

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1. Project Title** Social Audit: Local Tools for Poverty Reduction and Local Empowerment
- 2. Project No.** THA/03/003
- 3. Title of Assignment:** Technical Assistance and Advisory Roles to the project “Social Audit: Local Tools for Poverty Reduction and Local Empowerment”
- 4. Duration:** One year effective 15 October 2004
- 5. Background of Assignment**

The 1997 Constitution of Thailand guarantees people’s rights and promotion of participatory democracy and good governance. It provisions for the rights-based approach to development through decentralization, people’s participation and right to information. Although the Constitution provides a powerful foundation and framework for active and meaningful people’s participation, mechanisms for actual implementation have proven to be much lacking. This holds true especially in the area of having a feed-back mechanism in policy planning and public service delivery through which people’s views and assessment of public policies and services are taken into account seriously and systematically.

Poverty reduction is one of the five major policies of the Thai government. In the First Millennium Development Goal Report of Thailand, launched in June 2004, Thailand introduces the concept of “MDG-Plus”, a set of more ambitious and country specific targets that go beyond the international goals agreed on at the Millennium Summit. Among the MDGs Plus targets of Thailand is to reduce poverty to less than 4% by 2009.

In recent years, a number of initiatives to reduce poverty in an equitable manner have been introduced and implemented by appointed national and provincial governmental agencies as well as elected local administrative bodies. These initiatives are additional to existing mandates and on-going programmes and activities of national, provincial and local administration to promote people’s well-being and reduce poverty.

The Thai government has plans to develop a system of evidence-based planning that enables policy makers at different levels to be able to take in to account people’s voices and assessments of policies and services into policy planning and improvement of public services, with particular focus to poverty reduction issues. The government requires a methodology that (1) is scientifically vigorous and reliable, and (2) significantly provides an element of local and people’s empowerment.

For more than one year the Thai government has actively explored various options of Social Audit methodologies that could fit Thailand's needs and contexts. After a long period of consultation, including study tours to Pakistan and Philippines, it has now decided to adopt the methodology designed by **CIETInternational**, practiced in 40 countries, including Bolivia, Bosnia, Bangladesh, Mali, Nicaragua, Pakistan, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

Using the CIET International methodology, the Thai Government has decided to initiate the initiative: "Social Audit: Local Tools for Poverty Reduction and Local Empowerment in Thailand", with support from UNDP.

The Thai government has allocated a budget of 20 million baht (US\$ 500,000) ¹ from the National Research Council (NRC) of Thailand to the Social Audit initiative. The Thai government and UNDP have agreed to cooperate in the project, with UNDP providing a parallel funding to support costs of CIET international experts providing advisory services to the entire first year of the social audit process in Thailand (US\$ 125,235).

6. Objectives of the Assignment

The objectives of the "Social Audit: Local Tools for Poverty Reduction and Local Empowerment" project (with parallel funding from the Government of Thailand and UNDP Thailand) are to (1) establish *a social audit strategy and framework* on social and economic policies to strengthen the community voice in determining and implementing poverty reduction strategies through provincial and national levels and provide policy feedback at national level, (2) promote *use of evidence* generated at the local level in planning and implementation of economic and social policies, poverty reduction policies and governance, (3) develop and refine *locally relevant tools* for results-based management useful to local organizations and administrations, (4) develop *social audit model* in Thailand, including training projects to improve the skills and capabilities of personnel and officials responsible for policies at various levels, (5) identify *sustainability mechanisms* for a social audit strategy, and (6) strengthen *the evidence-based process of community empowerment*. The results of the research can be applied to facilitate the process.

7. Activities to be Undertaken

In view that the Thai government has selected the social audit methodology of CIETInternational to be utilized and learnt in Thailand, the Contract will be responsible for provision of technical expertise and advisory services to the Thai consortium on the application of the CIET social audit methodology throughout the implementation of the project "Social Audit: Local Tools for Poverty Reduction and Local Empowerment", including the technology transfer from CIETInternational to the Thai consortium of researchers and policy makers. At the end of the first cycle, CIET will provide recommendations to the Thai consortium in regards to needed implementation of the subsequent social audit cycle(s).

¹ An approximate conversion from Baht to US dollars, based on an exchange rate of 40 baht per one US dollar.

