Human Resources Development Readiness in ASEAN

Thailand Country Report
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ASEAN: A Community of Opportunities for All

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The map in this publication is only indicative and is not drawn to scale.
Foreword

MR. JESUS L.R. MATEO
Undersecretary for Planning and Human Resources and Organizational Development, Department of Education, Philippines
Chair of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education

DR. ANWAR SANUSI
Secretary-General of the Ministry of Manpower, Republic of Indonesia
Chair of the ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting

Developing human resources to empower peoples across the region and to strengthen ASEAN Community has been one of the key purposes of ASEAN as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter, adopted in 2007. The advancement of human resources development (HRD) has become more urgent, particularly with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) which has transformed businesses and jobs at a speed faster than workers can adapt. This urgency has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cognisant of the urgency of developing future-ready human resources to enable ASEAN to recover and thrive in the face of ever-changing demands of the labour market, ASEAN Leaders reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to build a people-oriented and people-centered ASEAN Community, through the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on HRD for the Changing World of Work and its Roadmap, championed by Viet Nam during their Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2020.
Carried out in support to the implementation of the ASEAN HRD Declaration and its Roadmap and in collaboration between ASEAN labour and education sectors, we are very pleased to welcome the publication of the ten country reports of the Study on HRD Readiness in ASEAN, which features the state of HRD readiness in each ASEAN Member States (AMS). The study is a joint initiative of Viet Nam’s Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and the ASEAN Secretariat, with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) through the Regional Cooperation Programme for TVET in ASEAN (RECOTVET).

Each country report compiles and synthesises national strategies, policies and programmes on HRD, which were then used as the basis in developing the regional report on HRD Readiness in ASEAN. We acknowledge that while the report demonstrates the significant progress made in the region, we are also aware of the commitments required to ensure that dynamic reforms are carried out going forward. We believe that the ten country reports and regional report will be instrumental in supporting the implementation of the ASEAN HRD Declaration and its Roadmap, particularly through the development of evidence-based policies and initiatives to advance HRD in ASEAN.

Lastly, we would also like to commend the efforts and commitment of the national researchers and authors from all AMS in developing the country reports under the guidance of Prof. Dieter Euler, as the Study’s lead researcher and author of the regional report. Appreciation also goes to the respondents and resource persons from relevant ministries and institutions from the labour and education sectors for their valuable feedback and contributions during the development and finalisation of the reports.

We would also like to extend our recognition to RECOTVET for their longstanding support in advancing HRD agenda in ASEAN.

MR. JESUS L.R. MATEO
Undersecretary for Planning and Human Resources and Organizational Development, Department of Education, Philippines

DR. ANWAR SANUSI
Secretary-General of the Ministry of Manpower, Republic of Indonesia
The Study on Human Resources Development (HRD) Readiness in ASEAN was initiated by the ASEAN Secretariat together with the Vietnamese Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA). The purpose of the Study is to support implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on HRD for the Changing World of Work adopted by the 36th ASEAN Summit in June 2020. The Study was conducted as an initiative under Viet Nam’s Chairmanship of ASEAN with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH through the Regional Cooperation Programme in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (RECOTVET).

Terms of Reference and an Inception Report for the Study were endorsed at the ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) and Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED) in April 2020 and June 2020, respectively. The research methodology was further deliberated by SLOM and SOM-ED focal points at a Validation Workshop held virtually on 29 June 2020.

The Study, which was conducted at regional level and across ten ASEAN Member States, has achieved its objective of offering comprehensive baseline information and recommendations. This valuable feedback will enable ASEAN policy makers and practitioners to better frame HRD as a priority for policy making.

The Regional Report and ten country reports were produced and endorsed following a series of extensive consultations with SLOM and SOM-ED from September 2020 to April 2021. The reports were launched at the High-Level Launch and Dissemination Forum conducted virtually on 26 April 2021.

The technical contributions of numerous individuals were invaluable to the development and implementation of the Study. We would like to offer our sincere thanks to the following:

- The focal points of ASEAN Member States’ labour and education ministries, whom there are too many to acknowledge individually, for your invaluable time and efforts to review draft reports, provide data and information, and share insights;

- To the International Cooperation Department of MOLISA Viet Nam, led by Dr. Ha Thi Minh Duc (Deputy Director General) for leadership and guidance during implementation of the Study, and her team members, particularly Ms. Tran Thanh Minh and Mr. Phan Nhat Minh;
• To the ASEAN Secretariat under the coordination of H.E. Kung Phoak, Deputy Secretary-General for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, including Director Rodora T. Babaran, the Labour and Civil Services Division, led by Ms. Mega Irena (Head and Assistant Director); the Education, Youth and Sport Division, led by Ms. Mary Anne Therese Manuson (former Head and Assistant Director); and their team members, in particular Mr. Carl Rookie O. Daquio, Ms. Madyah Rahmi Lukri, Mr. Alvin Pahlevi, Ms. Felicia Clarissa, and Ms. Shinta Permata Sari for their professional coordination and facilitation of consultations and stakeholders, as well as for their feedback to the draft reports;

• To GIZ’s RECOTVET team, led by Mr. Ingo Imhoff (Programme Director), in particular Mr. Nguyen Dang Tuan and Ms. Tran Phuong Dung for the financial, technical and administrative support throughout the Study;

• To Prof. Dieter Euler of St. Gallen University as the Study’s lead researcher and author of the Regional Report. This Study would not have been possible without his expertise and support;

• To the following national researchers and authors of the country reports:
  a. Dr. Paryono and the research team at SEAMEO VOCTECH (Brunei Darussalam)
  b. Ms. Ek Sopheara (Cambodia)
  c. Mr. Souphap Khounvixay (Lao PDR)
  d. Mr. Daniel Dyonisius and Prof. Bruri Triyono (Indonesia)
  e. Assoc. Prof. Razali Bin Hasan and the research team of the Malaysia Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Malaysia)
  f. Ms. Thet Su Hlaing (Myanmar)
  g. Mr. Elvin Ivan Y. Uy and the education team of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (the Philippines)
  h. Dr. Jaclyn Lee, Dr. Tay Wan Ying, and Dr. Dang Que Anh (Singapore)
  i. Dr. Chompoonuh K. Permpoonwiwat (Thailand)
  j. Dr. Dang Que Anh and Dr. Dao Quang Vinh (Viet Nam); and

• Finally, to Prof. Sir Alan John Tuckett for editing and proofreading the Regional Report, Dr. Daniel Burns for editing the Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand country reports, and Mr. Steven Christensen for designing the layout of the published reports.
Introduction to the Thailand country report

Human resources development (HRD) empowers people to actively shape their future in a modern world of work that is characterized by an accelerated pace of change. HRD aims at equipping people with the skills, competencies, values, and attitudes to prepare them for a future that is yet unknown.

Education and training systems are designed to provide people with the capacity and resilience to tackle current and future challenges in both their private and working lives. Governance, infrastructure, content, and teaching and learning processes have to be organized to accomplish this key function effectively and efficiently.

While these basic requirements are not new, the ASEAN regional context has changed considerably over the last decades. Advances in digital technologies, new demands in the area of environmental protection, and increased labour migration are just a few examples of the issues that require rapid responses by governments and the societies they represent. Education and training systems need to adjust to the changing times. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the need for societies to adapt to unprecedented and unpredictable disruptions, and to be better prepared for the future.

Against this background, the Heads of State adopted the Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work at the 36th ASEAN Summit on 26 June 2020, reaffirming the region’s commitment to equip its human resources with the competencies required for the future. A Roadmap to implement the Declaration was subsequently developed and adopted by the ASEAN labour and education ministers.

Guided by the aforementioned ASEAN Declaration, the Study on HRD Readiness in the ASEAN region was conducted to provide baseline information on the preparedness of HRD policies and programmes across ASEAN Member States with the aim of enabling their workforces to be relevant, agile and resilient for the future world of work. The Study was initiated by the ASEAN Secretariat to support Viet Nam’s Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2020 and in collaboration with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH through RECOTVET.
This Thailand Country Report is part of a comprehensive regional study investigating HRD readiness in ASEAN Member States (AMS) from a broader perspective. This report, together with the reports on the other nine AMS, forms part of the Regional Report on HRD Readiness in ASEAN. The ten country reports follow a common conceptual framework for HRD developed in the Inception Report, which was endorsed in June 2020. Together, the Regional Report and aligned country reports offer a wealth of background knowledge and guidance to enable ASEAN policy makers and practitioners to better frame HRD as a priority of future policy-making in the region.

The country reports were designed to focus on three key activities:

- Review relevant country-specific literature, policies, and other practices to identify elements of HRD frameworks and what ‘readiness’ means in the national context;
- Overview the current situation of national HRD policies and available resources to promote LLL and future skills; and
- Showcase promising strategies and practices to promote LLL and future skills within the respective areas of intervention.

