



NEWSLETTER

The latest news and updates from Dek Noi Pattana Foundation



Scaling Up High Quality Early Childhood Development in Surin

By Ian C. Porter

Since its establishment in 2017 and together with the Education Faculty of Surindra Rajabhaat University (SRRU), DNPF has been working in development centers across Surin to enhance the quality of early childhood development (ECD) and thereby the development of children's skills. Including centers that were supported under a pilot project that preceded the establishment of DNPF, close to 50 centers have been provided with support. This has included in-service training and coaching of teachers and caretakers, rigorous monitoring of the development of the children's skills and enhancing the engagement of parents, grandparents, communities, local authorities and other stakeholders in supporting the centers to enhance the quality of their work and then maintain a high standard. Still the task going forward remains a large one because there are more than 500 centers in Surin and all need to be supported.

In this context, DNPF is now working with the Surin Provincial Administration and SRRU on a scaling up plan for high quality ECD in the province with the overall objective of ensuring

over the next five years that all the centers in Surin are provided with the needed support to ensure the little children attending the centers have the opportunity to realize their full potential with respect to their physical, intellectual, social and emotional development.

The scaling up plan will focus on the four core areas of DNPF's and SRRU's work.

1. High quality in-service training (both basic and advanced) will be provided to all teachers and caretakers at least twice a year.
2. All teachers and caretakers will have the opportunity to benefit from expert coaching once a month, in line with best practices from other countries.
3. Teachers will be supported to undertake rigorous monitoring of the development of the children's skills at the beginning and end of each school year; and
4. Finally with respect to stakeholder engagement: parents and grandparents will be supported to better understand the importance of ECD and what they can do to support

Observations & Development Discussion

June 12, 2024, the DNPF team accompanied representatives from the PMU-A to visit Narong SAO ECD Center, Srinarong District. They were welcomed by the Center's management, the School Education Committee, parents, teachers and the management and faculty members of Surindra Rajabhat University. They visited classrooms to observe the activity organizing process, watched the video on the Center's activities and discussed the direction for continuous development.



their children and grandchildren while at home and in the centers; education management committees will be helped to better discharge their responsibilities with respect to the management of the centers; and concerned local institutions will be encouraged to play a more pro-active role in enhancing the quality of ECD.

Recently, the Project Management Unit for Area Based Development (PMU-A) of the Ministry of Higher Education has taken a keen interest in the work being done in Surin and has agreed to provide 350,000 baht as SEED money for the scaling up plan. The PMU-A has also indicated its interest in supporting the full scaling up plan once it is ready and in partnership with others. The SEED money will be provided directly to SRRU and is expected to focus on the fourth theme of DNPF's and SRRU's work, namely enhancing stakeholder engagement. Some funds will be managed by the Education Faculty of SRRU and will be used to design and pilot efficient methods for training parents and grandparents on the importance and nature of high quality ECD. The remaining funds will be managed by the Department of Humanities of SRRU and will be used to design and pilot a program for enhancing the role and participation in ECD of the education management committees, other community organizations and parents and grandparents.

The Surin Provincial Administration and SRRU with the support of DNPF are working to finalize the scaling up plan by the end of this year; and with the objective of starting implementation in the 2025/26 school year.

Foundational Skills in Thailand and the Importance of ECD and the Work of Organizations like DNPF

On February 21, 2024, at a High-Level Policy Forum, the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) and the World Bank launched a new report "Fostering Foundational Skills in Thailand – From a Skills Crisis to a Learning Society" 1 . Khun Anutin Charnvirkul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, gave the keynote speech.

The report draws on the results of a research project to survey the skills and readiness of the working age population, known as the Adults Skill Assessment in Thailand (ASAT). Among the report's key findings and conclusions are the following:

First, Thailand is facing a crisis of foundational skills with a large proportion of youth and adults (15-64 year-olds) not having basic foundational skills – meaning in the words of Koji Miyamoto (Senior Economist at the World Bank and one of the authors of the report) that: "there is a large proportion of youth and adults who lack the ability to read basic texts, solve simple problems, or show tendencies to engage with others and explore new horizons".

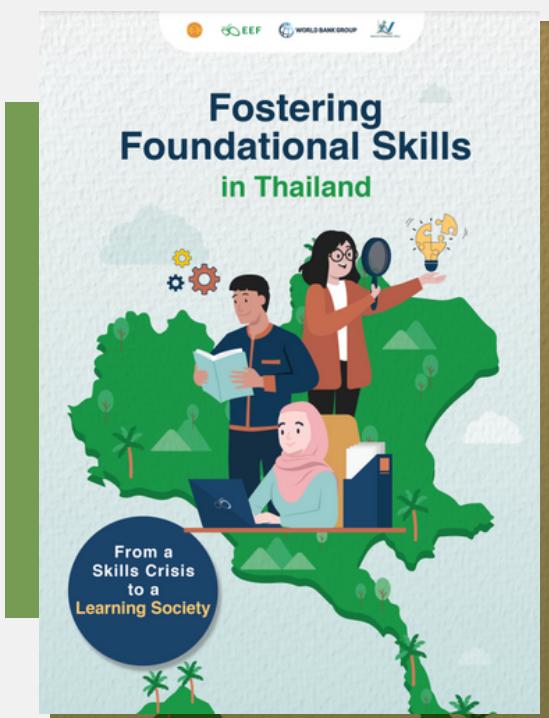
Second, the report states that: "Much of the skills gaps documented among youth and adults have been attributed to the failure of ECD in giving these children a good start. Many

of the children who entered basic education without having some of the most basic abilities – such as self-regulations and communications skills – struggle to learn and progressively develop a range of academic, vocational, and foundational skills".

