

Final Evaluation Report of Project:

**Paralegal Training for Rural Women and
Feminist Research Training in Thailand
2005-2008**

**Implemented by the FORWARD Foundation (Thailand)
and
The Women's Studies Centre, Chiang Mai University**

by

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and
BENCHAPHUN EKASINGH**

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Background

Thailand has experienced rapid economic growth and social-economic change over recent decades, the 1997 banking and financial crisis notwithstanding. Employment opportunities have grown fastest in the urban industrial and tourism centers, drawing both men and women into the cities, both for licit and illicit activities. The resultant out-migration from chronically poor villages has resulted in some remittance income for poor rural households, but rural incomes otherwise remain stagnant. Greater opportunities also draw migrants to Thailand from its neighbors in the region.

Thailand has strengthened legal protections offered to its citizens, including the passage and promulgation into law of the Child Protection Act of 2003 and other legislation affecting women. Implementation of constitutional and other legal and statutory protections sometimes falls short, as social change lags legal changes, and legal knowledge and legal literacy remain low, particularly in rural areas. While the number and percentage of women in decision-making and political roles has increased, males still dominate at virtually all levels, providing often unacknowledged resistance to changes which would benefit women—and there by society.

This evaluation was conducted during a time of critical change for Chiang Mai University and the Women's Studies Center. It appears that the creation of a semi-autonomous university, while intended to free the university of its historical bureaucracy, faces the roadblock of ingrained practices. Hence, rather than the Center being upgraded to the status of a full academic department with teaching responsibilities (and the concomitant ability to hire and fire teaching staff), it appears that the WSC will retain its status, with a parallel Department of Women's Studies to be created.

The project is making progress toward the ultimate goal of empowering women by equipping them with legal and feminist analytical knowledge for the purposes of overcoming human trafficking and other women's-related issues and to work towards a more just and equal world. The project has or will soon achieved the major goals of paralegal training, and generating knowledge related to trafficking issues in Thailand through feminist research.

Context of the Project

The emergence of the Human Rights Commission, among other institutions mandated by the 1997 Constitution,¹ has strengthened the basis for ensuring the rights of all throughout the Kingdom. Nonetheless, women's networks continue to play important roles in public and policy advocacy, and by bringing to light specific violations and addressing the needs of those violated. Progress in deepening the legal basis for women's rights continues, with, in recent years, the following legislative and regulatory changes in recent years.²

1. Domestic Violence Act (2007)
2. Amendment of Thailand's Name Act to enable married women to retain their maiden name (2005)
3. Thailand acceded to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (2003)
4. Thailand approved the Child Protection Act (2003)
5. Administrative regulation establishing Gender Equality Officers in all government departments (2000)
6. Measures in Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Children (1997)
7. Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act (1996)
8. Royal Decree on Principle and Procedure for Good Public Governance (2003)

Established in 1986, the Women's Studies Center offers degree and non-degree programs in women's studies, with the status of a *non-teaching* department within the Faculty of Social Science. (Teaching department status would enable the Center to hire its own staff, in addition to contracting multi-disciplinary staff from outside the Center under current arrangements.)

The Women's Studies Center and the FORWARD Foundation (the latter the project holder) holds raising women's awareness of their rights as one of its highest priorities. Since its establishment, the Women's Studies Center is one of the pioneering organizations providing gender-focused leadership trainings for grassroots women via its Paralegal Training for Rural Women Project. The FORWARD Foundation, established in 2002 as the Foundation for Women, Law and Rural Development, espouses objectives of engaging in study and research of issues of gender equality with regard to economic, political, cultural, and legal spheres, and to realize the value of sustainable rural development; empowering women by equipping them with valuable legal knowledge that will encourage and enable them to work towards a more just and equal world; following the basic concept of human rights according to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other relevant international mechanisms; encouraging the founding of women's organizations at all levels in order to further develop gender relations according to the Thai Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and promoting the creation of a civil society where women's presence is felt and their participation is equal, substantial and constructive.³

¹ Other Constitutionally-mandated new organizations include the Administrative Courts, the Constitutional Court, the Election Commission, and the Office of the Ombudsman. The 1997 Constitution was also intended to bring greater autonomy to other agencies, including those with mandates linked to rights and justice, including the National Counter Corruption Commission and the Office of the Auditor General.

² See http://www.thailaws.com/laws_index.htm for a list and English translations, not yet updated to include the Domestic Violence Act, of laws. Regulatory changes mentioned in this report are not included.

³ http://www.soc.cmu.ac.th/~wsc/forward_e.htm

In 2003, the Paralegal Training for Rural Women Project developed into the Gender and Democratization Project for rural woman leaders, complementing the original project by serving as a strategic path to the actualization of the gender equality. The project aims at stimulating the integration of legal knowledge and feminist perspectives in empowering women of various classes and ethnic backgrounds, and thus gender mainstreaming Thailand's development practices which will hopefully lead to more useful and effective policy recommendations.

As the project proposal noted, "the majority of women, especially those in rural areas are not aware of the law nor do they have access to it. Thus, they cannot develop the capability or the potentiality to call for the revision or adoption of law to bring about equality between the sexes and the protection of women's human rights."

Societal norms change more slowly than the law, and domestic abuse, for example, is under-reported because of widespread toleration, if not acceptance, in families and communities. As noted in the project proposal, research on Domestic Violence and Women's Health found that nearly half of Thai women (41% in the capital and 47% in other provinces) had experienced either physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner. About one-third of women who had serious injuries requiring hospital care never sought medical treatment.⁴

Women's leadership roles

Although women remain a small minority of those in political leadership roles, the past 15 years witnessed a five-fold increase in the percentage of women serving as village heads, from 1.2% in 1993⁵ to 4.6% in 2008. Women comprise a somewhat higher percentage of village heads in the 17 provinces targeted by the current project, at 4.69%.⁶ However, women outside the region are more likely to serve as *kamnan*: in the 17-province project area, women account for 2.7% of *kamnan*, compared to 3.29% nationwide.⁷

⁴ Kritaya Archavanichkul et al, "Intimate Partner Violence and Women's Health in Thailand". Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University and Foundation for Women, 2003, p.45 (กฤตยา อาชวนิจกุล และคณะ. "ความรุนแรงในชีวิตคู่กับสุขภาพผู้หญิง" นครปฐม: สถาบันวิจัยประชากรและสังคม มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล, 2546, หน้า 45.)

⁵ "Women and Politics in Thailand: Options for the 1990s," Suteera and Sheila Thomson, Gender and Development Research Institute, Bangkok, 1993. See p. 11 and 27, and Table 1, referencing data from the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior.

⁶ Department of Local Administration website.

⁷ Kamnan: heads of multi-village *tambon* administrative units, sometimes translated as Sub-District

Percentage of Female Local Leaders, Thailand (%)			
	Sub-district Heads	Village Heads	Both
1993			
<i>National</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>1.20</i>	<i>1.18</i>
2008			
<i>National</i>	<i>3.29</i>	<i>4.60</i>	<i>4.47</i>
<i>17 Northern Provinces</i>	<i>2.70</i>	<i>4.69</i>	<i>4.49</i>
Chiang Mai	0.49	1.96	1.81
Lamphun	0.00	3.04	2.76
Lampang	4.21	4.32	4.31
Uttaradit	3.08	7.32	6.88
Phrae	8.11	6.09	6.29
Nan	0.00	2.13	1.89
Phayao	0.00	1.23	1.13
Chiang Rai	0.00	1.86	1.71
Mae Hong Son	0.00	1.56	1.41
Nakorn Sawan	2.76	7.38	6.91
Uthai Thani	5.80	10.68	10.17
Kampaeng Phet	8.64	7.91	7.97
Tak	3.45	7.76	7.28
Sukothai	3.74	3.62	3.64
Pitaskanulok	0.00	6.06	5.31
Phichit	5.49	4.76	4.83
Phetchabun	4.59	6.27	6.13
Sources: 1993: Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, as reported in "Women and Politics in Thailand: Options for the 1990s," Suteera and Sheila Thomson, Gender and Development Research Institute, Bangkok, 1993, Table 1.			
2008: Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior.			

Institutional Evolution and a Turning Point

This evaluation occurs at a critical time for Chiang Mai University, the Women's Studies Center and the NJKF-supported program. Government policy is changing the shape of higher education in Thailand. State universities, including Chiang Mai University, are in transition to semi-autonomous status. Although the stated goal is to create greater autonomy and flexibility, the new system is shaped by the legacy of years as state institutions. Crucial decisions confront CMU and the Faculty of Social Sciences, the institutional home of the Women's Studies Center regarding the future status of the Center.

One proposal, which would have pulled disparate centers into a single department within the Faculty of Social Sciences, has been rejected. A second proposal, favored by the Center, would have retained the name "Women's Studies Center," while upgrading its status to allow the Center to hire its own teaching staff. As the FORWARD Foundation Chair indicated, any arrangement which maintains women's studies as a separate entity is preferable.

It appears that, under a proposal currently under consideration, the Center will operate parallel to a Department of Women's Studies (likely housed in the same building). Under historical University regulations (which appear to continue to hold sway in this debate), "departments" can hire own teaching staff, rather than borrowing from other departments within the University. A "center" cannot hire its own teaching staff. Although the alternative of eliminating that historical rule and establishing an avenue for Centers to hire staff is preferred by the Women's Studies Center, allowing it to maintain its well-established identity, support for this alternative within the Faculty of Social Sciences is limited. The original Division of Law, established within the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science some 43 years ago, was an integral part of the Faculty of Political Science, which split from the Faculty of Social Science in 2006. Subsequently, Law was elevated from a Department within Political Science to the Faculty of Law later in 2006.

