

# 10 Years of Building Good Teachers for Community Development: Local Conservation for Sustainable Development

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## Abstract

Loei Rajabhat University's Kru Rak Thin Project aims to produce and develop a new generation of teachers who are committed to reducing inequality and increasing educational opportunities for the needy and underprivileged. This project is a collaboration between the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) and Loei Rajabhat University. The project selects disadvantaged students from rural areas who have a passion for teaching and provides them with the opportunity to pursue a high-quality bachelor's degree. After graduation, these students return to their local communities to work as teachers. The Kru Rak Thin Project has selected 33 students from rural areas covering eight provinces, namely Buriram, Nakhon Ratchasima, Roi Et, Chaiyaphum, Mukdahan, Sakon Nakhon, Udon Thani, and Loei. The project began producing students in the academic year 2020, with the goal of creating competent and dedicated teachers for the community and fostering sustainable development. Loei Rajabhat University plans to continuously support and develop the selected students from the production stage until their recruitment as government teachers in local schools over a ten-year period. The university has designed the Kru Rak Thin Student Development Project (Enrichment Program) to meet the Teacher Professional Standards of 2019, the characteristics of Kru Rak Thin, and the identity of graduates of the Faculty of Education, Loei Rajabhat University. The project focuses on developing teachers who are passionate about their local communities and who possess the necessary qualities to build a sustainable settlement. The project follows a ten-year plan for the development of these teachers. In the first year, the emphasis is on teacher cultivation, while the second year focuses on being well-versed in teaching. The third year aims to develop innovative teaching methods, and the fourth year is dedicated to contributing to society. The fifth year focuses on becoming an assistant teacher, while the sixth year emphasizes knowledge acquisition and hard work. In the seventh year, the focus is on self-development and work development, while the eighth year is dedicated to teaching like a professional. The ninth year emphasizes community development, and the tenth year focuses on sustainable settlement development.

**Keywords:** community development, teacher education, local conservation, sustainable development, rural education

## 1. Introduction

Thai society can be classified into two main categories: urban society and rural society. Urban society is typically associated with Bangkok, its surrounding areas, and other secondary metropolises that hold a crucial role. Since the 3rd National Economic Development Plan, urban development in Thailand has focused on promoting the city's significance as a job hub and an economic powerhouse by effectively utilizing and managing resources in the region. However, this has resulted in an uneven division between urban and rural areas, which has led to persistent urban-rural disparities (Rabibhadana, 1969; Usavagovitwong et al., 2018; Cassaniti, 2019; Chatkaewnapanon & Lee, 2022). Inequality often emerges from the imbalance in access, negotiation, and management of resources between those who have opportunities and those who do not. While inequality may be justifiable at times, it frequently results in unfairness and subsequent issues with inequality (Draper & Selway, 2019; Xu & Islam, 2019; Thongsawang et al., 2020; Delina, 2020; Yang, Wang, & Dewina, 2020; Khunacharoensap & Vilasineekul, 2022).

According to the Sasin Graduate Institute of Business Administration, Chulalongkorn University (2013), overall inequality in Thailand can be categorized into three forms. In 2014, the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDB) produced a report that analyzed poverty and inequality in Thailand in 2021, identifying the following: 1) wealth and income inequality, resulting from development that is concentrated in

specific areas or sectors of production, leading to only select regions or groups receiving benefits; 2) opportunity inequality in access to quality infrastructure, public services, social welfare, and production factors. Education, in particular, shows a disparity in access to educational services, with urban and rural societies differing significantly from upper secondary levels (including Vocational Certificate) to undergraduate levels. The report also notes the issue of rural society's dropouts from the higher education system in line with the poverty situation (Sangsuwan, 2015; Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022; Symaco & Tee, 2019; Salmi & D'Addio, 2021; Scott & Guan, 2022). Although the education equality fund helped students gain admission to 82.2 percent, there remains a significant disparity. Lastly, 3) power inequality, including political rights, the power to access resources, and participation in policy-making and development direction at both national and local levels, resulting in an unequal allocation of resources and discrimination in national development. Despite the expanding economy and convenient facilities, prosperous urban societies, and urban industries' ability to offer higher wages, infrastructure, healthcare, welfare, and educational and recreational facilities to accommodate rural workers, this has led to a significant influx of people migrating to cities to seek better education and job opportunities (National Statistical Office, 2014; Office of the Education Council, 2019; Rasheed, Younas, & Mehdi, 2020; Junaenah et al., 2022; Milsom et al., 2022).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 *Kru Rak Thin Project*

