

EEF STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2024

 **EEF**
EQUITABLE
EDUCATION
FUND



Unlocking
Inequality
Through
Partnership





EEF Strategic Plan 2022-2024

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Section of the EEF Act sets out the objectives of promoting equitable education. Section 3 defines “*equitable education*” to mean that every people have equal and inclusive access to education and development and “*educational disparity*” as unequal distribution of academic resources due to quality and standards of educational establishments, quality and effectiveness of teachers, and socio-economic inequalities.

Educational disparity is a major, complex, and long-standing issue. The Independent Committee for Education Reform (ICER), which drafted the EEF Act, has initially assessed that promoting educational opportunities for four million disadvantaged children would require a fund of 25 billion baht per year or 5 percent of Thailand’s education budget. In reality, however, only 0.67 percent of the country’s education budget or 1.07 percent of the budget of the Ministry of Education has been allocated to EEF (data as of FY2020).

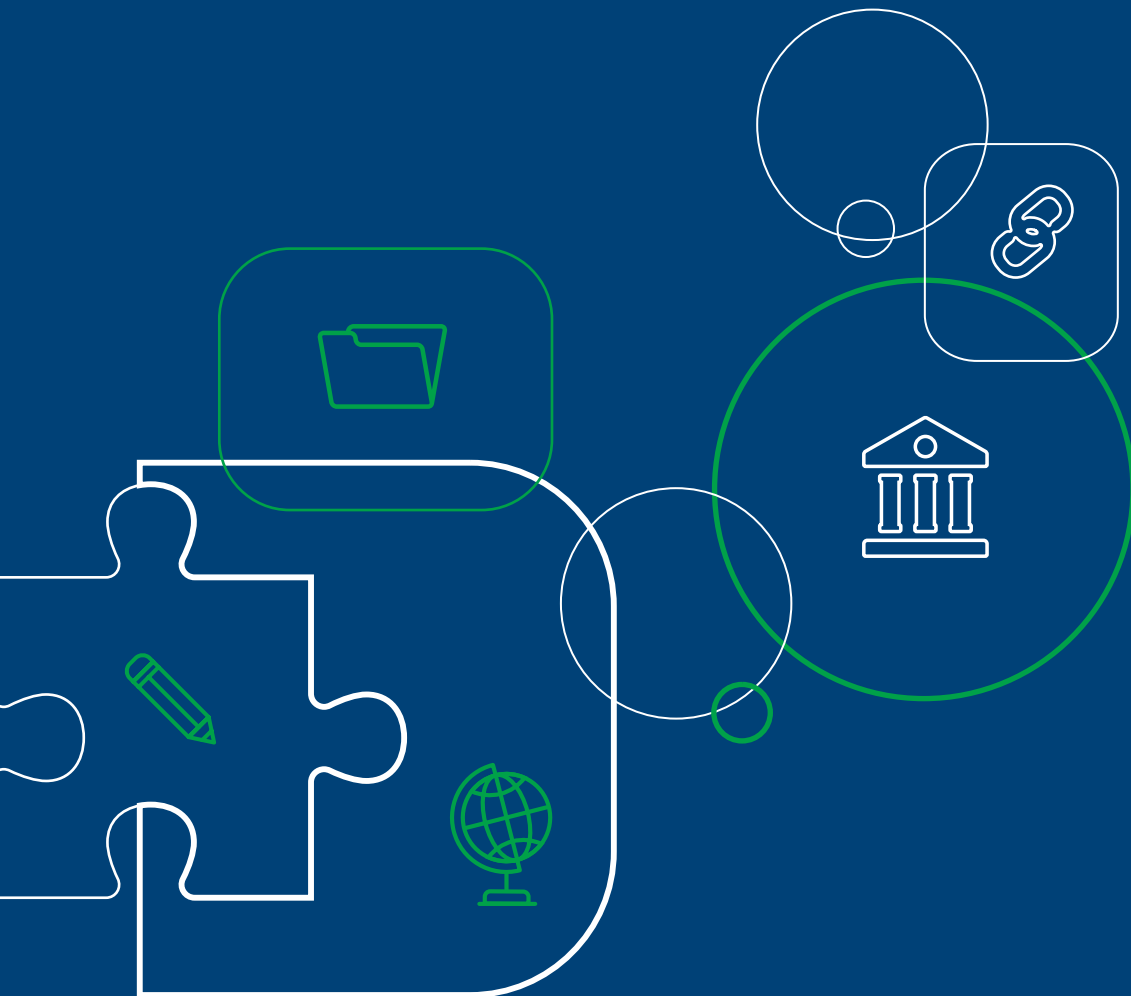
In the first three years (FY2018 - 2021), EEF spent most of its budget to support and assist 20-25 percent of the total target number of disadvantaged children. For the most part, this effort only tackled the problem at the level of inequality in household income. However, **educational disparity will not be addressed solely by providing direct financial aid. We also need to tackle weaknesses in the education system while reducing social problems related to health, family, law and order, culture, and locality.**

To successfully drive a national mission with budget constraints and without the power to make policy decisions is strategically challenging. As a result, **EEF should take the role of an “enabler”** to mobilize collaboration across line agencies (Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries and policy units), private organizations, and the people sector. EEF has strategically positioned itself as a “catalyst for systems change” and set the goal of “producing effective outcomes” for disadvantaged children and youth.

The next three years (FY2022 - 2024) will provide EEF with the opportunity to review its strategic plan and readiness to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic that has exacerbated educational inequalities further. Despite challenges ahead, EEF is still determined to carry out its duty in good faith and with transparency and will strive to improve its management performance in response to feedback and suggestions from stakeholders.

EEF would like to thank the Board of Governance, advisors, committees, partners, and all staff members for their contribution to the completion of this Strategic Plan 2022 - 2024.

Definition



Definition

Equitable education

All people have equal and inclusive access to quality education and development by providing assistance and support to disadvantaged children, reducing educational disparity, and developing qualified and effective teachers.

Educational disparity

Unequal access to quality education, distribution of qualified and effective teachers, or socio-economic conditions.

Basic education

Education provided prior to higher education, organized into three levels: preschool education, primary education, and secondary education.

Compulsory education

Grades 1 to 9 of basic education pursuant to the National Education Act.

Formal education

Education that specifies the aims, pedagogical methods, curricula, duration, assessment, and evaluation conditional to its completion.

Non-formal education

Education that has flexibility in determining the aims, modalities, pedagogical methods, duration, assessment, and evaluation with regard to its completion. The contents and curricula for non-formal education shall be appropriate, respond to requirements, and meet the needs of individual learners.

Definition

Informal education

Education that allows learners to learn on their own according to their interests, competencies, readiness, and time. Learners can study from persons, experiences, society, environment, media, or other learning sources.

Alternative education

Education that aims to cultivate learners not only intellectually, but also morally and spiritually. It is a pedagogical alternative for individuals, families, community organizations, and social institutions under the philosophy that learning should be enjoyable, promote understanding of nature, and respond to the needs of learners. Learning process and content are integrated into a comprehensive lesson that encourages hands-on experience in real-world settings

Lifelong learning

A transformational or developmental process in a person as a result of knowledge, skills, or experiences acquired from ongoing learning or daily activities throughout life.

General education

Basic education programs provided as prescribed by the Ministry of Education to develop learners' general knowledge and competencies in a system designed by the Ministry of Education as a continuous educational pathway divided into four levels: (1) lower primary education, (2) upper primary education, (3) lower secondary education, and (4) upper secondary education.

Vocational education

Education programs that are designed for learners to acquire vocational, technical, and technological skills and competencies.

Board of Governance

EEF Board of Governance.

Definition

Committees	Committees in the executive board of EEF.
Children	Persons below the age of 18 years but not including those who attain majority by way of marriage.
Preschool-age children	Persons below the age of six years, including small children.
Youth	Persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.
Academically resilient students	Thai students who are from the bottom socio-economic quartile of the country but can score in the top quartile of PISA test results.
Poor student	A student from a family with an average income per person per month of not more than 3,000 baht and a proxy means test (PMT) score between 40 - 49.
Extremely poor student	A student from a family with an average income per person per month of not more than 3,000 baht and a proxy means test (PMT) score higher than 50.
Low-skilled/unskilled labor	Labor that is paid a minimum wage and should receive more skills training.
Educational establishment	An educational establishment as defined in the National Education Act and shall include early childhood development centers.

<p>School size classification</p>	<p>Schools are classified according to the rules of the Office of the Basic Education Commission in 2006 into four size groups as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small schools: Schools/educational establishments with 1 - 120 students. 2. Medium schools: schools/educational establishments with 121 - 600 students. 3. Large Schools: Schools/educational establishments with 601 - 1,500 students. 4. Extra-large schools: Schools/educational establishments with more than 1,500 students.
<p>Intergenerational poverty</p>	<p>A cycle of poverty that persists from one generation to the next, as indicated by the real income of working-age children which remains unchanged compared to that of their parent's generation</p>
<p>Net enrollment rate (NER)</p>	<p>The number of students in the official age group for a given level of education who are enrolled in any level of education, expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.</p>
<p>Student retention rate</p>	<p>The number of graduates, expressed as a percentage of the number of first-year students from the same cohort.</p>
<p>Cost of living</p>	<p>The amount of money people needs to live during their studies.</p>
<p>Tuition fee</p>	<p>Tuition, maintenance, and other fees that are charged to a student by an educational establishment.</p>

Definition

Education-related expenses	Expenses related to education other than a tuition fee that are charged to a student by an educational establishment in accordance with the regulation, announcement, or order of the educational institution.
Constitution	Last paragraph of Section 54 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 states that “a fund shall be established for the purpose of assisting persons with insufficient means, reducing educational disparity, and promoting and improving the quality and effectiveness of teachers. The government shall allocate a budget to the fund or use tax incentives or mechanisms to encourage donations to the fund. The law related to the fund shall at least prescribe that the fund be independently managed and spent in order to achieve its objectives.”

Abbreviations

EEF.	Equitable Education Fund
ICER	Independent Committee for Education Reform
EEF Act	Equitable Education Fund Act B.E. 2561



Executive Summary

In 2018, the Independent Committee for Education Reform (ICER) reported that **educational disparity was one of the major problems facing the education system that needed to be addressed.** It proposed that EEF be established as a new mechanism for accelerating reform in this area more effectively. As educational disparity is contributed to socio-economic inequality and education quality issue that has been deep-rooted for decades, EEF as a new mechanism needs to develop strategies that match the scale of the problem and its complexity. Moreover, it should assume an appropriate role in driving educational reform together with the Ministry of Education and other line agencies. With its budget and authority constraints, **EEF has thus defined its role as an enabler to facilitate collaboration in educational reform** in areas that will produce progress toward resolving systems inequality, as well as to assist the poorest children and youth in society.

EEF Board of Governance has deemed it expedient to formulate this strategic plan for its second three-year mission (FY2022 - 2024). However, even

after this strategic plan has expired and another is in its place, one thing that EEF will continue to commit to is its goal as stated in the EEF Act, which has been translated into its “principle” or long-term vision that **“Every economically disadvantaged or underprivileged child, youth, and adult has access to quality education.”**

Over the first three years since its inception (FY2018 - 2021), EEF’s work to resolve educational disparity mostly focused on supporting and assisting economically disadvantaged or underprivileged children and youth in addition to developing teacher and school models, conducting action research, and creating databases necessary to support operations.

In the next three years, EEF will adopt strategies to tackle systems problems that have been deeply rooted in Thailand for decades. Moreover, EEF will improve its operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the country since 2020 and is likely to leave negative effects over the next three years.

It is expected that these new strategies will enable EEF to use limited resources to create big impacts.



Conceptual Framework of the Strategic Plan

(1) EEF is a new and very small agency when compared to the scale of the educational disparity problem that it aims to address. As such, the role of EEF should be to enable collaboration across organizations within the ecology of education system.

(2) All collaborative efforts should aim to produce impacts on the target population. Over the next three years, EEF will give great importance to children and youth, both in-school and out-of-school, especially those from the most disadvantaged families (bottom 15 percent). The expected impacts include access to education and learning outcomes for in-school students and alternative education opportunities for out-of-school children and youth.

