessary adjustments in keeping with the changes in social and cultural context and turn of events/problems and obstacles/present situation;
4. The reform is in fact a dynamic process, with positive forces both within the schools and outside to move it forward on a regular and sustained basis; and
5. The bottom-up concept and approach are consonant with the above outstanding features, thus ensuring the sustainability of the reform.

Reform of the learning process

Sumon Amornvivat, a member of the team of consultants, has analysed the conditions and factors of the school-based learning reform study. Her findings confirm the schools' requirements to be free from the influence of pedagogical theory and unfettered from too rigid bureaucratic procedures. The overall picture emerging from the National Pilot Study reflects an acute awareness and enthusiasm among most schools. Self-development has led to an amicable supervision process between and among local researchers and teachers within and outside the schools through the benefit of mutual technical and moral support. The schools have also been able to put into practice different models for organizing the learning contents and activities. The 5 models are :

1. Model of management for learning reform;
2. Model of school curriculum :
 - 2.1 Integrated learning unit;
 - 2.2 Integrated unit : projects;
3. Model of activities conducive to enhancement of quality and discipline;
4. Model of activities conducive to enhancement of wisdom or interest group activities; and
5. Model of amicable supervision process.

The main problems and obstacles identified include lack of confidence regarding their competency on the part of teachers and principals; fragmented approach to the reform process which lacks unity, depending

on different themes and topics and administrative authorities; support from the latter has not been timely, nor does it meet the schools' actual requirements. Details of the 5 models, problems and obstacles, together with the consultants' research methods can be seen in **Research Findings Based on the Study on "Learning Reform in Pilot Schools : Selected Models."**

School-Based Management

Boonmee Naneyod, another member of the consultant team, has also analysed the conditions and factors. His findings confirm that, for the school-based learning reform, the principals benevolent leadership is the key to success, as they are able to motivate all stakeholders to actively participate in formulation of vision and policy and feel fully committed to their continuous collective mission. Principals who decentralize authority to groups of personnel are more likely to succeed than to an individual e.g. a deputy principal or a teacher. Increased intensive interaction and closer relationship among school personnel have resulted in exchanges of learnings, with a more systematic approach to following-up and assessment of the schools' achievements. The 5 competencies of the principals are, in order of priority : faith of colleagues, team work capacity, intellectual leadership, vision and creativity. From a study of the 13 competencies calculated from the mean of the 15 SBM indicators, it has been found that the mean of each indicator at present is higher than the pre-test score, with a difference of statistical significance at level of 0.05 for every indicator. Details regarding competencies and indicators for principals, synthesis of the 4 administrative models for whole-school learning reform including problems and obstacles encountered can be seen in **Report on School-Based Management : Thai Ways and Methods.**

Assessment and quality assurance

Nonglak Wiratchai, another member of the consultant team, has analysed the whole-school reform outcomes in comparison with the indicators previously set. Her findings confirm that, at the latest measurement, most schools have earned higher scores subsequent to personnel development and inculcation of collective commitment. Some schools have consequently revised student assessment based on authentic situation and have adopted an integrated quality assurance system. Many, however, have not integrated assessment as part of the teaching-learning process, while the majority of teachers have not been able to link their work with the schools' quality assurance. An analysis of the factors conducive to the success of the whole-school reform confirms that participation in conceptualization and solving technical problems and

those relating to personnel administration by the local researchers has accelerated collective efforts within the schools, resulting in speedier and more effective school reform.

The results of assessment of the Study by Wiratchai can be thus summarized. The pilot schools have achieved increased quantitative development regarding learning reform, personnel development, SBM and internal quality assurance, while the whole-school reform has not been as extensive as desired. The rate of whole-school reform, however, has noticeably increased. Implementation of the Study has therefore lessened inequality among the schools. All pilot schools have changed their culture, with increased emphases on participation, teamwork, consultation and learning together etc. Concrete evidences of the noticeable changes can be discerned. Most pilot schools have been able to accomplish their main missions as required by the Study, while the rest have been able to fulfil certain tasks only. In analysing the conditions and factors conducive to the success of the Study, it has been found that the differences lie with the process and output of the teachers and principals, those of the students, the principals' previous achievements, teachers' average age and percentage of teachers who have been awarded. Details regarding the internal quality assurance and assessment of the Study can be seen in the **Report on Reforming Process for Learning Quality Development : Assessment and Assurance**.