The Contractor shall guide the Thai consortium through the social audit cycle which includes the following activities:

- To select a suitable sample from the 13 selected provinces in Thailand to provide representative data at the provincial level in order to constitute the baseline data which allows for comparison over time.
- To design survey instruments with inputs from local and provincial administrations.
- To select and train field teams and conduct a comprehensive social audit in the 13 selected provinces, including household survey, institutional reviews, key informant interviews and feedback focus group discussions.
- To undertake data entry and cleaning and suitable analysis of indicators and related factors, to include both quantitative and qualitative data, and produce reports of findings at local and provincial levels, including mapping to illustrate the findings.
- To conduct training of local/provincial field teams and collect additional data sufficient for monitoring and ends-oriented evaluation of selected poverty reduction policies as well as providing evidence and training for local/provincial planning in selected focus local administrations/provinces, developing tools for community monitoring in these areas.
- To undertake a comprehensive exercise of socializing the evidence from the survey, both quantitative and qualitative at local and provincial levels.
- To initiate links with suitable academic or training institutions at national and sub-national levels and organize/undertake detailed training for key personnel in the methodology of the social audit and evidence-based planning.

8. Mode of Payment:

Payment will be made to according to the following modalities:

- a. Funds will be allocated through the umbrella programme of UNDP-Thailand Partnership for Local Empowerment through Democratic Governance.
- b. Disbursement of funds will be according to the deliverable milestones listed in the contract document upon receipt of invoice from the Contractor and acceptance of reports by UDNP Thailand. When the relevant deliverables are received, funds will be released through the UNDP Thailand Country Office.
- c. The first installment will be released within fifteen working days following signature and upon receipt of invoice from the contractor.

9. Reporting and Audit Arrangements:

The Contractor shall produce reports to UNDP Thailand based on the deliverable milestones listed in the contract document.

The reports shall provide updates on (a) advisory services/technology transfer/training provided to the Thai consortium, (b) progress, activities, achievements and results of the Project to date, (c) recommendations on way forward in regards to advisory service methods (trips, e-mail exchange, ect.) to the Thai consortium in the upcoming period until the due of subsequent report and in regards to activities to be undertaken by the Thai consortium and milestones.

UNDP Thailand shall distribute reports to the Thai consortium and the Social Audit Steering Committee.

The audit modality of the assignment shall be according to audit requirements of the UNDP-Thailand Partnership on Local Empowerment Through Democratic Governance (PLEDGE).

ANNEX III**BREAKDOWN OF COSTS****CIET Budget for first cycle of social audit in Thailand****Technical assistance**

Item	Unit	Cost (US\$)	No. units	Total (US\$)
Senior research fellow	person-month	15,000	2	30,000
Research associates (three)	person-month	6,000	10	60,000
Technical oversight	month	1,000	12	12,000
Travel SRF (Pakistan-Thailand)	trip	1,000	3	3,000
Travel RA (Canada-Thailand)	trip	1,300	3	3,900
Subtotal				108,900
Administration/overhead 15%				16,335
Total				125,235

ANNEX IV

PROPOSAL OF THAI CONSORTIUM ON "SOCIAL AUDIT: LOCAL TOOLS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION AND LOCAL EMPOWERMENT"

1. **Project name:**

Social Audit: Local Tools for Poverty Reduction and Local Empowerment in Thailand

The three year project will

- Conduct a social audit of economic and social policies with particular emphasis on poverty reduction strategies, establishing a solid baseline and beginning to measure progress over the years to come. Local evidence will be collected and analysed, then returned to communities, provinces and national government for dialogue and action.
- Train evidence-based planners at provincial and national level, to enhance the skill base to implement social audits, information management reviews and evidence-based planning.
- Provide national aggregated evidence to track the effects of poverty reduction policies over time and across the country.

2. **Agencies responsible for the research project**

The Thailand Development Research Institute together with the Chulalongkorn University and the National Institute of Development Administration.

3. **Research question and its importance**

Poverty reduction is one of the five strategic priorities of the Thai government. Past implementation of poverty reduction policies has proven that work in this area requires sustainable and long-term efforts because it concerns a number of factors. Therefore, it is essential to examine economic and social results of government policies in order to eventually achieve effective solutions. In this case, a baseline must be compiled and applied to evaluate the performance of the government. Besides, findings collected at local levels must be analysed and conclusions must be reported to communities, provinces and the government so that these parties will be able to discuss them and jointly work out fact-based policies which will be truly effective.

