

# **The People's Audit Of Public Service Delivery By Government Agencies And Local Administrations In Thailand**

**Implementing Partner:  
King Prajadhipok's Institute (KPI)**

## **1.BACKGROUND**

The efficiency of public service delivery by government agencies and local administrations is best audited by none other than the people themselves who are the recipient of such services. The existence of a systematic framework of public participation no doubt plays an integral role in aiding the overall improvement of public services the government provides for its people in such a way that the needs of its people can be better met and any pitfalls can be corrected in a timely fashion. Moreover, the process provides an ideal setting for public involvement and determination in public service delivery in a systematic and concrete manner.

Realizing that any public service is supplied for people's needs and therefore any policy and its implementation should be people-centered, in Section 282 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 1997 states "the State shall give autonomy to the locality in accordance with the principle of self-government according to the will of the people in the locality." No doubt, the operative words here are 'autonomy' and 'locality', implying that extensive and intelligent participation by local citizens in the governing of their local affairs jointly with local government officials in the formulation and delivering of public goods and services will ensure the improved efficiency and effectiveness of those deliveries that will result in the equitable dispensation and full satisfaction of the citizens' collective well-being under the umbrella of myriad services provided by the Government.

Although the regulation is there for assuring people's participation in policy decision-making and implementation, the apparatus for assessing people's views towards public service delivery for organizational development of public service providers are still lacking in Thailand. For several decades, the standard format of public services has almost always been one-sided through centralization, with little involvement or meaningful participation by the recipients themselves. The quality of public services delivered to the rich and the poor show a wide discrepancy and, on the whole, the government still controls most of decision-making that directly affects public services.

However, with the affirmation of people's participation in policy making in the Constitution, civil society has been rendered the power to urge the government for a change. The task and the role of civil society on one hand can be a pressure group for requesting more transparent and accountable governance and on the other hand educate people about their rights and thus enhance people's negotiating strength against the government. King Phajadhipok's Institute sees this importance and would like to strengthen the good governance and participatory democracy emanating at the public participation on public service delivery.

With the United Nations Development Programme's assistance, the project **People's Audit of Public Service Delivery by Government and Local Government Units in Thailand** aims to search for the most promising systems, in the context of Thailand, of a participatory tool for organizational and quality of service improvement, to be tested and used at the local levels.

In 2003, the KPI received UNDP support to explore the various people's audit methodologies practiced in various parts of the world. Through literature survey and field visits, three people's audit methodologies were mainly explored, namely the Public Sector Excellence Programme (PSEP) practiced in the Philippines, the Social Audit Methodology currently used in Pakistan, and Citizens' Charter. Three knowledge sharing workshops were organized for 50 participants for each session as a follow-up to those trips as well as a concrete step toward determining the possibility of adapting and adopting certain methods that suits the Thai context. Participants were from related governmental agencies, local administrations, civil society organizations and academic institutes. The first workshop aimed to introduce the concepts of the Social Audit Methodology. The second workshop focused on the process and techniques of PSEP, while the third workshop examined the dialogue-based Technology of Participation, which is a facilitative skill focusing on collective and consensual decision as a result of the dialogue. In implementation of this project, network among many organizations and academic institute have been established.

## **2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

1. To formulate a Thai-customized model (or models) of a participatory tool to assess public service delivery of public agencies and local administrations for organizational and quality of service delivery improvement.
2. To develop handbooks and curriculum of such a model (models) for wide dissemination and up scaling by related agencies.
3. To create a nationwide network of individuals, institutions and agencies as champions and change agents in the People's Audit process.

## **3. PROJECT FOCUS**

As a follow-up to the work conducted and network accumulated in 2003, the project in 2004-2005 aims to promote network creation and develop models to assess public service delivery that fits the Thai context, based on knowledge and experience gained during 2003. The overall results will be compiled and presented to the Government for its review and perhaps implementation on a greater scale.

The project comprises two phases. The first phase is the development of a curriculum and manual toolkit, based on experiences and knowledge, experiences and network gained and developed during 2003. A training for People's Audit techniques will be conducted for a core group, ready to be tested in pilot areas.