Roles of respective parties in mobilizing collective efforts for whole-school learning reform

This report presents findings of the consultants who have studied the learning reform situation in the pilot schools. Their findings confirm the high feasibility of the whole-school learning reform. The reform will undoubtedly meet with success, provided that all parties concerned, namely : teachers, principals, school boards, parents and students, including educational supervisors, administrators of respective authorities at all levels as well as representatives and scholars of both the public and private sectors fully appreciate the content and spirit of Chapter IV of the 1999 National Education Act. All the parties concerned must necessarily realize then respective responsibilities and are able to align their roles to those of others, with the improved student learning as the common ultimate goal, as can be seen in the following figure.

Whole-school learning reform

At the end of the second phase of operation, the outcomes, based on the schools' actual situation and readiness, can be synthesized to represent 3 groups of schools, comprising 5 models as follows :

Group 1 : Schools almost completely reformed and self-reliant, comprising 2 models :

- Those which have worked closely with the respective authorities in the reform process and have received full technical support and reform guidelines;
- Those which have taken the initiative to reform themselves and have sought the necessary procedural guidelines on their own.

Group 2 : Schools partially reformed and not fully self-reliant, comprising 2 models. The reform of the schools in Group 2 has been similarly initiated as those in Group 1. The difference lies in the outcomes of Group 1 schools which are more complete, while those of Group 2 schools are only partial.

Group 3 : Schools interested in the reform and have just started. Only a single model emerges from the schools' initiative.

As already mentioned, the target schools have not been engaged in the reform on their own, but have received technical and moral support and assistance for personnel development from those outside the schools. These advisers are willing to serve as colleagues and friends who are prepared to learn together with the schools. From the outcomes of the joint efforts between the pilot schools and the 44 teams of local researchers, 3 models of the school reform can be identified :

Model 1 : Groups of local researchers responsible for individual schools, while others work as a group for the benefit of a single school which is almost completely reformed. The local researchers' tasks simply confirm the schools' academic success and provide support for more complete reform on a continuous basis.

Model 2 : Individual local researcher works with schools with varying degree of whole-school reform, thus requiring self-adjustment on the part of the researcher; such step is relatively easy since it involves only a single person.

Model 3 : A team of local researchers work together in a single school, thus requiring mutual consultations and channelling concepts and methods of work in the same direction to avoid possible confusion. While single researchers of Model 2 need the assistance of other academics to supplement what is missing, those of Model 3 work together

as a multidisciplinary team. Support provided to the school is therefore relatively easy and speedier.

From their collaboration with the schools, the local researchers have found different methods work adopted by the schools, depending on their previous background and the socio-cultural context of the schools and the communities. Common features, however, have emerged e.g. enthusiasm and awareness of the necessity for learning reform in the respective schools, the need for continuous academic support in terms of training workshops, close consultations and availability of easily accessible learning sources providing both instructional media and content. The local researchers have met those requirements by various means e.g. through their intervention, the schools are authorized to avail of the services of such learning sources in the teacher education institutes as the Study Centres for Teacher Development of the Rajabhat Institutes; participation in training activities organized by the institutes; and organization of exchanges of learnings between the participatory schools and those outside. Emphasis has been given to encouraging formulation of networks for mutual support. Three methods for such sharing of learnings have therefore been adopted, namely :

Model 1 : Schools take turn in serving as venues for such exchange, for which the hosts will serve as case study;

Model 2 : All schools in the network will regularly meet at a teacher education institute; and

Model 3 : Each school will learn on its own. It will, however, share advisers/mentors with other schools for provision of knowledge and experience. If necessary, arrangements will be made for occasional or informal meetings between the networks and the schools themselves.