This Thailand Country Report was written by the national researcher Dr. Chompoonuh K. Permpoonwiwat. It describes existing practices and introduces options for future policies as guided by a conceptual framework of investigation introduced in the Regional Report. In particular, it explores approaches currently applied with regard to HRD in reaction to the challenges of a changing world of work. It reveals considerable gaps between the appraisal of importance and desirability of HRD interventions on the one hand, and the extent of their realization and achievement on the other. In response, the report encourages those responsible for designing future strategies and policies to adapt their approaches to ensure the workforce is more resilient to the future world of work.

The ASEAN country reports were developed through extensive consultations between September 2020 and April 2021, at which time they were finalised and endorsed by their respective education and labour ministries. Building upon the findings and analyses in the country reports, the Regional Report was then developed by the senior international researcher, Prof. Dr. Dieter Euler. The Regional Report and country reports were launched at the High-level Launch and Dissemination Forum conducted virtually on 26 April 2021.
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# Abbreviations

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<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEC</td>
<td>ASEAN Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>Eastern Economic Corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRD</td>
<td>Human Resources Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRM</td>
<td>Human Resources Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLL</td>
<td>Lifelong Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCPO</td>
<td>National Council for Peace and Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDRI</td>
<td>Thailand Development Research Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Statistical facts: HRD/LLL in Thailand

According to a report by the Office of the Education Council (2018), the average mean years of education in Thailand is 9.52. This number was calculated based on the population of the country aged between 15-59 years old. Approximately 13.8% of Thai youth are not engaged in employment, education, or training (World Economic Forum, 2017). In terms of literacy and numeracy rates for young adults between 15-24 years old, UNESCO (2020b) reported that 98.6% of people in this age group are able to read and perform mathematic calculations at the appropriate level. With regards to the primary education enrolment rate, 99.8% of children between the ages of 0-14 are enrolled in schools (UNESCO, 2020b). Among the members of this group, 98% were able to attain primary education in the 15-24 age group (UNESCO, 2020a). As for the secondary education enrolment rate in the 0-14 age group, the available statistics were separated into two levels according to the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) in 2020. The first group was lower secondary education (grades 7–9) with an enrolment rate of 88% and the second group was in upper secondary education (grades 10–12) with an enrolment rate of 79%. The secondary education attainment rate was 83% for lower secondary education and 56% for upper secondary education; note that the data were based on the completion rate at the appropriate age of the education level and not between 15-24 years of age. In terms of the vocational education enrolment rate (15-24 age group), only 6% of Thai youth attended TVET schools, while the gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education (15-24 age group) in Thailand was 49% (UNESCO, 2020a). Lastly, the tertiary education attainment rate of the population aged between 25-54 is 20.5% (World Economic Forum, 2017).
2. Results of the readiness questionnaire

2.1 Frequencies/distribution of institutional affiliation and field of expertise, (six) areas of intervention

The readiness questionnaire covered six areas of intervention; (1) to promote HRD culture; (2) to adopt an inclusive approach; (3) to strengthen enabling structures; (4) to modernise HRD programmes; (5) to professionalise the development of qualified teaching personnel; and (6) to promote engagement in the business sector. Each area of intervention focused on different aspects of the HRD readiness of various sectors in Thailand. A minimum of twenty-five respondents is required for the survey, including at least one respondent from the following institutional sectors and fields of expertise; the ministries, primary / lower secondary schools, TVET schools/academies/colleges, universities, companies, and business membership organisations. The questionnaire was designed as a form of exploratory research. As such, the respondents may not represent all aspects of HRD readiness in Thailand. The respondents were selected based on Thai experts’ discretion. Therefore, in this study, at least one respondent from each of the institutional units was included to ensure the information was diverse, allowing perspectives from all the stakeholders.

There were thirty-three readiness surveys collected from various sectors and organisations in Thailand. The results were divided into four categories: (1) state bodies (nine government agencies); (2) educational institutions (thirteen institutions); (3) companies and business membership organisations (seven organisations); and (4) others (four institutions). The respondents from educational institutions represented four general educational levels – primary and lower secondary schools, three TVET schools, and six universities. In addition, each of the TVET schools specialises in different areas; one in agriculture, one in business and tourism, and one in technical and mechanical fields.

All the institutional affiliations tended to have some form of collaboration or involvement with regard to HRD and some had expertise in more than one field. Among the respondents, five had expertise in general and basic education, six in technical and vocational education, ten in higher education, six in corporate learning and development, four in non-formal and informal education, and nine others in fields related to HRD.
2.2 Fields of expertise

Figure 1: Fields of expertise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Count (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General/basic education</td>
<td>5 - (15.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical and Vocational education</td>
<td>6 - (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>6 - (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate learning &amp; development</td>
<td>4 - (21.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-formal/Informal education</td>
<td>9 - (27.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10 - (30.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 List of respondents

Table 1: List of interviewees and respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Ministry of Education</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation</td>
<td>Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Department of Skills Development</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Collaborative Project to Increase the Production of Rural Doctors</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Distance Learning Foundation, under Royal Patronage</td>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Student Loan Fund</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC)</td>
<td>National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of a private school - Bangkok</td>
<td>Primary/Lower secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of an international school – Bangkok</td>
<td>Primary/Lower secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of a public school – Nonthaburi province</td>
<td>Primary/Lower secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of a religious non-profit primary school – Ang Thong province</td>
<td>Primary/Lower secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of a technical school – Phetchaburi province</td>
<td>TVET school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Affiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of a technical school – Buriram province</td>
<td>TVET school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (Management level) – Vocational school in Bangkok</td>
<td>TVET school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a university in Bangkok</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a university in Bangkok</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a university in Chiangmai province</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a university in Pathum Thani province (main focus on technology, research, and innovation)</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a university in Thonburi province</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a university in Thonburi province</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a corporate-funded university</td>
<td>Higher education/Corporate learning and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An executive-level representative from a global company (Thailand branch)</td>
<td>Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a Thai printing business</td>
<td>Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a Thai petroleum business</td>
<td>Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>A representative from a Thai pharmaceutical business</td>
<td>Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Thai Medical Device Technology Industry Association</td>
<td>Business organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Business organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from the Labour Committee</td>
<td>Other – The National Reform Council, Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a top-ranked research institution in Thailand</td>
<td>Other – Non-profit organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a senior school in Chiang Rai province</td>
<td>Other (Non-formal/informal education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a senior high school – Sakon Nakhon province</td>
<td>Other (Non-formal/informal education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A representative from a Thai professional and qualifications institution</td>
<td>Other (Non-formal/informal education)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4 **Analysis: Discrepancies in the areas of intervention – importance/desirability vs. realisation/achievement**

In the first area of intervention – the promotion of HRD culture – 91% of respondents mentioned that the importance of promoting HRD culture is “very high” and “high”. Only 9%, representatives of three universities, implied that the promotion of HRD culture is important at a “quite high” level. In terms of realisation/achievement, only 33% thought that Thailand had achieved promotion of HRD culture at a “very high” and “high” level, while 34% thought it had been achieved at a “quite high” level.
The remaining 33% of respondents doubted whether HRD culture had been promoted in the country. Within this group, most were representatives from educational institutions.

In terms of area 2 – adopting an inclusive approach – 76% of respondents rated its importance and desirability at “very high” and “high”. However, 24% rated this area at “quite high” or “low”. With regards to realisation/achievement, this area was interesting because Thailand has advocated inclusive approaches for a long time. Nonetheless, the survey responses indicated that many of the implemented actions and attempts were not as successful as expected. Approximately 46% of respondents were not confident in Thailand’s capacity to adopt an inclusive approach, which showed in their ranking as “quite low” and “low”. Only 27% were confident in this area with ratings at “high” and “very high”. The remaining 27% were confident at a level of “quite high”.

The remaining 33% of respondents doubted whether HRD culture had been promoted in the country. Within this group, most were representatives from educational institutions.
To strengthen Thailand’s structures to promote HRD, coordination between government agencies, the private sector, and research institutions is essential. This ideal collaboration correlated with the results of the readiness survey; 97% of respondents rated importance/desirability in this area at “very high” and “high” levels. In terms of realisation/achievement, 27% rated this area as “very high and high”, 39% as “quite high”, and 33% as “quite low” and “low”. It appears that existing government structures and systems do not give the respondents confidence that they are able to support HRD.

In terms of modernising HRD programmes, many key informants mentioned that this is a critical area for Thailand’s development, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, all of the respondents ranked this area as “very high” and “high” in importance/desirability, with 70% rating it as “very high”. Unfortunately, among those who ranked it “very high” in terms of importance and desirability, only one institution believed that future skills had been realised/achieved at a “very high” level, with 24% rating it as “high”, 33% as “quite high”, and 39% as “quite low” or “low”.

