

Area-Based Assessment

by Professor Dr. Channarong Pornrunroj *

Conducting assessment through “reducing” questions to address appropriate sizes and through reducing the scale of “Thailand” to that of a “province”.

During the past decade, ONESQA’s external assessment for each round has followed the pattern of distributing the tasks so as to cover educational institutions at all levels nationwide. These institutions would be assessed at least once every five years. They would be duly informed of assessment outcome on a case-by-case basis. It is, therefore, not possible to have an “overall picture” at the local or provincial level. For concluding pertinent results so as to have an overall picture of each area, ONESQA has to wait for completion of assessment of all institutions concerned, which takes 5 years. Situations of these institutions might have changed, new problems might have arisen, the developmental guidelines, therefore, need to be changed accordingly. Consequently, ONESQA has no effective database with sufficient data and information enabling it to create an efficient network of allies, which can lead to strengthening of educational quality in the respective areas.

Therefore, with the view to obtaining maximal benefits from assessment results, ONESQA has introduced an “Area-Based-Assessment” or ABA model. This innovative approach “reduces” size, by reducing the size of “Thailand” to that of a “Province”. Such an approach enables those concerned to provide clearer answers. The main aim is to strengthen the educational quality assurance system of the area through setting in place provincial management mechanism so as to collect necessary information and relevant knowledge to conduct research for further quality development. It is another model for developing and strengthening the system of external assessment. It leads to systematic participation of all network allies within each area. For the first phase (FY 2012), the implementation covers 8 provinces: Phrae, Chai Nat, Sing Buri, Samut Songkhram, Trat, Amnat Charoen, Chumphon and Phangnga; for the second phase (FY 2013), it will

cover 20 provinces; for the third phase (FY 2014), 41 provinces and for the fourth phase (FY 2015), 8 provinces.

Objectives

1. To involve participation of all sectors in the area of education
2. To provide clarity for local development
3. To bring about impacts for the benefits of local development

Goals

1. To get the Area-Based Assessment Model for the remaining years (2013-2015) of the third assessment round and the fourth round (2016-2020);
2. To engage representatives of all network allies in the target areas where are actively involved in resource mobilization for strengthening educational quality; and
3. To organize an Educational Quality Festival of target areas to present the assessment outcome, problems and obstacles, and guidelines for enhancing quality of education with time frame set. Provincial “Creative Dialogue” will also be organized for presentation of results of research in cooperation with network allies, so as to benefit from the pertinent guidelines for improving educational quality.

ONESQA fervently hopes that the Area-Based Assessment will provide a model for innovative assessment leading to enhancing quality. It will also result in stimulating cooperation of network allies, which will emerge as a Quality Chain for strengthening existing cooperation efforts in the area, with the ultimate aim of achieving better quality of life as well as a culture of quality.

* Director, Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization):
excerpt from the programme of activities of the “Educational Quality Festival”

Chart showing steps for implementing Area-Based Assessment