Data collection and methodology used for this evaluation study

This evaluation study is based on the data collection by the authors, including interviews and extensive reviews of relevant WSC/FORWARD documents and records. The data collection and interviews went smoothly and the authors could obtain whatever data we asked or requested without any problem.

Interviews were conducted with WSC and FORWARD staff and board members (see Appendix table A2). Trips were made to paralegal trainees' homes and individual as well as group interviews were made as opportunities arose. The authors visited all together 9 out of 17 provinces of Northern Thailand in several short trips (see Appendix table A1). The provinces visited were Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Phrae, Sukhothai, Uttaradit, Phitsanulok and Uthai Thani. The authors also met and interviewed paralegal trainees from Mae Hon Son in Chiang Mai while they attended the August 2008 Training. All together 29 trainees were interviewed--22 being Batch 6 paralegal trainees and 7 Batch 1-4 trainees. In the visits to the paralegal trainees, 2-3 hours were devoted to each interview. Interviews were either on the individual basis or in small group basis depending on the local arrangements. The major hindrance was long travel times.

A single relatively large group interview was conducted in Chiang Mai when about 10 paralegal trainees (all of ethnic minority status) were together in one interview session. The group interview allowed for deeper understanding of the legal and social standing of minority women, and allowed for those fluent in Thai to translate complex responses which others of their language group could not express in Thai.

When travelling to the paralegal trainees' homes, WSC coordinator and some staffs accompanied us. Nevertheless, each time an interview was conducted, WSC staffs were asked to stay away much of the time so as to facilitate discussions. As discussions and interviews were towards the end, WSC staffs joined in to listen to some parts so as to follow up some points made by the trainees. The authors also did some secondary data collection at WSC with the assistance of WSC/FORWARD staff. The authors also met with Lao Women Studies Master students as well as some instructors of the Program. Interviews were also made with the key personnel from the judiciary and Human Rights Commission (See Appendix table A1).

The following provides conclusions based on field interviews with paralegal training participants, Women's Studies Centre, CMU Faculty of Social Science leadership, and judicial and human rights professionals.

Addressing Long-term Project Objectives

The project is making progress toward the ultimate goal of empowering women by equipping them with legal and feminist analytical knowledge for the purposes of overcoming human trafficking and other women's-related issues and to work towards a more just and equal world in general; creating a network of paralegals, academics and political activists through workshops, field visits and advocacy at the decision-making level in order to strengthen the women's movement; and generating knowledge related to trafficking issues in Thailand through feminist research.

Target Group: Direct and Indirect Beneficiaries

- The Paralegal Training Project has met the project goal of forty-five paralegal trainees, based on verbal communication between the project holder and NJKF consistent with a cut in the budget requested by the FORWARD Foundation.⁸ (The WSC/FORWARD project proposal dated June 2004 indicates a total of 55 women to be trained but due to the budget cut, 45 women were agreed by NJKF as the target). Out of the 45 women who were recruited, 44 have remained in the program.⁹ The project has also retrained 60-70 women from Batch 1-5 in selected events organized by the project. All together, the project has trained and still in contact with 135 paralegal trainees all over the 17 provinces of Northern Thailand.

The Feminist Research Training Project will meet its target of supporting the work of ten researchers and/or Postgraduate Students by the end of 2008; five research projects have been completed, research results published and distributed; the remaining five are in process. Additional research projects have been conducted under the funding of the Rockefeller Foundation with some of these being published and distributed. Further 2-week research training will be conducted in September 2008.

1. Partner cooperation

1.1 The relationship between the WSC/FORWARD and NJKF appears amicable and productive; NJKF has been strongly supportive of WSC/FORWARD even as Norwegian funding priorities shift from Thailand. Both moral and financial support from NJKF has

⁸ The Terms of Reference for this Evaluation indicate 45 paralegal volunteers were to be trained annually; NJKF staff indicate that this number is in error. The budget provided, as indicated above, did not accommodate this number of trainees, and NJKF staff verbally communicated their approval to FORWARD/WSC of the goal of 45 trainees for the life of project. Note that in the approved project document, it was clear from activities planned that WSC/FORWARD had intended to train paralegals over three years as the curriculum was not a one-year curriculum. The curriculum was designed to be 3-5 days each time but a couple of such trainings in a year (including meeting and study tours) over 3 years. Previous batches of paralegal alumni were also invited for retraining which have made the number of trainees larger than 45 but according to the planned activities and proposed targets, the project was certainly not intended to train 45 trainees annually.

⁹ One passed away during the training.

been excellent, demonstrating the strong NJKF commitment to women's concerns and to the WSC and FORWARD.

1.2 NJKF has actively supported WSC/FORWARD efforts, and works with the staff to clarify substantive and financial reporting issues, although clarification is sometimes delayed until NJKF staff visit Thailand.

1.3 Overall financial management has been strong and prudent; the project has benefited from the flexibility which FORWARD Foundation brings to the project, providing advance payments for project activities when disbursement delays would have otherwise resulted in a disruption of these activities.

- The occasional delays in funding result in some frustration at staff levels. Staffs also indicate a lack of clarity regarding the basis for exchange rate calculations.
- While Baht /Norwegian Kroner (NOK) exchange rate changes could have adversely affected the project, NJKF has compensated for those changes, relying on the Thai Baht budget as the governing budget.
- Accounts are carefully maintained and disbursements made in accordance with standard financial management principles.
- Annual external audits are conducted by the highly respected Thai Auditor Group, audited for to ensure that expenditures are fully document and meet accounting and financial management standards. The auditor indicated that the audit TOR did not call for an examination of allowability and allocability of expenditures, and that this function would normally be seen as the responsibility of an internal auditor or audit committee of the Board. Nevertheless, the Board has no internal auditor or audit committee to oversee project finance. While financial statements have been presented to FORWARD board and management, the WSC director and board are not informed of this project finance or audit unless she/they are already members of the FORWARD board.

1.4 Role of NJKF and FOKUS.

A review of the project, WSC and FORWARD financial accounts revealed that NKJF/FOKUS funded projects provided the biggest source of donor funding to WSC/FORWARD. Funding to WSC from the Thai government and other domestic sources are clearly low as stated in the WSC/FORWARD project proposal. The funding provided by this project has enabled WSC/FORWARD to stay active both in feminist and gender empowerment activist activities in a way that make the organization still a forefront in this field and able to achieve excellent impact among rural communities where paralegal trainees come from. WSC has benefited from FORWARD in that FORWARD has been able to generate external funding (from NKJF/FOKUS and other sources) to fuel important activities not otherwise possible by WSC funding alone.

The NKJF/FOKUS relationship with WSC/FORWARD is strong and active. In 2007-2008, FOKUS is undergoing an extensive reorganization process which has resulted in some delays in communication between the donor and project holder in the past year. This should not be an obstacle to their long-term relationship.

In 2007, WSC co-organized a successful FOKUS Networking Conference in Thailand , thereby creating additional networking platforms for WSC/FORWARD to be connected to international networks of women. In 2008, FOKUS nominated the WSC Project leader to attend the Commission on the Status of Women in New York and provided the necessary additional funding. This has enabled further networking for the project leader

as well as to increase the profile of women issues in Thailand. Through these meetings and networking, WSC has been able to connect to the Lao and East Timor women's networks and the Women's League of Burma. A recent symposium which WSC helped to organize is the Nobel Women's Initiative symposium on Political Crises of Women in Thailand and Burma held in Chiang Mai in July 2008. In this event, Nobel Women Jody Williams and Mia Farrow were able to share their views together with women from Thailand and Burma. Other networks include Coalition against Trafficking in Women, Women World congress in Madrid and Campaign against Violence against Women to be held in Vancouver, Canada. These are the collaborations developed through partial support by FOKUS/NJKF.

2. Achievement of objectives

2.1 As noted above, WSC/FORWARD has met or will soon meet both major project goals as verbally agreed: 45 women trained as paralegal volunteers, and supporting 10 feminist researchers.

2.2 To what extent have the target groups been reached?

Although all participants are women with limited opportunities for such training, the project could have had more impact on trafficking and related exploitation of women by targeting women in provinces along Thailand's Northern border (Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son and Phayao) and focusing efforts to achieve a critical number of women addressing trafficking and related exploitation. It can be said, however, that target groups also have been reached via research projects which have highlighted their problems e.g. research on Shan and Mon laborers dealing with sexuality and work experiences, research on trafficking in women via the internet and research on ethnic people's rights, given the prevalence of lack of Thai nationality. These studies provided substantive insights to the problems of trafficking, both domestic and transnational cases. Such research is not commonly available in other research institutions since it deals with sensitive issues. The project not only provides information on these issues but also relates the information to the relevant policy makers, academicians and grassroots women leaders through the extensive network that WSC/FORWARD has developed over the past 10-20 years through seminars, field visits, dialogues, publications, exchange of lecturers, conferences, etc.

2.3. Which factors have promoted or impeded the implementation of the project?

WSC/FORWARD has experienced significant staff turnover during the last few years. Retirement and heavy workload on the part of core staff have put constraints on the implementation of the project. The project has however managed to achieve its objectives due to the dedication and heavy work done by remaining staff. In the past years, a few core staff of WSC retired while the project leader would also have had to retire, but she obtained an 5-year extension from the University with a requirement that she cannot assume an administrative position (as the Director of WSC). She continues her work as the project leader, a WSC Board member and President of FORWARD Foundation. As a feminist leader, she is untiringly active, dynamic, influential and effective. The project and WSC also benefits greatly from the dedication of some retired faculty members who continue to assist WSC. The day-to-day running of project activities is largely done by the project coordinator who is also very dedicated, attending to all details and very hardworking. She was hired formerly by FORWARD and now is officially working for Chiang Mai University's WSC.

