

***EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR NON-  
VIOLENCE AND STRENGTHENING  
RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS THE ETHNIC AND  
RELIGIOUS DIVIDE IN SOUTHERN THAILAND:  
AN INITIATIVE EXPERIMENT OF TEACHING  
CULTURAL FLUENCY IN CATHOLIC  
SCHOOLS IN PATTANI***

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# A decade of deadly violence: the situation of schools under fire

Year	Teacher Deaths	Staff deaths	Student deaths	Teacher injures	Staff injures	Student injures	School arsons
2004	9	2	-	2	-	-	52
2005	22	5	5	21	2	22	32
2006	22	5	4	31	6	26	43
2007	21	5	18	21	3	46	166
2008	12	5	4	15	3	29	15
2009	13	3	3	7	5	29	16
2010	10	4	2	5	-	10	2
2011	10	1	2	8	-	-	1
2012	7	2	-	6	1	-	5
2013	7	3	-	4	-	15	-
2014	2	-	4	-	-	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>332</b>

Source: South Border Thailand Education Operation Center Ministry of Education, 2014

## *The Southernmost population by religions in 2011-2012*

Province/ Religions	Malay Muslims		Thai Buddhists		Catholics		Total	
	persons	(%)	persons	(%)	persons	(%)	persons	(%)
Pattani	599,856	90.43	63,425	9.56	125	0.01	663,281	100
Yala	409,744	82.99	83,894	16.99	343	0.06	493,668	100
Narathiwat	682,822	91.48	63,572	8.52	62	0.008	746,394	100
<b>Total</b>	1,692,422	<b>88.87</b>	201,891	<b>10.60</b>	530	0.03	1,904,343	100

Sources: SBPAC's Social Corporation and Psychological Policy 2011, Suratthani Diocese, 2012  
Percentage calculated by researcher.



Southern Thailand: Diversity society and the concept of “Thainess” based on Theravada Buddhism cosmology-Buddhist cultural. The Others, Muslim and Christian religious-cultures are the otherness that must be assimilated to be Thai.

# Southern Thailand under fire

- Is it a kind of cultural conflict?
  - ▣ Obviously, Asia Foundation survey in 2010 found that the primary factor driving the conflict is discriminatory governance and the alienation of the southern population from the Thai state. Furthermore, significant differences between the ethnic Malay Muslim and Buddhist populations in the southern provinces illustrate the contrasting experiences of these two groups (Park, 2010).

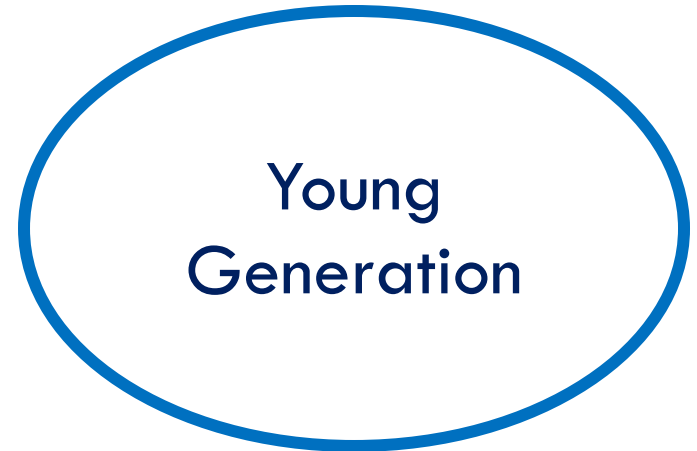
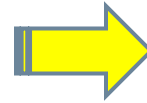
# How to restore social cohesion in divided society

- **Looking back to the history: no more multicultural education in Thai society especially in primary and secondary schools.**
- **Focusing on the currently situation in the Southernmost society: local people live together but do not know much each other culture; some Malay Muslims do not understand why Thai people offer food to Buddhist monk, Buddhists do not know why Muslim women wear Hijab, why Muslims do not like dog and do not eat pork, etc. (Phare, 2009)**

# How to restore social cohesion in divided society

## □ Possible solution:

- to build sustainable peace
- cultivate Seeds of Peace.