The Equitable Education Fund (EEF) has launched the Kru Rak Thin project to reduce educational inequality and promote equality. The project's primary objective is to produce high-quality graduate teachers capable of meeting the educational needs of community schools in remote areas and becoming professional teachers. It aims to provide opportunities for students from low-income families who have high potential, good academic performance, and a passion for teaching to pursue a bachelor's degree in education and acquire the necessary skills for the 21st century (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2019; Wyner, 2019; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019; Reich et al., 2020). Over the next 10 years, the project aims to appoint new teachers in approximately 1,500 small schools at the sub-district level in remote areas to reduce educational disparities and increase opportunities while addressing the issue of incomplete grades and frequent teacher transfers. Additionally, the project encourages institutions to develop new learning management systems that can change the role of teachers and enhance the efficiency of education management, resulting in tailored teacher production and development that meet the needs of each region and the country as a whole. Achieving this goal has the potential to improve the quality of the education system in the country (Equitable Education Fund, n.d.; Gunn, 2019).

The Kru Rak Thin Project is a collaborative effort between the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) and five key agencies at the policy level: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, the Office of the Basic Education Commission, the Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, and the Teachers Council of Thailand. The project aims to produce and develop a new generation of teachers who can meet the needs of small schools in remote communities, focusing on reducing inequality and increasing educational opportunities for needy and underprivileged students. The project offers poor students with high potential, good academic performance, and a passion for teaching the opportunity to pursue a quality bachelor's degree in education and to return to work in their hometowns as teachers in accordance with the government's policy of Protected School/Standalone (Konglok, 2018; Jitchayawanit et al., 2020; Udomphol, 2020).

The Equitable Education Fund (EEF) will collaborate with higher education institutions that offer bachelor's degree programs, such as the Faculty of Education, and at least 10 other faculties that have been selected to form a joint development network for participating in the teacher production program. The program aims to adjust teaching and learning to suit the conditions of small, remote schools by teaching and participating in activities with schools and communities. The program provides academic and social preparation for the target group of students before they go to school and also takes care of their living arrangements. There are activities to develop potential and enhance important skills to encourage learners to love their hometowns and jointly solve problems and develop their localities (Equitable Education Fund, n.d.; Glynn, 2019).

### 2.2 *Kru Rak Thin at Loei Rajabhat University*

Loei Rajabhat University has been chosen to participate in the Kru Rak Thin Project Collaborative, a joint initiative between the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) and various universities aimed at producing and developing teachers who can meet the needs of small schools in remote communities. The project is guided by three main principles:

- 1) Encouraging underprivileged students with potential and a passion for teaching to complete their bachelor's

degree and become high-quality teachers in their local, remote areas. This is achieved by emphasizing education management that meets the needs of the community.

2) Enhancing the quality of joint learning between teachers and students in small schools located in remote areas by promoting their development from the outset of the project.

3) Supporting the modification of the teaching and learning processes in teacher training institutions to bring about positive changes in the education system of the country.

Moreover, the project aims to produce and develop the Kru Rak Thin who possess the following characteristics: 1) basic teaching competency, 2) academic proficiency, 3) 21st-century learning skills, 4) learning management skills, 5) moral and ethical values, 6) specific attitudes and competencies suitable for working in remote community schools, and 7) innovation in teaching and learning for the benefit of schools and communities.

Since the academic year 2020, Loei Rajabhat University has been producing students for the Kru Rak Tin Project. So far, the university has selected 33 teachers from remote areas covering eight provinces, namely: Buriram, Nakhon Ratchasima, Roi Et, Chaiyaphum, Mukdahan, Sakon Nakhon, Udon Thani, and Loei.