WSC and FORWARD each has its own Board. WSC board in 2008 consists of 7 members while FORWARD board consists of 5 members. Four core members are present in both WSC and FORWARD Boards. Each board member has a four-year term. WSC board deals more with government requirements, personnel and budgeting while FORWARD board deals more with donors' project matters. WSC board meets 2-3 times a year while FORWARD board meets once a year or as matters arise. WSC board members are appointed by the Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences upon the advice of the Director and its Board. FORWARD board members are the founding team of the Foundation.

For the Paralegal Training for Rural Women and Feminist Research Training funded by NJKF and FOKUS, there is also a project committee which oversees the details of administration. The project committee consists of 18 members—mostly being faculty members of the Faculty of Law. This committee meets 3-4 or more times a year as they do planning for each major activity of the project. There is also a separate Master Program Committee consisting of 7 members—4 from the Faculty of Social Sciences, 1 from WSC, 1 from the Faculty of Law and 1 from the Faculty of Education. The committee members are proposed from WSC and endorsed by the Faculty of Social Sciences. This committee oversees the administration of Women Studies Master Program. Decision making mechanism on relevant matters is vested within these boards and committees although the core members of WSC and FORWARD boards continue to be the focal of decision making mechanism.

Despite these mechanisms of boards and committees, much of the work has fallen to the Paralegal project leader, who is the President of FORWARD, a WSC board member and a Women Studies Master's Program committee member. She supervises Masters' students, seeks funding, lectures, trains paralegal trainees, oversees research activities, networks, travels abroad, handles administration, finance, and other tasks. It is quite amazing how much she accomplishes in a year. Work is also supported by other dedicated staffs as well but it seems that given the broad and challenging scope coupled with heavy load of work that WSC/FORWARD is engaging, more inputs from other Chiang Mai University staff members are critically needed at this time.

A dilemma lies in the fact that Chiang Mai University teaching staff carry heavy workloads in teaching, students' supervision and research, somewhat constraining many staffs' ability to participate in the project. While they can participate in project planning and training curriculum, they have less time to engage in other activities of the project e.g. follow-up visits, field trips, networking, counselling, etc. WSC/FORWARD will be much facilitated if it can solicit more support from various Faculties of Chiang Mai University (e.g. those in social sciences, political science or laws) especially from middle-level career staffs who can assist in conceptual leadership and administration. If not properly handled, the separation of administration of FORWARD from WSC can hinder such needed new leadership in WSC. WSC is a Center of the Faculty of Social Sciences while many faculty members involved in the project are from the Faculty of Law. The frequent turnover of WSC director from Faculty of Social Sciences in the past 5 years have not impeded this project in the short run as the project is run largely by FORWARD but has not helped the long run planning and sustainability of the follow-up projects and related activities.

2.4. Are there other institutions offering similar services? WSC/FORWARD offers a unique and highly valued program, not otherwise available in Thailand, and addressing a critical gap in legal literacy. Much more needs to be done in this regard, perhaps through other modalities, to expand the impact and learning.

The concept of work and the services provided by WSC/FORWARD funded by NJKF/FOKUS is highly commendable as there are no institutions in the country offering such services and approach. The approach used in this project can be shown in Figure 1 where different project and WSC/FORWARD components are linked in the same conceptual model.

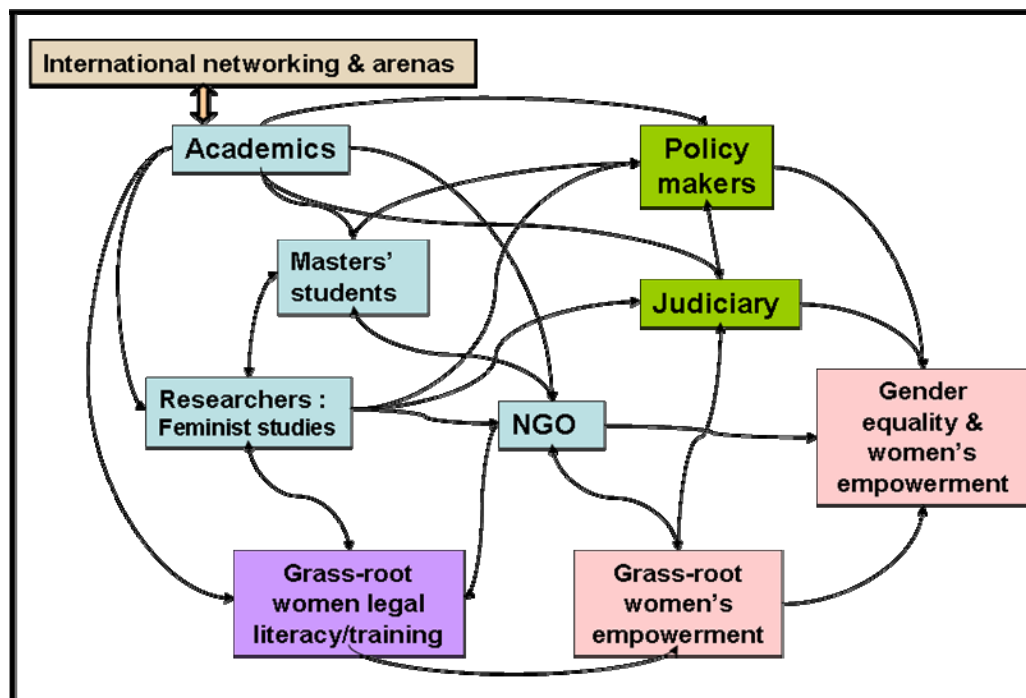


Figure 1 Concept of work in WSC and FORWARD

From Figure 1, the accomplishment of the project activities is not viewed on their own, but as components to lead to overall goals/objectives. This has made this program unique and has created enthusiasm to achieve much beyond a single project's goals/objectives. One can say that the successes of this program also depend on the personality, commitment and ideology of people involved as much as their ability to attract, seek and mobilize funding and support from partners/donors.

3. Gender equality and women's empowerment

3.1 What impact has the projects' approaches (paralegal training and feminist research training) had on the empowerment of women in the area, and to what extent has it been effective in promoting gender equality?

Impact of the projects' approaches (paralegal training and feminist research training) on the empowerment of women in the area is clear among trainees, but the extension of that impact beyond those directly trained by WSC/FORWARD varies, depending upon personal interest and commitment.

When the trainees are already local leaders, which in most cases they are, with information and experience obtained from the training, they become more effective leaders in their communities. They are seen to make use of the knowledge and skills in community development, health, education, social welfare, human rights and in particular on women issues and gender equality. The training for this Batch 6 has been focused more on women as opposed to earlier training programs. There are trainings in legal knowledge and issues on gender equality, women vs. constitution, domestic violence, and trafficking, family laws, media, agriculture, consumers, inheritance, land and environment, etc. The trainees themselves are empowered as local leaders and their work helps their communities, particularly women's groups and youth. This is especially so when the trainees and alumni create their own networks in their districts or provinces. This network of trained women has been seen as very effective as they help and support each other both in terms of morale and work.

The linkage between paralegal training and feminist research training does not seem obvious in the beginning but, as shown in Figure 1, it is part of the approach employed by WSC/FORWARD as means for women empowerment. This results in immediate, medium term and long-term impact on the empowerment of women in Northern Thailand, as follows:

- **Immediate impact:** Paralegal trainees assist to solve particular cases e.g. training, Thai identity card, rape cases, trafficking, domestic violence, abuse of police power, etc.
- **Medium term:** The networking of effective women leaders with support from educational institutions energizes women's empowerment in the North.
- **Long term:** The feminist research training generates valuable knowledge which can assist women working to end violence, trafficking, oppression and discrimination.

The linkages among the short-term, medium term and long term impact, the linkage among the different levels of stakeholders and different institutions and the continuity of this approach for a long period of time (over 10 years) are quite effective in promotion of gender equality in the North of Thailand.

3.2 How does the project improve the chances of the women involved to improve their own lives in terms of economic and social conditions and create chances for them to get involved in decision making processes?

Increased chances of the women involved to improve their own lives in terms of economic and social conditions and create chances for them to get involved in decision making processes: protecting self, family & community against exploitation, whether gender-based or otherwise.

The paralegal trainees and alumnae, with their improved knowledge, worldview, experience, network and skills, are able to work as effective and respectful leaders in their own context. Quite a number of trainees and alumni have been inspired to further their studies. Some were able to find funding to improve their work and communities. Some were tasked with higher responsibilities and were promoted to better social positions. They command better respect from their fellow villagers, male leaders and local government officials working in their communities. The paralegal trainee from Sukhothai after 17 years of being deputy head has now been elected as village head (Case 1). The paralegal trainee from Uttaradit now works closely with the Governor of the Province and gets connected in provincial committee and national committee (Case 2).