Figure 4: Total readiness survey: Strengthening enabling structures

Figure 5: Total readiness survey: Modernising HRD programmes
Among the key informants, the development of qualified teaching personnel was one of the most frequently discussed topics. The results of the readiness survey also provided a similar view because 97% of respondents rated importance/desirability in this area as “very high” and “high” with only one institution rating it as “quite low”. Despite the high rating, none of the respondents believed that realisation/achievement in this area was at a “very high” level, while only 24% rated this area as “high”. Approximately 40% of respondents rated it as “quite high” and 33% as “quite low” and “low”.

Finally, all of the institutions responded to the importance/desirability to promote engagement in the business sector as “high” and “very high”. Meanwhile, 70% responded that in terms of realisation/achievement this area was at a “high” and “quite high” level. This indicates the possibility for government agencies and the private sector forming collaborations in order to strengthen HRD in Thailand. However, what appears to be a challenge in this area is the engagement between the business sector and TVET schools, which requires greater effort.
2.5 Interpretation of distinctive features in the areas of intervention

Different institutional affiliations had different interpretations in terms of their responses. Even though some of the results may have similar ratings, their perspective depended greatly on the role of the affiliation. The results of HRD readiness in each area of intervention are different and based on practice, implementation, and policy. In each intervention area, the results were divided into four categories: state bodies, educational institutions (primary/secondary, TVET, higher education), business organisations and companies, and others (non-formal and informal agencies).

Promoting HRD culture

State bodies

Nine government agencies responded to the survey, all of which rated the importance/desirability of the promotion of HRD culture as “very high” and “high”. However, in terms of realisation/achievement, only two representatives believed that Thailand would not be able to reach a ‘high level”. The other seven rated it as “quite high” and “quite low”.

Educational institutions

With regards to general education, four schools (both private and public schools) ranked importance/desirability in the promotion of HRD culture at “very high” and “high” levels. In terms of realisation/achievement, which followed the standards of the Ministry of Education (MOE), two of the four respondents believed that realisation/achievement in this area was at a
“high” level. In contrast, the international and privately-funded schools for underprivileged students believed that realisation/achievement in this area was “quite low”. In terms of TVET schools, all of them rated the importance/desirability of the promotion of HRD culture as “high” and “very high”. However, they had different perspectives on the aspect of realisation/achievement. Two out of three rated this aspect as “quite low”, while the remainder rated it as “quite high”. Interestingly, in terms of higher education, the researcher attempted to diversify the informants with a focus on the top-ranked research-based universities that collaborate with the private sector. Three of the universities ranked the importance/desirability of the promotion of HRD culture as “very high”, while the other three ranked it as “quite high”. In terms of realisation/achievement, two of the six ranked it at a “high” level, one at “quite high”, two at “quite low”, and one at a “low” level.

Figure: 9 Promoting HRD culture – Educational institutions

Business organisations and companies

All respondents in this section rated the importance/desirability of the promotion of HRD culture as “very high” and “high”. However, in terms of realisation/achievement, three companies rated this area as “high”, three as “quite high”, and one, a business membership organisation, at a “low” level.
Others

All of the respondents ranked the importance and desirability of the promotion of HRD culture as “very high” and “high”. In terms of realisation/achievement, three of the four respondents ranked it at a “high” level and one as “quite low”.

Summary

In every category, most of the respondents rated the importance/desirability of the promotion of HRD culture at a “high” and “very high” level. Besides, they shared similar ratings in terms of realisation/achievement. Nonetheless, respondents from the TVET schools had the lowest rated scores on realisation/achievement in this area when compared with other affiliations. Based on the feedback from the interviews, there appeared to be a lack of resources and support for TVET schools.
compared to higher education. The interviewees also mentioned that the negative perceptions of the public toward TVET schools are another contributing factor. As such, it would be more difficult for TVET schools to encourage the public to accept them as one of the organisations involved in the promotion of HRD culture.

**Adopting an inclusive approach**

**State bodies**

A total of six respondents from state bodies believed that the importance/desirability of an inclusive approach was “high” and “very high” with three rating it at “quite high”. In terms of realisation/achievement, only two of the government agencies believed that Thailand would be able to accomplish this at a “high” level, while three respondents rated it as “quite high”, and four respondents as “quite low”.

**Educational institutions**

As for general education, all four representatives rated it as “high” and “very high” in terms of importance/desirability. With regards to realisation/achievement, two of the respondents rated it at a “high” level and two as “quite low”. For TVET schools, all of them ranked it as “high” in terms of importance/desirability. As for realisation/achievement, all of the respondents rated an inclusive approach as “quite high” or below. In terms of higher education, three of the respondents rated importance/desirability in this area as “high” and “very high” and three as “quite high” or below. In terms of realisation/achievement, only one university rated it at a “high” level while the rest rated it as “quite high” or below, with three rating it as “low”.

![Figure 12: Adopting an inclusive approach – State bodies](image-url)
Among the respondents in this category, two companies ranked the importance/desirability of adopting an inclusive approach as “quite high” and “low”, while the other five respondents rated this area as “very high” and “high”. In terms of realisation/achievement, only one of the respondents rated it as “very high”. The other six organisations rated it at between “quite high” and “low”. (Three “quite high”, one “quite low”, and two “low”).
**Others**

For this category, all respondents rated importance/desirability as “high” and “very high” regarding the adoption of an inclusive approach. Also, three of the respondents believed that Thailand was able to achieve this at a “high” level, while another respondent rated it as “quite high”.

**Summary**

Similar to the promotion of HRD culture, the majority of the respondents rated the importance/desirability for this area of intervention as “high” and “very high”. However, the average responses for realisation/achievement were at a “quite high” level. Even though Thailand implemented various policies to help vulnerable groups, there is still a concern with funding and limited resources in this area, especially for TVET schools. A TVET school is an agency that provides education for vulnerable groups and develops future workers for the private sector. Their primary target is to develop inclusive approaches for everyone. The respondents believe that with the proper resources, it is possible to adopt and effectively use an inclusive approach in Thailand.

**Strengthening enabling structures**

**State bodies**

All respondents rated the importance/desirability of strengthening enabling structures as “very high” and “high”. For the realisation/achievement aspect, most of the respondents rated the readiness survey as “quite high” or lower with only one representative of a state body rating it at a “high” level.
Educational institutions

All four respondents with general education expertise rated importance/desirability in this area as “very high” and “high”. On the other hand, only one believed that the country was able to realise/achieve in this area at a “high” level, with two of the respondents rating it as “quite high” and one “quite low”. Similar to the general education respondents, all responses from TVET schools rated importance/desirability in this area as “very high”. As for realisation/achievement, only one respondent rated it at a “high” level and the other two at a “quite high” level. In this area, five out of six representatives from higher education rated importance/desirability as “very high and high”. However, only two believed that Thailand’s realisation/achievement in this area is at a “very high” and “high” level with the other four rating it at “quite high” or at a lower ranking.
**Business organisations and companies**

From the business side, all respondents rated importance/desirability as "very high" and "high". Still, the realisation/achievement rating varied with two of the participants rating it as "high", two as "quite high", and three at "quite low".

![Figure 18: Strengthening enabling structures – Business organisations and companies](image)

**Others**

All of the respondents rated importance/desirability as "high" and "very high" in this area. In terms of realisation/achievement, two of the participants rated it as "high", one as "quite low", and the other as "low".

![Figure 19: Strengthening enabling structures – Others](image)
Summary
This area of intervention involved legislation, coordinating bodies, and funding, etc., which are important mechanisms to strengthen enabling structures for both state bodies and the private sector. The results showed that the majority of the respondents from each category rated importance/desirability at “high” and “very high”, which resembled the previous two interventions. However, the rating of realisation/achievement provided an interesting insight; at least one representative from each affiliation category rated realisation/achievement at “quite low”. From the point of view of business organisations and their perceptions of Thailand, strengthening enabling structures could not be achieved/realized at a “high” or “quite high” level within the existing system.

Modernising HRD programmes

State bodies
All nine respondents from state bodies rated importance/desirability of modernizing HRD programmes at a “high” and “very high” level. However, only one out of nine participants believed that Thailand was able to reach a “high level” in terms of realization/achievement, with five of the respondents rating it as “quite high”, two as “quite low”, and one as “low”.

Figure 20: Modernising HRD programmes – State bodies

Educational institutions
All respondents with a general education background rated importance/desirability at “high” and “very high” for this area. However, only two schools rated realisation/achievement as “high”, with one rating it at “quite low” and one at “low”. Similar to the representatives from general education, all of the respondents from TVET schools gave a “very high” rating for importance/desirability. However,
in terms of realisation/achievement, two respondents rated it as “high” and one as “quite low”. As for higher education, most respondents rated importance/desirability in this area as “high” and “very high”, with the notable exception of one university, which rated it as “quite low”. Unfortunately, only two universities rated realisation/achievement as “high” and “very high” with one rating it at “quite high”, another “quite low”, and two “low”.