Apart from the benefits obtained by the principals, teachers and the whole school communities, the collaborative action research has also been beneficial to the local researchers, as evidenced by the following :

1. The local researchers have contributed to an awareness rousing for the necessity for whole-school learning reform for developing quality of learners as well as instil faith in the teaching profession among the principals and teachers. An accrued benefit, on the part of the local researchers, is that their awareness and faith in their own profession have been further heightened.

2. There has been clear evidence of the local researchers' contributions to the capacity building and academic enhancement among the teachers and principals.

3. The academic support from advisers from the teacher education institutes and from the supervisors assures the schools of the right direction for the reform.

4. In collaborating with the teachers and principals in the pilot schools under their responsibility, the local researchers have been able to enhance their academic competencies and initiate a variety of strategies.

5. The local researchers are ready to apply the R&D outcomes from collaboration with the pilot schools for further development of their teaching responsibilities.

The feedback has been received from focus group interviews. Useful information has also been gathered from the reports of the local researchers. Based on such feedback and information, self-views of teachers and principals as well as their opinions of others regarding the whole-school learning reform as already mentioned, a matrix of the 3A component, namely : **Aware** (absorb and appraise); **Attempt** (implement, adjust, change and develop); and **Achieve** (receive outcomes), can provide the following overview of opinions of the main actors involved in the National Pilot Study.

Views of principals and teachers towards themselves, others and the National Pilot Study

Views of Level	Students	Teachers	Principals	Parents and communities	Local researchers	National Pilot Study
Aware	Individual differences	Recognize importance of self-study and further development.	Serve as leading internal change agents.	Appreciate the whole-school learning reform approach.	From observation of actual situation, appreciate the problems and needs of the schools.	Attracts attention of the public to the need for whole-school learning reform.
Attempt	Alert in learning through participatory teaching-learning activities	Conduct classroom research for improving quality of learners.	Systematic management of academic affairs with emphasis on participation and involvement of those concerned	Serve as sources of knowledge; provide instructional media and funding; attend meetings and follow up on activities.	Organize training; provide technical and moral support.	Teachers, principals and those concerned change their learning and work behaviour.
Achieve	Find satisfaction and change learning behaviour.	A variety of methods for arranging teaching-learning activities and systematic solutions, to students' problems	Exchange of learnings, mutual assistance and teamwork	Provide participatory and volunteer services.	Initiate the collaborative networks between higher education institutions and schools.	Actual experience provide lessons of successes and problems to be remedied.

Essential components and factors/requirements

Based on the data available and findings of the consultants, an overview of the essential requirements or factors conducive to whole-school learning reform regarding the 4 main features has emerged.

Reform leaders : more than 1-2 in number; apart from vision as proclaimed in the National Education Act, must have diversified skills and management competency.

Reform members : mutual faith and trust; shared sense of school ownership; common vision; mutual kindness and responsibility.

Reform process : collaborative learning; teamwork and systematic joint responsibility; access to and effective use of resources; continuity of activities; monitoring, follow-up and quality evaluation.

Support from authorities : unity and continuity in policy; diversified practices encouraged; flexible rules and regulations; appropriate distribution of budgetary and personnel resources; and continuous monitoring, follow-up and quality evaluation.

Other than the above factors, the essential requirements to ensure the success of the whole-school learning reform include love and faith of the community accorded to the schools and personnel; ability for collaborative learning and collective activities organized in co-operation with the community. Natural and socio-cultural environment, beliefs; services of the public/private sector regarding education, public health, economy etc. as well as the community's administrative mechanisms – all contribute to the enhancement of the reform which is considerably facilitated.

The overall picture of the essential components or factors conducive to whole-school learning reform can be seen in the following analysis showing the links between the outcomes and the features of the reform schools.