Ethnic paralegal trainees are now able to promote their problems and achievements nationwide in national and international conferences (Case 3). The network of paralegals has made the ethnic trainees to help each other, work together and get connected to the right people e.g. NGOs or lawyers. With the assistance of the project's paralegals and the network created by the project, the Lahu ethnic people will themselves establish a formal ethnic Lahu Association so that they can promote their causes and problems to policy makers. The ethnic Hmong Association has been in the past male dominated, now being run and more actively organized by paralegal trainees trained by the project. The two associations will address many problem areas faced by the ethnic peoples—not otherwise raised in other forum. One of the key issues discussed among the paralegal trainees is the deep-rooted discrimination against ethnic women by the male-dominated ethnic society. The project has provided the forum where the problems faced by ethnic women are openly discussed and ways to overcome them are better planned. The inclusion of trained women in these organizations increase their decision making power. In other cases, the women trained by the project are put in higher decision making positions.

3.3 In what ways have the project strengthened the women's movement?

The project has empowered women leaders through training, improved knowledge, worldviews and networks. These women leaders have been important forces for strengthening the women's movement. Feminist research results support the women's movement with substantive evidence and case studies.

The women leaders trained by the project carry with them the strong motivation to work for women's issues, to improve women's rights and gender equality. They not only work for women's movement by themselves as existing local, provincial and regional leaders but also they create networks of like-minds, get connected to educational institutions, and also the national bodies working on human rights. Together with research and case studies conducted by the project and the existing networks that WSC/FORWARD have, the paralegal women are strong forces in women's' movement. Batch 1-6 alumni and trainees meet yearly at WSC during International Women's Day or in an event created by WSC/FORWARD. They have formed themselves an Alumni Club but the problem of funding and personnel do not allow them to structure and organize their efforts in a continuing manner. With the newly formed working team, they want to be more active but need to be partially supported at least initially by WSC/FORWARD. They nevertheless exchange views, experiences, telephone numbers, contacts, etc. Socially and informally, they are friends who help each other in whatever way they can. For example, some of the Lamphun and Lampang trainees and alumni work together as local facilitators on community matters, women rights, corruption prevention, drug prevention, etc. As they also are influential in local politics, they often assume village and sub district leadership. In such positions, they are able to participate in district, provincial and national meetings and conferences dealing with women's concerns. Through women's networks, these local women are important forces for strengthening the women's movement.

From interviews with a Committee Member of the National Human Right Commission, we were informed that the grassroots women in this paralegal project by Chiang Mai University had facilitated and strengthened the work of the Human Right Commission. The work in the National body like Human Right Commission would not be effective if there are no connections to the grassroots level. Addressing women's problems and rights within the Human Right Commission are indeed facilitated by connections to this project.

The project also had facilitated seminars on women's issues among personnel in the judiciary. Four such seminars have been held in four regions of Thailand over the past 3-4 years. Each time, 35 members of the judiciary are invited to listen and discuss women's issues, problems, dimensions, and case studies. In total, 140 members of the judiciary/judges have participated in such seminars, jointly funded by the current project and other related projects, leveraging NKJF funds. In such seminars, improved understanding of women's issues and problems particularly when they deal with legal matters and implications is promoted.

One can say that through a combination of activities of the project, namely paralegal training, research activities, networking and seminars with personnel in the judiciary, the women's movement in Thailand is now very much strengthened.

3.4 In what ways have migrant and refugee women from Burma and Laos benefited from the project?

This project has generated valuable research highlights dealing with problems of migrant and refugee women from Burma. There are studies on trafficking dealing with Burmese, migrant and ethnic workers e.g. research on 1) statelessness as a risk factor for human trafficking, 2) to help, to heal or to harm the trafficked victims; treatment for the children and women rescued from trafficking 3) trafficking in women, sexuality and pornography on the internet, 4) human trafficking through the internet: feminist views of the laws and memorandum of understanding between government agencies working on women and child trafficking, 2003, 5) women's emotions and feelings: case study of Mon women migrants in gum factories, Tung Kok sub district, Songpinong district, Supanburi Province, 6) ethnic women's struggle over nationality. Such research results are being disseminated nation-wide to organizations working for women. Some of them do not deal directly with Burmese and Laos migrant and refugee women but they indirectly affect them. Migrant and refugee women are vulnerable to such trafficking due to their weak social status, and research conducted with project support furthers our understanding of the issues arising from their social status and the context in which they live in Thailand.

For example, according to the study on the children and women rescued from trafficking, it was revealed that some of the treatment and the assistance provided by officials should be improved such as food, shelter, psycho-social support, witness protection, legal assistance, and timeliness of legal cases. It was also found that the main reason of the officials' bias toward trafficked children and women was that they were not aware that prostitution was defined as trafficking issue. They believed that the victims of prostitution consented to participate in it. Trafficked children and women were normally labeled as prostitutes and as a result, they faced discrimination by officials.

The research goals were to raise awareness of those working in the anti-trafficking area to respect human dignity of the trafficked victims. The research was also intended to contribute the body of knowledge concerning trafficking in children and women in Thai society. The research findings will be disseminated as an advocacy document to improve measures and strategies to help and defend for the trafficked children and women.

Workshops and seminars were organized around issues of marginalized women, including migrant and refugee women from Burma and Laos. Policy makers, NGOs, personnel in the judiciary and relevant government officials participated in such workshops. Interviews with Human Rights Commission and personnel in the judiciary revealed that they relied very much on the research results coming from the project.

In the case of Lao women in particular, through related activities financed from other donors, some Masters' students from Laos who are staff of the Lao Women's Federation and Lao Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare were trained and introduced to issues and topics dealing with trans-border gender-related exploitation. WSC through this project and related project is empowering government and Lao NGO workers who would go back and work on gender equality and women's empowerment in their own country. From informal visits and discussions, it was found that trafficking problems from Laos were serious and many Lao women are seriously exploited by the Thai sex industry. Currently, not enough research and action are being done on these Lao women trafficked into Thailand.

4. Infrastructure

4.1. Are the available material resources (classrooms, educational materials etc) sufficient and appropriate for accomplishing the projects' objectives?

Available material resources (classrooms, educational materials etc) are sufficient and appropriate for accomplishing the projects' objectives.

In terms of paralegal training, the facilities in WSC are good and sufficient for the activities of the project. Education materials such as books and handouts are reported sufficient for the paralegal trainees. The project also sends follow up materials to trainees at their homes. Since the backgrounds of trainees are diverse, some would like to have more, some would like to have fewer materials. Some would like to have more newsletters and some would like to have the materials organized in bound form (books). When brought to study tours in a long trip, there was a suggestion for improvement of air conditioning in buses. Nevertheless, none of the trainees interviewed said the material resources were neither insufficient nor inappropriate. All appreciated and were thankful of everything the project provided for them. When asked whether they would be able to finance themselves for this kind of training, most would say they would be unable to pay for themselves to come to this kind of training given the high expense involved.

WSC has one big seminar room (with capacity of about 50-80 persons), one small seminar room (capacity about 10 persons) and a library. For paralegal training, the big seminar room is sufficient for the purposes but for research training and Masters' students' classes, the small seminar room is rather small for student's class of 15-20. One can say that work space for staff, researchers and students is still limited although it is not a critical problem as they can use the nearby Faculty of Social Sciences Library and workspace. The environment of interaction among researchers and staff nevertheless could have been better with more spacious facilities.

5. Assess the relevance of the training provided

Paralegal Training Project:

5.1 What is the motivation of the trainees for studying at the WSC and what do they expect from their training? How are the trainees recruited?

Trainees join the program for a variety of reasons, principally developing knowledge of the law, but also including prestige, enhanced credibility in the community and personal concerns regarding legal issues, generally related to land and inheritance.

- Trainees are recruited through nominations by Paralegal Program alumnae, by government officials, and NGO and community leaders. Some reported

submitted the application form by themselves responding to an announcement by WSC sent to the village, sub district, district or provincial administration. The Project Committee then selected the trainees from their applications and invited them to present their work in a meeting before the final selection was made. We found the selection process of the trainees carefully done. Most, except a few, trainees are local leaders who have been working actively in their communities. A few are provincial-level or regional-level women leaders. It was an intention of the Project to include some ethnic women leaders. About a quarter of the group were ethnic women from Upper North of Thailand. Literacy and formal education was not necessarily the requirement for the ethnic group.

Background of trainees

Forty-five Batch 6 trainees were rural grassroots leaders with an average age of 44 years. The youngest was 29 years old and the oldest was 68 years old. Thirty-five per cent were aged between 41-50 years; 29 per cent between 31-40 years and 28 per cent were 51-60 years old. All were local leaders who through their work experience in community development in various capacity, some became district, provincial and even national leaders. Their social positions were diverse e.g. village or sub-district head, members of village council, women's group, savings group, cooperatives, health volunteers, sub-district administration, provincial administration, media and NGOs. All were working for the community in their own capacity. Around 10 of them were ethnic minority women. Their education was not high, many had no formal education. The ethnic women were not able to read or write when they first came to the training (see Case 3). They reported remembering all materials via listening. After the first and second year's training, many of the women were motivated to continue their studies. Through adult education and community colleges, the women struggled to obtain better formal education. Some were able to finish their bachelor's degrees. Most were working actively in their community before they came to the paralegal training.

5.2 What do the trainees intend to do after finishing the paralegal training and what do they actually do after finalizing the training?

Many paralegal trainees already have positions of leadership in their local communities, and continue to serve in those positions as trainees and post-training. A number of program alumnae have gained confidence and interest in formal degree programs, and several of alumnae have gone on to obtain bachelor's degrees or higher. In the Thai educational system, students can do their studies through non-formal education programs, distance learning or community colleges. The paralegal trainees reported wanting to continue their community work, while much more actively than in the past promoting women's position and standing. Based on evaluation team interviews, trainees did what they intended to do. The trainings have clearly empowered them to assist community members on legal issues, and to focus on protecting the rights of women.