**Business organisations and companies**

All representatives from the private sector rated importance/desirability as “high” and “very high”. Regarding realisation/achievement, only two of the respondents stated that Thailand would be able to reach realisation/achievement at a “high” level.
Others
The three respondents rated importance/desirability of modernising HRD as “very high” with only one respondent rating it as “high”. However, most respondents rated it as “quite high”, with one at “quite low”.

Figure 23: Modernising HRD programmes – Others

Summary
Overall, all of the categories revealed that future skills are critical to modernising HRD programmes, which showed in the ratings as the majority rated importance/desirability as “high” and “very high”. However, the ratings for realisation/achievement were different: six out of thirteen educational institutions rated it as “low” and “quite low”. Among these groups, three out of six institutions had “low” ratings for modernising HRD programmes. Some representatives in other areas also rated this intervention as “quite low” and “low”. Three out of seven business organisations and companies also had the same rating for realisation/achievement.

Professionalise development of qualified teaching personnel

State bodies
The representatives of seven state bodies rated the importance/desirability of professionalising the development of qualified teaching personnel as “very high”, with two rating it at a “high” level. However, only two agencies rated realization/achievement at a “high” level with six of the respondents rating it as “quite high”, and one as “quite low”.

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Educational institutions

For general education, most of the respondents rated importance/desirability as “high” and “very high”. On the other hand, in terms of realisation/achievement two rated it as “high”, one at “quite high”, and one at “low”. With regards to TVET schools, all of the representatives rated importance/desirability as “very high” in this area. However, only two of the respondents believe that Thailand would be able to accomplish realisation/achievement, one of them at a level of “quite high” and the other at “quite low”. Most respondents from higher education rated importance/desirability “high” and “very high”, except for one, which rated it at “quite low”. For realisation/achievement, only two respondents rated it as “high”, with one “quite high”, two “quite low”, and one “low”. 

Figure 25: Professionalising development of qualified teaching personnel – Educational institutions
**Business organisations and companies**

All of the business representatives rated importance/desirability as “high” and “very high”. On the other hand, only two companies rated realization/achievement at a “high” level, with one at “quite high”, three at “quite low”, and one at “low”.

![Figure 26: Professionalising development of qualified teaching personnel – Business organisations and companies](image)

**Others**

All of the respondents rated importance/desirability at a “high” and “very high” level. In terms of realisation/achievement, three of the four respondents rated it as “quite high”, with only one rating it at “low”.

![Figure 27: Professionalising development of qualified teaching personnel – Others](image)
Summary
All of the respondents rated importance/desirability at “high” and “very high”. However, the results indicate that responses regarding realization/achievement were mostly at “quite high” (fourteen out of thirty-three respondents), with no ratings at “very high”. Furthermore, none of the representatives from TVET or the “Other” category rated it at a “high” or a “very high” level.

Promote engagement of the business sector

State bodies
Most of the government representatives rated importance/desirability of promoting business sector engagement at “high” and “very high” levels, with three rating it as “quite high”. As for realisation/achievement, five respondents rated it as “quite high”, while four rated it at a “quite low” level.

Educational institutions
In terms of general education, most of the respondents rated importance/desirability at a “high” and “very high” level. As for realisation/achievement, only one of the respondents rated it as “high”, while the other three rated it as “quite high”. For TVET schools, all of the respondents rated importance/desirability at a “very high” level and rated realisation/achievement as “quite high”. In terms of higher education, most respondents except for one rated importance/desirability as “high” and “very high”. For realisation/achievement, only one respondent rated this as “very high”, with two as “quite high” and three as “quite low”.

Figure: 28 Promoting engagement of the business sector – State bodies

![Pie charts showing the distribution of ratings for promoting engagement of the business sector among state bodies.]

- **Important/Desire:**
  - Quite High: 33%
  - High: 11%
  - Very High: 56%

- **Realised/Achieved:**
  - Quite Low: 44%
  - Quite High: 33%
  - Very High: 56%
Business organisations and companies
All of the business respondents rated importance/desirability at “high” and “very high” in this area. On the other hand, three of the seven representatives rated realisation/achievement at “high” and “very high”, two at “quite high”, one at “quite low”, and one at “low”.

Others
All of the respondents rated importance/desirability as “high” and “very high”. However, in terms of realisation/achievement, only one rated it as “high”, while two rated it as “quite high”, and one as “low”.

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**Figure 29: Promoting engagement in the business sector – Educational institutions**

- **Important/Desire**: Promoting engagement in the business sector – (Educational institutions)
  - Low: 31%
  - Quite Low: 8%
  - Quite High: 61%
  - High: 61%
  - Very High: 0%

- **Realised/Achieved**: Promoting engagement in the business sector – (Educational institutions)
  - Low: 0%
  - Quite Low: 23%
  - Quite High: 0%
  - High: 8%
  - Very High: 61%

**Figure 30: Promoting engagement in the business sector – Business organisations and companies**

- **Important/Desire**: Promoting engagement in the business sector – (Business organisations and companies)
  - Low: 14%
  - Quite Low: 14%
  - Quite High: 57%
  - High: 43%
  - Very High: 0%

- **Realised/Achieved**: Promoting engagement in the business sector – (Business organisations and companies)
  - Low: 14%
  - Quite Low: 14%
  - Quite High: 29%
  - High: 29%
  - Very High: 61%
Summary

In summary, most of the respondents rated the importance/desirability of promoting engagement in the business sector at a “high” or “very high” level. Additionally, most responses rated realisation/achievement at “quite high” (seventeen out of thirty-three respondents). Interestingly, almost half of the state bodies and half of the universities rated it at “quite low”. This also indicates room for improvement in terms of collaboration with public-private partnerships to promote HRD readiness.
3. Strategies, policies, and programmes on HRD/LLL

3.1 Review of relevant documents

The Thai Government initiated a 20-year National Strategy Framework (2017-2036) under the Prime Minister’s agenda to invest in human capital - more specifically the development of Thai citizens in the 21st century. The National Strategy Committee (NSC) was formed and mandated to develop the National Strategy Act B.E. 2560 (2017 C.E.). The Act specifies procedures for public participation in the formulation of the National Strategy, including monitoring, inspection and evaluation, and measures for encouraging and supporting all civic sectors to comply with the National Strategy. The NSC comprises of members from various areas including government officials, the private sector, politicians and academics, the National Reform Council, and civil society.

The vision for 2037 states that Thailand will become “a developed country with security, prosperity, and sustainability in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.” All parties will participate nationally through six strategies: (1) the National Strategy on Security; (2) the National Strategy on Competitiveness Enhancement; (3) the National Strategy on Developing and Strengthening Human Capital; (4) the National Strategy on Social Cohesion and Equity; (5) the National Strategy on Eco-Friendly Development and Growth; and (6) the National Strategy on Public Sector Rebalancing and Development (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2017; Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2018). This framework is in adherence to the National Economic and Social Development Plan, the five-year National Development plan, guiding Thailand in an appropriate direction for HRD.

In the 20-year National Strategy Framework, the national strategy on developing and strengthening human capital mentions three key success factors: the development of quality of life, happiness, and well-being among Thai people; the achievement of study and lifelong learning; and the development of Thai society and families (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2018). The guidelines for accomplishing this strategic plan are as follows:

1. Transforming social values and cultures
2. Promoting life-cycle development
3. Promoting learning processes reform to accommodate 21st century changes
(4) Realisation of multiple intelligences

(5) Enhancing well-being among Thai people

(6) Promoting human capital development-friendly surroundings

(7) Strengthening capacities in sport to generate social values and promote national development

To accomplish these goals, national development during the Strategy’s time frame is focused on an appropriate balance between social and economic development. With the aims of pursuing development in human capital for all ages, all ministries are in the process of developing their strategic plans to ensure consistency with the 20-year National Strategy, especially the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHE-SRI). This national plan focuses on six main target groups: (1) from pre-school through high school in general education; (2) students at TVET schools and in higher education; (3) the workforce; (4) senior citizens; (5) farmers; and (6) talented citizens. Human capital includes the assets of each worker, such as their skills, knowledge, experience, and other tangible qualities that workers can utilise to create economic value, their organisation, or their community. There are many sectors and sub-sectors that promote HRD culture in Thailand along with various programmes providing support for HRD in the country.