4. **Objectives**

- 4.1 To establish *a social audit strategy and framework* on social and economic policies to strengthen the community voice in determining and implementing poverty reduction strategies through provincial and national levels and provide policy feedback at national level.

- 4.2 To promote *use of evidence* generated at the local level in planning and implementation of economic and social policies, poverty reduction policies and governance.
- 4.3 To develop and refine *locally relevant tools* for results-based management useful to local organisations and administrations.
- 4.4 To develop *social audit model* in Thailand, including training projects to improve the skills and capabilities of personnel and officials responsible for policies at various levels.
- 4.5 To identify *sustainability mechanisms* for a social audit strategy
- 4.6 To strengthen *the evidence-based process of community empowerment*. The results of the research can be applied to facilitate the process.

5. Relevant researches

- 5.1 Andersson N. *Evidence-based planning: the philosophy and methods of sentinel community surveillance*. CIETInternational & EDI World Bank : Washington, D.C. 1996.
- 5.2 Andersson N. *Impact, coverage and costs: An Operational framework for monitoring child survival emerging from two UNICEF projects in Central America*. UNICEF/Guatemala; September 1985.
- 5.3 Andersson N. Villegas A., Paredes S. *Micro-regional planning*. EDI/World Bank; 1995.
- 5.4 Ledogar R.J., Andersson N. Impact estimation through sentinel community surveillance : an affordable epidemiological approach. *Third World Planning Review* 15:3, 1993, pp. 263-272.
- 5.5 Munro L. *Sentinel community surveillance to monitor the effects of structural adjustment*. UNICEF/Zimbabwe. 1992.

6. Scope of the research

The research will apply the newly introduced method to Thailand, developed by CIETInternational. It is aimed at increasing knowledge about the process of poverty reduction. In other words, it is intended to study the success and failure factors of poverty reduction efforts of governmental agencies and local administrations so that recommendations comprehensive and acceptable to governmental agencies and civil society can be generated. The knowledge will help strengthen communities because correct knowledge is the first important step of the process of community empowerment. This research will focus on establishing scientific knowledge than action research aspects. The knowledge that is correct and scientific will be the first significant step of community empowerment. Besides, the methodology of CIETInternational is outstanding for determination to publicise findings and explain them to all parties in the society, both people who receive services and those who implement government policies. The application of the methodology in the Thai contexts can lead to changes of ideas or practices. Therefore, it combines the characteristics of an ordinary research with those of an action research.

7. Time frame

The research will be concluded in three years and its budgetary spending and contents will be determined on a yearly basis. The details of this research proposal are planned for

implementation in the first year of the research that will start on 1 September 2004, and continue for 12 months.

8. Research sites

The first year of the research will cover 13 provinces that are selected through the following criteria:

- Sufficient population for the research
- Suitably representing all the four regions of Thailand

The selected 13 provinces comprise one focus province and 12 national cycle provinces. The focus province must be a large province with a number of communities to facilitate various facets of the research. The focus province must have about 25 communities and about 2,500-3,500 households.

The rest 12 provinces will suitably represent all the four regions of Thailand (three provinces in each region). Each of such provinces should have 400-600 households and the research will target four communities (villages or urban slum communities) in each province.

There are two reasons for the survey to take place in 13 provinces including one focus province. Firstly, the focus province will prove if the CIETInternational methodology is effective and suitable for the country. This is because the focus province covers a number of communities and the processes of disseminating analysed results and of surveying opinions that will lead to changes of ideas and practices (see more details in the methodology chapter) will be done in depth. Secondly, the study opts to cover other 12 provinces in all regions of the nation because the CIET methodology in analysing household information is recognised for its ability to reflect the overall picture of national policies. However, it needs household information from several provinces that scatter in all parts of the country. This is to prevent local factors from influencing analyses.

The selection of rural and urban communities for the research will be based on their population or the number of their poor people in rural and urban areas. The study in every selected community will reach all households. They will not be sampled.