5.3. Are there any obstacles for female trainees in terms of difficulties with travel and living arrangements in order to be able to study and subsequently work?

The program is arranged to allow trainees to carry on with their usual lives, except for 3-4 day concentrated training, held every 3-4 months. Although travel may be demanding, none indicated that this was an obstacle. Some reported a time conflict with their schedule dealing with their community tasks in one or two occasions but none thought this was a serious obstacle. They would like to join the trainings whenever they could. A

trainee metaphorically said she would walk to Chiang Mai from Uthai Thani (over 500 km) if she had to. Some had to come on a bus or a train instead of driving themselves due to limited travel budget allowed, but they did not consider this a problem.

5.4 Does the curriculum reflect the educational needs of the trainees?

Several trainees expressed difficulty in understanding legal language when they began the program, but indicated that this difficulty disappeared with additional hours of training and familiarizing themselves with legal terms.

The trainees having worked in the community as local leaders have recognized the importance of being knowledgeable about the laws and legal knowledge and the relevance of such knowledge to their work. They all came with inquisitive minds, eager to learn, remember and absorb the knowledge given to them by WSC trainers. When the knowledge was given to them as case studies, study tours, exchanges of experiences, they appreciated it even more than lecture materials. The curriculum provides life experience for these trainees and they felt lucky to be chosen as trainees and indicated that they would like to recommend their friends to have the same experience.

In order to see the depth of the curriculum, Figure 2 displays curriculum details. The figure shows the main training events. There have been also minor events such as visits to the paralegal homes by Faculty staff, donors and students, occasional side events, mobile legal counseling, etc. which are not shown in this figure. One can see that the curriculum is quite comprehensive and extremely valuable for trainees, each of whom has much background in community work. The design of the curriculum has been participatory although the teaching methods are largely lecture style although seminars, dialogues, questions and answers, sharing of experiences as well as study tours complement the lectures so as to make the curriculum more interesting and participatory. Nevertheless, further participatory teaching methods such as small group discussions, role plays, facilitated and student-centered learning processes can be employed.

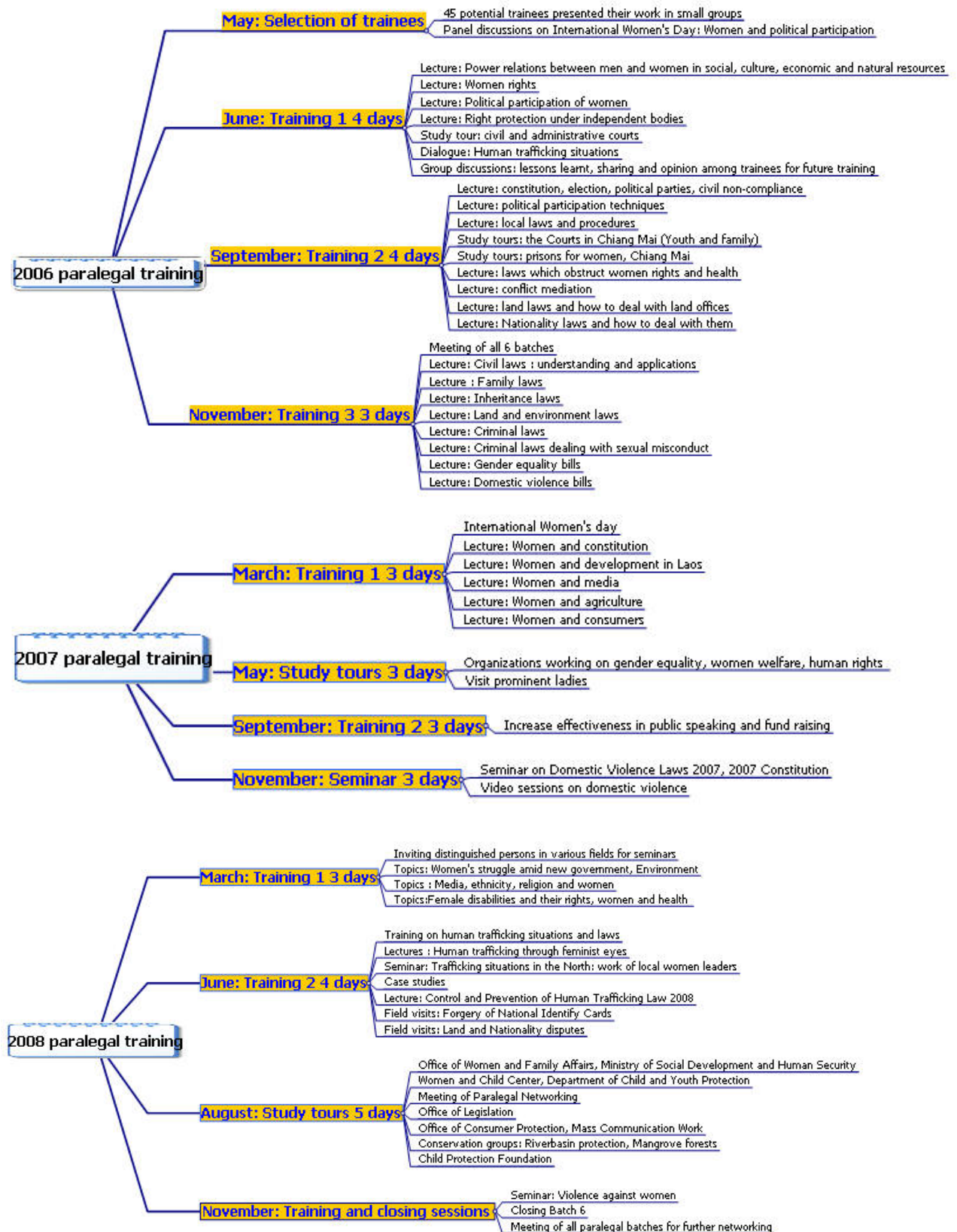


Figure 2 Batch 6 Paralegal training 2006-2008

5.5 Does the training at the WSC equip the participants with relevant legal and feminist analytical knowledge needed for work in the communities and hence contributing to the empowerment of rural women?

The training at the WSC does equip participants with relevant legal knowledge, much of which is applied in addressing concerns within communities regarding family laws, civil rights, gender equality, land and environment laws, inheritance, laws against domestic violence, civil and criminal laws, etc. Feminist analytical knowledge and perspectives were also introduced. The training was divided into different events, series and each time not too intensive. Over the three years, the trainees have been properly trained, introduced to important legal knowledge and feminist analytical knowledge needed for work in the communities. The depth of legal knowledge and feminist analytical knowledge acquired vary widely from one trainee to another, apparently partially reflecting differences in the life experiences and interests of participants. Apart from the training in legal and feminist knowledge, the project facilitated the emergence of the network of paralegal and professional legal women which helps support the empowerment of rural women. This training model is quite unique and highly commendable.

5.6 Is the quality and quantity of the teaching aids and other educational materials appropriate for the achievement of the project objectives?

The quality and quantity of the teaching aids and other educational materials is appropriate for the achievement of the project objectives. The instructors for the project were chosen from the network of resource persons all over the country, not only limited to the Chiang Mai University instructors. These were quality instructors with real experiences to share. For the paralegal training, educational materials and teaching aids were reported as very good.

5.7 Are the teaching methods used appropriate to the needs of the trainees?

The teaching methods used were modified to suit the trainees' problems and needs. Case studies, role-plays, discussions, field visits were used to greater extent than in the past as tools to teach trainees. The teaching methods were found appropriate to the needs of the trainees. Further use of participatory methods of teaching was recommended by some alumnae. Nevertheless, as practiced, the latest curriculum was modified to be more participatory than was previously the case. Further participatory teaching methods can be designed although the project staff reported that such methods are limited by the nature of teaching content which was rather rigid dealing with many laws and legal matters. The short duration in each training (3-4 days) was good in that it was not too long for the trainees. After 3-4 months, they were invited back for another training, seminars or field trips. This is a good way to engage trainees who are also busy with personal lives and their community work.

5.8 Do the teachers have adequate background and skills?

The project has brought qualified teachers and instructors, both within and outside Chiang Mai University to teach in this curriculum. The quality of the teachers and curriculum has been excellent and much admired by trainees. Such wide selection of

qualified teachers was possible because of the good connections that the President of FORWARD has created throughout the 30 years of her work in this field. The interaction with paralegal trainees and knowledge on particular feminist research also enabled the teachers to be up to date with facts on the ground and in tune with grassroots reality. They in turn have more background and skills to teach the next batch of trainees.

Feminist Research Training Project:

5.9 In what ways have the research projects generated knowledge related to trafficking issues in Thailand/the region? How has the knowledge acquired been disseminated and integrated into advocacy work and strategies?

WSC/FORWARD conducted research training as a regular activity under NJKF and other donor funding. This is usually a two week training involving 6 days of lectures, 2 days of field visits, four days of writing and three days of presentation—all in one stretch. The lectures cover feminist concepts, movement, philosophy, history, eco-feminism and research methods. About 20 researchers are trained in each batch. Only selected proposals will be funded, including budget for publication and dissemination. For the periods of project duration 2006-2008, research training has not been done during 2006-2007 but will be done late 2008. (One on one support from academic advisers has served to support the researchers funded during 2006-2007.) During 2006-2007, five research grants were made to WSC or WSC-affiliated researchers and/or students of Women Studies Masters Program. In 2008, 15 more researchers will be trained and another five research grants funded according to the project proposal. This activity is an integral part of WSC and the Women Studies Masters Program. The funding from NJKF/FOKUS has enabled WSC and WSC-affiliated researchers/students to pay more attention to trafficking issue especially dealing with migrants from Burma.

