

BMN Community Based Approach and Integrated Resource Allocation to Improve Rural Quality of Life

Direk Rerkrai¹

ABSTRACT

Self-reliance development in Thailand could not work as estimated due to lacking of the indice for people's organization to search for their real needs in the community.

The development of basic minimum needs (BMN) approach in Thailand has achieved as an instrument of village committee for improving the quality of life since 1986. BMN indicators and its process were used as an instrument for problem's diagnosis and evaluative instrument for quality of life improvement. The achievement of BMN approach in social development schemes could be evaluated in terms of : 1) The commitment from the government (in 20 August, 1985) and policy makers, 2) the widely acceptance of BMN indicators as an instrument for village committee since 1986, 3) with the preparation of BMN information as an instrument for intersectoral cooperation among 4 major ministries and for readjust the frame of policy, programme planning and implementating at the national level and provincial level.

INTRODUCTION

Thailand experienced a period of remarkable economic growth during the period 1960-1981, averaging about 7% a year. However, income disparities have become larger among the different regions ; also within each region the rural urban gaps have also become wider. Poverty is also found to be closely related to other problems. According to a 1982

National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) report, over 64 % of Thailand's population suffer from vermi-intestinal infections. About 90 % of rural people suffer from anemia. Statistics also reveal that 80 % of pre-school rural children suffer from under-nutrition. The illiteracy rate is as high as 14% when averaged over the total population, the majority of whom live in rural areas(NESDB,1984).

¹ Office of Extension & Training, Kasetsart Univ. , Bangkok 10900

The strategy failed to eliminate the close and complex links that exist between economic and other aspects of economic and other aspects of development. Another major contribution to the problem was the weakness of the current administrative system which prevents an efficient of intersectoral cooperation and the equity in allocation of resources.

In recognition of the inadequacies of past strategies, in 1980 the NESDB established the National Social Development Project (NSDP) and incorporated this into its national economic and social development plan. Prime movers from 4 ministries : Interior, Agriculture, Education, Public Health ; and another two ministries : Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of University Affairs, were assigned for workshop on problem solutions in social development strategy. At the same time, a multi-level social planning system, a long term social development goal, and a social development network were developed. Thus, the current NSDP approach represented a new approach; BMN approach, to encourage community participation in social development process. It made the significant change for the increase efficiency of intersectoral cooperation among 4 major ministries officials, and the more equitably in allocation of resources. It also reflects an attempt for the first time to keep a proper balance between economic and social development. (NESDB, 1984).

BMN Approach made a significant changes in rural development.

BMN indicators and its process were accepted by Thai government as one of various approaches in improving the quality of life. It is an instrument of village committee to diagnose common problems and needs of the community. The BMN data will be one source of community information for intersectoral cooperation among agents of 4 major ministries to allocate the limited resources with equity. At the same time it probably will be an instrument for readjusting the frame of policy and plan in any level.

Therefore the objectives of this study were to determine:

- 1) The development of BMN approach and its strategies in Thailand worked as an instrument for social development.
- 2) The achievement of BMN approach as one approach for social development in improving quality of life.
- 3) Some results of study related to BMN applying in social development activities and its recommendation.

Documentary research and the systematic observation and analysis were used as tools of this study.

In syntheses and analysis of data, some criteria were set for evaluation the achievement of BMN approach in social development of Thailand were as

following : 1) The commitment from the government and policy makers. 2) The widely acceptance for BMN indicators as an instrument for village committee for diagnosis the common problems and needs of the community. At sometime it had the possibility for using as an instrument for monitoring, evaluation, and integrated cooperation system or even for allocation of resources. BMN approach created some changes in socio-economic development.

Framework, and related concepts.

1. The central concept and goals of rural development in Thailand.

Thailand realizes that the central concept of rural development should be consisted of : 1) Raising the capacity of rural people to have their own decision making for their ways of life in socio-cultural, economic, and political concerns. 2) The equity allocation of wealth and benefits, and 3) The motivation of intersectoral oriented among the officials working at the local level, and its also creating the community participation of grass-roots group in the process of development too (NESDB, 1982 a)

2. Intersectoral cooperation situation in Thailand before 1987.

During the National Fifth 5-Year Economic and Social Development Plan (1982-86), brought about

2.1 Some pilot projects on 38 provinces had tried to find the strategies

of integration among 4 ministries under the network centre at NESDB and the National Rural Development Committee System. They tried to find out the strategies of integration. However, the focuses were quite different from each other. Some projects focused on agricultural development and expanded to other sectoral development. Another project focused on health program and extended to economic development program.

