



THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP

Sustainable Development and Youth Participation
in Conflict Resolutions



Organized By:

Social Policy and Development Program (SPD)
Faculty of Social Administration,
Thammasat University

Date:

12-14 September, 2025

Location:

Mae Sod, Tak Province, Thailand

PREFACE

This proceeding is published as part of the International Conference and workshop of Sustainable Development and Youth Participation in Conflict Resolutions, organized by Social Policy and Development (SPD), Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University. The conference served as an academic and participatory platform for scholars, students, practitioners, community members, and youth participants to exchange knowledge and reflect critically on the intersections of sustainable development, education, migration, displacement, and conflict resolution.

The conference was developed in response to the growing social and humanitarian challenges affecting marginalized and conflict-affected communities, particularly along the Thai–Myanmar border. In recent years, political instability, forced displacement, economic insecurity, and educational disruption have significantly affected the lives of migrant and refugee youth. These realities have generated urgent questions regarding educational access, social inclusion, legal recognition, and the role of youth participation in shaping more equitable futures.



INTEGRATING ACADEMIC INQUIRY WITH COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

The event was organized into two main sessions: Paper Presentation Session and Community-Based Workshops. Together, these sessions demonstrated the importance of integrating academic inquiry with community engagement and experiential learning.

The Paper Presentation Session highlighted five papers that explore the structural challenges affecting migrant and refugee youth in border contexts. The topics included educational disruption after the 2021 military coup in Myanmar, barriers related to documentation and legal status, refugee education in camps, university closures, economic precarity, and limited access to higher education opportunities. Across these contributions, a shared concern presents: many young people possess aspirations, abilities, and resilience, yet continue to face structural barriers that restrict their educational pathways and future opportunities.

Complementing these discussions, the Community-Based Workshops provided participants with opportunities to engage directly with local border communities through participatory and experiential activities. The workshops explored themes such as indigenous food cultures, inclusive education, youth engagement, and community-based learning. Through collaborative activities and intercultural exchange, participants reflected on the importance of social relationships, cultural continuity, and participatory approaches to education and community development.



Collectively, the contributions in this event emphasizes the border education is not merely a formal institutional process, but also a social, cultural, and political space closely connected to dignity, belonging, participation, and hope. The discussions and activities documented in this volume further demonstrate that sustainable development and conflict resolution cannot be separated from inclusive educational opportunities and meaningful youth participation.

We hope these activities will contribute to ongoing academic discussions and encourage further collaboration among universities, civil society organizations, communities, and young people working toward more inclusive and sustainable futures.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to all presenters, workshop facilitators, participants, community partners, organizers, and supporting institutions whose contributions made this conference possible. Their commitment, knowledge, and engagement have enriched this proceeding and strengthened the shared vision of building inclusive spaces where no young person is left behind.



Session 1:

Paper Presentations

Academic and community-based studies exploring education, displacement, refugee youth, social exclusion, and alternative learning pathways along the Thai–Myanmar border.



12 September 2025 | Centara Hotel, Mae Sot

Contents



Session 2:

Community-Based Workshop

Participatory workshop focusing on indigenous knowledge, inclusive education, experiential learning, and community engagement in Ban U Hu, Tak Province.

13–14 September 2025 | Ban U Hu,
Tha Song Yang District, Tak Province



Session 1: Paper Presentations

explored the lived realities of migrant and refugee youth affected by conflict, displacement, and educational inequality, while highlighting pathways toward inclusion, resilience, and opportunity through education and community support.