The research projects have generated useful knowledge related to trafficking issues in Thailand and the region. The knowledge is valued by relevant agencies dealing with women's concerns. The knowledge acquired has been and is in the process of widespread dissemination through WSC publications. Some knowledge generated has been incorporated into advocacy work and strategies especially dealing with trafficking and immigration issues. The following were research topics in this project.

Title of research

- 1 Gender and Life Experiences of Transnational Immigrants: Shan Women
- 2 The Lives of Women and Children Victims of Trafficking in Northern Thailand after Receiving Assistance
- 3 A Study of Transnational Marriage: Thai Women Marrying Foreign Men through the Internet Matchmaking Service in Thailand
- 4 A Case Study of the Emotions and Feelings of Women Laborers in a Clay Factory in Tung Kok Sub-District, Song Pi Nong District, Suphanburi Province
- 5 A Feminist Analysis of Human Trafficking: Examining the Internet, Legal Processes and the Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Cooperation to Suppress Trafficking in Children and Women

In addition, Women's Studies Masters theses also produced related research outputs on the following topics, namely,

- 1 Statelessness as a risk factor for human trafficking in Thailand
- 2 Trafficking in Women, Sexuality and Pornography on the Internet
- 3 Sexuality and experiences of Shan women laborers
- 4 Women, sex and the internet
- 5 Ethnic women's struggle over nationality

Not only are these topics relevant and interesting in relation to trafficking and gender equality, we found the research content quite impressive with good depth of knowledge in sensitive issues. Each research will be published in a book and widely distributed to relevant libraries and institutions throughout Thailand. Some will be on sale at WSC. These are written in Thai and funded by various funding sources e.g. Rockefeller Foundation, NORAD, Asia Pacific Women, Law and Rural Development Foundation (APWLD). WSC has also launched a national journal called the Thai Feminist Review in 2007 with some feminist articles in English and Thai languages. One volume is planned per year. The research activities and the dissemination of research results are financed from many sources and are productively interlinked by WSC and FORWARD. No funding is available to translate these studies into English, therefore limiting dissemination to Thai-language works. Occasional English-language papers and books by the FORWARD Chair and others draw on these works to expand understanding of challenges faced by women at the grassroots level.

At the time of this evaluation, two project-funded research reports have been published and distributed; one being in press and two will be ready in two months. In 2007-, a 3 day symposium on “Human Trafficking in Women and Children” was held where the researchers presented and provided forum of discussions on the research findings. Approximately 40 participants attended the symposium including academics, students from Chiang Mai University, NGOs, police officers from Immigration Division in Chiang Mai Province and general public. Together with the set of research results produced by Women Studies Masters’ Program, the project has a good body of knowledge that can be used for advocacy and implementation strategies for relevant government and non-government agencies. One of the researchers who wrote reports on “A Feminist Analysis of Human Trafficking: Examining the Internet, Legal Processes and the Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Cooperation to Suppress Trafficking in Children and Women” is a police woman who works in cases dealing with women and children abuse. The research and the training she obtained will be directly useful to her work. Moreover, the personnel from the judiciary and Human Rights Commission we interviewed confirmed that they relied on Chiang Mai University WSC to produce this kind of knowledge on women’s issues because other agencies were neither so skilled nor keen to do so.

5.10 Has there been any reduction in the number of women involved in trafficking during this period?

There been no reduction in the number of trafficked women attributable to the project during this period, although two young women were reportedly rescued from a situation of labour exploitation by a paralegal trainee. It is expected nevertheless that the research highlighting problems of trafficking will result in some action by policy makers or police or social development officers who will reduce the number of trafficked women,

especially from Burma and Laos. Further linkages to relevant officers to highlight research results are needed.

6. Sustainability and future perspectives

6.1 Although the Faculty of Social Science indicates willingness to take on a major expansion of paralegal training, complex institutional arrangements pose a challenge. The current project, funded by NORAD through the NJKF, is held by the FORWARD Foundation, not by the WSC. Neither the University nor the Faculty of Social Science has a role in the management of a project where a unit within the University is not the project holder. Moreover, the fact that the project leader and many project board members are from Faculty of Laws even complicates the issue.

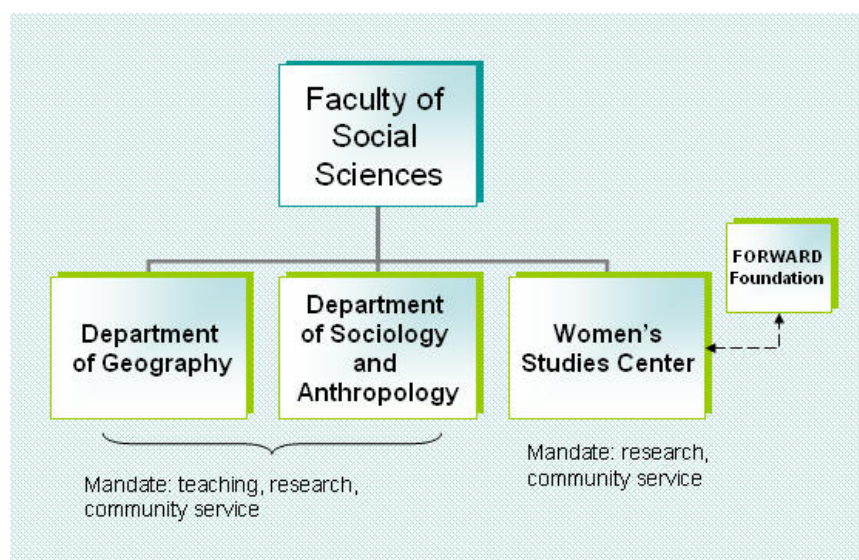


Figure 3 Women's Studies Center in Faculty of Social Sciences Structure

The WSC is currently the equivalent of a non-teaching department, with a mandate limited to research and community service, within the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University (Figure 3). Under the old structure of the University, being a research center, the University has not permitted the recruitment of teaching staffs. The Women's Studies Master Program is formally under the administration of the Faculty of Social Sciences although in practice it is being administered by WSC. When the workload is increasing both in research, community service, training and Master students' education, WSC is constantly in need of more high calibre staff. One way to do it is to incorporate the teaching component as part of the mission of the Center so as to justify the recruitment of more Faculty staff. An effort is underway to upgrade WSC status to that of a full department, with a formal teaching mandate. This would provide an additional measure of sustainability for the graduate training component of the program. WSC prefers that as a research center, it can employ teaching staff and the Master Program be formally under its administration. It is uncertain that this preferred position is feasible under the new structure of the University but at least there is a proposal now wherein there is a Women's Studies Department offering Masters and Ph.D Program in addition to the Women's Studies Center (Figure 4). To WSC, this is a second-best solution as it separates the research and teaching function into different units.

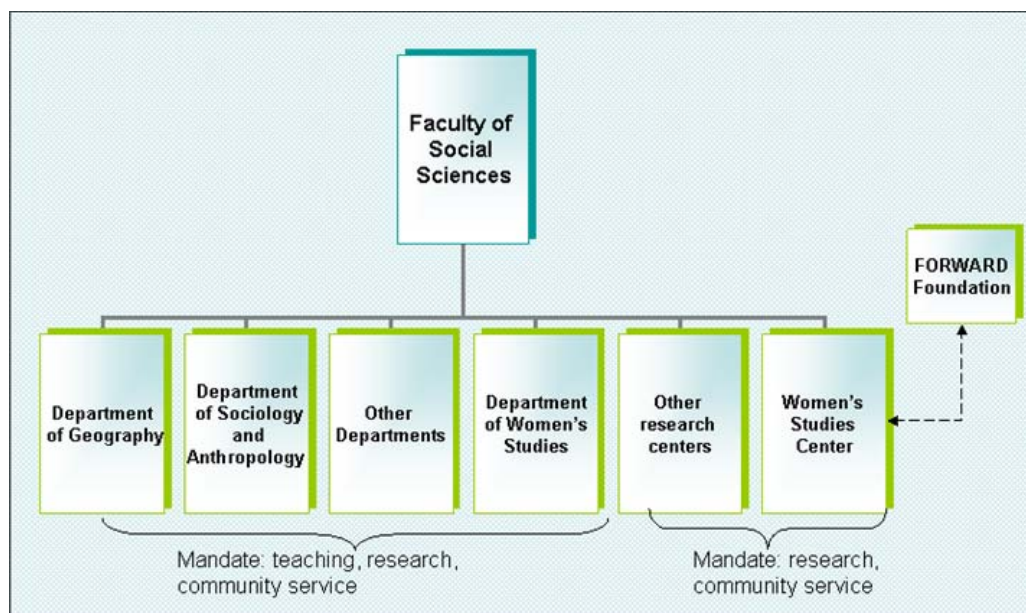


Figure 4 Proposed structure of CMU Faculty of Social Sciences

Not only that WSC needs to find its niche in the Faculty of Social Sciences, it also needs a way to work productively with FORWARD. Without FORWARD, it is doubtful how this kind of project can continue in similar manner. Even with FORWARD, the organization structure, personnel and leadership issue in WSC is still an open question. It needs to expand its work into the provinces using the network of paralegal trainees and alumnae. It also needs to work much more closely with personnel of the judiciary to promote women's causes and issues. It is possible to sustain the good work model that proves successful but efforts are needed to establish steps towards that direction. Without the existing key staff who have been working hard with all the longstanding right connections and networks, it is not easy for the new staff members of WSC can take over and repeat past successes. Long-term sustainability remains a challenge.