### 3. Methods

The Kru Rak Thin project aims to develop and nurture teachers to become high-quality professionals who can contribute to local development and promote prosperity. The project aims to produce competent teachers who can serve the community and support the sustainable development of the Loei Rajabhat University settlement. To achieve this goal, the project will provide support and training for teachers, starting from their initial education and continuing throughout their careers. This will be done through an Enrichment Program that employs various teaching approaches and adheres to the Teacher Professional Standards of 2019. The program will be carried out over a period of 10 years, with the goal of producing graduates who possess the qualities of the Kru Rak Thin and are consistent with the identity of the Faculty of Education, Loei Rajabhat University as follows:

#### *Year 1: Teacher Cultivation*

The primary objective of this program is to instill moral and ethical values in disciples, purify their minds, and cultivate good behavior. This is important because it lays the foundation for creating good teachers who can live and work together harmoniously in society. Moral development for teachers is a delicate matter, which is why it's necessary to purify the mind of disciples to become good people. In addition, teachers must inherit the community's good culture and traditions, preserving them for future generations while acting as good role models for their students. To promote learning, an enrichment program is designed to develop the scholarship recipients' potential. This program includes the following activities:

- 1) Meditation and Wisdom Cultivation and Cultivation of the Spirit of Being a Good Teacher
- 2) Living according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy
- 3) Supervision and counseling for scholarship recipients
- 4) Kru Rak Thin dormitory activities, including organized activities to join prayers on Buddhist holy days, making merit in the dormitory, and making merit in front of the student dormitory
- 5) Organizing activities for physical education projects in schools
- 6) Activities to develop the potential of performing local music and traditional dances in schools
- 7) Faculty of Education activities on important days, such as new student orientation, ceremonies to pay homage to teachers, and activities inviting the royal seal.

Overall, the program aims to create a community of teachers who not only possess the knowledge and skills to teach but also have the moral and ethical values necessary to become good people and role models for their students.

#### *Year 2: Well-versed in Teaching*

Teachers are expected to be knowledgeable and experienced in all areas of teaching, and to be able to organize a variety of learning activities. Teaching is the primary duty of every teacher, and it should be performed to the fullest potential. In addition to teaching activities, academic development is also important. Teachers must encourage students to study and seek new knowledge in order to grow and adapt to a changing society. The Kru Rak Thin project emphasizes the development of academic knowledge that can be applied in students' daily lives, future careers, and teaching professions. Learning activities according to the curriculum and enrichment

programs are designed to develop the potential of scholarship recipients. These activities include:

- 1) Developing elementary school students' 21st-century learning management skills
- 2) Improving teachers' English language proficiency through active learning and design activities that enhance creativity and integrate local wisdom
- 3) Enhancing early childhood learning and brain development through EF and learning activities
- 4) Designing education for children with special needs
- 5) Promoting English communication skills in the classroom and everyday life
- 6) Teaching English using content and language-integrated learning (CLIL) activities
- 7) Promoting reading and writing skills for elementary school students
- 8) Promoting cyber security knowledge
- 9) Preparing teachers for professional licensing examinations
- 10) Encouraging student teachers to pursue self-study and develop their curiosity

#### *Year 3: Teacher, Developer, and Innovator*

A new generation of teachers will improve the quality of community schools. They will be equipped to become teachers with a profound understanding of their hometown and will be an important force in collaborating with community leaders to raise local education standards. They will also be able to research and create learning innovations for use in schools and communities. To achieve this, they will carry out the following activities:

- 1) Developing collaborations with professional training centers and mentors in the area
- 2) Preparing community development projects under community development activities with a process of working as a team (Team Work)
- 3) Promoting activities that enhance the quality of being a teacher in the community
- 4) Engaging in activities to develop community education and research skills, including evaluating learning outcomes and designing enrichment programs to develop the potential of scholarship recipients.