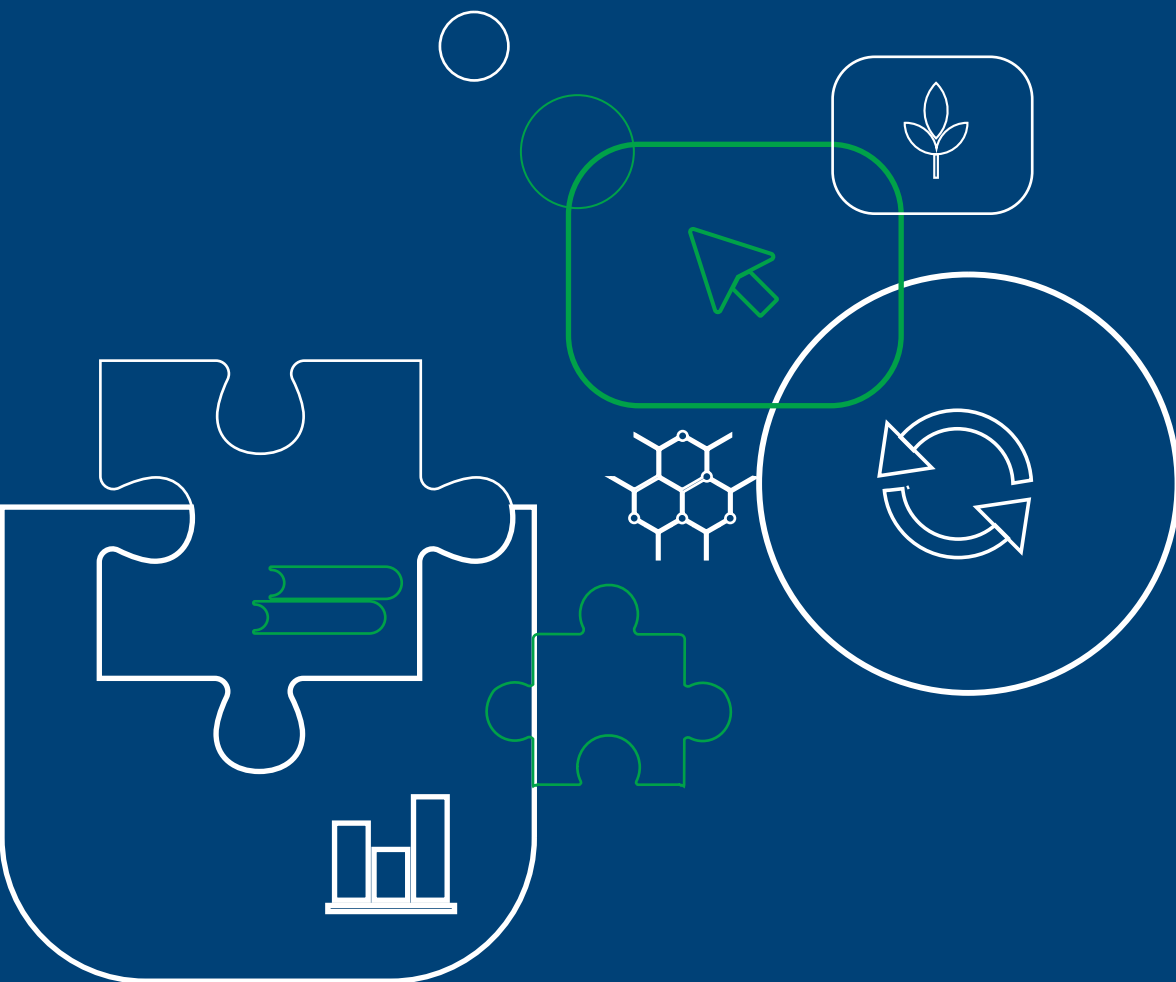
(3) The impacts on the target population will lead to systems change, covering national education policy to working models at the agency level (such as schools, educational establishments, and local community organizations), and probably change in family units.

(4) EEF has no policy authority. As such, to bring about systems change, it must work together with responsible agencies through a participatory policy process to encourage organization partners and actors with high capabilities to join the efforts.

(5) To carry out its mission effectively, EEF must develop a more resilient work system, personnel, and governance in order to sustain trust, which is the key to mobilizing cross-sector collaboration.

Summary Diagram

Strategic Plan
2022-2024



Summary Diagram

Strategic Plan 2022-2024

Vision

Every economically disadvantaged or underprivileged child, youth, and adult has access to quality education.¹

Mission

To enable cross-sector collaboration to promote educational opportunities, reduce inequalities, and improve teacher quality.

Goals

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| G1 Learning Access | G4 Systems Change |
| G2 Learning Outcome | |
| G3 Alternative Education | |

Objectives

G1 Learning Access

- 01 Support children and youth to access quality education and prevent dropouts, especially from compulsory education.

G2: Learning Outcome

G2 Learning Outcome

- 02 Support educational establishments, communities, and the civil society sector to take part in education management to reduce educational disparities and build 21st-century skills for economically disadvantaged or underprivileged children and youth.

G3: Alternative Education

¹ EEF's vision derives from the purpose of establishing the Equitable Education Fund as stated in the last paragraph of Section 54 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560.

Objectives

G3 Alternative Education

O3 Support out-of-school youth and adults to access lifelong learning for personal and career development.

G4: Systems Change

G4 Systems Change

O4 Develop innovations, knowledge, and databases to drive policy change.

O5 Build networks to tackle educational disparity and mobilize resources.

Key Results

G1 Learning Access

K1 The net enrollment rate of preschool and school-age children increases.

K2 The student retention rate increases.

K3 Opportunities for furthering formal and non-formal education increase.

G2 Learning Outcome

K4 The learning outcome gap decreases.

K5 Teachers and educational units are trained to facilitate learning that meets diverse needs.

G3 Alternative Education

K6 Out-of-school youth and adults are given opportunities to return to school or receive vocational training.

K7 Flexible learning for out-of-school youth and adults to improve their career prospects and quality of life.

Key Results

G4 Systems Change

K8 Innovation and knowledge lead to policy change.

K9 Equity-based budgeting for education.

K10 Community and society participation in education.

Abbreviation

G is Goal

O is Objective

K is Key Result

Based on the above conceptual framework, EEF has developed the following seven target-group specific programs.

(1) **Equitable Education Guarantee System Development** This program aims to provide direct support to extremely poor and disadvantaged students. In the first three years, direct financial support was provided to about one million children in Kindergarten through Grade 9 per year. In the second three years, the support will be expanded to cover prekindergarten children in any educational establishments and out-of-school children. The goal is to prevent at-risk children from dropping out and conduct research to identify risk factors that contribute to children dropping out of school.

(2) **Post-Compulsory Training for Youth Quality Development** The goal is to improve learning outcomes for at-risk youth who will not continue their studies after completing general or vocational education to prepare them for careers and entrepreneurship in the 21st century. Because EEF has enough budget to offer up to 2,000 - 2,500 scholarships per year, accounting for only 1 percent of economically disadvantaged youth in each batch, this program aims to fundraise and collaborate with educational institutions and other funding sources to award need-based scholarships in addition to EEF scholarships. Another goal is to improve the quality of education in teacher development institutions, as well as to promote the value of vocational education and training among youth.

(3) **Whole School Development** This program aims to develop 900 schools in rural areas or with large shares of poor or disadvantaged students. Most of these schools are medium-sized sub-district schools. The program will also improve the quality of teachers and 21st-century skills-based classroom learning, as well as school management to find a “leverage point” or an educational quality promotion

system to be proposed as a reform policy after the program is completed. Moreover, it will develop learning outcomes assessment tools and test the feasibility of a poverty action lab approach and a self-improving school support system (e.g., a quality assurance system).

(4) **Teacher Training for Protected Schools** This program aims to develop 1,500 small protected schools in remote areas across the country. One measure is to provide scholarships to students in target schools to allow them to complete their education and return to teach at schools in their hometowns. At the same time, it will focus on curriculum development for teachers who will be placed in protected schools in the name of the “pilot teacher training institution” under Section 5(6) of the EEF Act. Therefore, the major component of this program is teacher development, covering new-generation and in-service teachers in remote areas.

(5) **Out-of-School Youth and Working-Age Adults Development** This program aims to develop alternative education programs that meet the local needs for out-of-school youth, including those who are employed, unemployed, and with difficulties returning to school. For instance, persons in the NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training) category who are at the bottom of income distribution and most vulnerable in the Thai economic system. The program will also improve the capacities of communities and related organizations, as well as develop teachers for out-of-school youth.

(6) **Area-Based Education for Reducing Inequality** This program aims to explore integrated models for promoting educational opportunities at the local level. It will test an education model managed principally by local people in conjunction with government agencies, local administrative organizations, and the private sector, with resource

support from EEF and localities. Moreover, the program will test the feasibility of the area-based approach and suitable models. It is expected that the experiences obtained after the implementation of this three-year strategic plan will help EEF develop its operation model for expanding results further in the future.

(7) **Management plan in the development of work can have a high impact** and measurable to help and meet the target group which needs to use information and knowledge to develop proposals for reform education management and push into change systematically with appropriate methods and opportunities. There are 3 significant processes which are 1) Determining the level of proactive work. strategy by managing key targets and creating the changes by appointing 2 groups which are children and youth who lack educational opportunities and teachers 2) Structure management which aims to integrate mechanisms under the operating structure of all parts to be in harmony with the results of the target groups, and 3) Management consists of personnel management to induce highly

competent personnel to join in driving high impact work with flexible format management and governance to increase efficiency budgeting and finance system. Then to continue to analyze the use of strategic budget target group and system area follow-up and evaluation to create a monitoring system. The monitoring system helps the situation of inequality in human resources, including information evaluation systems for various projects and information technology systems, to achieve accurate connections in internal and external systems data.

In addition to the above programs that aim at specific target populations, **EEF will also conduct research to study the national education system** in order to find system vulnerabilities that are the main causes of inequality and identify education reform issues together with policy-making agencies.

All programs will focus on setting effective outcomes to be accomplished in the next three years, integrating collaboration between research organizations, evaluation, policy communication, and robust and efficient management support. Lessons learned from program implementations will be extracted and formulated into policy recommendations.



1. Introduction



1.1 EEF and Its First Three Years (2018-2021)²

The Equitable Education Fund (EEF) was established under Paragraph 6 of Section 54 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 to support and assist persons with insufficient means, reduce educational disparities, and improve teacher performance. It is an independently-managed fund under government budgeting. EEF's target population is people of all ages in the bottom 15 percent of the country's income distribution, especially economically disadvantaged or underprivileged children and youth, both in-school and out-of-school.

EEF has aligned its operational plan with national-level plans, including (1) the 20-Year National Strategy, Priority Area 4: Social Equality and Equity, (2) the Master Plan under the National Strategy 17: Equality and Social Security, and (3) the Thailand Education Reform (Big Rock 1): Ensuring Access to Learning Opportunities and Equitable Education from Early Childhood.

Over its first three years (FY2018-2021) under the Master Plan 2018-2023, EEF has produced considerable quantitative results and received strong support from the government, network partners, and society. However, the results are mostly outputs like the number of scholarships offered, rather than clear **outcomes and impacts**. For example, it remains uncertain to what extent has the goal of reducing educational disparity been achieved, how much impact on the target population has been created by educational opportunities, how to determine outcome indicators, and how educational opportunities have affected the education system.

At the same time, uncertainty about resources remains unclear, especially budget increasing at a slower rate. However, experiences accumulated by EEF over the past three years allow it to have sufficient knowledge and understanding to review and improve programs to produce qualitative results and determine outcomes and impacts more effectively in its strategic planning to keep up with the current situation and future trends.

Based on the analysis of the organization's background, past performance, and changing situations, EEF has revised and developed its strategic plan for the next three years (FY2022 - 2024) to enhance effectiveness, improve efficiency, and reduce risks.