6.2. While the project has had excellent impact among the paralegal trainees, alumnae and the community which they work for as well as to promote women's empowerment among the trainees, it has raised issue about the long-term sustainability of the program beyond its project life. There are good potentials for sustainability although currently it seems it has not built a good institutional groundwork for it to sustain. The recommendation of the past evaluation report that suggested the project institutionalized its work into existing line agencies was not taken up. The explanation given by WSC/FORWARD staff was that they were not convinced that the quality of the work could be maintained if done by existing line agencies. While there are some truths in this reasoning, the question remains whether how to sustain the good work which have lasted over 10 years and created much women's empowerment in rural areas of the North. Donors' funding has been necessary to experiment this model initially. Once proved successful, the problem of sustainability is real and needs to be carefully planned.

New institutional designs are necessary to sustain the good work model. The tensions between governmental agencies and non-government agencies may not be easily resolved but they can be minimized with good institutional contexts. While it is possible that this

type of project be self sustainable, clear steps to establish such sustainability have yet to be developed.

Conclusions

All in all, we find this project very well worth donor's spending, well executed, well connected and having high impact towards rural women's empowerment and gender equality. The project's leadership, staff's commitment and dedication have been excellent. It can be used to be a model of work elsewhere. Long-term sustainability of the good work must be well thought out and explicitly designed to fit the particular institutional context for each place.

Recommendations

Given the above detailed findings, the following are some recommendations for WSC/FORWARD for its future work.

1. The paralegal training project is unique, valuable and effective to strengthen women's movement and empowerment; all considerations should be made to continue the activities subject to funding and personnel. Funding should be solicited from Thai and donor agencies. Scaling out the project to other provinces and regions should be considered using the already well established network of alumnae. Intensifying the network of ethnic minority women by targeted training, particularly in the provinces of the Upper North, Tak and Phitsanuloke provinces should be given consideration.¹⁰ Scaling up the project to have the connection with policy makers, decision makers, legislators, the judiciary should also be strengthened.
2. Long-term sustainability of the program should be well thought out and action taken to ensure the continued expansion of the paralegal network, both through direct efforts of the WSC and FORWARD Foundation as well as through cooperation with other national entities. For example, as the Rachabhat University network (a nationwide-network of former teacher's colleges) expands its community college program, it has been recommended by paralegal trainees themselves that a curriculum be developed for the community colleges. Institutional linkages to enable line agencies/local women leaders to absorb and continue some core activities should be well designed. Continuing support from WSC/FORWARD is nevertheless needed in those situations.
3. Finding appropriate WSC leadership must be a high priority. Better institutional arrangement to facilitate and continue the good work done by WSC/FORWARD should be explored. The connections between WSC and FORWARD leadership and activities must be further strengthened in order to avoid unproductive misunderstandings. Linkages to and support from various Chiang Mai University Faculties should be strengthened, including working with various departments to integrate feminist social and legal perspectives into a wide range of academic course work.

¹⁰ See item 4 below.

4. Strengthening ethnic paralegal trainees should be prioritized if trafficking issues are to be seriously tackled. Further communication of research results on trafficking must be made to policy makers and/or officials working in these issues.
5. Even though the current curriculum is already participatory with many trainees' inputs, further participatory teaching methods can be employed by teaching staff in order to make the curriculum more interactive to trainees.
6. Selection of trainees must continue to be rigorous. Women who have proven records of working with their community and who are energetic, youthful and dedicated should be the target of future training. Marginalized and poor women should be prioritized. Considerations should be given to create an effective network of empowered rural women leaders.
7. Follow up of paralegal trainees in their home base should be strengthened. Supplementary support e.g. seed money, personnel back up, side events, should be provided to alumnae pending on budget.
8. Linkages between research components and paralegal curriculum should be made explicit. For example, research results are conveyed to paralegal alumnae or be explicitly used in paralegal curriculum.
9. Seminars with the personnel in the judiciary need to have better follow-up as they are important but difficult to organize. Future events should be adjusted to make them more effective.

APPENDIX

Case study 1: Uttaradit

Saisamorn in Uttaradit province is 43 years old, married with 2 children. Her husband is a teacher in a private technical college in the province. She finished a bachelor degree in mass communication from the community college in the province. Before coming to the paralegal training, she was a volunteer working with women and youth group which she said started in 1984—24 years ago when she must have been 19. She then moved to work for a Chiang Mai newspaper. She also works for community radio program. She also volunteered to work for the Electoral Election Committee in her province. She is active in community development and coordinates together with other friends the provincial body for community development whereby the provincial administration has provided a platform of communication with NGOs or civil society groups. Through years of experience in the province, she is now influential at the provincial level. She could mobilize funding from government and non-government agencies to assist in development projects and programs. She reported mobilize 600,000 baht from UNICEF for relief efforts for victims of a bad flash flood in Uttaradit in 2006. She can mobilize also some funding from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security to do community work. She mobilized 5 million baht to do 15 trainings in organic agriculture—each could entertain some 100 participants. She coordinated to obtain 50 million baht for community development. She said she had direct connection to the Provincial governor who believed in the value of her work and listened to her. The non-government provincial-level community development committee which she coordinated dealt with all issues of community development e.g. village funds, village organization, women group, disaster relief, livelihood enhancement, environment protection, etc. The office of this committee is in the Provincial Community Development Office and works closely with the relevant government office. She worked with no salary but with a small per diem and some travel expenses. She insisted that this provincial community development committee must have women members who would know about women and youth issues. She said now many women participated in this committee in various ways. Women were now active in politics many in the position of village heads and village fund committees.

She reported working a lot for youth groups as they participated in community radio programs. She was confronted with many cases dealing with child abuse and rape. She has assisted 7 rape cases using the knowledge from the paralegal training. She reported that child molestation in schools and temples were unsurprisingly frequent. Monks in the temples she worked for molested young girls. After cases were reported and dealt with, two monks were de-roped. Teachers also molested their students, etc. In such cases, she assisted the victims using her newly acquired legal knowledge. Working as she has been, knowledge of the laws and awareness of important legal issues make her effective in her work. The training offered to her by Chiang Mai University opened her world. She could visit and see many things not otherwise possible in her own capacity as a local women leader. She appreciated her opportunity to be trained in Chiang Mai University. If the curriculum will be revised, she wanted to have legal knowledge in more depth for both civil and criminal codes.

She sought to network with women activists in 15 provinces and the paralegal training enabled her to do this networking. She was recommended to the training by a women leader in the network who was a paralegal alumnae. She now had frequent meetings with the regional network. She used this network to seek funding to assist in women's causes. She said seeking fund from the provincial or ministry authorities was not so difficult as long as you had good projects. She is submitting a proposal to the governor concerning social learning models—to set up social network in schools where extra curriculum outside the schools are enhanced and

children helped each other more actively. Currently, she is working closely with another paralegal so that they become a stronger voice in the province. But there are only few paralegals in Uttaradit.

She said she was ready to establish some women organization in her province. She was thinking of a model of expanding FORWARD into provincial branch. She said a paralegal club across different provinces may not be a good idea as they were from different social context. She preferred to work within a province to be effective although regional networking is also important and should be maintained for cross learning. She would like to work to solve women and children problems, mainly dealing with sexual misconduct and women rights, in her province. While human trafficking was not so much a problem in this province, there were still prostitution houses disguised as traditional massage parlours. The current constraint for her work is the fact that she obtained no formal recognition when dealing with police or prosecutors even if she is well trained and would like to help as a volunteer legal advisor. She suggested WSC issued her and trainees a formal paralegal ID or formal letter introducing her and other paralegals in the province to the governor where she could show to the police when she wanted to help a person or FORWARD sets up a provincial branch in Uttaradit. Moreover, she had an idea to expand the network of paralegals in her province. Village-level paralegal volunteers would be possible if one mobilized funding and resource persons in the province with the assistance of Chiang Mai University Women Studies programs/ projects. She was convinced she had the influence and drives to do it.

Case study 2: Sukhothai

Duangdoa is a 50 year-old village headwoman in a small village in Sukhothai. She had four years of formal primary education and had recently studied non-formal education and received the secondary school certificate. She worked for 17 years as deputy village head and since she attended the paralegal training had enabled her to be effective leader and she was later elected as village head. Community development work she has been involved ranging from village funds, village/sub district construction and infrastructure work, poverty alleviation programs, women's human rights and drug trafficking. She said it was important to have legal knowledge to be a good local leader. Many village matters dealt with the laws and she had not had the knowledge before. Now she had more legal knowledge, men and especially police respected her. Her character is very outspoken speaking very fast and full of ideas. She joined other paralegal trainees in the province and also some energetic women in the community to work together as a team. The women team of 5-6 persons helped each other and always got things done. She said unless the women were united and empowered, the men would ignore them. For her to be a village headwoman was not easy as most villagers were used to have men as leaders. Men in the village did not want to let go their superior status as well but many were convinced now that women can work better and more effective than men.