As the first year of the research will cover only 13 provinces, researchers will later adjust the study during their field surveys. For example, they may focus more on the provinces where there have been surveys and studies on poverty reduction, community empowerment and local administration.

The research team together with CIETInternational specialists will finalise research sites and samples so that they will truly correspond to the CIET Methodology. The finalised details will be included in the inception report.

9. Research plan

The research team will comprise researchers from the Thailand Development Research Institute, the Chulalongkorn University and the National Institute of Development Administration. They will form a social audit core group. The group together with representatives of the National Research Council and UNDP as well as a suitable number of other co-opted members will form a committee that will supervise the work of the core group. The Social Audit Steering Committee will discuss and approve the designs of methods and cycles of economic and social audits, cycle focuses and the selection of samples and survey instruments to collect data.

The Social Audit Steering Committee will receive the reports on the progress of the work of the core group and disseminate the findings of the research. Under the steering committee, there will be a technical sub-committee that will consist of some members of the core group, a technical adviser to CIET, and some members of an implementation group. The sub-committee is duty-bound to give advice and consider details.

The implementation group will comprise 2-4 members to be selected and appointed in line with the recommendation of the core group. The implementation group will be responsible for daily administrative work and enjoy technical support of CIET.

CIETInternational will be always responsible for technical support throughout audit cycles especially for designs, analyses, and the dissemination of information to educate society.

The research project is set to continue for three years. Social audits at the national level will take place annually for three years and targeted provinces will change every year. As a result, the number of the provinces to undergo the audits will rise yearly. The audits will expand as far as budgets will permit.

Each audit cycle will last about a year. The first six months will deal with designs, the collection of information, analysis and reports; and the rest six months will focus on the dissemination and application of gathered information and the training of planners and policy makers on how to use the information in working out development plans.

Plans and educational activities

Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Determine scope and audit focuses	■											
Design instruments and samples		■	■									
Train field teams			■	■								
Collect data on households and p services				■	■							
Input and review field data				■	■							
Preliminary analyses					■	■						
Discuss results with communities collect feedback						■	■					
Report key findings						■	■					
Detailed analyses and mapping						■	■	■				
Discuss evidence-based issues government officials								■	■	■		
Workshops and policy feedback									■	■	■	
Final report and recommendations										■	■	■

Researchers from the three institutes will conduct the research in the selected provinces and work closely with CIETinternational. They will share responsibilities for the research in the 12 other provinces in the way that researchers from each institute will do the research in four provinces. The method will be repeated if it proves to be successful in the first year of the research.

Besides, the research team will seek cooperation from the agencies that have potential of assisting in the research project. For example, the cooperation is expected from the National Statistical Office that can assist in collecting information and from local researchers who can work as local coordinators.

10. Budget

The project budget is sought on a cost-sharing basis from the National Research Council (NRC) and UNDP. The first year of research needs Baht20 million from NRC to cover activities in Thailand. From UNDP, US\$125,000 will pay for overseas technical support from CIETinternational and US\$75,000 will add to the budget for Thai researchers.

Details of the budget

Description	Unit	Cost per unit	Number of unit	Amount of money
Researchers' returns				1,296,000
Lead researcher (1x12 person x month)	Per person per month	18,000	12	216,000
Researchers (6x12 person x month)	Per person per month	15,000	72	1,080,000
Survey Spending: Central Expenses				324,000
Training local coordinators	session	84,000	1	84,000
Communication and support systems	month	20,000	12	240,000
Survey Spending for the focus province				3,035,200
Training, data collection, feedback	province	600,000	1	600,000
Local coordinators (1 person per province 12 months)	Per person per month	30,000	12	360,000
Traveling within communities	community	5,000	25	125,000
Traveling expenses of researchers, advisers (2 trips 12 persons) and central coordinators (3 trips 3 persons)	flight/vehicle trip	4,000	33	132,000
Field expenses of researchers, advisers and central coordinators (4 days per trip)	per person per day	1,600	132	211,200
Design sessions	day	6,000	2	12,000
Materials	community	10,000	25	250,000
Data input and reviews	community	15,000	25	375,000
Seminar (50 participants including speakers)	session	70,000	1	70,000
DSA and traveling to seminars (50 participants per session)	participant	4,500	200	900,000
Survey Spending for the other 12 provinces				8,992,800
Training, data collection, feedback	province	200,000	12	2,400,000
Local coordinators (1 person per province 8 months)	per person	80,000	12	960,000