→ **Paper 1:**

A Bridge for Marginalized Youths in Migrant Community,
Thai-Myanmar Border

- by Love and Care Learning Center

→ **Paper 2:**

Conflicts Significantly Affected livelihoods of Youth Migrants

- by Kaung Set Linn , Mya Asinn, Nan Khin Thet Htar, Lily and Mg Kyaw Lin from Youth Champions, The Inclusive Education Foundation

→ **Paper 3:**

Education life in refugee camp: A Journey with Unclear Future

- by Minmahaw Higher Education Program (MHEP)

→ **Paper 4:**

Understand the Challenges of Accessibility of Education Among
Vulnerable Myanmar Youth after Military Coup

- by Minmahaw Higher Education Program (MHEP)

→ **Paper 5:**

Impact of University Closures and Job Losses on Myanmar's Students
Post-Coup

- by Ma Esther Kyaw and Atip Jitwong

INTRODUCTION



SESSION 1: PAPER PRESENTATION

The Paper Presentation Session of the International Conference of Sustainable Development and Youth Participation in Conflict Resolutions brought together academic reflections, youth perspectives, and community-based experiences from conflict-affected border areas along the Thai–Myanmar border.

The papers collectively explored how political instability, displacement, migration, and educational inequality continue to shape the lives of marginalized youth, particularly following the 2021 military coup in Myanmar.

Across the presentations, several interconnected themes emerged, including educational disruption, barriers related to legal documentation and citizenship, refugee education, economic precarity, limited access to higher education, and the growing uncertainty faced by migrant and refugee youth. Although each paper approached these issues from different perspectives, they shared a common concern regarding the structural barriers that prevent many young people from accessing stable educational pathways and future opportunities.



At the same time, the papers emphasized the resilience of youth and communities in responding to these challenges. Community-based learning centers, youth-led initiatives, alternative educational programs, scholarship opportunities, and cross-border collaborations were highlighted as important pathways for inclusion and empowerment. Rather than portraying migrant and refugee youth solely as victims of conflict and displacement, the presentations demonstrated their aspirations, agency, and active participation in shaping more hopeful futures.

Together, the papers contribute to broader discussions on sustainable development, inclusive education, social policy, and youth participation in conflict-affected societies. The session further demonstrates that educational access is not only a matter of institutional provision, but also closely connected to legal recognition, economic security, social inclusion, and human dignity.



This session presents five papers that collectively reflect the lived experiences, challenges, and aspirations of migrant and refugee youth in border communities. By bringing together academic analysis and youth voices, the session highlights the importance of collaborative and inclusive approaches to education and social development in contexts of uncertainty and displacement.

1

A Bridge for Marginalized Youths in Migrant Community, Thai–Myanmar Border

By Love and Care Learning Center



* Problem Statement

Education plays an important role in improving opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and promoting social and economic mobility. For migrant youth living along the Thai–Myanmar border, access to education represents not only academic advancement, but also a pathway toward dignity, stability, and future opportunity. However, many migrant students continue to face structural barriers that limit their access to formal education and higher education pathways.

This paper presents the experiences of Love and Care Learning Center, one of the migrant learning centers operating in Mae Sot. The paper discusses the educational support provided by the center, the challenges faced by migrant students, and the importance of inclusive educational opportunities for marginalized youth in border communities.

Educational Support in Migrant Communities

Love and Care Learning Center is one of the migrant learning centers serving migrant communities in Mae Sot. The center provides educational and healthcare support for students both physically and mentally. In addition to academic learning, the center promotes Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), Child Safeguarding (CSG), sports activities, and annual fundraising events that encourage students to value themselves and strengthen community relationships.

The learning center also maintains connections with Thai communities through participation in community activities and collaboration with Thai Non-Formal Education programs. Similar to many migrant learning centers operating along the border, the center relies on partnerships with organizations and support from parents rather than permanent funding sources.



“Migrant learning centers critically deliver supports to students for educational and healthcare services, both physically and mentally, and help them value themselves.”



Challenges Affecting Migrant Youth



Despite strong motivation among migrant students to continue their education, significant structural barriers remain. Many students face difficulties related to legal documentation, financial insecurity, social conflict, and the absence of recognized educational systems. These challenges have contributed to increasing dropout rates among migrant youth.