Analysis of Whole-School Reform Conducive to Learning For Developing Quality of learners

In existence/ available

- ⊙ **Community/Family**
 - Natural resources
 - Human resources and wisdom
 - Culture, tradition
 - Belief
 - Government mechanism
 - Services to meet basic requirements
- ⊙ **School/personnel**
 - Love, faith from outside
 - Collaborative learning
 - Team spirit
 - Participation in community action

Proviso-Essential Requirements

- ⊙ **Reform leaders**
 - With vision as proclaimed in the National Education Act
 - More than 1-2 in number
 - Diversity in skills and management ability
 - With integrity and moral values
- ⊙ **Members**
 - Shared sense of school ownership
 - Common vision
 - With integrity and reciprocal kindness
 - With responsibility
- ⊙ **Process**
 - Collaborative learning
 - Group participation, team work and joint responsibility
 - Systematic and efficient management of group and organization
 - Access to and effective use of resources
 - Continuity of activities
 - Monitoring, follow-up, control and quality evaluation
- ⊙ **Support from authorities**
 - Unity in policy
 - Diversified practices encouraged
 - Rules and regulations conducive to promotion and support
 - Appropriate distribution of resources (budget and personnel)
 - Supervision, follow-up, control and quality evaluation
 - Continuity of policy/work

Goals

- ⊙ **Reform Students**
 - With skills useful for life
 - Collaborative learning with other stakeholders in school and community
 - Formation of student groups/organizations and with systematic and efficient management for development of themselves, school, community and society
 - With desirable qualities and attributes
 - Happiness in learning
- ⊙ **Reform schools**
 - ◆ **Better development in**
 - Learning
 - Management of teaching-learning process
 - Administration and internal quality assurance
 - ◆ **Self-reliance**
 - Teachers able to conduct R&D in students' learning process
 - Principals able to apply R&D to school development
 - Ability to create body of knowledge
 - Enjoy good relationship with parents and organizations/institutions in community
 - Ability to choose appropriate alternatives for adjusting schools to changing situation
 - Ability to obtain resources required for whole-school development
 - ◆ **Sustainability**
 - Ability to control and check work process and evaluate outcome
 - Enabling all stakeholders to participate at all stages of work and in improvement based on evaluation results for subsequent multiplication

The links between the outcomes and the features of the reform schools, as shown in the above analysis of essential components and factors/conditions, also largely depend on the schools' awareness and ability to maintain the reform on a sustainable basis. Such sustainability can be achieved through continuous strengthening of the intellectual capacity of the school personnel, which is, at the same time, in consonance with their own context. The highest aim being the learners' benefit, great importance is therefore attached to the quality of learners. To sustain the reform efforts which will be constantly enhanced requires academic/intellectual freedom, extensive support network and effective provision and utilization of budgetary resources for the reform. Pilot schools with such attributes can serve as models/master schools for multiplication of the reform efforts, thus reaching the efficiency and effectiveness advocated in the 1999 National Education Act.

Policy recommendations

Based on the synthesis of the above findings, the researchers can discern important issues highlighted in the following policy recommendations on learning reform :

1. Unified policy and mobilization of collective efforts for learning reform

The central authority still wields its administrative power through the fragmented approach, resulting in undesirable effects on the reform efforts. The respective administrative units, with different strategies, standards and criteria, have tackled different issues separately. As a result, there has been a lack of unity and no mobilization of collective energy needed for the reform. The research clearly confirms that, adherence to the conceptual framework, guidelines, and procedural steps, as prescribed by the respective authorities, allows the schools minimal opportunities to learn in order to search for a new approach suitable to their contexts.

Since reform efforts begin at the schools, they should be accorded complete freedom and flexibility for maximum learning reform through self-management, and through the strategies and models initiated by the schools and regarded as suitable to their potential and their contexts. Many central systems are recommended to refrain from giving separate instructions. They should join efforts in proposing common conceptual frameworks, guidelines and main strategies for consideration of the schools which, after the necessary adjustment, will adopt as their own. The Study confirms that, without being fettered by the procedural steps and models prescribed by their administrative authorities, all schools are empowered to take a variety of initiatives and can mobilize the efforts required for an effective learning reform.