Description	Unit	Cost per unit	Number of unit	Amount of money
Traveling within communities	community	5,000	48	240,000
Traveling expenses of researchers, advisers (2 trips 2 persons) and central coordinators (2 trips 1 person)	flight/vehicle trip	4,000	72	288,000
Field expenses of researchers, advisers and central coordinators (4 days per trip)	per person per day	1,600	288	460,000
Design sessions	Day	6,000	24	144,000
Materials	Community	10,000	48	480,000
Data input and reviews	Community	15,000	48	720,000
Seminar (50 participants including speakers)	Session	50,000	12	600,000
DSA and traveling to seminars (50 participants per session)	Participant	4,500	600	2,700,000
Others				6,352,000
Advisers on poverty (4x8 person x month)	Per person per month	88,000	32	2,816,000
Advisers on local finance (1x8 person x month)	Per person per month	88,000	8	704,000
Advisers on local administration (1x8 person x month)	Per person per month	88,000	8	704,000
Advisers on social dimensions (1x8 person x month)	Per person per month	88,000	8	704,000
Central coordinators from 3 institutes (3x12 person x month)	Per person per month	30,000	36	1,080,000
Returns for 3 specialists (Steering Committee)	Person	100,000	3	300,000
Contingency			0	44,000
Total				20,000,000
UNDP sponsorship (US dollars)				
For researchers		40,000	1	40,000
For surveys		35,000	1	35,000

Although the budgetary details were proposed in accordance with planned research activities, they may change in line with future recommendations of CIETinternational specialists.

11. Methodology

The research is an action research. Its activities will centre on encouraging government agencies and people's organisations to learn the methods and processes of social audit in order to evaluate the results and progress of government policies concerning social development and poverty reduction. The processes developed by CIETinternational consist of tools that will allow all stakeholders to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the public services of government agencies. Also included in the processes are the mechanisms that can trace the inefficiency of public services. The social audit method of CIET is not overly complicated. They are based on the concept that public service providers, especially agencies of or under the supervision of the government, and the served party, people, have their say in attempts to improve public services.

Research process

The research process is shown in the Chart 1 below. It begins with selecting poverty policies to be studied. The study will try to cover as many policies as budgets and time permit. To be studied are the policies that are really intended to reduce poverty, grass root economic policies and other fundamental policies (including those concerning education, public health and justice) that are related to poverty reduction. The study will not really find out which particular government issues such a selected policy but will look into the policies that are being implemented in the communities to be surveyed.

Besides, selected policies will be divided into two main categories. The first one will cover the policies identified by researchers and the second one will gather the policies that locals select for the study to suit the needs of their communities. The first category will gather the policies that poverty-related researches in Thailand have considered as having impacts or having enough potential to create impacts on poverty reduction. In the second category, researchers will discuss with communities whether the latter would like to add or remove any poverty-related policy to suit their local social and economic situations.

The next stage will be the analyses of all gathered secondary data on the poverty-related policies to be studied and of the social and economic statuses of the areas or the communities to be studied. Then, instruments will be specified, that is to produce questionnaires for field surveys. The questionnaires must be pre-tested before their real application, which is the step of gathering information as shown in the chart. Afterwards, the gathered information will be analysed with initial data analysing tools developed by CIETInternational. The process from the start to the initial data analysis should take about six months or the first half of the cycle specified by CIETInternational.

The second half of the cycle or the rest six months of the research will deal with the discussion of the data and analysed results with communities and with information dissemination that is expected to cause changes to the implementation of poverty-reduction policies.

The second half will start with a focus group discussion in each area or community to be studied. Participants will be encouraged to comment on initially analysed results and add topics or information that should benefit the final analysis of data.

When the final analysis is concluded, findings will be distributed to communities and implementers. Workshops will be organised to let all parties concerned from all levels learn analysed results and findings and make comments. The main objective is to apply analysed results to adjust ideas and practices related to poverty-reduction policies. This is the stage of translating plans into actions as shown in the chart.