The 12th National Economic and Social Development plan (2017-2021) provides direction for the whole country. The 20-year National Strategy Framework (2017-2036), Thailand’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Thailand 4.0 initiative, along with other related agendas were also important aspects in the development of the 12th National Economic and Social Development plan. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (2017) claims that the plan was developed to address future challenges and demands. The plan is geared to reduce income disparity and poverty, strengthen the Thai economy and enhance the country’s competitiveness, promote natural capital and environmental quality, and further boost the confidence of Thailand in the international community. It consists of ten development strategies: (1) the Strategy for Strengthening and Realising the Potential of Human Capital; (2) the Strategy for Creating a Just Society and Reducing Inequality via Three Major Policy Directions; (3) the Strategy for Strengthening the Economy and Underpinning Sustainable Competitiveness; (4) the Strategy for Environmentally-Friendly Growth for Sustainable Development; (5) the Strategy for Reinforcing National Security for the Country’s Progress towards Prosperity and Sustainability; (6) the Strategy for Public Administration, Corruption Prevention, and Good Governance in Thai Society; (7) the Strategy for Advancing Infrastructure and Logistics;
the Strategy for the Development of Science, Technology, Research, and Innovation; (9) the Strategy for Regional, Urban, and Economic Zone Development; and (10) the Strategy for International Cooperation for Development. In the first strategy, human capital is enhanced as a priority and its potential developed. The plan also aims to achieve higher world competitiveness rankings by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD). The flagship projects that must be implemented during the 5-year plan include: social and economic restructuring to increase competitiveness; upgrading the skills of Thai citizens; projects that can create a balance between social and economic growth; infrastructure projects that can drive long-term economic growth; and projects that can generate income to create sustainable growth.

The trends for HRD in Thailand are based on targeted industries of the future or the “New S-Curve”, along with the direction of the workforce development policy for 2020-2024. The S-Curve is an idea that growth is usually slow in the first stage of development, particularly in a new area. Once the foundation has been laid and strengthened, progress will accelerate and become more economical, just like the middle of the “S”. Eventually, growth will reach the maximum point and then plateau to form the last part of the letter. New technology or innovation may replace existing ones and the cycle continues. The New S-Curve in Thailand describes a similar idea, but with the focus on ten “new” industries that will help Thailand to advance. The government identified ten targeted industries as part of a new digital internet of things (IoT) plan along with the Thailand 4.0 initiative in order to move the country into the digital age. The ten industries include five existing industries: (1) Next-generation automotive technology; (2) Intelligent electronics; (3) High-value and medical tourism; (4) Advanced agriculture and biotechnology; (5) Food for the future; and five new future industries, including: (6) Automation and robotics; (7) Aviation and logistics; (8) Biofuels and biochemicals; (9) Digital technology; and (10) Medical and comprehensive healthcare (Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council, 2019). However, three more industries were added later; Defence, Education, and Human Resources Development, which added a total of twelve industries to the list. The “S-Curve” was promoted as the primary model that the government is employing to stimulate Thailand’s GDP and economic growth (Eastern Economic Corridor Office of Thailand, 2019).

3.2 Conclusions of the review

Based on the information provided above, it appears that Thailand has a long-term plan for the development of the country in a direction that would benefit all sectors and prepare them for the demands of the future. After the introduction of the 20-year National Strategy Framework, all government agencies used it
as a basis for developing their future agendas, policies, and programmes. This allowed every section of the government to work towards the same goal without any overlap. Normally, each ministry would establish its future direction based on the National Economic and Social Development plan. By adjusting the 20-year National Strategy Framework, each government agency faced the challenge of making a long-term plan for their organisation without reorganising its blueprint every five years. Additionally, each ministry also received clear direction on how to proceed with their programmes and what they needed to accomplish to meet the requirements of the National Strategy Framework.

The strength of the 20-year National Strategy Framework is its long-term targeted goals. They enable all government agencies to make both short-term and long-term plans that adhere to the new framework. The government included HRD as part of the framework because it believes that HRD will help Thailand to achieve its targeted goals and compete with other countries. As such, HRD has become a significant part of the framework and future policies in Thailand. Furthermore, this framework is under the supervision of the Prime Minister and his team. The PM serves as a mediator between the ministries with the ability to delegate responsibility to each section as required. On the other hand, due to various levels of government procedures, it has become difficult for government personnel at a local level to implement these plans. The personnel need to follow numerous steps to ensure that these plans are followed, even though the local government may not have the same resources as the central government. In addition, it may take some time before decisions can be made, which reduces the effectiveness of programmes or makes it complicated for government personnel to manage all of the procedures. Additionally, there are some overlapping responsibilities/tasks among various government agencies. For example, there are three agencies that provide training/assistance for workers with disabilities due to the nature of their organisation and available resources. As such, the resources are shared amongst these agencies, which may hinder progress or efficiency. In turn, this affects the outcome of training and limits access to certain people.

3.3 A brief outline of good practices

The government agencies and the private sector have been actively engaged in the development and improvement of their strategies since implementation of the 20-Year National Strategy Framework and there are many types of good practice involving the promotion of HRD culture in Thailand. Some examples of good practice include the creation of platforms for online/offline learning, the application of digital literacy to educational curricula, incorporating STEM into training, building up entrepreneurship programmes, and encouraging people to obtain further education or qualifications, especially those in targeted industries.
For non-formal learning, both public and private intermediaries provide various kinds of platforms for both online and offline learning. The courses included free online lessons at the higher education level, re-skilling and up-skilling training courses, and platforms for career advancement. The training courses include computer repair, mechanical services, construction, culinary arts, robotics, and special courses for business related to the EEC, etc. For more information, visit the Department of Skills Development’s website; http://www.dsd.go.th/. In addition, the government established the Thailand Professional Qualification Institute (TPQI) to increase the number of skilled labourers in the market and provide certification for non-formal learning. The TPQI has become more involved in the certification process for employees and factory workers. Instead of only using academics to create their standards, the TPQI asked professionals within specific fields along with other stakeholders to help them form national standards that meet the demands of future markets. The table below provides a list of some of the platforms available for online courses.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Link to the platform</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOL platform for job and up-skilling/re-skilling</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dsd.go.th/">http://www.dsd.go.th/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University free open online platform (CHULA MOOC)</td>
<td><a href="https://mooc.chula.ac.th">https://mooc.chula.ac.th</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free online course of higher education (Thai Mooc)</td>
<td><a href="https://thaimooc.org">https://thaimooc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-private partnership online platform for career advancement (M-Powered)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.m-powered.org/thailand">http://www.m-powered.org/thailand</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>SkillLane (Private platform)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.skilllane.com">https://www.skilllane.com</a></td>
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The government also asked 14 large private companies in the country to join the campaign of the “Excellent Model School (EMC) project”. This resulted in the improvement of vocational curricula to meet industry standards and requirements. This project was composed of four elements: (1) re-branding; (2) excellent school models; (3) a demand and supply database; and (4) a standards and certification centre. This initiative was used in 46 vocational schools in 2016 and then expanded to 68 vocational schools and 21 private companies in the second phase of the project.

Another initiative under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science Research and Innovation was recently launched to promote future skills by opening a platform for online and offline learning in a project called “Future Skill x New Career Thailand”. This project provides a financial reward of THB 1,000 for anyone who registers for a course on this platform. Most of the courses were submitted by universities and
approved in advance by a committee using selection criteria based on relevant future skills for the private sector (Ministry of Higher Education, 2020).

Finally, the Office of the Basic Education Commission has developed programmes that encourage collaboration between educational institutions, the private sector, and TVET schools. The programmes offers an apprenticeship programme for young students, invites university faculty members to help design curricula, and enables general education students to take vocational courses at TVET schools or universities.

3.4 Key points/conclusions on promoting HRD culture

Many plans and policies are currently in place to promote HRD culture. However, there are many overlapping areas along with limitations in related issues like skills development, trained teachers, and technology. Some of the most commonly received feedback, especially from representatives in the government sector, is that there are overlapping responsibilities among different government agencies. For instance, while the TVET schools collaborated with the private sector to train workers, the Department of Skills Development also offered similar types of training. On the other hand, representatives from the Department of Skills Development stated that there are few organisations in Thailand that can administer certificates or licenses for various careers or specialties (e.g. TPQI and the Ministry of Labour) which limits efficient service providers. Additionally, some of the occupational standards did not correlate with the demands of the private sector. An attempt was made by including the perspective of businesses in the formation of occupational standards, but this may not be enough to cover all of the occupations needed in Thailand.