2. Support the whole-school learning reform under management with internal quality assurance

The findings of the research confirm that the systemic reform requires sustained and continuous efforts until they become embedded in the school daily life. In

administering the schools, emphases must be given to **Plan, Do, Check** and constant improvement to ensure internal quality assurance of outcomes. The administrative authorities of the schools and the organizations concerned at all levels should therefore lend support to the whole-school learning reform and provide timely assistance for problem solving, thus ensuring the success of the school self-management through internal quality assurance

3. Accelerate development of principals and leading teachers in order to link management with development of quality of learning

A key factor with strong influence on the success of the whole-school learning reform is the leadership of the principals, who take an interest in happenings in the classrooms, teaching-learning activities and students' problems. Attempts have been made by these principals to provide the environment and mechanisms conducive to enhanced learning. They have also made efforts to continuously strengthen their own academic competency and that of all teachers. With a large number of teachers, however, accelerated systemic development during a short period of time proves to be difficult. Hence it becomes necessary to encourage contribution of a corps of competent teachers to act as agents of change.

Adopting a policy of linking management with learning quality development necessarily involves policies regarding resources distribution and development of the principals and a corps of leading teachers which are interlinked. In other words, the training should also include management, academic basics and learning, with emphasis on the alignment of administrative arrangements to those relating to learning. Management competency will enable the principals and the leading teachers to effectively utilize the resources. The research findings confirm that allocation of budgetary provisions in support of teaching-learning activities, enabling the schools to utilize them under a suitable, appropriate, transparent and accountable framework, will accelerate the reform efforts.

4. Promote the collaborative action research

The context of each school being different, formulation of solution to the problems or development guidelines for individual schools naturally differs, depending on the culture and background and previous experience of the schools and the communities. The whole-school learning reform for better achievements of the schools or the classrooms, based on proven research findings, will avoid the trial-and-error approach and truly meet the different needs. Adopting a policy of encouraging the collaborative action research, based on participatory learning, will lead to the whole-school reform for improving the quality of the students. Budgetary support is hence indispensable and of utmost importance. The research findings confirm that success will be ensured when the principals and teachers participating in the collaborative action research are clear about the priority of the changes required by the

schools and the classrooms relating to management, organization of teaching-learning activities and quality assurance.

5. Encourage teacher education institutions to learn together with the schools

With academic support of the faculty staff of the teacher education institutions, other than moral support and stimulation, the schools will feel confident of the right direction for the learning reform. The research findings confirm the local researchers' contribution to the progress of the schools which have earned recognition of the communities and nearby schools. *Vice versa*, the teacher education institution faculty staff have benefitted from their services as local researchers i.e. access to authentic learning sources, ability to adjust their roles so as to become closer and more familiar with the local areas where they work. The teacher education institution policy, therefore, should include accelerated inculcation of awareness and sense of responsibility of the faculty staff towards other educational personnel and schools/educational institutions in the local areas.

6. Encourage master teachers, master principals and master schools to serve as leaders of reform at personal / organizational / network levels

The research findings reveal that the honour given to the teachers for multiplication of the reform efforts to the networks of their colleagues have caused problems to the leading teachers workload in providing technical support to the teachers of their own schools as well as those of the external networks. The students in their own classes have also been deprived of opportunities for full development. Thus there is an urgent need for adjustment in the academic affairs management system of the schools for the benefit of network building. Such adjustment will also obviate the problems which might be faced in the future by master principals as well as master schools to be selected.

Being honoured as leaders of reform will, at the beginning, be easier than sustaining the status of quality leaders. The policy for recognizing and honouring their achievements must necessarily include strengthening of the competency of these individual teachers and institutions, so as to avoid possible relapse, but to reach greater heights on a continuous basis. Thus serving as multipliers of reform will only bring effectiveness and efficiency, contentment and moral support to all stakeholders of the reform.

7. Support for the use of ICTs for scaling up the whole-school learning reform

In this collaborative action research, all those working together with the pilot schools have experienced self-dedication, determination, genuine attempts and avidity for intellectual enhancement on the part of the teachers, principals, and others concerned. Multiplication of experiences and lessons learnt together with expansion

of new frontiers of knowledge through utilization of printed matters and traditional training, in large and small groups, might be unsuitable not only for those engaged in the National Pilot Study, but also for the teachers and principals nationwide. Application of the ICTs to facilitate the learning of students, teachers and principals will widen the scope of their vision and increase their knowledge. Collective learning through exchanges of experiences will be on a wide scale, speedy and on a continuous basis.