Although this strategic revision is a crucial step for the organization, EEF is prepared to adapt to unexpected challenges that may arise over the course of the next three years. It will also listen to any feedback and suggestions from all parties, especially resolutions of the Cabinet, parliamentary debates, and the performance assessment report after three years pursuant to Section 44 of the EEF Act. EEF hopes to create sustainable equitable education and ultimately achieve the objectives set when it was established.

²For reference purposes, FY2018-2021 will be referred as the first three years, combining FY2018 and FY2019 into one fiscal year. This is because although the Cabinet approved the budget of 499,187,400 baht for EEF in FY2018, the Budget Bureau transferred that budget to EEF in FY2019. As a result, both FY2018 and FY2019 budgets were used for EEF's operations in 2019.

Performance in the First Three Years



In the first three years (FY2018 - 2021), EEF has been allocated a budget of 2,537.37 million baht, 5,496.13 million baht, and 6,084.76 million baht, respectively.

In the first year, EEF studied, experimented, and searched for effective operational approaches in order to “make a big impact with a low budget.” In the following years, EEF has expanded its results to cover more target populations to create the most effective model of equitable education.

EEF’s performance can be divided into three areas as follows:

1. Supporting disadvantaged children to increase their educational opportunities

In FY2018 - 2021, EEF has continued to reach more target populations, with 8.29 hundred thousand, 1.07 million, and 1.38 million people supported in respective years. This was due to: (1) expanded coverage of schools and educational establishments to reach more targets, (2) the amount of the accumulated funds for target in-school youths, and (3) an increase in the number of economically disadvantaged or underprivileged people because of the COVID-19 situation since Q3 of FY2020.

2. Conducting research to develop systems-change innovations

Research is important for exploring methods and measures to promote educational opportunities, such as the Teacher and School Quality Program, four innovative scholarship programs, and community-based vocational training.

3. Developing a screening system and a database to create equitable education

EEF has successfully developed models for reducing educational disparity, such as proxy means tests (PMT) and conditional cash transfer (CCT) to target poor students. EEF has worked together with the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) to allocate funds for conditional cash transfers and screen extremely poor students to provide cash assistance for education and prevent them from dropping out of school. Moreover, EEF has integrated a poverty database together with six ministries, which enables direct budget disbursement to target groups.

EEF’s operations in the first three years would not achieve its goals without collaboration from various organizations, including the government, Cabinet, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the civil society sector, and network partners who have worked to put policy into practice.

1.2 Challenges for the Next Three Years

There are two challenges EEF will face in the next three years.

1.2.1 Educational Disparity Challenges Prior to the COVID-19 Crisis

Educational disparity situations in Thailand before the COVID-19 crisis can be summarized as shown in the figure below.

Educational Disparity Situation

1.8 million poor or disadvantaged students are at risk of dropping out of school.

430,000

Thai children are out of school due to poverty and disadvantages.



246,651

children and youth with disabilities are studying in OBEC schools

Only 5% of poor children per generation have access to higher education.



Families of poor children bear the burden of **high education costs** compared to their incomes.

four times

The cost is higher than that of wealthy families.



The gap in access to education between families in **the bottom and top 10% of income** distribution is up to **20 times**

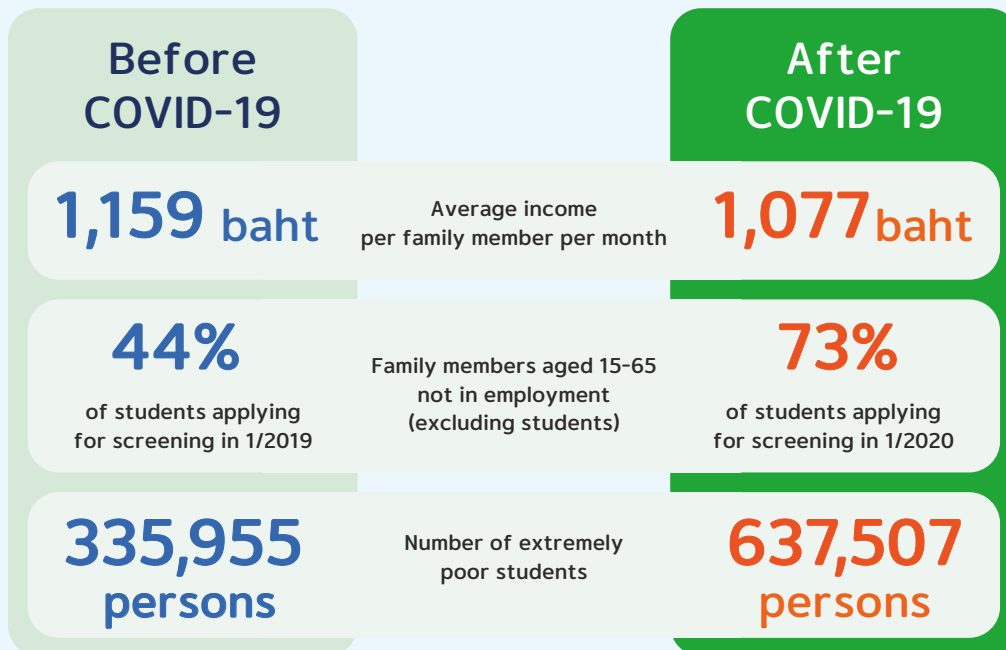


Students in rural schools have lagged **behind their urban peers by two school years.**



COVID-19 has caused a **drop in family incomes** and the number of **poor students to increase by 300,000.**

Average income dropped by 7%
compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic.



Note: Based on the number of poor students applying for screening in Semesters 1/2019 and 1/2020.
Source: Equitable Education Research Institute (EEFI), 2020

1) Based on these situations, EEF has identified four priority areas to reduce educational disparities in the Thai education system as follows:

Prevent over 1.8 million poor and extremely poor children from dropping out of school before completing compulsory education.

2) Support over 430,000 compulsory school age children (ages 5-14) who are out of education system or 7.5 percent of the total population to return to school or receive literacy and vocational skills development.

3) Support poor and extremely poor students to access post-compulsory education opportunities. Currently, only 5 percent of low-income students have access to post-compulsory education, which is 20 times less than well-off students.

4) Address rural-urban disparity in students' academic performance, which has a gap of more than two academic years.



1.2.2 Educational Disparity Challenges Due to the COVID-19 Crisis

Since Semester 2/2019, the COVID-19 pandemic has directly and indirectly affected families with school-age children and deepened educational inequalities further.

Because of family economic difficulties, the number of target children and youth at risk of dropping out of school has increased. Even if they manage to stay in school, they may experience learning loss due to a lack of school or teacher readiness and appropriate learning resources and programs. There are also other complex issues, such as public health management within schools, which may not contribute directly to educational disparity but can affect how teaching and learning are conducted.

Due to high uncertainty about the COVID-19 situation over the next three years, EEF has set out to strengthen operational resilience to better prepare for changes and improve its capacity to attract new partners to work together to enhance or recover children's learning skills in the short-term and the long-term. EEF will also adopt educational technology to create opportunities for target populations to access quality learning and classroom teaching amidst changing situations.

1.3 Ecology of Equitable Education

There are many government and private organizations in Thailand that work in the field of education, which may be referred to as an “ecology of education system.”

Organizations within the ecology of education system include agencies directly responsible for formal and alternative education planning and administration and agencies that play a supporting role, such as conducting academic examinations and research, offering volunteering opportunities, communicating educational information, and developing educational technology.

Situational information about the ecology of equitable education is crucial for designing a process of collaboration to drive progress toward equitable education.

It will enable EEF to draw upon the strengths and expertise of each organization, such as policy making, manpower, budget, technology, and access to specific target populations, to achieve the four goals under this Strategic Plan and ultimately create systems change.

To drive progress within the ecology of equitable education, EEF upholds the principle to avoid duplicating efforts that have already been undertaken by other agencies to prevent overspending or unnecessary organizational expansion.

For this reason, EEF has relied upon survey data of partner organizations within the ecology of equitable education throughout the intervention journey to plan and implement activities to achieve the goals and directions set out in this Three-Year Strategic Plan³.



³ The survey was conducted by Roland Berger, a consulting firm, in 2020–2021 to support the preparation of this Strategic Plan.

A Scenario for Creating Opportunities and Added Values throughout Intervention Journey to Reduce Educational Disparity Together with Stakeholders within the Ecology of Education System

B5

 Organizations

Intervention journey →

	Generate Intervention	Pilot, incubate & evaluate	Scale & accelerate	Advocate	Operate	Monitor	
Government sector OPS-MOE	●	●	●	▶	●	●	Push for education policy adoption.
OBEC	●	▶	●	▶	●	●	Pilot projects in the education sandbox.
ONEC	●			▶	●	●	Make policy recommendations for inclusion in education development plans.
LAO	●	▶	●	●	●	●	Pilot projects in LAO schools and child development centers.
NESDC	●	●	●	▶		●	Make policy recommendations for inclusion in national development plans.
SEC				▶		●	Support innovative financing and push CSR regulations.
SET				▶		●	Support innovative financing and push CSR regulations.
DJOP		●				●	Support project development to assist target groups.

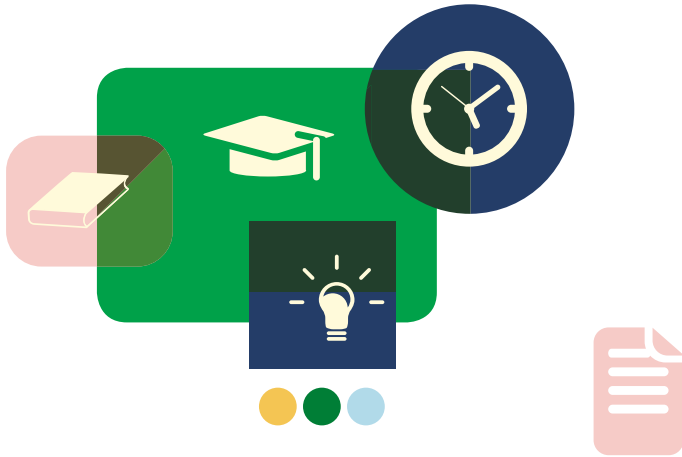
Intervention journey



	Generate Intervention	Pilot, incubate & evaluate	Scale & accelerate	Advocate	Operate	Monitor	
Research							
TDRi							Pilot projects in the education sandbox.
PIER							Support information and funds for research.
Universities							
UNESCO							Scale up project results
Unicef							Set goals and collaborate systematically.
Sodsri Saritwong Foundation							Voice of the organization's work.
SCB Foundation							Leverage EEF's network to work with the government sector.
Private companies							
Betagro							Provide information and network to develop CSR programs
SCG							
CPF							
TOT							
KTC							
MK							
Media							

High opportunity and added value
 Moderate opportunity and added value
 Low opportunity and added value
 Overlapping and should be avoided
 No opportunity

2. EEF Strategic Plan 2022-2024



Based on its experience obtained over the past three years, as well as survey data of partners within the ecology of equitable education and educational

disparity challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EEF has reviewed its operational procedures resulting in this Three-Year Strategic Plan as follows:

2.1 Vision⁴

“Every economically disadvantaged or underprivileged child, youth, and adult has access to quality education.”

A vision is a projection of a future desired world. Sectoral and global socioeconomic factors all contribute to the success of a vision. Even though EEF is an agency that is too small to bring about

long-term changes in Thai society alone, this vision reflects the aspiration that EEF upholds and hopes to achieve, as well as the spirit of the Constitution, which gave birth to EEF.

2.2 Mission

“To enable cross-sector collaboration to promote educational opportunities, reduce inequalities, and improve teacher quality.”

In defining this mission, EEF has strategically positioned itself as a **“catalyst for systems change”** and will act as **an enabler to mobilize collaboration across sectors to set goals and policies to create equitable education, reduce inequality, and deliver educational opportunities for the most disadvantaged children and youth.**

Within the “ecology of education system,” EEF thus assumes the role of a “catalyst” of education reform. It will engage and facilitate organizations working in the field of education to participate in the policy advocacy process to promote equitable education according to their specific context, level of competence, and individual factors.

⁴ Due to many external factors involved and as a long-term ambition, it is not possible to measure progress toward vision. However, measurable goals and objectives are outlined in this Strategic Plan.