2.2 The major problems of intersectoral coordination in Thailand during 1960-1986 were as followed : 1) lack of common ultimate goal and could not clarify the total picture of strategies and the continuity of the development program. 2) The provincial level could not find the appropriate strategies to link them together. Some projects may work effectively, but not on the basis of formal intersectoral cooperation, but on the ability of the head project alone in motivating the people in other sectors to join the program. By this system, the provincial government frequently did not know what policies or even what projects of many ministries which being done on his province. 3) The overlapping of activities according to conduct their own program is due to the lack of a centre for coordination. 4) No systematic evaluation and monitoring system, and what are the cost-benefit of the program, etc (NESDB, 1982 b).

2.3 Effective integrated development. In order to promote the effectiveness integrated rural development to improve social development and poverty elimination, the following items should be improved : 1) Only on single organization of National Rural Development Committee should be set and it should provide for the integrated policies which start from 4 major ministries. 2) Delegation of authority for resource allocation and administration should be provided for the province and district. Provincial development teams and district development teams from each sector of rural development will help in integrated planning. The sub-district council would be trained for increasing the capability in diagnosis the common problems and needs of the community, prioritize them, and find out the solution. 3) The focus of an attention would not an any sectoral activity, but instead on the response of the target, and the community participation for the success of the program. Training the village committee to increase the ability in conducting social development is needed. 4) The overall social development framework would be examined in term of its evolution in the near future and over the long run. 5) Social indicators should be constructed. The data coverage of these indicators should be consisted of the measuring of well being, factors influencing well begin. The data should be easily manageable form and can conduct by people's organization at the village. 6) By

knowing more social development information gathering by people's organization in the villages, the central data bank may seek for setting the basic standard, the targets and strategies for development. (Wudhimaedhi,et.al.1981; NESDB,1982 c).

RESULT OF STUDY

BMN approach created some changes in socio-economic development.

1) Case of "Developmental Korat Project" (1983-1984) in 53 villages (Rerkrai,1986) showed that only some significant and highly significant changes occur (using Z test) : 1) Infants and preschool children were under nutrition surveillance (from 67.15 % to 74.95 %) 2) Children from 5-14 years received all necessary nutriments to meet their physical needs (from 62.9% to 73.10%) 3) Received the necessary information concerned (from 57.77% to 78.32%). However,it was found in negative significant changes too as followed : 1) House are made from durable materials (from 74.5% to 60.67%) 2) family houses were kept clean and orderly (from 41.56% to 15.61%) 3) children under 1 year received 6 kinds of vaccination(from 74.40% to 62.17%) 4) pregnant women were vaccinated and checked 4 times before giving birth (from 60.47% to 35.85%) 5) pregnant women received birthing services and a check up within 6 weeks after giving birth (from 63.39% to 57.56%)

However, for total picture of outcome of using BMN approach in Nakornratchasima province, it showed the significant changes in development during the year of 1983-85 on one of comparative study in 820 villages of 23 districts. A comparative study of developmental average scores for district in Nakornratchasima province in 1983 and 1985 found that (Rujeerakods, 1986) 1) there were significant relationship between the developmental average scores in 1983 and 1985, and it showed that every district got significant changes in higher developmental average scores both in poverty and non-poverty district areas (in 1983, N = 240 and in 1985 N = 820).

Another study showed that BMN approach should be prerequisite to poverty elimination. The poverty indicator was compared for their value between the year of 1983 and 1985 at the BMN operational target areas (11 districts) and non-BMN operational target areas (10 districts) of Nakornratchasima province. The result of the study showed that (Rerkrai, 1987 a): 1) There was a higher significant difference between poverty areas (2 districts, 15 villages) under BMN approach in the year of 1983 and 1985 ($t=15,117$, $d.f.=1$), and there was significant difference between the non-poverty areas under the BMW ap-

proach (5 districts, 27 villages) ($t=3.211$, $d.f.=4$) 2) There was non-significant difference between poverty areas (8 districts) under non-BMN approach ($t=1.1765$, $d.f.=7$, N.S.), and also non-significant difference between non-poverty areas (3 districts) under non-BMW approach ($t=0.7106$, $d.f.=2$, N.S.) This showed that BMN approach also took a significant change in economic too.
BMN approach applied as an instrument for diagnosis, prioritize the problems and need in the community.

BMN indicators and its process can make clearer, for village committee and sub-district council, the social development target and social indicators particularly the basic level of condition of quality of life and also those ones which were prerequisite for economic development.

"Developmental Korat Project" at Nakornratchasima province was a pilot project of BMN approach of National Social Development Project, NESDB showed the significant changes in 240 villages in June 1983 and 840 villages in 1985 as the following¹: 1) The village committee could gather the BMN data by themselves with the supporting of volunteers in the community and the agents from 4 sectors within 3-7 days. 2) The BMN indicators with target was an instrument for village committee to

¹See more detail on the poverty indicator in : Division of Educational and Dissemination of Development, NESDB (1986), The Result of Analysis for Poverty Indicator in District Level in 1983-1985.

diagnose and prioritize the community's problems and needs. 3) The community could mobilize the resources for problem solution under the self-help programme. 4) They understood the importance of quality of life under the BMN criteria. However, it was noted that social preparation would be prepared both for the agents of 4 sectors and the people in the community too before using BMN approach in improving the quality of life. (Nakornratchasima 1984 a, 1984 b)

BMN indicators, Therefore, could be used as monitoring and evaluation indices of the community.