Multicultural education

# Multicultural education is an option.



Multicultural education refers to an educational approach that integrates four factors that encourage diversity and equality into a curriculum:

- The instruction of students from different backgrounds,
- The study of ethnic and other cultural groups,
- The development of critical thinking skills, and
- A focus on human relations (Johnson, Musial, Hall, Gollnick & Dupuis, 2004)



# Is Multicultural education an option?

- “The suitable ways to manage the education in the local area ...should hold on the principle of the social and cultural integration in educational management in order to bring about the acceptance of the variety identities, languages, religious and cultures.” (Suthirak, 2012)



Cultural Fluency  
programme

# What “Cultural Fluency” is?

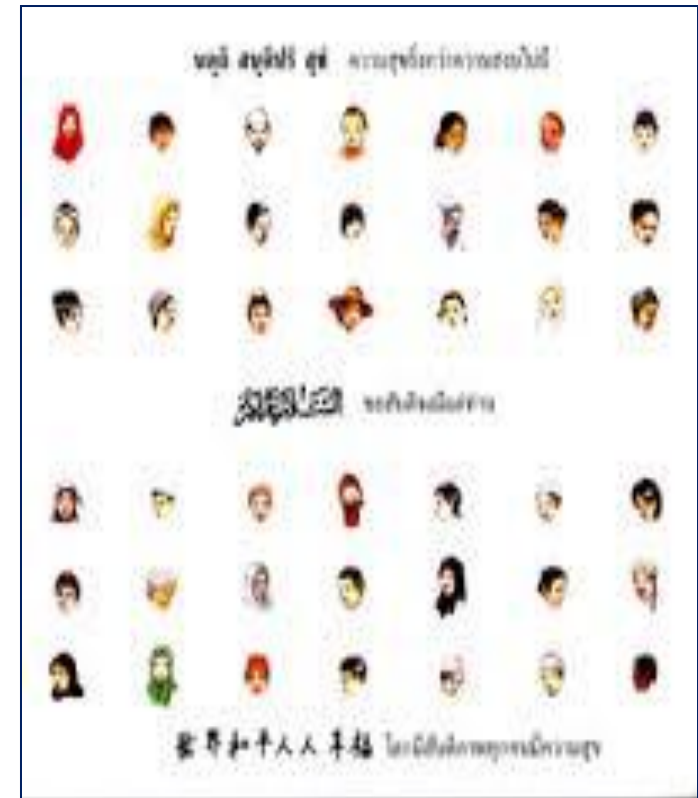
- A guideline that will help people with vastly different underlying assumptions, experiences, values, and beliefs to work well together (Smith & Lischin, 1987).
  - self-understanding, is a foundation for
  - learning other cultures,
  - guiding ideas,
  - perspective and vision,
  - communication and empathy,
  - technical and professional skills,
  - process skills, and
  - leadership abilities

# Who should engage with

- Smith & Linchin (1987) indicated that some areas for **potential culturally-fluent leadership programs** include schools, universities, corporate classrooms, international community building, training programs, and future-responsive learning.
- Chaiwat Satha-Anand (2009): Peace builders and general people

# “Cultural Fluency” in Southern Thailand

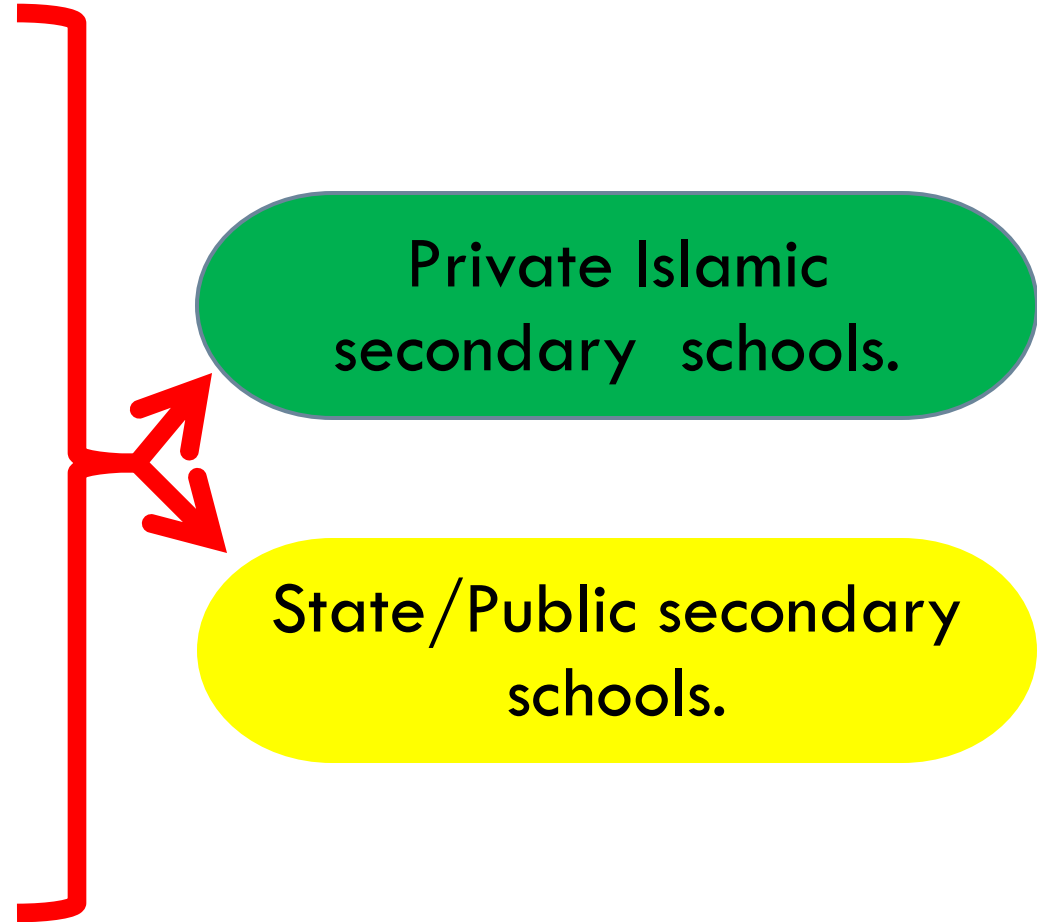
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Cultural fluency can be a thread to weave a social fabric