2.3 Goals

From the vision and mission above, EEF has identified two goal areas: change to target group and systems change leading to change to target group, as follows:

Change to Target Group is evident in Goals 1 - 3.

G1: Learning Access Economically disadvantaged or underprivileged children and youth, both in-school and out-of-school, have access to quality education or learning appropriate to their competencies, families, and communities until completing at least compulsory education.

G2: Learning Outcome Economically disadvantaged or underprivileged children and youth, both in-school and out-of-school, develop their competencies and skills fit for the 21st century.

G3: Alternative Education Underprivileged youth aged 15 - 24 years who have completed basic education or lower and are out of school have opportunities to improve their competencies to become self-reliant through alternative and informal education.

Systems Change is evident in Goal 4.

G4: Systems Change National and local policies aim to allocate and manage resources (budgets, personnel, facilities, equipment, etc.) to support quality lifelong education opportunities, reduce educational disparities, and develop teacher quality through models and innovations that can drive policy and systems changes.

2.4 Objectives

01 **Support children and youth to access quality formal or alternative education and prevent dropouts**, especially from compulsory education (learning access).

02 **Support educational establishments, communities, and the civil society sector to take part in education management** to reduce educational disparities and build 21st-century skills for economically disadvantaged or underprivileged children and youth to enable them to reach their full potential (learning outcome).

03 **Support out-of-school youth and adults to access lifelong learning for personal and career development** through innovations and collaboration with policy-making partners and organizations in communities and society (alternative education).

04 **Develop innovations, knowledge, and databases** to reduce educational disparities and drive policy change (systems change).

05 **Build networks to tackle educational disparity** and mobilize resources to promote equitable education (systems change).

2.5 Key Results

The 10 key Results expected within the next three years are broken down by the four Goals, as follows:

G1: Learning Access

K1 The net enrollment rate of preschool and school-age children increases.

K2 The student retention rate increases.

K3 Opportunities for furthering formal and non-formal education increase.

G2: Learning Outcome

K4 The learning outcome gap decreases.

K5 Teachers and educational units are trained to facilitate learning that meets diverse needs.

G3: Alternative Education

K6 Out-of-school youth and adults are given opportunities to return to school or receive vocational training.

K7 Flexible learning for out-of-school youth and adults to improve their career prospects and quality of life.

G4: Systems Change

K8 Innovation and knowledge lead to policy change.

K9 Equity-based budgeting for education.

K10 Community and society participation in education.



2.6 5 Focus Areas

EEF has identified five focus areas to drive progress toward the goals set in this Strategic Plan, as follows:

(1) Share the Same Mindset

EEF believes that communicating shared values among partners will build a strong foundation for moving collaborative work forward to promote equitable education and reduce educational disparity.

(2) Data & Evidence as Driver of Change

EEF attaches great importance to developing new databases and linking databases among multiple government agencies, as well as building and collecting empirical knowledge to be analyzed and communicated to stakeholders and society. As a *“thought leader,”* EEF offers best practices that have been researched and proven to direct changes and create a ripple effect that will influence actors from the government, local government organization, private, family, and people sectors to participate in promoting equitable education within the scope of their responsibilities.

(3) Mobilizing Partners

EEF is well aware that it is crucial to mobilize partnerships across sectors, including the government, research, private, local, and civil society sectors, to work together to set goals and policies for reducing educational disparities and creating educational opportunities. Through partnerships, EEF will use evidence-based and governance frameworks to drive results that have been proven successful.

(4) Leveraging Resources

EEF will leverage a database of target children and youth across the country and knowledge derived from research to effectively manage available resources for equitable education.

(5) Programming Excellence & Developmental Evaluation

Over the first three years, EEF has demonstrated its strength as a research organization. EEF has established the Equitable Education Research Institute (EEFI) to conduct and communicate research, especially for targeting disadvantaged students and recommending fiscal measures for this target group. In the next three years, EEFI will strive to improve its action research competency while conducting macro-level and systems research to enable program implementations to better reach target populations. In particular, a focus will be placed on research for evaluating the various measures has been implemented to ensure that they can be used to develop effective reform policy recommendations.

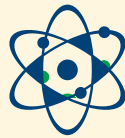
1 Share the Same Mindset



2 Data & Evidence as Driver of Change



3 Mobilizing Partners



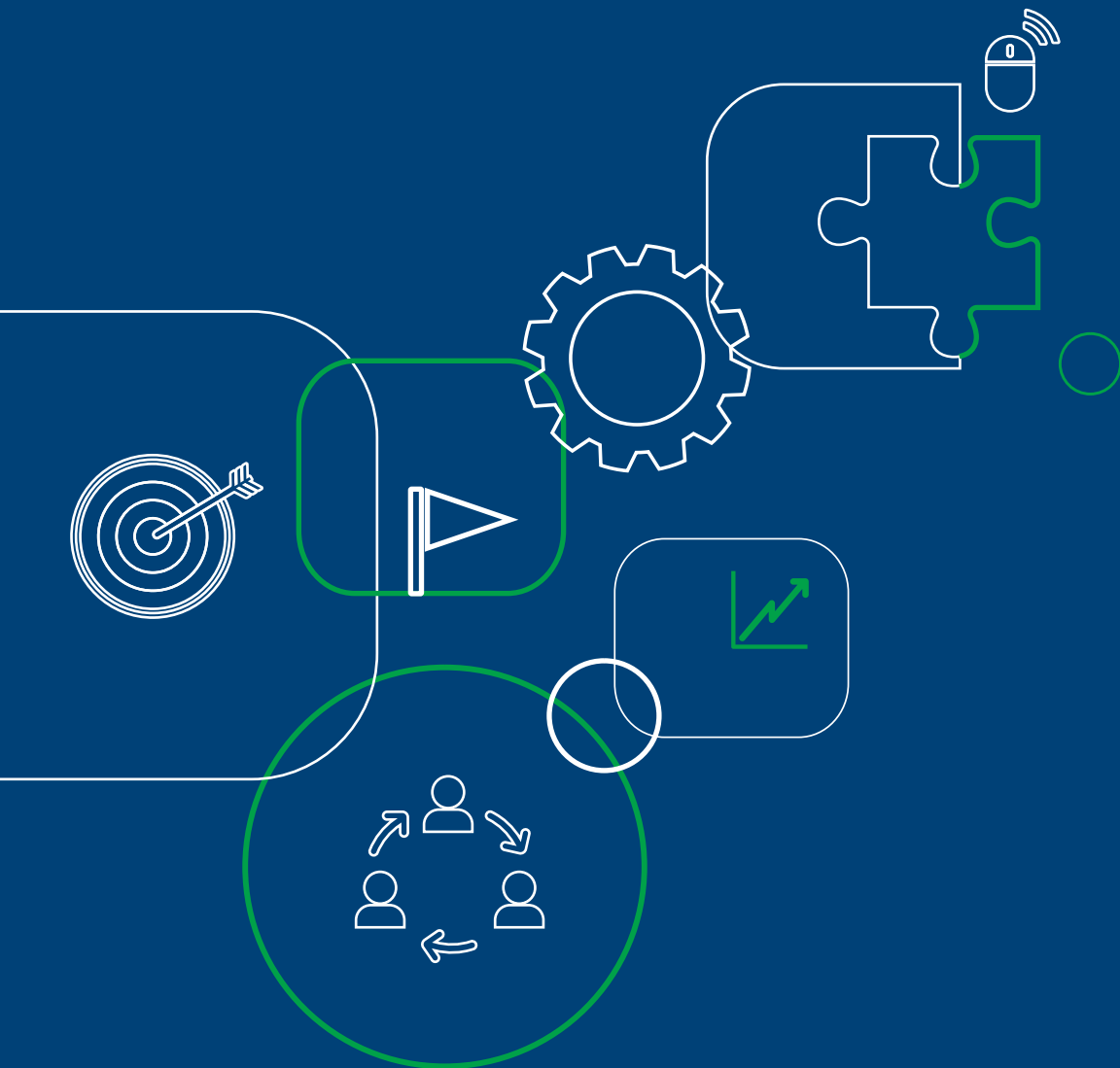
4 Leveraging Resources



5 Programming Excellence & Developmental



Results at a Glance



Results at a Glance

Goal 1: Increase Learning Access to all economically disadvantaged or underprivileged children and youth, to have access to the education system.

Country Level

- The rate of dropping out from the education system or before the compulsory level is less than 10% among poor/underprivileged students in Thailand.
- Poor/underprivileged students in Thailand are stay in a pre-compulsory retention rate of more than 90%
- 40% of students who dropped out from the education system in Thailand are able to return to study in both formal and external education systems.

EEF Targeted Level

- Poor/underprivileged students who receive funds from EEF, have a lower rate to drop out before the compulsory level less than 2%
- Poor/underprivileged students who receive support from EEF, have to stay in the education system for a compulsory level of more than 99%
- 80% of students who dropped out from the education system in the provinces where EEF has collaboration must be able to return to study in both formal and external education systems.

Goal 2: Improve learning outcomes for poor/disadvantaged students to have quality learning outcomes

Country Level

- Disadvantaged students in Thailand have achieved higher results in learning (measured by standardized test scores).

EEF Targeted Level

- A group of students who received support from EEF, have a higher learning achievement (measured by standards scores and internal assessments within EEF).

Results at a Glance

Goal 2: Improve learning outcomes for poor/ disadvantaged students to have quality learning outcomes

Country Level

- Narrowed the gap in learning achievement between disadvantaged students and other students in Thailand (Compared to various economic student groups).

- Thai children can transcend poverty across generations (Earn higher financial than their parent's generation). Measured by Labor Force Survey

EEF Targeted Level

- Achievement gaps among disadvantaged students who are supported by EEF and other groups are decreased.

- Students who received support from EEF have a good income which can able to eradicating poverty across generations. (Measured by long-term income of workers who entering in the labor market.)

Goal 3: Youth has more opportunities to develop higher potential skills within alternative education.

Country Level

- 50% of youth who are 15 years old and are informal education in Thailand, can receive an opportunity to study or practice while developing professional skills.

- Children and youth in the informal system have a higher level of knowledge, competence, and working skills. (Workforce Skills Assessment > 60%)

EEF Targeted Level

- 50% of youth who are 15 years old and are informal education in provinces where EEF works collaborative can receive an opportunity to study or practice while developing professional skills.

- Children and youth in the informal system who have received support from EEF can have a higher level of knowledge, competence, and working skills. (> 80%)

Results at a Glance

Goal 4: Aiming to expand the impact of changes systematically to create equality in education.

Country Level	EEF level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEF's Innovation projects get recognized to extended by the government and various sectors in society. (30% of projects, 10 projects). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEF's researches and projects have a 100% tracking and evaluation report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and schools are affected by the EEF's policy which has been extended at the national level. (number of students and school, 10% of students). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of EEF's projects and activities have been pushed to expand policy releases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thailand's education budget is allocated under the principle of equality (50% of the budget). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% of EEF's budget received additional from the initial budget but through innovative finance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed a connection network for 100 educational equalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed a connection networks for Equality of Education in 10 provinces with 60 outstanding activities.