However, there is an interesting attempt by the government, which is the formation provided by the MHESRI. This ministry adopted the national strategy to set up four platforms as a mechanism for increasing the quality of higher education and research institutes. These four platforms are composed of the following: (1) manpower and knowledge development; (2) research, development and innovation of grand challenges; (3) research, development and innovation for competitiveness; and (4) research and development on area-based development and inclusiveness. Following up on the performance of this platform may lead to meaningful results in terms of practical evaluation.
4. Inclusiveness of HRD/LLL approaches

4.1 Scope of initiatives and challenges with regard to HRD/LLL for vulnerable groups

4.1.1 Initiatives

The definition of vulnerable groups in Thailand can be challenging for researchers because there are different definitions and categories that government agencies use to define “vulnerable groups”. In the education sector, vulnerable groups are divided between students without disabilities and students with disabilities. Students without disabilities include ten categories: (1) students from low-income families; (2) students with drug problems; (3) abandoned children; (4) students with a history of family abuse; (5) students with HIV or other contagious diseases who are shunned by society; (6) students from ethnic minorities; (7) homeless students; (8) victims of child labour; (9) victims of child prostitution; and (10) students in juvenile detention. As of 2017, 3,701,223 children/students were considered “vulnerable” in the education sector (Office of the Education Council, 2018). Additionally, for students with disabilities, there are nine categories: (1) impaired vision; (2) impaired hearing; (3) cognitive impairment; (4) physical or health impairments; (5) learning impairments; (6) language impairments; (7) behavioural or emotional impairments; (8) autism; and (9) people with multiple disabilities.

According to the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (2019), there are eight categories of vulnerable groups: (1) women (48% of the total population); (2) Muslims (5%); (3) people with disabilities (3%); (4) female prisoners (0.05%); (5) homeless people (less than 1%); (6) the elderly (16%); (7) casual labourers (31%); and (8) undocumented migrants and the stateless (7%). Due to the inclusion of women and casual labourers, which makes up more than 79% of this group, the number of vulnerable people in Thailand may seem quite high when compared to other countries (Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2019). Additionally, a representative from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security mentioned male prisoners as another vulnerable group. One aspect of the 20-year National Strategy Framework is to create programmes to assist vulnerable people and allow them to gain some form of stability. These programmes include training for workers, educational opportunities for pregnant teenagers, and schools for senior citizens.
4.1.2 Challenges

According to representatives from the Ministry of Education and TVET schools, one of the major challenges in this area is the negative perceptions of people in vulnerable groups. Although this aspect has changed over the last few decades, some prejudices still exist in contemporary society. For example, the parents of students with disabilities may feel embarrassment about allowing their children to attend school. Furthermore, a lack of proper facilities and accessibility were other significant limitations for these groups.

The Student Loan Fund is one of the supporting organisations that promote an inclusive approach to education. Every student can obtain a low-interest rate loan, which helps them to repay the loan after they graduate. Unfortunately, many people take advantage of this fund and exploit the system by not paying back their loans. This results in a shortage of funds and new students are unable to obtain loans. This leads to more students dropping out of higher education because they lack the money to support themselves.

There are many challenges experienced by people in vulnerable groups in Thailand. In the case of pregnant high school students, some lack the resources and capacity for education, which then prevents them from obtaining work after graduation or causes them to select the wrong career path. The lack of qualified teaching personnel and the mismatch caused by the demands of business are the main issues for TVET schools. Additionally, the myths and negative perception of TVET students being low-ranking students are still prevalent in Thai society. In terms of workers, one of the primary problems is casual workers. Many are not registered with the Thai national health care system and have to pay their medical expenses out of pocket. Furthermore, they need to reskill and obtain more training, especially in skills related to ICT, languages, and STEM skills. The next challenge is among the elderly population as many of them are not equipped with skills for the future and require more support to keep up with the changes compared to younger generations. The low birth rate has exacerbated the current situation as there are not enough members of the younger generation to replace the previous generation. Farming is vitally important for Thailand, but many farmers do not make enough profit, which forces them to obtain loans. Unfortunately, many farmers are indebted to banks and unable to repay their loans. On top of that, farmers are unable to keep up with the demands of current society and are still following the old traditions of farming, which reduces their ability to compete with farmers from other countries.

4.2 HRD/LLL programmes for vulnerable groups; implemented/planned/desirable

The main government agency that provides free or cost sharing courses for workers
is the Department of Skills Development, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour. In addition to the training courses for workers, the Department arranges programmes for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, youth, women, prisoners and the unemployed. The training programmes that the Department provides for Thai citizens include computer training, automotive repair, robotics, AI, and culinary classes. The representatives from the Department of Skills Development also reported courses that offered various training certificates in both the public and private sectors. Companies or local governments can request support for skills training from the Department on a cost-sharing basis or for free, depending on government regulations and agreement between the agency and the companies. Currently, online courses are available in certain fields for workers to gain new skills; for example, languages, culinary arts, mechanics, electrical repair, and welding. This was before the COVID-19 outbreak and has become quite popular following the pandemic due to job losses and the need for people to find new career paths.

Another organisation that plays a significant role providing financial support and low-cost training for vulnerable groups is TPQI. TPQI aims to encourage workers to become certified in their field of expertise (Thailand Professional Qualification Institute, 2020). Furthermore, based on Article 14 of the Promotion of Non-Formal and the Informal Education Act, (A.D. 2008), the Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE) is the central organisation that provides support for non-formal and informal education, along with recommendations for policies, strategies, or programmes. They also form partnerships with local agencies, families, individuals, the private sector, and other institutions in the promotion of formal and informal education. This type of programme is similar to the General Education Diploma (GED) or an alternative certificate to a high school diploma. It is also of a similar standard to special areas education programmes that can certify individuals to fulfill personal or community needs. ONIE is also responsible for setting standards for non-formal education along with the Ministry of Education. The government believes that ONIE will be able to reduce inequality in Thailand, especially education about inequality and preparing people for the future (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2008).

### 4.3 A brief outline of good practices

The philosophy of King Bhumibol Adulyadej is an inclusive approach developed to assist Thai people in many areas. The “Sufficiency Economy Philosophy,” or SEP, is the guideline for individuals, communities, and the country that underlines three key concepts: moderation, reasonableness, and prudence with two underlying conditions: knowledge and virtue. There are many inspirational cases that upheld these principles that survived and succeeded in business. SEP allows individuals to develop their resilience since it provides an alternative approach that can be adapted in all situations. By adapting the SEP concept, His Majesty’s development project – Royal Project Foundation – has aided
farmers and ethnic minority groups in remote areas. In terms of farming, it promotes the idea that farmers should be able to provide for themselves first before they can begin to sell their products for profit. At the same time, the ways in which they support themselves need to be sustainable and eco-friendly. Otherwise, they may damage the environment and sabotage their progress. Furthermore, the border police is another agency that arranges different types of education (informal and formal) for people near the border of Thailand, especially children. At times, education may include agricultural knowledge, sales and marketing techniques for SMEs, and languages.

Thailand has already become an ageing society. As such, both the public and private sectors are eager to support this population. Many companies have started to hire people over 60 years of age. Additionally, educational institutions are also involved, and many have developed special courses to train the elderly in future skills. One of the most successful projects is the Third Age (U3A) at the University of Chiang Rai in northern Thailand. It is a project with the aim of encouraging older members of the population to obtain more knowledge or to develop new skills. This university is based on a model created by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which supports the elderly population in various areas and forms life-long learning potential. This project is a collaboration between many agencies, including Thai and Japanese government agencies, local government, and non-profit organisations. Many classes are based on requests from the participants, but some are part of the curriculum. This may range from dancing and drawing to more complicated classes like ICT-related skills or mechanics. As not all of the participants are able to attend regularly, classes are modified to suit the needs of this population.

The government passed the Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act (A.D. 2008) and the Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act (A.D. 2013). These two laws require government agencies and educational institutions to provide both formal and non-formal education for people with disabilities. The establishment of special schools for people with special needs and the development of qualified teaching personnel were also aspects of the two laws.

The Skills Development Promotion Act (A.D. 2002) and its amendment was created to promote and encourage employers to conduct training for their employees regardless of nationality in order to improve employees’ skills so they match the needs of employers. Also, this Act forces business operators who have one hundred employees or more to provide skills training for at least 50 percent of their employees each year. If they fail to do so, they have to pay fines into the “Skills Development Fund”. The fine is calculated according to the number of employees who have not received training. However, if business operators provide training for their employees as required by the Act, they can register their training course details and costs with the Department and receive a 200% tax reduction and other incentives as laid out in the Act. (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2002).
5. Key points/conclusions on adopting an inclusive approach

Thailand has many organisations that are responsible for assisting vulnerable groups. This includes the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (M-Society), the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESRI), the Ministry of Labour (MOL), the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Ministry of Health (MOH), as well as the Chaipattana Foundation and the royal projects, along with other local agencies and non-profit groups. On one hand, this is a benefit for people in vulnerable groups because they can receive support from many different organisations. In addition, there are policies and plans to assist vulnerable groups, especially after the introduction of the 20-year National Strategy Framework. On the other hand, there is a lot of overlap between different government agencies, which can reduce efficiency and resources for vulnerable groups. Furthermore, their readiness to adopt an inclusive approach in Thailand remains unclear. Even if there are many policies to support this population, according to an interview with a representative from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the outcomes of government-supported programmes were less effective than they should have been. A part of the challenge was due to a lack of new or up-to-date technology to allow trainers to prepare people for the demands of the business sector. Another part of the challenge was the need for knowledgeable and highly skilled trainers/teachers. Many times, people with the most up-to-date skills and knowledge are from the private sector. However, it can be quite difficult to get them to teach classes due to their workload and responsibilities. Teachers from TVET schools or in higher education may possess the necessary knowledge and teaching skills to prepare workers, but they may not have up-to-date technology or the latest knowledge required to teach effectively.