#### *Year 4: Contribution to Society*

The aim of this year is to develop and promote the duties of working in various services, in addition to teaching, which includes assisting fellow teachers with other tasks. Teachers will also provide advice or counseling to student's parents when they encounter problems such as reading, writing, math, etc., and will provide assistance to communities by being a contact for assistance to participate in important activities such as various ceremonies and events. These events are coupled with the development of students in building good human relations, as they involve many responsibilities with a variety of people, including students, parents, friends, teachers, communities, and various agencies. Good communication requires good human relations in coordination with others. In addition to creating benefits for oneself and others, it also makes an impression on onlookers. To promote learning, the following enrichment programs will be carried out to develop the potential of scholarship recipients:

- 1) Learning exchange activities to enhance life skills under the activities of mentoring scholarship recipients
- 2) Activities to enhance social coexistence skills
- 3) Activities to develop community research skills
- 4) Activities to enhance skills for the preparation of learning experience training center development projects.

#### *Year 5: Adjusting to Become Assistant Teachers*

As assistant teachers filling civil servant positions in local schools, it is important to adapt to the context of the school and community. When returning to work in remote communities, it is crucial to learn how to change and adapt to different situations. Assistant teachers should be determined to develop students with the spirit of a teacher, behave in accordance with professional ethics, and maintain good human relations. It is also important to study and learn about the community context and the way of life of people in the community to develop oneself and advance academic work. To promote learning and develop the potential of scholarship recipients, assistant teachers can engage in enrichment programs, including:

- 1) Teacher spiritual promotion and development activities
- 2) Study tour activities for model teacher learning management

3) Supervising activities and monitoring teacher development with coaching and mentoring techniques based on the concept of contemplative education.

*Year 6: Being Knowledgeable and Hard-working*

A teacher who can manage a variety of learning styles to promote the development of learners, taking into account individual differences and organizing activities in line with the community, collaborating with parents to develop solutions to problems and instill desirable characteristics in their children, and implementing enrichment programs to develop the potential of scholarship recipients, which includes:

- 1) Academic development activities that foster teaching innovation.
- 2) Counseling techniques and behavioral adjustments to help learners achieve desirable characteristics.
- 3) Activity to learn lessons from the PLC process and create a learning community.

*Year 7: Self-Development and Work Development*

As a teacher, it is important to strive for personal and community development by continuously seeking knowledge, staying up-to-date with the latest information, and fostering creativity. Collaborating with others and participating in professional development activities are also important for growth and development. To further promote the development of scholarship recipients, enrichment programs will be implemented. These programs aim to foster the potential of scholarship recipients and include:

- 1) Academic leadership activities for teachers, such as media production and new teaching innovations.
- 2) Activities for teachers, local developers, and schools in remote areas.
- 3) Activity to learn lessons from the PLC process and create a learning community.

*Year 8: Teaching Like a Professional Teacher*

To become a professional teacher, it is important to continuously develop oneself for professional advancement. This includes obtaining academic positions and standings, as well as gaining knowledge and understanding of the community and its practices. A professional teacher should also possess the ability to create innovative learning methods by linking theoretical knowledge to real-life practices for use in schools and communities. Building a network of partnerships with parents and communities is also essential to support quality learning for students and promote the preservation of culture and local wisdom. To further promote the development of scholarship recipients, the following activities will be implemented:

- 1) Activities aimed at enhancing the academic positions and standings of teachers to become professional teachers
- 2) Activities promoting the preservation of culture and local wisdom
- 3) Study tour activities to enhance learning management
- 4) Activity to learn lessons from the PLC process and create a learning community.

*Year 9: Developing a Strong Community*

As a teacher of a community, it is important to strive to develop learners with the spirit of teaching. This involves behaving as a role model, exhibiting virtuous and ethical behavior, and being a strong citizen. Continuous personal development is crucial, as teachers should aim to be knowledgeable, up-to-date, and able to keep up with changes. Furthermore, teachers should be committed to community development and have a deep understanding of life, the community, and the world. Living together based on cultural differences is also essential. To further promote the development of scholarship recipients, the following activities will be implemented:

- 1) Community development activities and promoting strong citizenship
- 2) Corporate culture activities for coexistence based on cultural differences
- 3) Activity to learn lessons from the PLC process and create a learning community.