The educational pathways available to migrant students are often limited. Students who wish to continue their studies generally follow either vocational pathways or higher education preparation programs. Some migrant learning centers collaborate with organizations such as Youth Connect Foundation, Rays of Youth, and BEAM Foundation to support vocational training and youth development.

In addition, programs such as the GED and the K-12 Testing Program for Non-Formal Education Learners offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University provide alternative pathways for students seeking further education. However, not all migrant learning centers have access to these programs, creating unequal educational opportunities among migrant communities.

Impacts on Youth Futures

Educational barriers continue to affect the long-term futures of migrant youth. Limited access to recognized education, financial hardship, and legal insecurity increase the likelihood of school dropout and restrict future employment opportunities. These challenges not only affect individuals, but also create broader social and economic consequences for migrant communities and neighboring societies.

The growing number of students unable to continue their education contributes to long-term inequality, reduced economic opportunity, and social exclusion. For many migrant youth, education represents hope for a more stable future, yet structural barriers continue to limit access to these opportunities.



“ Since we are migrant students, we have two options to continue our higher education: a vocational pathway and access to continuous education. ”

* Community Support and Educational Pathways

Despite these challenges, migrant learning centers continue to create educational opportunities for marginalized youth. Community partnerships, non-profit organizations, and alternative education programs provide important support systems that help students continue learning and develop future pathways.

The experiences of Love and Care Learning Center demonstrate the importance of community-based educational initiatives in supporting migrant youth. These learning spaces not only provide academic support, but also foster social connection, self-confidence, and community participation.

“

The formal education has a potential to uplift individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds.

This is the reason why formal education is important for migrants between Thai and Myanmar.



* Conclusion

This paper highlights the important role of migrant learning centers in supporting marginalized youth along the Thai-Myanmar border. While migrant students continue to face barriers related to legal documentation, financial insecurity, and limited educational access, community-based learning centers remain important bridges connecting young people to education and future opportunities.

The paper further emphasizes that education should not be restricted by borders or social status. Expanding inclusive educational opportunities for migrant youth is essential for promoting social inclusion, sustainable development, and long-term community resilience.



2

Conflicts Significantly Affected livelihoods of Youth Migrants

By Kaung Set Linn, Mya Asinn, Nan Khin Thet Htar, Lily, and Mg Kyaw Lin
Youth Champions, The Inclusive Education Foundation



Introduction

The political and social changes that followed the 2021 military coup in Myanmar have significantly affected migrant and refugee youth along the Thai–Myanmar border. Increasing numbers of young people have crossed into Thailand not only in search of work and education, but also due to political instability, insecurity, and forced conscription.

This paper explores the experiences of migrant youth in border areas and examines the challenges they face regarding documentation, education, employment, and higher education access. Drawing from the experiences of participants in the Youth Champions program, the paper also highlights the need for broader educational support systems and collaborative opportunities for marginalized youth.

“

Empowering many young people
is not a solution, yet
and we need them to connect
with more opportunities doors.

—Kaung Set Linn—



Ground Situation in Border Communities

Thailand and Myanmar share a border extending more than 2,400 kilometers, with major crossing points including Mae Sot, Mae Sai, Mae Hong Son, and Kanchanaburi. Ethnic communities living along the border maintain strong cultural and family relationships across both countries.

Before the 2021 military coup, migration to Thailand was largely connected to employment opportunities and education. However, political instability following the coup changed migration patterns significantly. Many young people now cross the border due to safety concerns, armed conflict, and attempts to avoid military conscription.



“

Since the coup,
more and more young people
are crossing into Thailand,
not only for jobs and education,
but also because of safety concerns,
political instability,
and to avoid conscription.

—Mg Kyaw Lin—



Documentation and Structural Barriers

One of the major challenges affecting migrant youth is access to legal documentation. Many young people lack official legal status, creating fear, insecurity, and barriers to stable employment and education.

Several forms of documentation exist, including Border Passes, Pink Cards, and Certificates of Identity (CI). However, these documents are often expensive, difficult to obtain, and dependent on brokers. The process creates significant financial burdens for migrant families, while limited awareness and dishonest intermediaries place many youth at additional risk.