3. Target-Group Specific Programs



3.1 Equitable Education Guarantee System Development

Target Group	In-school and out-of-school children (ages 2-14)	Key Result Areas
<p>Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are still preschool-age children who are not enrolled in early childhood development centers/kindergartens. • Physical development of poor children (weight and height) is below the growth standard for age. • Many children of compulsory school age have dropped out of school, affecting the country both economically and socially. • The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the number of poor and extremely poor students to rise and put them at greater risk of dropping out of school, especially those in transition phases (Kindergarten 3, Grade 6, Grade 9, and Grade 12). 	
<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Access Develop a system to guarantee equality in educational opportunities for the poor and disadvantaged students. • System Change Reform work system, related mechanism, and information for resource allocation, surveillance, and monitoring while promoting systematic forwarding. 	<p>G1</p> <p>G4</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop models, including (1) equity-based budgeting and (2) information system for equitable education, to support school-aged children in poor and disadvantaged families to complete compulsory education or higher. • Develop and deliver a model of an early warning system for school dropout prevention to nodal education agencies. 	<p>G1, O1</p> <p>G4, O5</p>

Target Group	In-school and out-of-school children (ages 2-14)	Key Result Areas
<p>Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support policy and education reform recommendations and collaborate with government, local, and private organizations to mobilize resources for target populations. 	<p>G4, O4</p>
<p>Program-Level Results</p>	<p>National Level</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The school dropout rate of the target population decreases. <p>Area Level/Program Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration at the local level to implement an early warning system for school dropout prevention. Research that analyzes situations and barriers to enrolling and retaining in school among poor and disadvantaged students to be used in developing policy recommendations. Screening and support systems to assist poor and disadvantaged students to have access to scholarships or other resources more effectively. A system to effectively monitor, assist, and support poor and disadvantaged students to access scholarships. 	<p>G1, K1, K2</p> <p>G1, K1, K2, K10</p> <p>G4, K8</p> <p>G1, G4, K1, K9, K10</p> <p>G1, G4, K1, K8</p>

Target Group	In-school and out-of-school children (ages 2-14)	Key Result Areas
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Screen target students in early childhood to compulsory education for poverty and disadvantage. 2) Research and develop guidelines/measures to reduce barriers to enrolling and retaining in school. 3) Use databases to encourage collaboration to drive policy-level solutions that fit the specific local context. 4) Develop an early warning system together with student support centers and nodal agencies. 5) Support information for developing (1) a support system to help students with poverty, health, learning, and behavior issues and (2) a model for evaluating the equitable education guarantee system. 6) Develop an information referral system together with vocational and higher education agencies and make referrals to increase opportunities for poor students to further their education at a higher level through scholarships from various sources, such as the government, private, and civil society sectors. 7) Work together with partners to provide scholarships and develop the target group to reach their full potential. 	

3.2 Post-Compulsory Training for Youth Quality Development

Target Group	Youth in post-compulsory education (ages 15-24)	Key Result Areas
<p>Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of the poorest children and resilient students that have access to post-compulsory education is very low compared to the national average. Educational programs do not meet the labor market demand and the skills being taught are not aligned with what is needed in today's jobs. The quality of educational establishments is still a problem, affecting the achievement and quality of learners. It needs to be addressed and improved. 	
<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Access Poor and disadvantaged students have access to educational opportunities after the compulsory level and are prevented from dropping out after. G1 Learning Outcome Poor and disadvantaged students have opportunities for life and career that can develop self-reliant and life skills that are suitable for the modern world. G2 System Change Responsible for poor and disadvantaged students, personnel, and learning and teaching system to have the ability and create performance in accordance with the demands of the career market. G4 	

Target Group	Youth in post-compulsory education (ages 15-24)	Key Result Areas
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and assist economically disadvantaged youth to access opportunities for furthering post-compulsory education to develop knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the workplace. • Improve the training of vocational workers that meet the needs of economic and social development and build human capacity to drive toward Thailand 4.0 through strengthening target educational establishments that provide quality learning and develop competencies and quality of life for youth. • Build experience-based knowledge for promoting educational opportunities and developing educational establishments, identify driving factors, and compile work experiences for relevant organizations. • Direct and undertake policy and social advocacy to promote: (1) access to education, (2) youth skills development, and (3) improvement of post-compulsory education quality. 	<p>G1, O1, O2</p> <p>G2, O2</p> <p>G4, O4</p> <p>G4, O4</p>
Program-Level Results	<p>National Level</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Poor/disadvantaged students supported by EEF can access education and vocational training at the post-compulsory level. 	<p>G1, O1, K2, K3</p>

Target Group	Youth in post-compulsory education (ages 15-24)	Key Result Areas
<p>Program-Level Results</p>	<p>Area Level/Program Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Poor/disadvantaged students complete post-compulsory education without dropping out. 3) Educational establishments are able to prevent the risk of students dropping out before they complete their programs. 4) Offer more scholarships for post-compulsory education and vocational training for poor/disadvantaged students. 5) A system to effectively monitor, assist, and support poor and disadvantaged students to access scholarships. 	<p>G1, O1, K3</p> <p>G1, O1, K2, K3</p> <p>G1, G2, O1, O2, K2, K3</p> <p>G4, K8</p>
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<p>For students</p> <p>Provide guidance to students, promote access to learning, and coordinate with funding sources such as government, private, and nonprofit organizations to deliver basic and vocational education opportunities to target students, especially vocational programs that are aligned with the direction of national economic and social development.</p> <p>For educational establishments</p> <p>Support the development of the following: (1) an early warning system for school dropout prevention, (2) work integrated learning curriculum and process, (3) collaboration with entrepreneurs and potential employers, and (4) standard testing and evaluation to ensure competencies required by employers as well as 21st-century, digital, and entrepreneurship skills.</p>	

Target Group	Youth in post-compulsory education (ages 15-24)	Key Result Areas
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<p>For collaboration with other organization outside educational establishments</p> <p>Conduct research and lessons learned to summarize key knowledge and innovation, such as budgeting, co-financing, and co-funding, and develop education and training models to provide learners with hard or entrepreneurship skills, which can drive results in nodal agencies. Develop communication campaigns to change attitudes in target audience toward the value of vocational education and employment. Direct and undertake policy advocacy to enhance the image of vocational education and improve the quality of education through successful models, such as a collaboration model for education management between educational establishments and businesses.</p>	

3.3 Whole School Development

Target Group	Teachers, management, and education programs in medium educational establishments	Key Result Areas
<p>Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in rural schools have lagged behind their urban peers by two school years. • Teachers’ pedagogy does not keep up with rapid changes in the modern world, and learner achievement varies with teacher’s teaching quality. • The dropout rate of among at-risk students is rising, especially transition students (Kindergarten 3, Grade 6, and Grade 9). • Learning loss due to the COVID-19 outbreak has caused students to lose learning, including knowledge and skills, equivalent to at least one school year. 	
<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Outcome School has a high capacity to manage quality education through teaching and learning which is suitable for the 21st century. • Access Learning Quality system for all students which includes preventing and monitoring students from dropping out of the education system. • System Change School model which has autonomy and readiness for systematic self-management and forwards the transformation model to policy agencies or related sectors. 	<p>G2</p> <p>G1</p> <p>G4</p>

Target Group	Teachers, management, and education programs in medium educational establishments	Key Result Areas
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop medium schools into “self-improving schools.” • Develop competencies of school personnel to enable them to manage learning and support students to develop academic, soft, and hard skills. • Add learning spaces/learning platforms with diverse formats or innovations and improve factors necessary to enhance learning outcomes that respond to changing situations and accommodate changes in learning models. • Implement an early warning system to prevent at-risk students from dropping out of school and integrate a database together with school partners. 	<p>G4, O4</p> <p>G2, O2</p> <p>G2, O2</p> <p>G1, O1</p>
Program-Level Results	<p>National Level</p> <p>1) Self-improving medium schools are able to facilitate learning that allows students to develop according to their capabilities and needs until they complete compulsory education.</p> <p>Area Level/Program Plan</p> <p>2) Students in target schools have higher academic achievement; listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills needed for effective communication; and soft and hard skills that meet the needs of the local community context.</p>	<p>G4, O4, K8</p> <p>G2, O2, K4</p>

Target Group	Teachers, management, and education programs in medium educational establishments	Key Result Areas
<p>Program-Level Results</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) School administrators and teachers are capable of using an information system for managing schools and classrooms to enable continuous whole school development. 4) The early warning system can monitor individual at-risk students and can forward information to other classrooms/schools effectively. 5) There are a variety of new learning spaces to accommodate changing learning models and develop academic, soft, and hard skills for students. 6) The self-improving school model is used to drive results in other schools systematically. 	<p>G2, O2, K5</p> <p>G1, O1, K3</p> <p>G2, O2, K4</p> <p>G4, O4, K10</p>
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Support collaboration with partners focusing on harvesting outcomes and lessons learned to drive results further. 2) Support collaboration with policy agencies to (1) develop a mechanism for school development at the local level, (2) work with stakeholders to further pedagogical innovations with the goal of better supporting the learning of students with different needs, and (3) support policy dialogues. 3) Support the use of an information system to benefit classrooms, schools, and nodal agencies. Develop a variety of evaluation systems for different groups of children/students. Support the preparation for competency-based curriculum in target schools. Promote innovative learning approaches so that students can design their learning for furthering education or pursuing a career. 4) Drive results of the self-improving school model in other schools, such as BPPB schools, Pariyat Dhamma schools, and small schools by applying the Fundamental School Quality Level (FSQL) to the Thai context. 	

Target Group	Teachers, management, and education programs in medium educational establishments	Key Result Areas
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<p>5) Develop a self-assessment system and school quality assurance system; an education volunteer system to work together with parents and communities; a new learning approach and modern media that upskill students in at least compulsory education and basic education, and an active guidance system that enables learners to discover themselves and see the importance of furthering education at a higher level.</p>	

3.4 Teacher Training for Protected Schools

Target Group	Teachers and education programs in protected educational establishments	Key Result Areas
<p>Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current teacher production system does not address the shortage of teachers in protected schools and lacks effective planning. The teacher placement system has resulted in up to 80 percent of non-local teachers in local areas, causing high rates of teacher turnover which directly disrupts the academic attainment of students in remote areas. The teacher development and support system are not consistent with the teaching context in protected schools. 	
<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access Learning Support opportunities for students' access to quality education in the locality while monitoring and preventing students, teachers, and new generation teachers not to drop out of the education system or learning management units at each level. Learning Outcome The quality of students and teachers in remote school areas is consistent with work conditions. School personnel has an appropriate level of learning management skills which need in remote school areas. Then students can have a higher learning outcome. System Change Have model institutes for developing teachers in both quantity and quality which meets the needs in remote areas. In addition, there is a new teachers' production and development system that has been developed and tested while providing reliable assessment. It can assist in terms of course learning, guidelines for teaching and learning management, development of teachers, and administration. 	<p>G1</p> <p>G4</p> <p>G2</p>

Target Group	Teachers and education programs in protected educational establishments	Key Result Areas
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a new model of teacher production that can be upgraded to a policy recommendation for the “pilot teacher training institution” within three years. • Improve the quality of protected schools to prepare school administrators and teachers to manage schools and pedagogy and develop schools together with communities with the goal of enabling students to access quality education. • Improve the pedagogical management system so that protected schools are able to meet the fundamental school quality level both in terms of teaching equipment and school management. 	<p>G4, O4</p> <p>G2, O2</p> <p>G2, O2</p>
Program-Level Results	<p>National Level</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Extremely poor students in remote areas have opportunities to study in higher education until graduation and are placed as teachers in target schools. 2) Teachers in protected schools, such as BPPB and non-formal teachers, who do not have professional teaching qualifications have access to learning for self-improvement to be able to manage learning for students and support new-generation teachers effectively. 	<p>G2, O2, K5</p> <p>G4, O4, O5, K8, K10</p>

Target Group	Teachers and education programs in protected educational establishments	Key Result Areas
<p>Program-Level Results</p>	<p>Area Level/Program Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Protected/standalone schools have sufficient number of quality teachers and can be upgraded to community learning centers. 4) Education volunteers in communities work together with teachers and parents to support the learning of students in protected schools. 5) Thailand's teacher database that can be used to support teacher workforce planning and teacher training at the local level. 6) A pilot teacher training institution that can produce and develop high-quality teachers (closed system) to work effectively in protected schools, taking into consideration differences in remote areas and restrictions. 	<p>G1, O1, K3</p> <p>G2, O2, K5</p> <p>G2, O2, K4, K5, K10</p> <p>G4, O5, K8, K9</p>
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Support the provision of educational opportunities for extremely poor students to allow them to study in order to return to teach in their hometowns under the Homegrown Teacher Scholarship Program and expand results to other protected schools with different contexts. 2) Develop protected schools into a professional teacher training unit together with medium and large schools by supporting measures to develop schools in new dimensions, which will lead to a policy recommendation and collaboration with the pilot teacher training institution. 3) Action research aiming to (1) promote the Fundamental School Quality Level (FSQL) for protected schools, (2) develop a system for monitoring homegrown teacher scholarship students and the performance of new-generation teachers, and (3) work together with protected schools to develop a community education volunteer system to support learning and a credit bank for lifelong teacher development. 	