BMN as an instrument for interaction cooperation among 4 major ministries.

The BMN data of every village may enable ministries of Public Health, Education, Interior and Agriculture and Cooperatives to coordinate their activities in the implementation of social development activities in the rural areas.

The possible activities for interaction cooperation among agents of 4 sectors under the BMN approach were as followed :

1. The strategy of dissemination for appropriate technology that called as "Technical Cooperation among Developing village" (TCDV) which had tested in 10 provinces in 1987. Under this pre-

mise the agents from 4 sectors must prepare the list of appropriate technology among the selected villages as a network in each district. The agents worked together as stimulators for village committee in the network village to teach together as teachers for selling "know how" to each other.⁽¹⁾

2. The analysis and preparing for linkage between 2 systems of village information system : (1) BMN indicators and (2) National Rural Development Committee (NRDC) "form no. 2c". These two systems were quite different, while BMN stressed on bottom-up approach and it worked as an instrument of village committee where as "NRDC form 2c" worked as an instrument for agents of 4 ministries. "NRDC form 2c" also concerned on 34 socio-economic indicators while BMN form stressed on 32 social indicators and had more detail than NRDC form no. 2c". However, both information systems may support together especially in manipulating the bottom-up programme for the 5-year plan of sub-district council. By This Linkage is a possible approach which let the bottom-up and top-down meet at the halfway at the province.

BMN information system as a resource allocation instrument for identification

¹See more detail in (a) National Rural Devt. Coordination Centre, NESDB (1985), Quality of Life Year Mass Campaign Project of the People of Thailand, pp. 25-36. (b) NRDC, NESDB (1987), Technical Cooperation among Developing Villages : Handbook for Agent of 4 sectors. (c) NRDC, NESDB (1987), Technical Cooperation among Developing Villages : Handbook for Village Committee.

of priority areas.

BMN information system collected annually in the village by the village committee may inform the agents from 4 major sectors (health, education, interior and agriculture) in any level in order to effectively mobilize and allocate resources to meet community's needs and priorities. The possible readjusting the frame of policy and master plan of 4-5 major ministries of Thailand would occur when they get the result of BMN census in 1987 and annually after that. Therefore, the equity in distribution of social services and resources will be happened.

Thai government made a commitment to BMN approach in 1985.

1. The cabinet approved the BMN approach under the Quality of Life Mass Campaign Project of Thailand, NESDB, at 20 August 1985 and declared that the year of 1985-1987 were quality of life improvement years. At the same time the cabinet accepted BMN approach as one of approaches in social development. (NESDB, 1985)

2. The Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1987-1991) announced at first time for major goal in social development. A listed as "To emphasize the development of human quality so aswhile improving the urban and rural quality of life to meet the standard of basic minimum needs" (NESDB, 1987)

According to these commitments,

the BMN indicators were collected by village committee in 1986 in one village of every subdistrict and collected the BMN data in every village in 1987, and after that annually collection of BMN indicators occur under the system of National Rural Development Committee.

Analysis for the successful of BMN approach in social development in Thailand.

The successful of BMN approach in Thailand for social development may be related to :

1) The strongly support by the NESDB and 4 major ministries and especially one of the Minister of the Office of the Prime Minister.

2) The appropriate strategies to handle the projects (National Social Devt. Project, 1980-1984, and the Project of Quality of Life Mass Campaign of Thailand, 1985-1987) such as : (2.1) strategy for consent making among core persons from 4 major ministries and other concerned, which arranged the simultaneously and synchronization of : a) coalition building b) framework setting c) agenda setting d) brainstorming e) many coordinators worked in specialization. f) make the belief that the BMN approach will get the government commitment and bring the benefit for the poor and to the official's organization too. (2.2) The application of BMN concept and strategies was adapted to suit the existing rural social development system. At the same time many strategies were related to Buddhism concepts