According to a report by OCED-UNESCO, Thai education systems still have problems implementing an inclusive approach, especially among vulnerable groups. Although the government has invested heavily in the education sector, the outcome has not been as expected. A new curriculum and approach are highly recommended in order to reduce educational inequality in Thailand (OECD/UNESCO, 2016). This information is similar to the interview data obtained from the respondents from TVET schools. They mentioned that while the government stated that a large portion of the funding was invested in education, they still lacked the necessary resources for schools. In addition, TVET schools are deemed important on the policy level, but they do not believe that they received the same
level of attention as general or higher education. Furthermore, Thai teachers are not well-equipped to assist students with disabilities and the curriculum and regulations may need to be adjusted to accommodate this population. Even though there are special schools for people with disabilities, there may not be enough to assist everyone. Some students with disabilities are capable of self-care, but they still need proper facilities to allow them to achieve their full potential (Bualar, 2016). The 20-year National Strategy Framework includes this aspect of national development. Currently, there are programmes at the higher education level that train teachers and prepare them to assist students with special needs at the general education level. This may be the beginning of a long-term plan, but it appears that we are heading in the right direction to accommodate all students.
6. Professional development of qualified teaching personnel

6.1 Formal standards in place for TVET teachers, school managers, and in-company trainers

There are many organisations at the national and local level that are responsible for the development of qualified teaching staff. At the national level, the Ministry of Education oversees the qualification system for TVET and general education teachers. The Ministry of Labour is mainly responsible for managing the standardisation of workforces. There are sub-sectors in each ministry in charge of improving the skills, capabilities, and knowledge of teachers.

In order to qualify teachers in the field of general education, the Teacher’s Council of Thailand (TCT) has issued professional standards for teachers since 2005. The first version contained several types of standards, such as knowledge standards, professional experience standards, and performance and ethics standards. In April 2019, the professional certification standards of a teacher were revised with the focus on the assessment of teaching skills and updating the evaluation categories for teachers, including ICT, language, and communication skills. In May 2020, new standards were implemented in the qualification test and were tested for the first time in October 2020 (The Teachers’ Council of Thailand, 2020).

There have been various attempts by TVET schools and companies to collaborate with “in-house trainers” in companies and allowed teachers to have direct experiences with workers in the field. Unfortunately, scheduling can be difficult because both workers and teachers have responsibilities in addition to training. As such, it may not be possible to get them together for lengthy periods. To work around this issue, some TVET colleges were able to send students for training in factories through apprenticeship programmes. Instead of short periods, students spend more than six months with a company, which allows them to gain the necessary skills required in the field. The company also has a chance to examine the students and may hire them at the end the programme. As for the trainers, they must attend a short certification course on teaching before becoming an in-house trainer. In this way, the students get to learn from specialists in the field and receive direct experience at the same time.
6.2 Recruitment of committed teachers

In order to attract more people to teaching, more scholarships have been provided to 12th grade students who wish to become teachers at schools in their hometowns. This programme is called “Kru Ruk Tin”, a programme for teachers returning to work in their hometowns. This a major collaboration between the government sector and ten universities, especially in the faculties of education, to train qualified general education teachers to help schools in small towns or in remote areas in Thailand. Additionally, each candidate is guaranteed a government position in a local school at the end of their studies (Equitable Education Fund, 2020).

Another way to motivate high-ranking students to become teachers is to offer them scholarships for continuing education. For example, a university that needs nursing teachers will recruit their highest-ranking students to become teachers and offer scholarships to take a master's degree or a doctoral degree in nursing. The business sector also implements similar programmes with pay raises on the completion of their degree/certification, which motivates current employees to improve their knowledge and skills. By inspiring people to commit to the teaching profession or become a trainer, Thailand has improved the capabilities of teachers in pre-service and in-service teacher training, improved the capabilities of school managers, and developed the abilities of in-company (master) trainers.

6.3 A brief outline of good practices

To train qualified teaching personnel at TVET and university level, there is a good practice programme called “Thai-Meister Best Practice.” In the programme, many Thai instructors were sent to Germany to obtain the German Meister standard at Handwerkskammer in Aachen, Germany, in the fields of mechatronics, electrics and electronics, automotives, precision, food, information technology, and railways. This programme was established by the Thai-Meister Institute under the initiative of public agencies, private companies, and the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre, where Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi and Rajamangala University of Technology Isan were launched. Two training cohorts have successfully completed the programme. For more information, see the following link https://rmutithaimeister.wixsite.com/home (RMUTI Thai Meisterschule, 2020).

6.4 Key points/conclusions on the professionalised development of qualified teaching personnel

The real challenge for the government with regards to TVET schools is the negative public perception. The study by TDRI revealed that TVET schools in Thailand have been seen as institutions for poor-quality applicants and poor-quality teaching
personnel. Both parents and students prefer degrees in higher education. The image of TVET degrees compared to general and higher education is still perceived negatively by Thai people. Furthermore, the average wages of employees with TVET degrees tends to be lower than those with university degrees. The primary reason is that employees with higher education degrees are preferred by companies for management and higher level positions. As a result, students are more likely to choose a higher education degree than a TVET degree (Thailand Development Research Institute, 2019).

The “Thai-Meister Best Practice” has been successful for training qualified trainers/teaching personnel (RMUTI Thai Meisterschule, 2020). Therefore, if TVET schools obtained or developed more programmes that were equally effective as the Thai-Meister, it may change the negative perceptions of TVET schools and strengthen vocational training. With the country moving toward Thailand 4.0 and the establishment of the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), vocational education has become a significant tool in making Thailand more competitive with other countries. Teachers and trainers also need to engage in re-skilling and up-skilling in order to match up with the future demands and the new competency standards of Thailand 4.0 (Ministry of Higher Education, 2020; the Office of the National Economic and the Social Development Council, 2018). Furthermore, representatives from the Department of Skills Development are confident in their ability to develop qualified workers to meet business demands. They believe that their curricula and facilities are sufficient and up-to-date to train qualified workers and trainers. However, a study from the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) in 2019 indicated a different conclusion. In the study, the TDRI found that Thailand is still behind in the development of qualified workers/trainers and standards are not as high as expected. This is because the training curricula are out-of-date and do not meet the demands of the current market (Thailand Development Research Institute, 2019). This is another challenge that government agencies have to overcome to improve the perception and quality of TVET schools and vocational training programmes.
7. Engagement of the business sector in HRD

7.1 Areas of engagement in TVET and higher education

The business sector plays a significant role in HRD in TVET schools and higher education. The survey was collected from representatives of TVET schools, business organisations and private companies, universities, and government agencies.

- To what extent is the business sector engaged as a partner in TVET in the following areas of HRD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of TVET programmes (e.g. apprenticeships/internships)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of equipment/teaching materials for schools</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner in assessments and examinations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in training of teaching personnel</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in the development of curricula and skills standards</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement in TVET bodies at national and local levels</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These answers were collected from five representatives from TVET schools, business organisations and private companies. The ratings in this table are the average of the responses.*

- To what extent is the business sector engaged as a partner in Higher Education in the following areas of HRD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support in the development of courses and programmes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in the delivery of courses and programmes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support in the training of university personnel</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting joint projects</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of equipment/teaching materials</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of industry-academia transfer institutes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These answers were collected from eleven representatives from universities, private companies, and government agencies. The ratings in this table are the average of the responses.*
7.2 Incentives for companies to increase engagement

The Skills Development Promotion Act (A.D. 2002) encourages private companies and business organisations to allow their employees to obtain certification or improve their skills by providing incentives in the private sector. The incentives include tax exemptions for companies based on the percentage of training expenses of all employees, an exemption on import duties on training equipment, and reductions of utility bills etc. (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2002).

The Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) is applying a demand-driven concept to propel manpower production to support the critical needs of industries in the area, which is implemented under the coordination of the Eastern Economic Corridor Human Development Centre (EEC-HDC). One approach is for the public and private sectors to collaborate in creating demand-driven curricula, with subsidies and support for speakers, and the provision of tools and equipment. Another approach is for the public and private sectors to provide short courses (non-degree) subsidised at 50% and an employment guarantee for at least one year after training in the private sector (Eastern Economic Corridor, 2020).

7.3 Incentives for international collaboration to meet future workforce demands in the EEC area

The EEC also provides a special or fast track for developing educational curricula. This special programme was launched to encourage collaboration between various educational organisations, both domestically and internationally, including vocational schools, universities, and private companies to develop educational curricula that meets future demands and international standards (Eastern Economic Corridor, 2020). The following are examples of these programmes.