Target Group	Teachers and education programs in protected educational establishments	Key Result Areas
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="467 353 1401 517">4) Support the development of mechanisms for smart teacher training together with the private sector and international organizations and promote results of successful private school education development models or approaches. <li data-bbox="467 555 1401 629">5) Support lessons learned to improve, change, and develop an education system at the national and local levels. <li data-bbox="467 667 1401 831">6) Develop a teacher database together with relevant agencies to share information in order to (1) support the improvement of teacher quality and (2) develop an effective teacher training system for protected schools. 	

3.5 Out-of-School Youth and Working-Age Adults Development

Target Group	Out-of-school youth and working-age adults (ages 15 and older)	Key Result Areas
<p>Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are more than 16.1 million youth and working-age adults who have completed lower secondary education or lower. Most of them are informal workers, engaging in semi-skilled or unskilled labor with no income security, and are excluded from social protection. They have been hit hard by the transition to Thailand 4.0 and the COVID-19 pandemic. • In 2019, the number of youths in the NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training) category in Thailand reached 1.3 million, or 14 percent of the total number of Thai youths, and the figure keeps increasing by 1 percent every year. 	
<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative Education — Youths who lacking of opportunities to develop higher potential skills 	<p>G3</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for out-of-school youth and working-age adults to return to school or receive vocational training to allow them to gain knowledge and skills required for jobs. • Build capacity for communities and related organizations and develop teachers to provide flexible learning to out-of-school youth and working-age adults for career development and better quality of life. 	<p>G3, 03</p>

Target Group	Out-of-school youth and working-age adults (ages 15 and older)	Key Result Areas
<p>Program-Level Results</p>	<p>National Level</p> <p>1) Out-of-school youth and working-age adults targeted by EEF have opportunities to develop their soft and hard skills to become self-reliant, be able to support their families, or become youth/community leaders.</p> <p>Area Level/Program Plan</p> <p>2) Local agencies have a pilot community-based vocational training center that is able to provide learning and soft, social, and vocational skills that respond to economic, social, and community development, and have a learning system connecting with formal, non-formal, and informal education.</p> <p>3) Out-of-school teacher training programs to enable teachers to teach diverse out-of-school youth. The programs are managed by out-of-school teachers and should provide teachers with a secure career path and recognition from communities and society.</p> <p>4) Relevant national, provincial, and local agencies use performance and skills assessment results of the target populations to develop a strategic plan/budget plan to promote, support, and assist target groups. There are agency databases, learning resources, learning programs, and local careers that help to match skills development and jobs, as well as policies, support guidelines, and financing tools such as investment for self-employment.</p>	<p>G4, O5, K10</p> <p>G3, O3, K6</p> <p>G3, O3, K7</p> <p>G3, O3, K6, K7</p>

Target Group	Out-of-school youth and working-age adults (ages 15 and older)	Key Result Areas
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Support strategic grants through databases and collaboration with expert partners to assist target groups in addition to offering competitive grants. 2) Develop a model for a community-based learning process, taking into consideration the surrounding environment of the target group, including their families and communities, and other factors such as databases, suitable technologies, economic chain, and learning process improvement to develop youth into youth or community leaders. 3) Conduct research to study a learning system model that connects with formal, non-formal, and informal education. Develop a skills survey to design learning spaces that meet the needs of working-age adults. 4) Develop model out-of-school teachers capable of creating learning tools, knowledge kits, courses, or work innovations for supporting and assisting out-of-school youth. 5) Develop a referral database between partners, such as NFE, Department of Skill Development, Department of Children and Youth, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, and Department of Local Administration, with a focus on transition students. Work together with policy, legal, and media partners to promote alternative education public policy advocacy and support out-of-school teachers who play a role in mobilizing local partnerships. 6) Develop agency databases, learning resources, learning programs, and careers. Develop networks and analyze support to the target group to be used as input for promoting lifelong learning for career development. Develop a policy platform and organize communication campaigns to promote the value and image of the target group. 	

3.6 Area-Based Education for Reducing Inequality

Target Group	Populations of all ages, especially economically disadvantaged and underprivileged children and youth, both in-school and out-of-school, and educational units at the provincial level or sub-level.	Key Result Areas
Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure quality education and reduce educational disparity, it is necessary to downsize the scale of management that is in line with the direction and movements of successful countries. Thailand's policies tend to focus on participation from the provincial-level sectors. 	
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems Change Thailand has made a systematic change to create educational equality 	G4
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore integrated models for promoting educational opportunities at the provincial level or sub-level to test an education model managed principally by local people. Integrate resources from EEF and other local sources to test the feasibility of the "Learning City" concept to find a suitable model for implementation. 	G4, O4 G4, O5
Program-Level Results	<p>National Level</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Inequality or local educational data is used as a framework or criteria for budget allocation to local areas, and various sectors participate in area-based education management to reduce inequality. 	G4, O4, K9

Target Group	Populations of all ages, especially economically disadvantaged and underprivileged children and youth, both in-school and out-of-school, and educational units at the provincial level or sub-level.	Key Result Areas
<p>Program-Level Results</p>	<p>Area Level/Program Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Provinces are able to manage and integrate resources and budgets within the province to reduce educational disparities. 3) Line agencies and partners at the provincial or local level are able to implement educational reforms to reduce inequality in the long run. 4) The educational disparity situation of the target groups of EEF in model provinces improves. 	<p>G4, O5, K9, K10</p> <p>G4, O4, O5, K10</p> <p>G4, O4, K8</p>
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Promote education reforms to reduce inequality at the provincial level through participatory action research (PAR) and area-based mechanisms in 10 provinces. The results are synthesized into a model for further national scale-up. 2) Conduct research on budget and investment in education at the provincial level. 3) Build capacity for provinces to enable them to develop common goals, area-based education development plans to reduce educational disparities, and educational opportunity guarantee models for the target group, with a focus on developing tools, information systems, provincial management systems, systems research, and policy advocacy to support implementation and expanding results. 4) Improve public forums that prioritize dialogue between organizations and sectors, both at the provincial and inter-provincial level, to lead to implementation, provincial education development planning, and development of area-based education databases and processes to reduce inequality at the provincial level. 	

Target Group	Populations of all ages, especially economically disadvantaged and underprivileged children and youth, both in-school and out-of-school, and educational units at the provincial level or sub-level.	Key Result Areas
Operating Guidelines	5) Support provinces to become principal drivers and play a leading role in communicating and advocating policies to reduce educational disparities, developing a database model, and allocating budget and resources at the provincial level	

3.7 Management

The operating model under the EEF Strategic Plan 2022 - 2024 is built on the **theory of change**, **experience** obtained from the operations of EEF over the first three years, and future trends. The key conditions are the assumption that the annual budget allocated by the government to EEF is dropping, which is expected to be about 5,000 - 10,000 million baht per year, and the situation of educational disparity that is likely to worsen due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the above conditions, EEF will spend a major portion of its budget on direct support to target groups. Another portion will be allocated to implementations that can produce high impacts, which requires information and knowledge to develop education reform recommendations to enable systems change. The operating model consists of three parts: active strategic planning, structure management, and organizational management.

3.7.1 Active Strategic Planning

For the next three years (FY2022 - 2024), EEF's active strategic planning will focus on producing impacts for two of its target groups: **educationally underprivileged children and youth and teachers.**

The conditions of these target groups can be summarized below:

Target Group 1 - Educationally underprivileged children and youth

Educationally underprivileged children and youth refer to children and youth of early childhood age to 24 years from the poorest families in the bottom 15 percent of Thailand's income distribution, including those underprivileged due to reasons other than an economic disadvantage. **It is estimated that the number of these children and youth will reach 2.8 million in the next three years (FY2022 - 2024).**

There are three reasons for using poverty as the key factor to identify this target group.

(1) Poor families often suffer from other disadvantages associated with poverty, such as poor health, social insecurity, legal problems, and living conditions. In addition, poverty deprives children and youth from those families of a quality education. Therefore, supporting educational opportunities for these children and youth can help address other disadvantages associated with poverty.⁵

(2) Targeting children and youth from the poorest families over the course of the first 5 - 10 years will allow EEF to use its limited resources to produce tangible results expected by society without spreading too thin that it is difficult to achieve anything.

(3) Children and youth may be educationally underprivileged due to other reasons, such as improper environment or living conditions, ineffective pedagogies that prevent students from accessing quality education or learning, and the health of learners or their families.

Target Group 2 - Teachers

Teachers refer to individuals who teach students, which is not limited to those in public schools or having a professional teaching certificate under Section 3 of the EEF Act. In its mission, EEF gives importance to teachers who teach economically disadvantaged children and youths (ages 3 - 24) in the bottom 15 percent, including other children and youth who are underprivileged due to other reasons.

Because teachers are one of the key mechanisms in driving change for children and youth, EEF does not separate teacher development from target group development. That is to say, EEF supports the development of teachers to enable them to produce impacts for children and youth.

Teachers who are the target group of EEF can be classified as follows:

(1) Compulsory school teachers teach and support poor and extremely poor students in compulsory education (ages 3-15). About 100,000 teachers teach in small and medium schools in rural areas (out of a total of 500,000 teachers).

(2) Post-compulsory school teachers teach poor and extremely poor students, ages 15-24, in general and vocational education.

(3) Out-of-school teachers teaching poor children of compulsory school age (ages 3-15) who are out of school and youth aged 15 - 24 years who have discontinued their studies. They are not affiliated with any educational establishment but may be affiliated with non-governmental agencies such as foundations that work with target groups.

⁵ Source: Preliminary analysis by the Independent Committee for Education Reform (ICER).

3.7.2 Structure Management

Structure management focuses on coordinating mechanisms under all operating structures to produce results for target groups to ensure that project designs and plans are aligned with and cover the target quadrants. It also connects mechanisms in different parts to allow them to effectively promote educational opportunities for target groups.⁶

Structure management can be summarized as shown in the Figure below.



⁶ For more information, see Appendix A.

3.7.3 Organizational Management

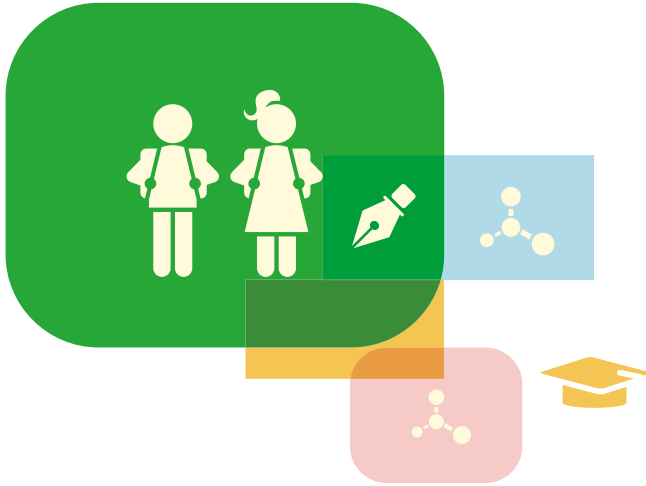
Target Group	Organization System Mission and Governance Implementation Efficiency	Key Result Areas
<p>Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure and skills of middle-level personnel are so limited that they do not align with the organizational strategies that require a high proportion of middle-level personnel (shifted diamond structure) in order to produce high impacts. At the same time, a heavy administrative workload has caused personnel to struggle to balance their time for high-impact tasks. Risk management, internal control, and compliance processes are being planned and developed to meet the organization and international standards. Information technology system is still in the early stages of development to ensure that it can support operations, reduce administrative workload, and comply with rules and regulations. Although the EEF Act allows EEF to raise funds or receive financial support from other sources, EEF relies mainly on budget from the government. Its spending continues to focus on supporting and assisting the target group at scale while the probability of getting more budget in the future is slim. 	
<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization System/the efficiency to proceed the mission and good governance 	<p>G4</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>Manage in a way that allows for monitoring and timely supporting the target group under the principles of good governance as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> People and Partnership: Working together with partners to develop innovations and knowledge that lead to policy change. 	<p>O4</p>