8. Encourage strengthening and expansion of networks of targeted schools, academic associations etc.

All pilot schools under the Study necessarily belong to the official networks prescribed by their respective administrative authorities. A large number of teachers, however, have become members of the unofficial networks. Achievements of the latter have led to a movement for reform of learning/education. For such movement to serve as the key factor resulting in sufficient critical mass to drive the learning/education reform forward on a firm and continuous basis, thus benefitting all parties concerned, the respective authorities are required to have a clear policy on devolving their power in all aspects of administration, as mandated by the 1999 National Education Act, to their official networks and, at the same time, attach greater importance to the unofficial networks. Such policy entails allowing official interventions on various issues as appropriate as well as providing budgetary support. These steps, however, by no means permit interference and control over the functioning of the unofficial networks.

9. Improve the evaluation system for position classification

The research findings confirm that evaluation of the achievements of principals and teachers for position classification or promotion must be based on their performance and student outcomes rather than documentary evidences. The key factor conducive to the success of the whole-school learning reform, other than the essential qualifications of the principals and teachers, is their performance. The reform will reach the success as targetted only when all parties concerned fully understand and appreciate the spirit of the 1999 National Education Act advocating the highest importance to learners. All parties involved must therefore be able to adjust their respective roles for mutual support and assistance with emphasis on development of the learners' quality as the ultimate goal. All concerned must appreciate that evaluation of achievements is one and the same as that for promotion. The teachers' performance largely depends on the students' growth and development.

Therefore if the state has a clear policy regarding the evaluation criteria for position classification or promotion of teachers and principals as borne out by the research findings, the change in the learning culture of the teachers, principals and students will be speedier as targetted in the spirit of the 1999 National Education Act.

Reporting on the outcomes of the National Pilot Study

As already mentioned in **Chapter 1 : Time-frame of the National Pilot Study** the team of domestic consultants has the responsibility of submitting reports on the outcomes of the Study at its completion. The following actions have consequently be taken :

1. December 11, 2001 : report to the ONEC and the ADB at a small-scale meeting, attended by the NEC Secretary-General, ADB representatives, the 4 domestic consultants and ONEC research teams.

2. December 15, 2001 : report to the Sub-Committee of the National Education Commission on Foreign Technical Assistance to Support Learning Reform and the Technical Working Group of the National Pilot Study at a joint meeting of the 2 bodies, attended by the NEC Deputy Secretary-General, ADB representatives, ADB international consultants, the 4 domestic consultants and ONEC research team.

3. February 13, 2002 : report to the NEC at a meeting at the national policy level, attended by the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of social issues, ministers, high-level administrators of the agencies concerned with the Study and the education reform of the MOE, MOI, BMA, the 4 domestic consultants, and ONEC research teams.

4. February 28, 2002 : report to the Education Reform Committee of the MOE at a high-level policy meeting of the Ministry, attended by the Deputy Minister in charge of learning reform, Deputy Directors-General and representatives of the departments, agencies and bureaus concerned, NEC Deputy Secretary-General, 3 domestic consultants and ONEC research teams. Subsequently on April 29, 2002, the MOE established the Working Group on Scaling-up of the Pilot Project : Learning Reform Schools of Developing Quality of Learners.

ONEC's missions to be accomplished

1. The ONEC in co-operation with the ADB and the 4 domestic consultants will organize a forum for exchange and learnings with the view to disseminating information on the achievements of the Study to the public on June 10-11, 2002.

2. The ONEC will select master principals from among the applicants of the 250 pilot schools under the Study. Successful candidates will accordingly be provided with budgetary support for R&D activities for subsequent multiplier actions.

3. The ONEC will take preparatory measures for selection of master schools.

4. The ONEC will provide the pilot schools with the necessary support so as to be ready for the expansion of their respective networks for the education year 2002.

5. The ONEC will synthesize the experiences, lessons learnt and outputs of the Study for dissemination through the mass media.

Glossary of Abbreviations

BMA	Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
DGE	Department of General Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOI	Ministry of Interior
ONEC	Office of the National Education Commission
ONESQA	Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment
ONPEC	Office of the National Primary Education Commission
OPEC	Office of the Private Education Commission