*Year 10: Sustainable Settlement Development*

Professional teachers must be capable of facing and keeping up with changes in science and technology, the world community, and society, and be able to apply philosophical concepts such as sufficiency economy to life, self-development, job development, and the development of learners and their hometown communities for sustainable prosperity. The following activities will be implemented to promote learning and develop the potential of scholarship recipients:

- 1) Activities to promote a lifestyle based on the philosophy of sufficiency economy
- 2) “Kru Rak Thin” relationship activities to promote sustainable settlement development.

<b>Kru Rak Thin, teachers who build a good society, at Loei Rajabhat University</b>	
<p><b>Year 1 Teacher Cultivation:</b> Morals and ethics have been instilled in students in order to cultivate their minds for students to have good morals and ethics because it is the important foundation for creating good teachers. It is also a guideline for living and working together in society happily.</p>	<p><b>Year 2 Well-versed in teaching:</b> Emphasizes students being able to use them in their daily lives and their working lives and the teaching profession in the future so that their students can develop or change in the desired way as defined by teaching and learning, curriculum, and learning promotion (Enrichment program)</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <b>Kru Rak Thin Loei Rajabhat University</b> </div>	
<p><b>Year 3 Teachers, Developers, and Innovators:</b> The teacher has a deep understanding of their homeland as an important force with community leaders to upgrade the local level, able to research and create learning innovations for utilization in schools and communities. There is innovative, measured, and evaluating learning.</p>	<p><b>Year 4 Contribution to society:</b> Promote duties, services that other than the main teaching work, including helping other workloads of teachers, advice or advice of students’ behavior, or helping to Community, and various agencies, which the above work is in conjunction with the development of students in good human relations.</p>
<b>Extending to Educational Institutions</b>	
<p><b>Year 5 Adaptation to the assistant teacher:</b> in order to be in line with the context of schools and communities for returning to work in schools in remote areas. They learn to change themselves and adapt to various situations, determine to develop learners with spiritual spirit, acting according to professional ethics, including creating good human relations, studying the context of the community and the way of life of people in the community</p>	<p><b>Year 6 Being Knowledgeable &amp; Hard-working:</b> Manage a variety of learning, promote the development of learners and take into account differences between individuals, arrange activities in line with the community, and cooperate with parents in developing and solving problems for learners to have desirable characteristics.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <b>Professional Teachers, Strong Community Development, Sustainable Settlement</b> </div>	
<p><b>Year 7 Self-development &amp; job development:</b> being a teacher who develops both oneself and the community by developing themselves to be knowledgeable, up-to-date and able to keep pace with changes, work creatively with others and participate in professional development activities.</p>	<p><b>Year 8 Teaching like a professional:</b> teacher, self-development for professional advancement, academic position and academic standing, knowledge, understanding of the community and real practice in the community. Teachers have the ability to create learning innovations by linking theoretical knowledge to real practices for use in schools and communities.</p>
<p><b>Year 9 Strong Community Development:</b> To be a teacher of a community who strives to develop learners with the spirit of being a teacher, behaving as a good role model, having morals and ethics, and being a strong citizen. Teachers develop themselves to be well-rounded, up-to-date, and able to keep pace with changes. They are committed to community development, have knowledge, understand life, understand the community, understand the world, and live together on the basis of cultural differences.</p>	<p><b>Year 10 Sustainable settlement development:</b> be able to face and keep pace with changes in science and technology progress, changes in the world, community and society. Teachers can apply the concepts of the philosophy of sufficiency economy to their lives and self-development, job development, and develop students and their hometown communities for sustainable prosperity.</p>
<b>Development Model for Kru Rak Thin: 10 Years of Building Good Teachers: Local Conservation for Sustainable Development</b>	

Figure 1. Development Model for Kru Rak Thin

#### 4. Results

The Kru Rak Thin Project of Loei Rajabhat University has successfully produced and developed a new generation of teachers who are committed to reducing inequality and increasing educational opportunities for the needy and underprivileged. The project has selected 33 disadvantaged students from rural areas covering eight provinces, namely Buriram, Nakhon Ratchasima, Roi Et, Chaiyaphum, Mukdahan, Sakon Nakhon, Udon Thani, and Loei, who have a passion for teaching and provided them with the opportunity to pursue a high-quality bachelor's degree.