# A pilot project of Cultural Fluency in some State and Islamic schools

- Initiative to integrate in a subject of “Society, Religion, and Culture” for G 10-12
- New Student Orientation/Cheer activity
- Guidance hour



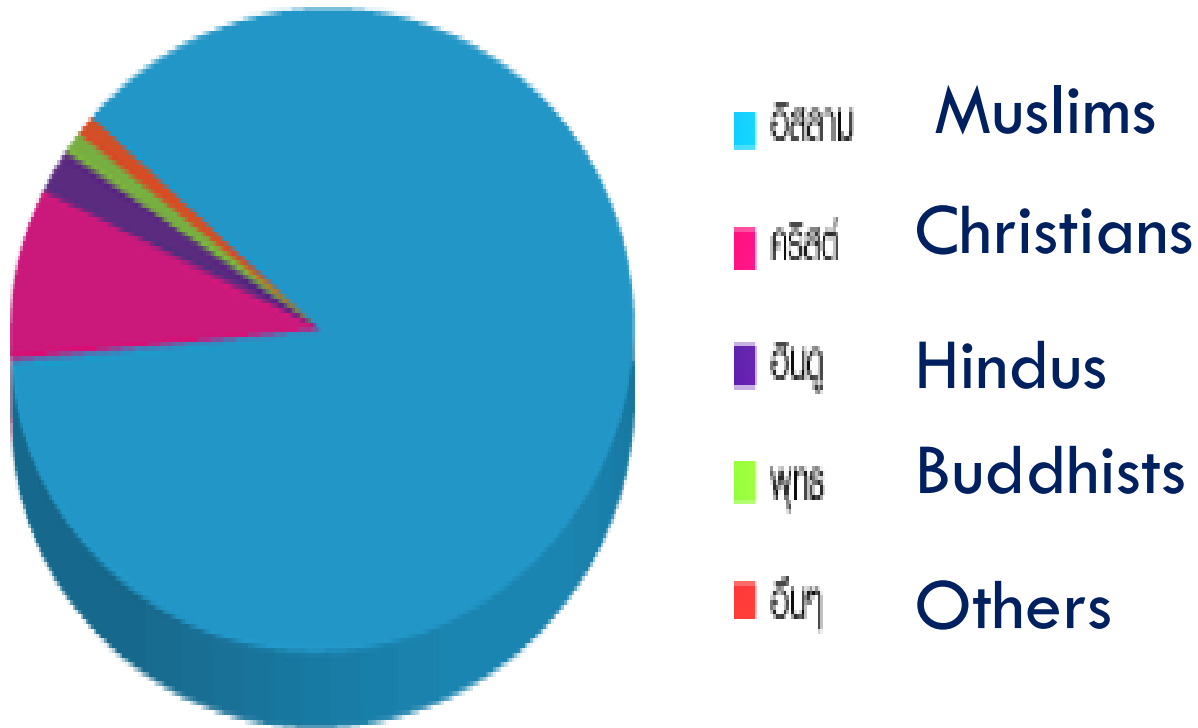
# An Initiative Experiment of Cultural Fluency in Catholic Schools: An alternative choice for practicing

- Cultural fluency in Catholic schools
  - ▣ Safety place to learn and practice – third cultural space
  - ▣ Tri-religious cultures interaction (Muslim, Catholic, and Buddhist students) in everyday life

# Cultural Fluency in schools: A potential project to strengthen social cohesion

- Pilot project have shown positive results.
  - ▣ Students & Teachers worked well together
  - ▣ Muslims and Buddhists in pilot schools knew how to deal with each other better than ever
- **Little remarks:** Any sense of suspicion, less multi-culture inside schools, no credit to count in some schools, need more support from principal/director.
- Presenter's remarks:
  - ▣ Cultural Fluency needs more supporting from the state education system such as put it into national education policy and curriculum.

# Multiculturalism in ASEAN



Source: <http://www.thaibizindonesia.com/th/info-indonesia/geography.php>