To be associated with Chiang Mai University' Paralegal Training Program has been a life experience for her and she is very eager to learn everything. She likes, and is very thankful of, the WSC paralegal curriculum as it is very relevant to her work. She needs this kind of knowledge for her work and would like to recommend her friends to join it. She said she and her team were empowered and the women's movement for gender equality was now strengthened. If women had no knowledge of the relevant laws as she received training from Chiang Mai University, they would be marginalized. Men and officials looked down upon women because women had no knowledge and experience. She was able to engage in study tours to many important places (e.g. court, prisons and women-related institutions). Now, she had gained

respect from her peers. She (and also her friends who are also paralegal alumnae/trainees) received many awards e.g. Distinguished Woman for the Region, Distinguished Deputy Village Head, Distinguished Woman to Promote Good Culture, etc. She told us that to have a good team, most trained by WSC in a province over many years (there were about 5 paralegal alumnae/trainees in Sukhothai) was essential for making an impact in a province. Some of the alumnae/trainees work at the provincial level, some at district level. They complement local village/sub district leaders like her and vice versa. Duangdoa said that she could now find budget from the government to do more training for women in her province in similar ways that she received from WSC using the network in her province and to campaign on various issues dealing with women and youth. She was certain the availability of government budget was not a problem if women could convince the village/community to see the benefits and incorporate into the yearly plan as she and her team had been doing.

To be sustainable, she recommends that similar curriculum as this paralegal training one can be incorporated into students' curriculum in secondary schools or community colleges. Support of Chiang Mai University's WSC should still be there e.g. in addition to regular training, more (funds and personnel) is available to support the local women to work independently in their own community.

Case Study 3: Chiang Mai

Porchai is a 43 year-old Lahu ethnic woman living in Chiang Doa, Chiang Mai. She is married twice. Her first husband was shot dead by someone who thought he worked for the police. Together with her own and ex-husband's children, she now had 7 children but many had their own jobs and families. She is also not wealthy but her current husband who is a low-rank army officer at least does have a salary. Her village is a Lahu village in Chiang Mai where only 50 per cent of the people have Thai national citizenship. For an ethnic man or woman, to have a Thai national citizenship and proper documents is essential for livelihood—without them, basic services like health, education, travel, social welfare, political participation, etc would be denied. Porchai has already the Thai citizenship but many of her fellow villagers do not have it.

As an ethnic woman, she had little formal education—none actually-- so she could not read or write when she came to Chiang Mai University WSC paralegal training. A few of the ethnic women coming to the training also did not have any formal education and could not read or write like her. Porchai was in jail for 8 months trying to protect a woman friend from being wrongly charged with drug trafficking from an army officer who wanted to molest her. Porchai was charged by the police with the obstruction of justice and was sent to prison. She said her friend was sentenced with drug possession charge with 33 year term. She is now fighting her case by appealing to the court that she was unfairly sentenced. She was recommended to attend WSC paralegal training by an NGO called IMPACT working for ethnic human rights. She has a strong character and after being in jail for 8 months, is determined to fight for injustice and gender inequality. Listen to her talking, you would know immediately she is an ethnic woman as she has a strong ethnic accent. After a few conversations with her, you would know also immediately that you cannot take this woman lightly.

She learnt the materials from the paralegal training by remembering all things said. She and the ethnic women had good memory and could remember many things. The training has opened her world and empowered her to work to fight for gender inequality and human rights. Since attending the training, she was motivated to study in non-formal education classes. Now, she has finished 6 year primary education and can read and write. She is now seen to carry, consult and

cite causes from her “legal” books and texts all the time as part of her style of speaking and living e.g. the 2007 Thai Constitution, teaching materials from the paralegal training courses. She will refer to the relevant legal codes or the institutions or the persons she works with when she has to deal with police or government officials. To do so helps her to be effective in her work as people know that she is now knowledgeable of the laws and get connected to people with authority.

She works for her ethnic Lahu without formal title or pay, fighting for them dealing with human rights, civil rights, human trafficking, drug trafficking, police and officers’ abuse, etc. She once rescued two young women trafficked to Bangkok as domestic workers. Their mothers were unable to deal with travel, communication with people, and expenses associated with helping their daughters. Porchai, with her legal knowledge from the training at WSC, was confident and sought help from police and women organizations. They went to rescue the two poor girls in Bangkok. Porchai has helped many girls in rape, discrimination, nationality and family cases. She is a comfort to the Lahu community. Many would come from other districts to see her and ask her for help. She, together with others, is now setting up a Lahu Association—a process quite complicated involving many officers and communities. She is also running for a village head position as she thinks many problems come from the current male village head who is not a good leader and exploits already poor villagers, especially women. This is mostly because they do not have Thai nationality. She is recognized by outside agencies which always come to her for interviews, invitation to seminars, dialogue, planning and networking including the National Human Rights Commission, IMPACT NGO and Nobel Prize Initiative. Law and political science students also come to her for interviews or visits. She was one of the twelve nominees for the Nobel Peace Prize from Thailand. She is very proud of herself and of being able to help others. She gets connected to other ethnic women leaders at the paralegal training as well as to the women alumnae/trainees and instructors from this paralegal training. She gains much confidence to continue her work although this type of work costs her money and time as working for the poor who have not much money. If she is elected a village head, she would be more capable to help others in her capacity with formal title and budget. Nevertheless, the village head election is not always fair as often votes are easily bought and she is not sure she can win the upcoming election. Working like she does pose high risks to her safety as her work challenges existing power structure. She does know it but does not seem to care.

Table A1 Names of persons met

Name of persons interviewed/interacted	Status	Location
Pimpun Kaewsinual	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Chiang Rai
Noreri Thungruangthong	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Chiang Mai
Chanchai Noloy	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Chiang Mai
Rasmee Torsirichuchai	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Chiang Mai
Pine Moonkjaew	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Chiang Mai
Vichunee Porkam	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Chiang Mai
Nasae Yapa	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Chiang Mai
Dokrak Wantad	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Phitsanulok
Boonchuer Oodnoon	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Phrae
Mae Paeamnaj	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Mae Hon Son
Suda Narmjitcharaen	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Mae Hon Son
Tusnee Wiwatwattananon	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Lampang
Pornpun Punyaphrek	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Lamphun
Suchitra Suthipong	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Lamphun
Chamlong Matabong	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Sukhothai
Suthep Puangkajorn	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Sukhothai
Orathai Polmuangdee	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Uttaradit
Pornwachee Papatee	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Uttaradit
Siriporn Marayat	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Uthaithani
Saranya Polrueng	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Uthaithani
Sunantha Panploy	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Uthaithani
Jiraporn Boonmak	Paralegal trainee Batch 6	Uthaithani
Dedduang Jindafueng	Paralegal trainee Batch 3	Sukothai
Surat Kamchaem	Paralegal trainee Batch 3	Sukothai
Bankorn Dejpong	Women leader	Sukothai
Nujree Na Nan	Paralegal trainee Batch 3	Lamphun
Siriruen Supraditarporn	Paralegal trainee Batch 2	Lampang
Siriporn Punyasen	Paralegal trainee Batch 1	Lampang
Sriwai Thamajai	Paralegal trainee Batch 1	Phrae
Nilubon Winijchai	Paralegal trainee Batch 4	Lampang
Naina Supapueng		Human Rights Commission
Soonthariya Muengpawong	Judge	Rapeepat Judiciary Institute
Maneewan Kittiraj	Laos Masters' student	Laos
Maneeworn Luangsombat	Laos Masters' student	Laos
Soukphaphone Phanit	WSC Masters' Program graduate	Laos
Phoumvilay Sirapholdej	WSC Masters' Program graduate	Laos
Tengmeng Yanleuxay	WSC Masters' Program graduate	Laos
Suwanna Sataanan	Paralegal trainer	Chulalongkorn University
Suchada Taweasilp	Paralegal trainer	Mahidol University
Yos Santasombat	Feminist trainer	Chiang Mai University
Supakwadee Amartayakul	Feminist trainer	Chulalongkorn University
Tudporn Sareyan	Feminist trainer	
Boonsawat Prugsiganont	External auditor	The Thai Auditor Group
Rattanyou Koewsipan	Assistant external auditor	The Thai Auditor Group
Kristin Schjodt Bitnes	Lawyer	NJKF
Irmela van der Bijl	Lawyer	NJKF

Table A2 Names of Chiang Mai University/WSC/FORWARD met

Name of persons in WSC/FORWARD/CMU interviewed/interacted	Status	Affiliation
Virada Somsawas	President, FORWARD, Project leader	WSC
Kwancheewan Buadaeng	WSC Acting Director	WSC
Benjamaporn Loymee	Project coordinator	WSC
Chalardchai Ramitanon	FORWARD, WSC board member	WSC
Paisit Panitkul	FORWARD, WSC board member	WSC
Maliwan Senawong	Assistant Project coordinator	FORWARD
Seksin Sriwattananukulkit	Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences	CMU
Nattha Komolwetin	Media specialist	WSC
Patareeya Kitcharoen	Researcher	WSC
	Research Project Coordinator /	
Pathai Wonganutrohd	Webmaster	FORWARD
Kesanee Wongwiboon	Administrative Officer	WSC
Sirincha Sathumea	Paralegal Training Project Assistant	FORWARD
Duongduen Chumyen	Finance officer	FORWARD

About the Evaluation Team

Dr. Gary Suwannarat, a 31-year resident of Thailand, has over two decades of experience in program design, implementation, oversight and evaluation. She has worked with several UN agencies on issues relating to women and children. Dr. Suwannarat holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Politics and Public Policy.

Dr. Benchaphun Ekasingh, an associate professor specializing in agricultural economics, rural development and public policy, Faculty of Agriculture, Chiang Mai University, Thailand. Her specialization includes gender roles in agriculture and agricultural development. She has served as board members, including once a Board Chair, of some international organizations dealing with agricultural development in the developing countries.