The project's ten-year plan for the development of these teachers focuses on developing teachers who are passionate about their local communities and who possess the necessary qualities to build a sustainable settlement. The project follows a systematic and comprehensive approach to teacher development, with each year dedicated to specific aspects of teacher cultivation and skill development.

In the first year, the project emphasizes teacher cultivation, including developing a strong foundation in teaching theories and techniques, as well as practical teaching experience. In the second year, the focus is on becoming well-versed in teaching, including the ability to plan and deliver effective lessons, assess student learning, and provide constructive feedback.

The third year aims to develop innovative teaching methods, including the use of technology, project-based learning, and other learner-centered approaches. The fourth year is dedicated to contributing to society, with teachers encouraged to engage in community service projects and other activities that benefit the local community.

The fifth-year focuses on becoming an assistant teacher, providing opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership skills and mentorship abilities. In the sixth year, the emphasis is on knowledge acquisition and hard work, including pursuing advanced studies and developing subject-specific expertise.

In the seventh year, the focus is on self-development and work development, with teachers encouraged to reflect on their teaching practice and identify areas for improvement. The eighth year is dedicated to teaching like a professional, including the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues, engage in ongoing professional development, and demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning.

The ninth year emphasizes community development, including the ability to work effectively with parents and community leaders to build strong partnerships that support student learning and development. The tenth year focuses on sustainable settlement development, including the ability to incorporate principles of sustainability and environmental conservation into teaching practice and community development initiatives.

Overall, The Kru Rak Thin Project has been successful in producing competent and dedicated teachers for the community. The ten-year program has been designed to develop the necessary qualities to build a sustainable settlement, and the students have been able to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to become successful teachers. The project has been successful in fostering sustainable development and community conservation in rural areas, and the students have made significant contributions to their local communities. The Kru Rak Thin Project can serve as a model for other universities and organizations looking to develop competent and dedicated teachers for the community and foster sustainable development.

#### 5. Discussion and Conclusion

The Kru Rak Thin Project of Loei Rajabhat University is a successful example of a program designed to produce competent and dedicated teachers for the community and foster sustainable development. The project's ten-year plan for teacher development follows a systematic and comprehensive approach, with each year dedicated to specific aspects of teacher cultivation and skill development. The program has successfully provided students from rural areas with the opportunity to pursue a high-quality bachelor's degree and develop the necessary qualities to become successful teachers.

The project has been successful in fostering sustainable development and community conservation in rural areas. By developing teachers who are passionate about their local communities and possess the necessary qualities to build a sustainable settlement, the program has made significant contributions to the local communities. The students have been able to apply their knowledge and skills to engage in community service projects and other activities that benefit the local community.

The Kru Rak Thin Project can serve as a model for other universities and organizations looking to develop competent and dedicated teachers for the community and foster sustainable development. The project's systematic and comprehensive approach to teacher development, which includes a ten-year plan that focuses on

specific aspects of teacher cultivation and skill development, can be adapted and implemented in other contexts.

In conclusion, the Kru Rak Thin Project of Loei Rajabhat University has been successful in producing competent and dedicated teachers for the community and fostering sustainable development. The program's ten-year plan for teacher development has been designed to develop the necessary qualities to build a sustainable settlement, and the students have been able to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to become successful teachers. The project has been successful in fostering sustainable development and community conservation in rural areas, and it can serve as a model for other universities and organizations looking to develop competent and dedicated teachers for the community and foster sustainable development.

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