(more detail in (Rerkrai,1986) which are familiar to Thai People way of life. On the other hand, BMN approach was used under the condition of self-reliance development, intersectoral cooperation, and equity in distribution of resources. (2.3) The capability of selecting the pilot project at Nakornratchasima province which stated the project at 240 villages under the existing condition in the first year programme (on June,1983) and extended to 420 village and 840 villages in 1984 and 1985 respectively. (2.4) The training strategies of training committee, under the Quality of life Mass Campaign Project at Thailand,took a significant cooperation and devotion of the trainers in national, provincial, district and subdistrict level. The multiple effect was assigned to the trainers from national level,down to provincial,district, subdistrict level. In establishment for training curriculum, the trainers at national level were created by themselves under the situation of "learning by confusing" and "learning by doing". (2.5) The grant aids supported at the first period from Netherland government and from WHO were more valuable for creating the atmosphere of brainstorming. (2.6) The very good prime movers, who specialized in specific areas of technical assistance and in the areas of mobiliza-

tion and utilization of human resource and development,worked hardly together and took the dream came true. (2.7) The BMN approach needed for community preparation for stimulating the developmental mechanism in the village level such as : (a) commitment of the local leader (b) efficiency of people's organization (c) developmental management in the community (d) appropriate technology (e) public relations and communication network (f) mobilization and utilization of resources especially for raising the community fund (g) total human development (h) socio-economic structure, environment, natural resources, and situation concerned in the community.⁽¹⁾ However, the preparation for agents of 4 sectors was needed in order to bring them together : (a) the sense of belongingness (b) the realization that they should work for the people but not for expanding the empire of their organizations.⁽²⁾ In handle for BMN approach,in needed to stimulate the agents of 4 sectors by natural strategy but not by force them to do the programme. Therefore, the monitoring system from the governor may be prepared carefully in order to stimulate the agents and people's organization.⁽³⁾ At the same time, it needed to link the social development programme under the BMN ap-

¹More detail on the developmental mechanism on (a) 9, pp. 87-92. (b) Rerkrai, Direk (1985), Changing Society by Diffusion of Innovation, chalemchan Pub. Comp., pp. 74-80

²Case study on "Developmental Korat Project" showed for this preparation.

³Case study on this strategy occur on the situation of Chainat Province during 1985-1986 under the governor Pairat Decharin.

proach to be as a prerequisite for economic development schemes. Therefore, it requires logical efforts to persuade the NGOs in the province to joint the programme too.(NESDB,1982 b)

However, it is needed to follow up the results of study of "Quality of life Mass Campaign of Thai People Project" on the issue of (a) technical cooperation among developing villages (b) the linkage system between the two systems of village data : BMN indicators data system and NRDC form 2c" data system for the benefit to meet a half way between bottom-up and top-down approaches.

3) The creation of central BMN data bank which will be a total picture of quality of life under the standard of BMN indicators in every village. This programme may be the basis for equity in allocation of social resources to the problem areas by adjusting the frame of policy and master plan of 4 ministries at national and provincial level.

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⁴This case occured in the situation of Mahasalakarm province during 1986-87 under Governor Sawai Bhammani.

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APPENDIX

Component of quality of life under the criteria of BMN

The meaning of quality of life which defined by National Social Development Project under the criteria of basic minimum needs composed of 8 components and 32 indicators as following

1) Family members consume sufficient nutrition (3 indicators : 1) Infant and preschool children are under nutri-

tion survalance and are free of dangerous level of malnutrition. 2) Children from 5-14 years receive all necessary nutrients to meet their physical needs. 3) Pregnant woman have adequate and correct food consumption)

2) Appropriate shelter and environmental conditions (4 indicators : 1) Houses are made from durable materials. 2) Family houses are kept clean and orderly. 3) Family has an hygenic latrine. 4) Have sufficient clean drinking water.)

3) The opportunity to receive those basic social services which are necessary for livelihood and occupation. (8 indicators : 1) Children under 1 year receive vaccination against 5 diseases. 2) Children and Youth are able to receive compulsory education. 3) Primary school children receive vaccination against 5 diseases. 4) People 14-50 years are literate. 5) Receive necessary information concerning occupation and quality of life. 6) Pregnant women are checked 4 times before giving birth. 7) Pregnant women receive birthing services and check up within 6 weeks.)

4) Security of their lives and possessions (1 indicator : people are safe from thieves)

5) Sufficient production and procurement of food (5 indicators : 1) Able to make soil improvement. 2) Use certified seed and recommended animal

variety. 3) Use both chemical fertilizer and organic fertilizer. 4) Able to have plant protection. 5) Able to protect animal diseases.)

6) Able to plan the spacing and number of children (one indicator:couples have not more than 2 children)

7) Participate in developing their own and community. (7 indicators:1) Be member of interest groups for improving community. 2) Participate in the community development program. 3) Parti-

cipate in supporting and keeping public property. 4) Participate in supporting and keeping for appropriate cultural treasures. 5) Participate in taking care of natural resources. 6) Use the right for election voted. 7) The village committee is able to make the decision in development process.)

(8) Proper spiritual development (4 indicators : 1) Cooperation and hospitality. 2) Participate in religious day. 3) No addiction to alcohol, gambling, etc. 4) Economy in any ceremony activity.