Data analysis

The data analysis that CIETInternational has developed is based on the idea of epidemiology. It is recognised for the ability of seeking successful policies (like finding workable medicines or treatment to cope with diseases). It is adapted to evaluate the success of public services by the state. The information to be gathered from household surveys will be transformed into five levels of performance indicators as follows (more details are in the appendices):

Level 0 indicators are commonly used descriptive frequencies such as the proportion of the households who are satisfied with government policies.

Level 1 indicators are the unbiased odds ratios of success gauged in a way when people receive services from the policies designated for the study (compared with the people who do not receive services).

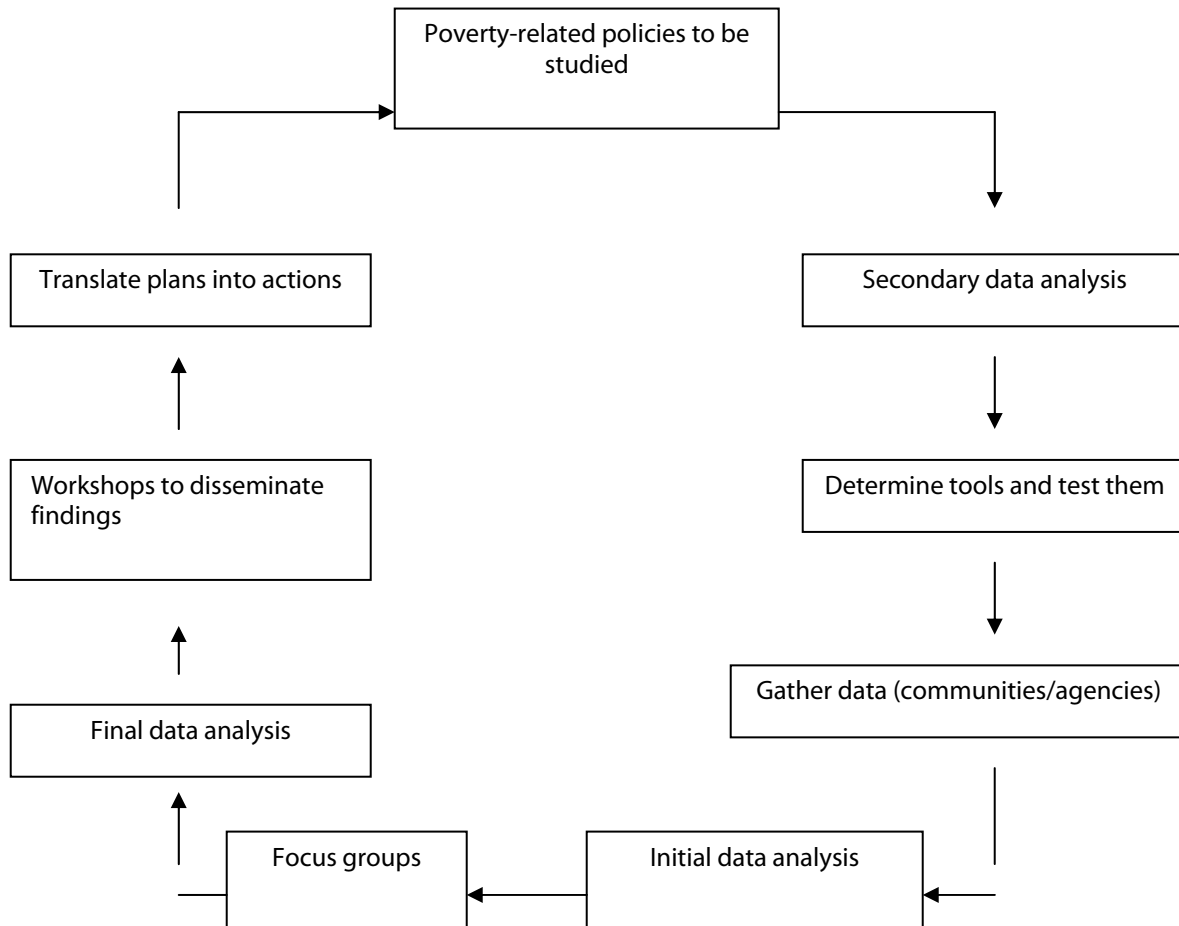
Level 2 indicators are expected benefits which are usually based on the number of the people who benefit from the studied policies.