Target Group	Organization System Mission and Governance Implementation Efficiency	Key Result Areas
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Process: Planning, managing, and supervising to ensure a speedy, cost-effective, and governance-driven work process. 3. Technology: Adopting technology to help the organization, programs, and partners reduce educational disparities. 	
Program-Level Results	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) EEF has high-performing staff members, able to work together with external personnel to produce social impacts. The organization system should have a shifted diamond structure with a recruitment and retention process focusing on developing middle-level personnel. 2) EEF and its partners have a performance and audit reporting process that demonstrates compliance with the principles of good governance and effective risk management. 3) EEF has an evaluation system in place to evaluate its overall performance and project implementation in driving systems change or policy recommendations and a monitoring system to monitor the situation of inequality in human resources and education on a regular basis. 4) Budget disbursement is efficient, cost-effective, and timely as scheduled in the action plan. EEF is able to mobilize additional resources from other sources and has innovative financing mechanisms that are effective. 	G4, O4, K8, K10

Target Group	Organization System Mission and Governance Implementation Efficiency	Key Result Areas
<p>Program-Level Results</p>	<p>5) The information and information technology systems of EEF are safe and secure in compliance with laws. They are a reference source for research, and can be used to drive missions of the organization and create a space to promote learning and reduce educational disparities through partnerships with the private sector and organizations with expertise in information technology</p>	
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<p>Personnel Management</p> <p>Attract high-performing people to join the organization to drive high-impact work through hiring or partnership.</p> <p>Management and Governance</p> <p>Streamline the office support, management, and governance processes and develop an operating manual together with partners.</p> <p>Budget and Finance</p> <p>Develop a system for analyzing strategic budgeting for target groups by monitoring budget disbursement through the project management system developed by EEF. Pilot the innovative financing program to raise new funds for operations.</p> <p>Evaluation System</p> <p>Develop databases, especially a demographic database of EEF’s target groups. Collect databases from various agencies both in the country and abroad to monitor the human resource inequality situation. Develop a system for assessing information of various projects. Encourage partners to use the databases of EEF to drive research, development, policy recommendations, and evaluation for improving operations to support and assist target groups.</p>	

Target Group	Organization System Mission and Governance Implementation Efficiency	Key Result Areas
<p>Operating Guidelines</p>	<p>Information Technology System</p> <p>Develop the information technology implementation plan to help reduce quantitative workload and reduce the risk of operational errors in accordance with the principles of information technology management. Linking information both within and outside of the organization. Seek collaboration with the private sector and organizations that specialize in developing platforms to promote learning and reduce inequality.</p>	

4. Appendix



A. Theory of Change

This Three-Year Strategic Plan is built on EEF's "*Theory of Change*" as follows:

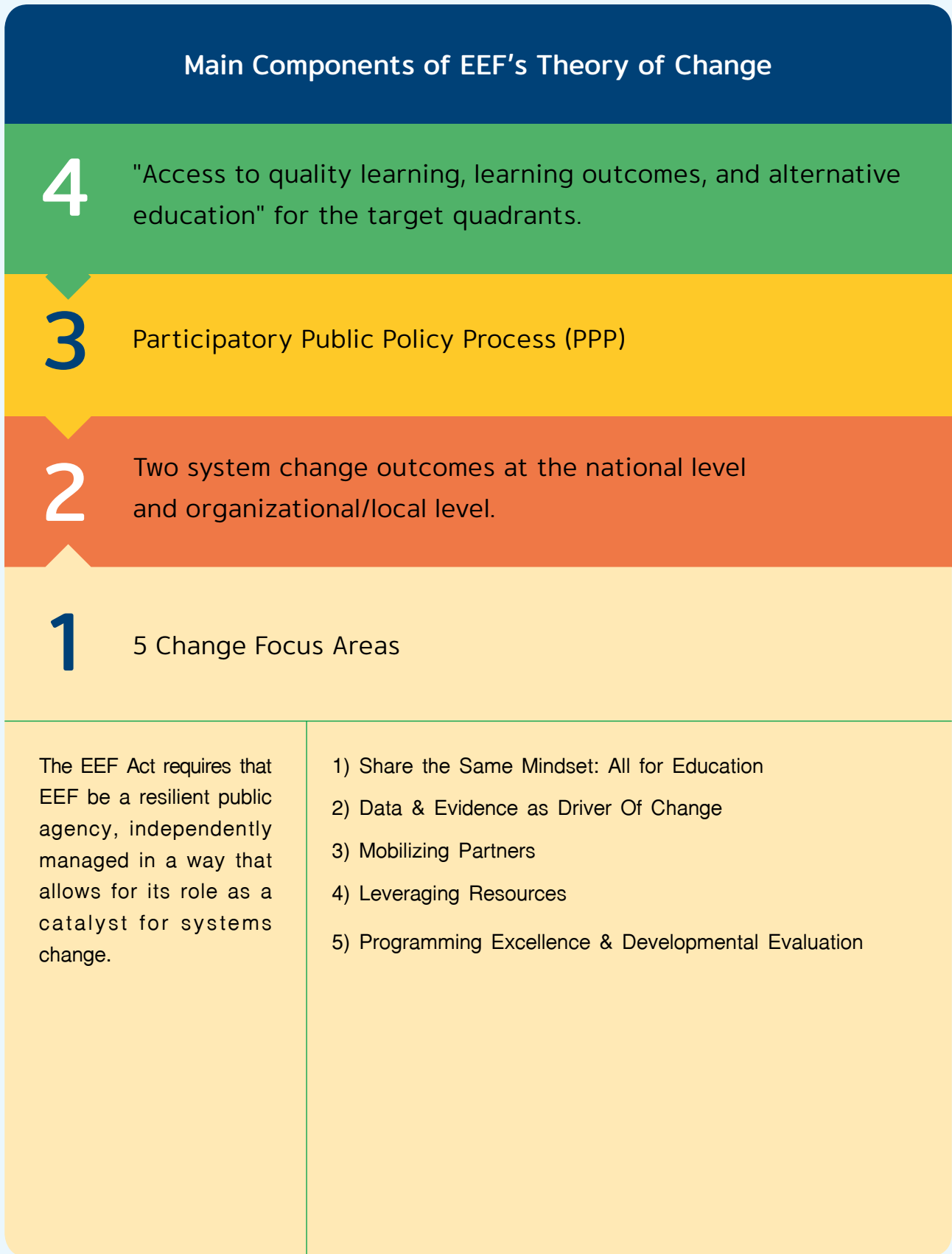
• Concept

Reducing educational disparities and creating equitable education is a complex national issue that has been deeply rooted in Thai society. As a small agency when compared to the scale of the problem, EEF cannot solve this issue alone.

However, the analysis of stakeholders involved in reducing educational disparities and creating equitable education within the "ecology of equitable education" found that these stakeholders consist of many governmental, private, and civil society organizations with varying missions, roles, resources, and legal obligations, all working toward educational development goals. These organizations are our valuable "capital" that can support each other to work toward a common goal under an effective management system capable of driving educational reforms in line with the spirit of the Constitution.

For this reason, EEF has strategically positioned itself as a "**catalyst for systems change**" with the belief that enabling collaboration between partners will lead to a better system for reducing inequality caused by economic, social, and educational disparities and producing positive impacts for the target population, starting with the sample population in the pioneering phase and driving results further within a reasonable time period.

This concept forms the basis for developing EEF's theory of change comprising different components as shown below.



• Goal Areas for Change

EEF has set two goal areas for change: change to target group and systems change leading to change to target group, as follows:

Systems Change

Systems change is the goal area that aims to produce outcomes. EEF will act as a “catalyst” for systems change at two levels.

(1) **Organizational or local level:** (schools, educational establishments, provinces, localities, or administrative units), At this level, EEF will encourage partner agencies to work together to improve and transform the education system within a short period of time, as well as to verify results and harvest knowledge and lessons learned from implementations.

(2) **National level:** This level means public policies or systems (e.g., educational measures, resource allocation, regulations, laws, and fiscal measures). In some cases, EEF may find opportunities to promote systems change at the national level right from the start. At the same time, EEF is also aware that in some cases, the right timing is everything. This is because changes at the national level often follow positive changes at the organizational or local level when environmental factors permit.

The link between these two levels is the key to producing changes toward the desired goals. EEF believes that the key factors for achieving success are: (1) **strategic target** that is clearly defined and responds to the problem of the target group, (2) **participation** of line agencies that own public policies from start to finish, and (3) **organizational competency and status** that is resilient as required by the EEF Act. EEF’s internal competency must be aligned with its goals and can manage processes with high efficiency.

For this reason, EEF has set its development goals for the fourth to sixth years with a focus on the poorest children and youths (ages 3 - 24) in the bottom 15 percent, as well as other underprivileged children and youth, numbering 2.8 million in total. Subsequently, EEF has classified problems by target group in order to formulate a plan that effectively addresses the biggest problem in each target group.

How EEF Sets the Goals for Change

The positive impacts on target groups that EEF has set as the final goals in its efforts to reduce educational disparities are a result of the empirical analysis that has led to identifying the target quadrants that reflect the problem of educational disparity in Thailand. EEF has used these findings to design a scenario of change aimed at producing significant impacts on children, youth, and people who are economically disadvantaged and educationally underprivileged, as follows:

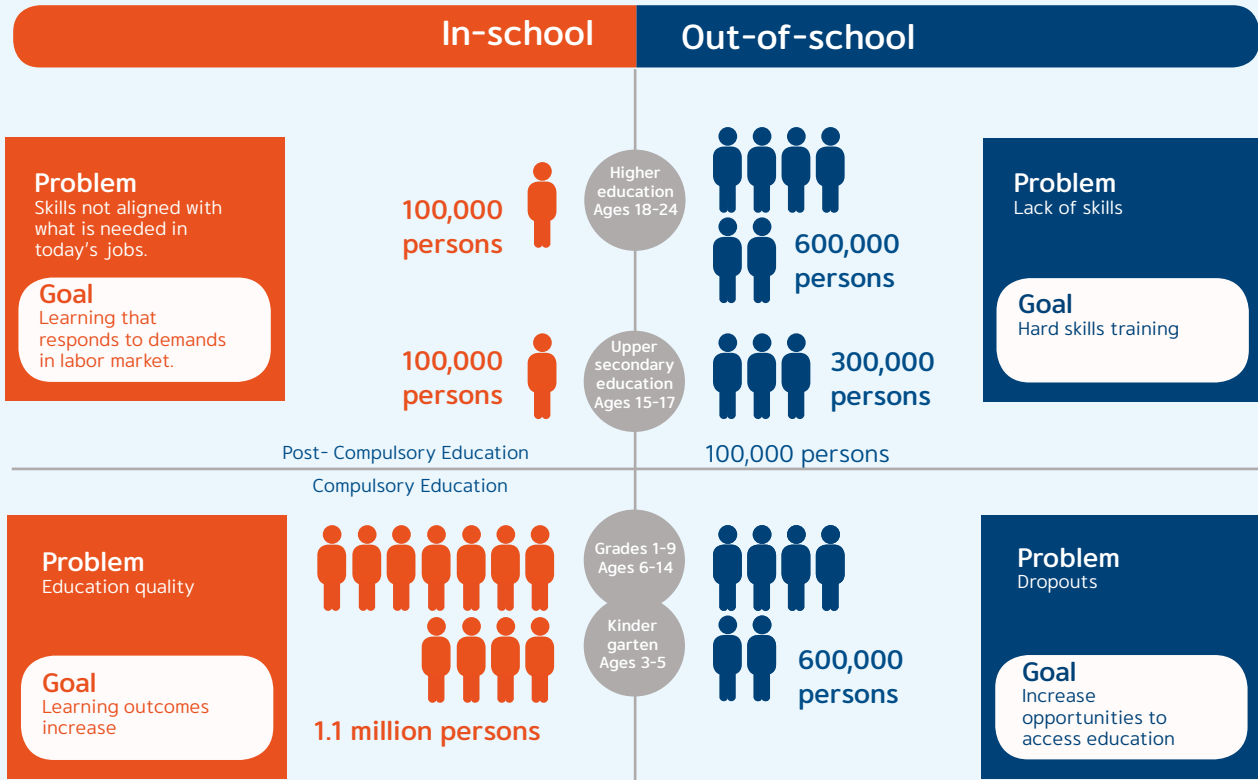
1. Poor and extremely poor students in compulsory education: This includes those from pre-primary education (ages 3-5) to compulsory education (age 15). The key goals for this target group are to improve their education quality and prevent them from dropping out of school.