The second phase is the pilot phase where the curriculum and models will be piloted in five selected provinces, namely Chiang Rai, Sakon Nakhon, Maha Sarakham, Songkla and Phetchaburi. Focal points and change agents in various parts of

Thailand will be formed to help provide needed support for provincial offices and local administrations involved in the People's Audit process.

The expected output of the two-phased process is a Thai-customized model (or models, to be identified by actors in pilot provinces) to be developed and introduced to local administrations, government agencies, particularly at the provincial levels, as well as civil society and community members so that lessons learned in the implementation of the project in the pilot areas can be used and adjusted to particular situations of each community. The major focal point in the public sector to upscale the models developed in the project is the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission, an organization set up in 2002, one mandate of which is to mainstream public participation into civil service, both as organizational culture and as performance indicators.

#### **4. OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES**

In order to mainstream the concepts and practices of the People's Audit process to a wide range of public service providers (governmental agencies and local administrations) in a long term, the People's Audit Network, comprising approximately 20 active and committed participants from the 2003 knowledge sessions, identify the following as operational strategies of the People's Audit process.

**Strategy 1:** Establishment and expansion of a People's Audit Network, with KPI as a center, to be operationalised via five plans:

- ❖ Plan 1: Database system with regular updating
- ❖ Plan 2: Forums for harmonizing understanding, awareness and decision-taking
- ❖ Plan 3: Workshops for creating curriculums including content, format and dissemination methods
- ❖ Plan 4: Forums for mutual learning and exchange
- ❖ Plan 5: Meetings to make joint action plans and goal-setting.

**Strategy 2:** Development of a People's Audit model (models) that fits the Thai context, to be operationalised via five plans:

- ❖ Plan 1: Workshops to produce People's Audit handbooks
- ❖ Plan 2: Experimenting with the handbook that fits local conditions and target groups together with various evaluation methods
- ❖ Plan 3: Development of curriculum(s), handbook(s) and methodology (ies)
- ❖ Plan 4: Meetings of the People's Audit Network as a forum of exchange and introduction of the curriculum
- ❖ Plan 5: Field trials in designated pilot areas.

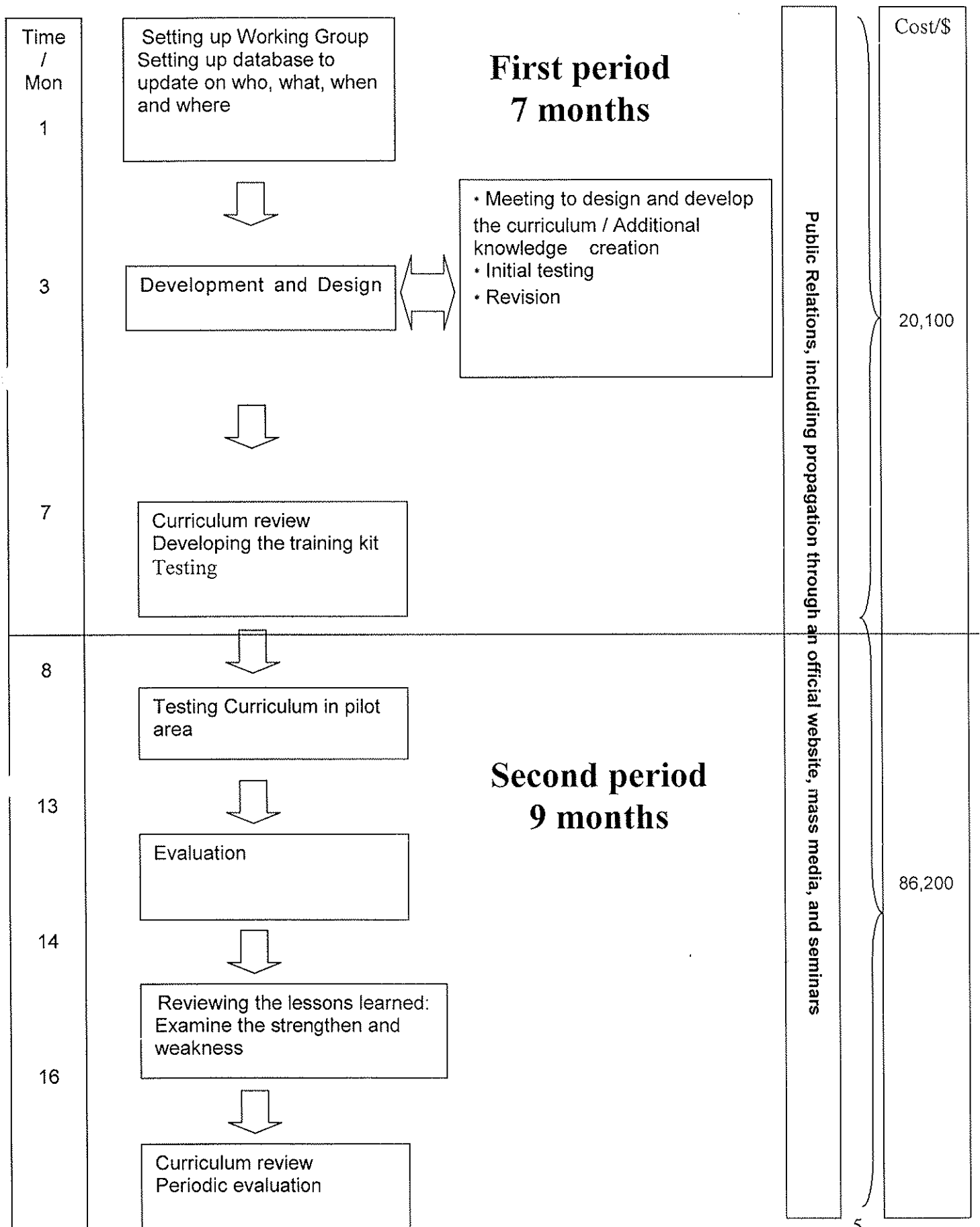
**Strategy 3:** Publicity and pushing for the shaping of policy-level reality, to be accomplished via 2 plans of operation as follows:

- ❖ Plan 1: Meetings of core parties and key network coalition members to explore strategic moves and set agenda

- ❖ Plan 2: Public forums to spread the conceptual framework and advocate for participatory planning tool of People's Audit and its utility to the public.

Figure 1 below illustrates the two-phased implementation of the project: (1) the development of curriculum and training kit, and (2) testing in pilot areas as well as receiving the lessons learned from the project.

**Figure 1: Two-phased implementation period, 2004-2005**



### EXPECTED OUTPUTS

1. Customized model(s) for a participatory planning tool (People's Audit) for organizational development and improvement of services
2. Training curriculum and training manuals for the PATH (People's Audit Model of Thailand)
3. A website on People's Audit
4. A strengthened and expanded People's Audit Network, including a core group of change agents/champions/trainers of the PATH process
5. Lessons learnt as documented from results of the pilot testing in the five provinces, including factors supporting and undermining the People's Audit process.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. People receive better public service delivery than before.
2. People participate in process of and assessment of public service delivery.
3. Concepts of public service delivery perceivable among public agencies.
4. Strengthening the participatory democracy in Thailand.

### DURATION OF PROJECT

September 2004 – November 2005 (16 months)

### BUDGET

US \$ 106,300

### ESTIMATED BUDGET

Activities	BAHT	US Dollar
Meeting cost	520,000.00	13,000.00
Handbook edition	600,000.00	15,000.00
Program preparation	155,000.00	3,875.00
Training kit publication for 5 provinces	120,000.00	3,000.00
Implementation cost in 5 provinces	1,693,000.00	42,325.00
Questionnaire preparation for 5 provinces	685,000.00	17,125.00
Coordination communication fee	20,000.00	500.00
Office supplies	50,000.00	1,250.00
Management allowance	154,000.00	3,850.00
Research assistant allowance	255,000.00	6,375.00
Total Amount	4,252,000.00	106,300.00

(1 Dollar = 40 Baht)



## **Workplan**

The implementation of workplan comprises following two phases:

Phase 1: Program Development      Duration: 7 months

- i. Formulation of steering committee
- ii. Enhancement of People's Audit program
- iii. Improvement and edition of People's Audit handbooks
- iv. Preparation of handbooks for trainers and participants

Phase 2: Program Experiment      Duration: 9 months

- v. Public relations and dissemination of program to potential representatives at executive levels, for example, governors and various public agencies
- vi. Experiment in workshop and outline of applicable knowledge to target areas
- vii. Edition of program and handbook