Level 3 indicators determine the package of policies that has the highest possibility of success. A package of policies covers various policies that are implemented simultaneously.

Level 4 indicators are the indicators that will facilitate choices of policies to be invested in. Good choices are necessary because all policies cannot be implemented due to financial constraints.

Besides, the research will also deal with data analyses at the community level, called Maeso-Analysis, because community data, such as a distance between a community and its clinic, may have significant effect on the chances of success of the studied policies. This kind of data can be considered together with household data. Moreover, Maeso-Analysis can be applied to analyse quantitative data together with semi-qualitative data. This part of analyses will be based on interviews with key informants and on focus groups.

Variables obtained from the middle-stage analysis can be combined and used for an upper stage of analyses. As a result, we can link findings resulting from analyses at individuals' level and those resulting from population's level and thus find out the effects of variables at the household level. This will help assess the potential of different forms of public services and facilitate the government's plans of public services.

Chart 1 Social audit cycleScope of and people involved in the research

This research covers all government agencies which take part in poverty reduction processes. They are administrators (such as provincial governors, district chiefs, village group heads and village heads), representatives of ministries or departments at the provincial level (such as provincial developers, public health officials and volunteers), and local administrative organisations (such as provincial administrative organisations, tambon administrative organisations and municipalities).

The people sector that the research targets covers the people who benefit from poverty reduction policies, communities' organisations, local intellectuals and non-governmental organisations.

Which parties will be targeted by the research will depend on their roles. The research will target the parties that play important roles in solving poverty as well as those which have not played such roles but have potential to do so.

The research will try to cover as many poverty reduction policies as the budget and time will permit. It will focus on policies with specific focus on poverty reduction, grass root economic policies and other fundamental policies (such as those concerning education, public health and justice) which are related to poverty reduction. It will not focus on the question of which particular government made such a policy but will pay attention to the policies that are currently implemented in the communities selected for the study.

Regarding the selection of policies, choices will belong to researchers and designated communities that will have the right to select the policies which meet their study needs.

Social audit approach

CIET's social audit approach consists of seven components as follows:

- 1. Get the evidence** Public services do not always work as expected. The easiest mistake to make in service delivery is to assume that coverage and impact will be obtained, simply because they are desired or expected. Hard evidence is needed about what is available and how it works.
- 2. Civil society participation** When civil society is brought into the picture in an informed way, co-producing and using the data shared with them through carefully targeted communication strategies, public services become part of a network of governance issues on which there is meaningful interaction with the public. Results of each social audit cycle are returned to the community for discussion in gender strategies focus groups.
- 3. Impartiality** Monitoring by a neutral third party can help to build a culture of transparency in public services. At tambon, provincial and national level, this can help to build accountability and good governance.
- 4. Partner buy-in** Partners in local government and public service sectors are actively involved throughout the social audit, from the initial stages of design to action plans based on the social audit results and community-led solutions. Civil society institutions, whether in a service delivery or other capacity, are drawn into the process as key interlocutors with provincial government.

5. **No finger-pointing** Social audit is intended to focus on system flaws and to build local solutions. It is not about “finger pointing”. Even negative findings in a social audit can be framed as a baseline, a starting point to improve.
6. **Repeated social audits** Through “operational accounting” of public services, efforts can be focused whether they are most likely to have an impact. Strategic emphasis in service delivery can thus be modified from year to year. Through repeated social audits, it is also possible to identify where the gains of public sector investment level out. This allows for investment to be fine-tuned, and where it ceases to have a major impact, an exit strategy to move the resources elsewhere.
7. **Dissemination and use of results** Sharing results and the ability to interpret them are keys to transparency and accountability. Nourished by fresh evidence, managers in each sector know about the particular mix of circumstances under which an intervention works. Just as importantly, the public is kept apprised of progress. CIET recently adapted its GIS system for local systems. Combined with provincial summaries of public perceptions and experiences of services, the performance maps help to focus attention of decision takers and public alike. With careful preparation, mass media offer an additional channel of dissemination of the findings.