Third, the report goes on to say that: "The good news is that the percentage of children aged 3-5 years attending any ECD program has increased considerably from 60% in 2005 to 86% in 2019. Yet concerns remain regarding the quality of ECD programs, with teachers limited pedagogical ability to foster the range of foundational skills in a motivating and playful way, and regarding the capacity of ECD institutions to organize and sustain the operations".

Fourth, the report highlights the work of the Dek Noi Pattana Foundation (DNPF), stating: "Promising signs of progress made in Thailand to improve the quality of ECD do exist. For instance, the DNPF has been delivering a major ECD program in Surin province since 2017 to foster children's cognitive, socioemotional, and physical abilities. Its design and implementation modalities are evidence-based and integrate impact assessments. Results to date are promising, showing significant improvements in foundational skills among those treated compared to the control groups".

The Dek Noi Pattana Foundation (DNPF) designed to strengthen teachers' and caretaker's capacity to foster children's cognitive, socioemotional, and physical skills in Surin province of Thailand.

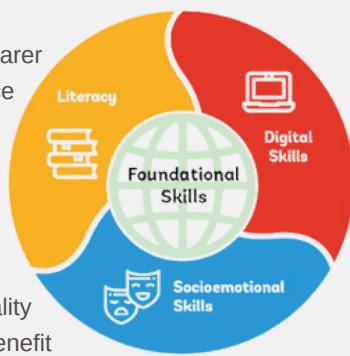


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<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/thailand/publication/fostering-foundational-skills-in-thailand>

Fifth, the report emphasizes the importance of preparing and disseminating evidence-based programs and again refers explicitly to the work of DNPF as a promising sign of evidence-building efforts.

In sum, the report could not be clearer in emphasizing first: the importance of enhancing the quality of ECD programs in Thailand in order to address the foundational skills crisis; and second that the work of organizations such as DNPF is clearly demonstrating how the quality of ECD can be improved for the benefit of little children and eventually the economy and people of Thailand.



Early Childhood Development initiatives in Roi Et Province

By Anuje Sirikit

Dek Noi Pattana Foundation (DNPF) started its expansion of quality early childhood development program in Roi-et around one year ago. Thanks to Khun Preecha, Chief administrator of Noan-sa-nга subdistrict organization (SAO) who initiated the idea of expansion and made a request to Khun Ian Porter, Chair of DNPF.

Khun Preecha collaborated with DNPF earlier on when he was working in Surin and has seen vast improvement in the ECD centers under his authority. Upon his arrival in Roi-et, he consulted the Chief Executive of Noan-sa-nга SAO and the head of the Education section to join with DNPF in improving the quality of ECD centers in Noan-sa-nга SAO. Khun Preecha has set a good example of a leader who inspired others to improve the quality of education for children in the community.



Upon the request of Khun Preecha, Khun Ian and DNPF team visited Noan-sa-nга and Ban Noan Jan and met with the Chief Executive of Noan-sa-nга SAO who is very supportive of the idea of a model center. DNPF then met with the Rector of Roi-et Rajabhat University (RERU) to request for his support in letting the Faculty of Education members give technical support in the implementation of the pilot project.

Khun Preecha reflected that positive feedback from parents and grandparents on the rapid progress their children and grandchildren are making in developing physical, intellectual, social and emotional skills were very encouraging. The progress made within a short period was due to the collaboration of stakeholders involved, i.e., RERU, Roi-et administration, DNPF, teachers, parents, grandparents and communities.

RERU will be measuring the development of the children's skills in Noan-sa-nга and Ban Noan Jarn ECD centers relative to the development of the children's skills in a neighboring centers that are not receiving DNPF support.

In future, DNPF will be working with RERU and the Roi-Et Provincial Administration on how best to build on the experience and lessons learned from the pilot project.



Reflection from Khun Sakchai Kamwan



Khun Sakchai has been an active member of Donraed community and is the father of Khun Champ. Khun Champ was the first batch that entered Watchai si-sa-ad early childhood development center (ECD) that DNPF supported as the pilot project over ten years ago. Khun Sakchai reflected that he was very pleased that DNPF supported teachers with training and skills needed in enhancing children's skills development. He reflected that Khun Champ's smooth transition from kindergarten to upper level was due to the skills he developed at an early stage.

Khun Champ became a student leader when he was in elementary school. He is currently studying hard in high school in Ubon Ratchathani and is also part of the school athlete team. Khun Sakchai said that Khun Champ is a very responsible person and able to look after himself. Khun Sakchai emphasized that Khun Champ's social skills must have been cultivated at an early age.

Khun Sakchai thanked DNPF for the continuous support of high-quality early childhood program.