2. Poor children who are out of school: This includes children of compulsory school age who are out of school, accounting for up to one-third of the total number of poor children. This group of children is the most difficult to help get back to school.

3. Poor and extremely poor students aged 15 - 24 years: These 200,000 students are in upper secondary education or vocational education. They tend to stay in school for one to three years, after which they will enter the labor market. Many will become low-skilled workers and have low incomes throughout life.

4. Youth aged 15 - 24 years who have discontinued their studies including working-age adults: Most of them have completed compulsory education or lower. This group of youth has the highest cumulative number. They are likely to become unskilled or low-skilled workers with low incomes and fall into a cycle of intergenerational poverty. Currently, the Thai labor market has up to 60 percent of unskilled informal workers, which is the main factor that drags down the country's competitiveness.

Figure Showing EEF's Target Quadrants



Source: Equitable Education Research Institute. Analysis based on databases of the Department of Provincial Administration and Office of the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Education, 2019.





Change to Target Group

Change to target group is the goal area that aims to produce impacts. It is identified based on the results of the analysis of strategic targets in the fourth to sixth years. The main problem facing each target group can be translated into the goals to be achieved for these groups as follows:

- (1) Children, youth, and adults have equal **learning access**.
- (2) Children, youth, and adults have higher **learning outcomes**, especially in 21st-century skills.
- (3) Out-of-school youth and adults are able to

receive vocational and soft skills training fit for the 21st century through community-based **alternative education** that meets their interests.

The role of EEF as a catalyst for systems change aim to balance between its role as an **“enabler”** to facilitate collaboration between partners and public-policy agencies and its role as a **“responsible agency”** that carries out the mission as assigned by the EEF Act.

EEF will enable collaboration among its partners through a **participatory public policy process (PPP)** to drive collaborative efforts toward systems change and the three impacts outlined above.

• Principles for Change

From its operations in the past three years, EEF has identified the **five focus areas for change**⁷ and driven the operating process through the

“intervention value chain”⁸ conceptual framework to leverage all results in an integrated manner, as follows:

⁷ Based on the analysis of the operations during the first three years (FY 2019 - 2021).

⁸ Results of the study by the consulting firm Roland Berger (2021).

• The operating process under the “intervention value chain” conceptual framework

The “Intervention Value Chain” is one of the concepts for EEF’s public policy advocacy to accelerate systems change and enable cross-sector collaboration to reduce educational disparities and create equitable education. It covers key processes for producing

systems change, from Generate Intervention to Pilot & Incubate, Scale & Accelerate, Policy Advocacy, Monitor & Evaluation, and Operate, as shown in the Figure below.



B. Situations of Target Groups and Topics to Address

1. School-age children (ages 2-14)

1.1 Situation and Trend: About 21 percent of preschool-age children have not attended early childhood education.

The cost of preschool enrollment is 6,833 baht/person/year.

A drop in family income due to the COVID-19 pandemic has made these children less likely to enroll in preschool.

Topic to Address:

Coordinate with nodal agencies, Child Support Grant Program, early childhood development centers, and preschools to implement measures to support poor/extremely poor preschool-age children to enroll in school.

Early childhood years present a “window of opportunity for learning and development” because this period is when the brain is most open to learning. In 2019, there were 2,818,408 preschool-age children (ages 2 - 5) in Thailand, but 587,155 (21 percent) of these children were not enrolled in early childhood development centers or kindergartens due partly to family financial difficulties. The average cost of sending children to preschools is 6,833 baht/person/year, while poor preschool-age children’s families have average expenses of 12,824-16,467 baht/person/year. Children aged 2 have the highest cost because the government does not provide education aid.⁹

Due to barriers to accessing early childhood education, only 48.5 percent of poor children are literate, while 76.4 percent of their wealthy peers are literate. It also is found that only 14.2 percent of poor families have at least three children’s books.¹⁰

⁹ 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), National Statistical Office (NSO) in collaboration with UNICEF Thailand.

¹⁰ Screening and Individual Budgeting Model Development Project for Disadvantaged In-School and Out-of-School Children, 2020, Thammasat University and Equitable Education Fund.

1.2 Situation and Trend: The COVID-19 situation has caused the number of poor students to increase and put them at greater risk of dropping out of school before completing compulsory education.

Topic to Address:

Collaborate with nodal compulsory education agencies across the country to develop a system and measures to prevent dropout from compulsory education, especially during transition phases (Kindergarten 3, Grade 6, Grade 9, Grade 12).

The dropout rates among at-risk students are rising. Due to economic and social impacts, the number of students dropping out of school before completing their basic education has doubled, especially among disadvantaged students.

The new wave of COVID-19 has severely affected people in low-income families, causing sudden poverty to increase by about 10 percent. It is estimated that the number of extremely poor students in Semesters 2/2021 and 1/2022 will reach 291,234. Transition students are at greater risk of dropping out in School Year 2021 - 2022. Among 294,454 transition students receiving conditional cash transfers in OBEC, LAO, and BPPB schools, 242,081 (82.21 percent) have continued their studies and 43,060 students (14.6 percent) have dropped out.¹¹

2. Youth in post-compulsory education

Situation and Trend: The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of poor students, who are more likely to leave school after completing compulsory education to pursue a career to support their families.

Topic to Address:

Collaborate with nodal agencies of formal and non-formal basic education across the country to develop flexible learning programs to provide youth with learning opportunities while pursuing their careers, as well as to pilot an alternative education model with the target group.

Poor youth still lack opportunities to continue their studies at a higher level. Only 53 percent of students in poor families have access to upper education, while only 10 percent of students in extremely poor families have access to higher education, which is similar to OECD's assessment of resilient students (13 percent).¹²

The student assessment program conducted by OECD found that 13 percent of students in Thailand's bottom socio-economic quartile are able to score in the top quartile of PISA tests. This percentage of resilient students is higher than the OECD average of 11 percent. It was also found that 81.49 percent of Thai resilient students hope to further their studies in universities. Therefore, if no referral measures are planned to promote educational opportunities for this group of students in the long run, it would result in a loss of human resources for the country.

¹¹ Extremely poor student screening results, Round 1, 23 July 2021.

¹² Dr. Poomsarun Thongliamnak, PISA, 2018, Equitable Education Research Institute

3. Pedagogical Quality and Teachers

3.1 Situation and Trend: Students in remote rural schools have lagged behind their urban peers by two school years.

Topic to Address:

How to reduce the difference in the quality of educational establishments that affects the quality of learners.

The study of learning outcomes of students in rural and urban schools found that rural students have lagged behind their urban peers by two school years, and this gap is likely to widen. Moreover, it was found that the reading literacy of Thai children continues to decline.¹³

The varying quality of schools in Thailand is a result of: (1) budgets or resources from the government to improve the quality of public schools do not take into account the actual development context; (2) pedagogical process by teachers and educators lacks active learning, causing students to be unable to develop their full potential; and (3) school administrators lack academic leadership and informed-management skills necessary for effective management.

Furthermore, systems issues and pedagogical methods that do not keep pace with changes in the 21st century also affect learning outcomes and quality of students. To reduce rural-urban disparity in students' academic performance, the following issues need to be addressed: (1) learning content, curricula, and teaching methods are not aligned with the skills needed for careers; (2) whole school quality assurance is ineffective; and (3) there are problems related to quality and effectiveness in work-integrated learning.

3.2 Situation and Trend: Education outputs lack skills highly needed in today's jobs.

Topic to Address:

How to manage teaching that responds to the labor market of Thailand 4.0.

The output of the education system affects the economy, as evident by the lack of skilled and competent workers that meet the needs of today's jobs and economic and social development to drive Thailand 4.0, especially highly-skilled vocational workers which is the key driver of economic growth. The demand for these skilled workers in the Eastern Special Development Zone alone has reached 83,183 people. However, the quantity and quality of graduates have remained insufficient. **Production of manpower to become entrepreneurs through the development of innovations, technologies, and new jobs, as well as the world of future learning**, such as vocational training programs, will help provide key solutions to this problem.

¹³ PISA 2012, 2015, 2018 conducted by OECD.



3.3 Situation and Trend: Learning loss due to the COVID-19 situation.

Topic to Address:

What measures should be taken in the post-COVID-19 to recover learning loss and promote technological opportunities?

Since 2020 - 2021, the COVID-19 situation has affected people all over the world in all dimensions, especially school closures which resulted significant learning losses for millions of children. For countries that have already faced decline in student achievement, the direct and indirect socioeconomic impacts have further disrupted student learning and forced schools or educational establishments to change how teaching and learning are organized. Changes in teaching and learning methods or even school management have posed a challenge to the country's education system.

Thailand School Readiness Survey Phase 4 Report 2021 shows that children in Kindergarten 3 have experienced severe learning losses due to the COVID-19 situation. Prolonged school closures have led to 90 percent learning loss, especially in mathematics and working memory (part of the executive function or EF). For instance, a school closure for more than five months would result in a learning loss equivalent to at least 4.5 months. This learning loss is a result of a comparison of school readiness among preschool children with varying school attendance because some provinces (4 out of 25) were locked down in January 2021.¹⁴

¹⁴ Thailand School Readiness Survey Phase 4 Report 2021, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Weerachart Kilenthong, principal investigator, and School of Early Childhood Education, University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce.

4. Informal workers

4.1 Situation and Trend: Up to 1.3 million out-of-school youth are not in employment.

Topic to Address:

What measures should be taken to develop and train disadvantaged or out-of-school youth to allow them to gain soft and hard skills to survive in the 21st century?

An analysis by the Thailand Development Research Institute found that Thailand is facing the problem of youth aged 15 - 24 not in education, employment, or training (NEET). In 2019, the number of NEET youth in Thailand reached 1.3 million, accounting for 14 percent of Thai youth and the figure continues to increase by 1 percent per year. This is in contrast to the number of Thai youths, which has decreased by 1.2 percent over the past decade.

About 65 percent of the NEET group are women, which is mainly a result of school-age pregnancy. According to statistics, 8 percent of the NEET group is stay-at-home women, half of which are married and have only completed secondary school.

Dr. Nicholas Burnett, an educational economist and former officer of UNESCO and World Bank, has estimated that out-of-school children will incur 330 billion baht of socio-economic damage to Thailand annually or 3 percent of GDP, which is equal to the country's average economic growth over the past decade. Although the Thai education system has a high investment, the situation of out-of-school children and youth continues to deteriorate in all parts of the country, jeopardizing the economic development opportunities that would allow Thailand to escape from the middle-income trap.





4.2 Situation and Trend: Most working-age adults are informal workers who are semi-skilled or unskilled without income security.

Topic to Address:

Upskill and reskill programs in response to economic and labor market demands.

More than 16.1 million working-age adults have completed lower secondary education or lower. Most of them are informal, semi-skilled or unskilled workers without income security and social protection. They have been hit hard by the transition from Thailand 3.0 to Thailand 4.0 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the Bank of Thailand's analysis, Thailand's overall productivity is low and has not increased in the recent years. The 2017 World Economic Forum reported that Thailand still has weaknesses, with skilled worker employment rate of only¹⁵ percent (ranked 93rd) of the total labor force. As such, unskilled and low-skilled workers are more likely to fall into a cycle of intergenerational poverty and drag down the country's competitiveness.

Upskill and reskill programs should be implemented to meet the economic and labor market demands. However, Thailand still has systems problems and ineffective management. Resource allocation and vocational training models are still limited and focus on basic skills and craftsmanship. Current vocational programs are not aligned with community economic development and labor market.

¹⁵ EEF's vision derives from the purpose of establishing the Equitable Education Fund as stated in the last paragraph of Section 54 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560.