12. **Benefits of the research and the success indicator**

This research project has an important value-added aspect. It will create a system to audit the implementation of poverty-reduction policies and the system will be based on facts. The approach that CIETInternational will apply in Thailand is flexible and should be compatible with various government policies both in breadth and depth. The in-depth compatibility with policies should be suitable for the study of poverty-related policies, which have complicated dimensions and aspects. Besides, flexibility allows the approach to be applied to communities that are different in social and economic terms.

Strategies and frameworks for auditing poverty reduction policies and evaluating their social and economic results in order to empower communities to have their say in making and implementing both provincial and national policies and to report the results of poverty reduction policies.

1. Processing of local information that will facilitate the analysis of success and failure factors of poverty reduction policies.
2. Applying the processed local evidence as a baseline for the expansion of operations related to social development policies, poverty reduction and governance.
3. Strategies and prototype mechanisms for social audits in Thailand and projects to improve skills and capabilities of personnel and officials involved in social policies at various levels.
4. Methods to create sustainability for social audit strategies.
5. The success indicator is the number of the designated communities that can create sustainable processes to evaluate the economic and social results of poverty reduction policies and apply the processes as tools to strengthen themselves.

As the research approach will last only one year in designated communities and provinces, gains from the project will bear limitation in terms of their sustainability. This is because the social audit system to be created should in fact function every year. Budgetary constraints prevent the researchers from expanding the system to other provinces or communities simultaneously with repeating it in the provinces designated for the study in the first year. The researchers must take either choice.

A way to solve or alleviate the problem is to select already relatively strong communities in the first year. The research team hopes that when communities and the implementers of government policies recognize the gains of the new social audit approach, they will manage to acquire financial support or other kinds of support from the state or local administrative organizations to prolong the audit system. In the meantime, the researchers will be able to move the study to other provinces or other communities to expand the gains of the audit approach to other parts of the society.

13. Beneficiaries of the project

The beneficiaries are the people sector, especially the poor who will have more chances to freedom from poverty, as poverty reduction policies will become more effective and efficient.

As well, the project will benefit the government sector, both central government agencies and local administrative organisations, because they will be aware of the strong and weak points of poverty reduction policies and of the true needs of people and the poor. Importantly the project will benefit communities, as they will take part in creating the system to audit poverty reduction policies through correct and scientific information and know how to apply information to improve such policies in the future.

14. Outputs of the project

Major outputs of the project are as follows:

1. A Social audit strategy for the government's public service providers responsible for poverty reduction. This includes:
 - Better understanding among the government's service providers at all levels in designated provinces and among local administrative organisations on the processes of participatory audits.
 - Reports on findings at the provincial level and the formats of reports to disseminate information and findings to every province designated for the research.
 - Reports on the processes of training and capability building in the focus province.
2. Result-based governance tools at the provincial level, comprising:

- Training manuals for service providers in the government sector and for local administrative organisations on how to collect evidence to be used to monitor services and poverty reduction policies and ensure that evidence is used.
 - A communication and dissemination strategy to be disseminated to communities and parties concerned.
3. The processes of information analyses at the national level for policy planning, implementation and monitoring, comprising:
- Analysis of evidence collected from surveyed and interviewed households and local intellectuals to study the cause-effect relation of the implementation of poverty reduction policies across time and place and identify factors related to increased citizen participation and improved service delivery.
 - A national baseline that will facilitate the follow-ups of poverty reduction policies to be studied.
4. The use of information and support for public accountability created at various levels:
- Training of government officials and staff of local administrative organisations in the focus provinces, covering the evidence from the social audit and how to use it in their work.
 - Studying thoroughly successful public services (best cases) and publicising findings through mass media.

Besides, researchers will present the following reports to the National Research Council:

- Within the third month of the research, an inception report that will contain selected samples, the networks of local coordinators, the poverty reduction policies that the researchers and communities select for study, and questionnaire formats.
- Within the sixth month of the research, the first progress report to contain initial survey results, a plan for the verification of survey results with communities, a focus group plan, part of focus group results, and a plan for the dissemination of research results to communities and service providers who implement poverty reduction policies in the government and the private sectors.
- Within the tenth month of the research, a draft final report to contain the results of information analyses, the initial results of workshops on the dissemination of findings to communities and parties concerned, and recommendations on the sustainability of economic and social audits.
- Within the 12th month of the research, the final report that will contain all research results, the evaluation of the project and guidelines for the research in following years.