- AMATA University collaborated with the National University of Taiwan to open a Master of Science in Engineering (MS) programme focused on intelligence manufacturing systems.
- The CMU-Thailand Programme is a collaboration between Carnegie Mellon University and King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL), offering degrees in electrical engineering and computer engineering.
- Les Roches Global Hospitality Education established a hospitality management academic institution in Thailand to produce high skilled workers in tourism and hospitality related industries.
7.4 Business membership organisations

The Joint Public and Private Sector Consultative Committee (JPPSCC) was formed to assist business organisations with issues related to business advancement. It is an initiative by the government to resolve specific concerns from the perspective of business. At times, government regulations may prevent or limit the progression of private companies. This joint committee serves as a place where the two sides can meet and resolve such issues. Additionally, each province can form their own JPPSCC to meet the demands of local businesses. The JPPSCC receives both private and government financing and cooperates through representatives on each side (Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking, 2020).

The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking (JSCCIB) is another business membership organisation that promotes HRD among their members. JSCCIB was formed to provide assistance and make recommendations to the JPPSCC. It is funded by a combination of the private sector and government agencies. The state bodies are organised by the JSCCIB, but the business sector offers experience or consultants. (The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce Industry and Banking, 2020).

7.5 Priority sectors

As Thailand is moving towards an innovation-driven economy, the demand for a highly skilled workforce in targeted industries is on the rise. Likewise, the knowledge and skill requirements for future industries are becoming more complex and challenging as time passes. For this reason, the government decided to designate twelve industries as “new S-curve industries”. These industries are the core of the creation of national policy to develop human resources and build the infrastructure to support them. The twelve industries include the following: (1) next-generation automotive technologies; (2) intelligent electronics; (3) high-value and medical tourism; (4) advanced agriculture and biotechnology; (5) food of the future; (6) automation and robotics; (7) aviation and logistics; (8) biofuels and biochemicals; (9) digital; (10) medical and comprehensive healthcare; (11) defence industry; and (12) education and human resources development (Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council, 2019).
7.6 A brief outline of good practices

The Federation of Thai Industry (FTI) has worked closely with the government and has recently established the “FTI Academy” linking life-long learning and the up-skilling/re-skilling policy. The academy has also developed training programmes based on the competency needs of industry. For some programmes, such as aircraft maintenance or food for the future, the academy worked with universities to develop new curricula that requires experts from both academia and industry. In addition, FTI proposed a white paper to the government with a five-point agenda: the ease of doing business in both public and private sectors; establishing private innovation funds for SMEs and using big data to leverage “smart agro”; to develop a Made in Thailand brand for the SME Venture Programme to leverage the quality and standards of Thai products, including supporting industrial experts to advise SMEs; unlocking unnecessary regulations and improving the efficiency of public services; to promote lifelong learning and to fill in the gaps between education and industry (The Federation of Thai Industries, 2020).

The Highly Skilled Workforce for EEC and New Growth Engines programme focuses on designing measures and mechanisms to develop the workforce, including graduates from vocational schools and universities, from bachelor degree level to doctoral level. It also aims to supply industries in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) as well as the first and new S-curve industries. Such mechanisms and schemes include the development of databases, plans for industrial demand for talent, a training and R&D consortium, work-integrated learning, talent mobility, cooperative education, an experimental sandbox for education and innovation, and the recruitment of talent for companies wishing to embark on R&D (Eastern Economic Corridor, 2020; Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2018). In addition, the Intermediary Agency was formed in the EEC region to promote collaboration between private companies and government agencies under the supervision of the EEC-HDC. This agency is responsible for creating and customising human resources development programmes and was co-designed by the private sector and academic institutions based on EEC models. The EEC-HDC supports private companies in terms of HRD, while coordinating with the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (OPS) to encourage both universities and vocational schools to revise their curricula to correspond with the skills and knowledge required by the private sector. The government has provided funding for organising short courses based on the needs of the private sector with a target goal of 30,000 trained personnel in 2021.
7.7 Key points/conclusions on promoting business sector engagement

The Sub-Committee of the EEC-Model in Human Resources Development is the main mechanism for government and business agencies to advance their demand-driven HRD plans. The Office of the Permanent Secretary for Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (OPS) was used to revise higher education and vocational certificate programmes to fit the EEC Model Type A criteria. The OPS obtained government funding to organise short courses for the 2020-2021 fiscal year and encouraged their projects to achieve agreed and targeted goals. The OPS also collaborated with the implementation of the Eastern Economic Corridor Office (EECO), which is in charge of HRD activities in the EEC area and the creation of activities to promote HRD in Thailand and in areas surrounding the EEC.

In recent years, Thailand has been investing considerable resources in the EEC to advance the country in the digital age and meet the demands of the future. The 20-year National Strategy Framework is the foundation of all future plans in the country. Each government agency is required to follow this plan to set a clear direction and increase collaboration between the private and public sectors. This is not a simple plan and requires various sectors to work together to move the country forward. However, when this project succeeds, the government believes that it will enable Thailand to compete with other countries in the region and attract foreign investment. This will increase GDP and the well-being of all Thai citizens.
8. Conclusions

By focusing on the four areas of intervention in HRD: promoting HRD culture; adopting an inclusive approach; professionalising the development of qualified teaching personnel; and promoting engagement of the business sector in HRD, the study found that Thai state bodies realise the importance of these areas. They also encourage the development of Thai citizens, including policies to implement all areas into all key fields of HRD. Despite importance and desirability, there is still a gap between the goal and what has been achieved. Thus, the strengths and recommendations for the four areas are based on the results of the investigation, as follows:

(1) Promoting HRD culture

With the very first long-term and comprehensive strategic plan, Thailand set a new agenda in terms of HRD with a platform to create manpower and develop a knowledge-based society. As a result, government agencies and state bodies should promote a platform to address individual skills and develop learning systems and accessibility for people in all key fields.

Thailand faces the problem that many private companies are hesitant to send their employees out for training because of labour transfers between companies. Thai society also favours higher education degrees over vocational degrees, even though vocational degrees can benefit young adults more in terms of being in demand throughout the country. Curricula design should include a variety of subjects that enhance the vital skills of future workers. It may also increase the capacity of the country by promoting future skills among young workers, preparing them to be resilient in the working environment.

(2) Adopting an inclusive approach

By aiming to promote equity, the government and many large companies, including non-profit organisations, tend to adopt locally targeted and inclusive hiring practices. However, there are still people with a lack of job opportunities and skills development due to various limitations, such as financial issues or social background. A recommendation for this area may be to include people from vulnerable groups in every process of policy analysis. The government should aim for a bottom-up approach in which people from vulnerable groups can help design an inclusive approach. This will allow the approach to be adjusted easily and meet local demands rather than policy following central government direction. Furthermore,
the creation of a database on vulnerable groups is important in terms of HRD. In order to effectively assist vulnerable groups, information must be complete and accessible to everyone. This would help provide a clear picture of the needs of vulnerable groups and enable the government to make informed decisions.

(3) Professionalised development of qualified teaching personnel

Professional development can be defined as continuing education for educators. The government has provided financial support to many programmes and has attempted to engage the private sector in the training process, especially in the case of TVET schools. However, while most Thai teachers obtained education degrees, they may lack sufficient hands-on experience to teach in TVET schools. It is important that these teachers receive proper training in the field and are able to teach to their full potential at TVET schools. On the other hand, in-company training can be a large investment for a company. Even though the government provides incentives for the private sector and sends its workers for training, only large enterprises can benefit from these incentives. If there are organisations that provide low-cost training for SME workers, the government should help these small and medium-sized companies compete in the market. Furthermore, teachers, especially those in the public school system, are required to do large amounts of paperwork, which can be quite stressful on top of their teaching duties. Teachers may not have enough time to take courses to enhance their skills or conduct research. The amount of paperwork should be reduced to allow teachers to spend more time preparing for lessons or training. Additionally, standards for teachers should correspond with their field of expertise, rather than the “one model fits all” qualification. Finally, one of the issues mentioned by many of the respondents is that the curricula for many education degrees are out of date.

(4) Promoting engagement of the business sector in HRD

The EEC has played a major role in developing national education curricula. This special programme was launched to encourage collaboration between various educational organisations, including vocational schools, universities, and private companies to meet future demands and international standards.

There is an attempt to find a middle ground between the government and the private sector through the Innovation Sandbox Act (A.D. 2019). As a new Act, it requires further assessment to prove whether it is achieving the expected results. It is necessary for the government to take action to push this Act forward. On the other hand, business engagement in HRD requires a large investment of resources, which may prevent many private companies, especially SMEs, from participating. The government should create a mechanism for SMEs and government agencies to form partnerships to strengthen their capacity to engage in HRD investment.
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