Even when migrant youth obtain legal documents, employment opportunities remain restricted. Professional careers such as teaching and medicine are often inaccessible regardless of educational qualifications or personal abilities.



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Most youth
don't have legal papers,
so they live in fear
and can't find stable work.

Even when documents exist,
the process is complicated
and much expensive.

—Mya Asinn—

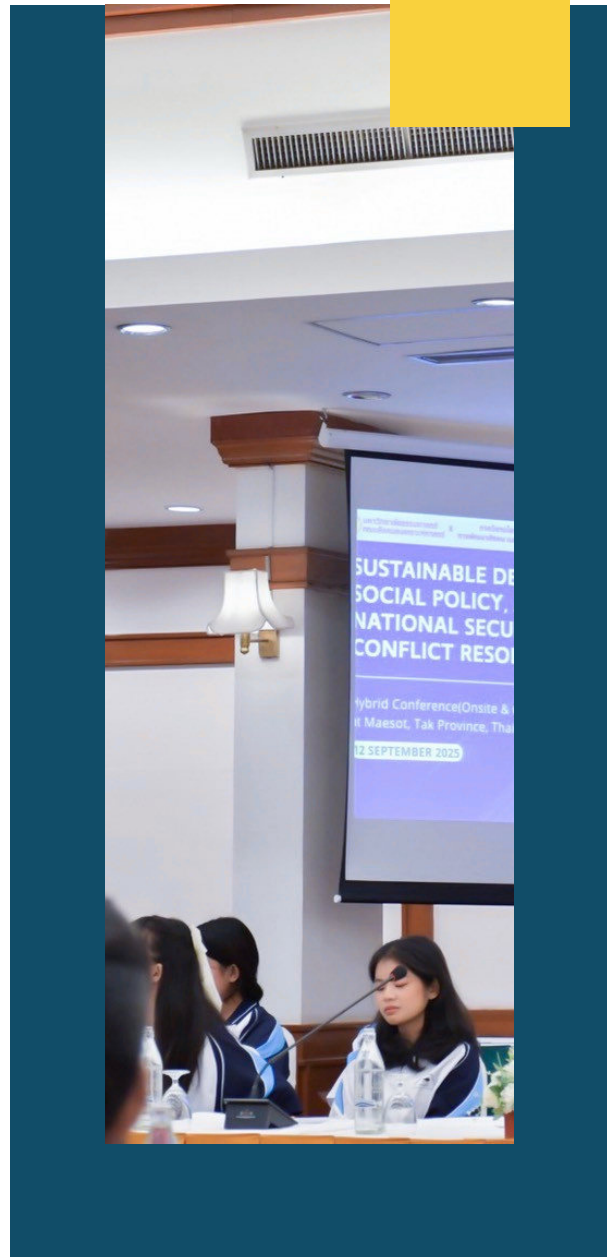


Educational Challenges and Higher Education Pathways

Educational disruption remains another major issue affecting migrant youth. Many students have incomplete high school education, interrupted university studies, or limited access to recognized educational systems. Financial hardship, lack of scholarships, and educational displacement contribute to increasing dropout rates among young people aged 14 to 30 years.

The paper highlights the lack of recognition for certificates issued by many Migrant Learning Centers, limiting educational progression and employment opportunities. At the same time, demand for higher education opportunities is significantly greater than the available support.

The presenters emphasized the need for more flexible educational systems, including scholarship opportunities, credit transfer systems, and pathways allowing students from Myanmar universities to continue their studies in Thailand and abroad.



“



Many Migrant Learning Centre certificates aren't officially recognized, emphasizing the need for credential recognition and legal pathways

—Lily—

Youth Champions Program and Community Support

The Youth Champions program was developed to support marginalized youth by providing Thai and English language training, computer literacy, workplace readiness skills, and community-based capstone projects. These activities aim to increase access to higher education and employment opportunities.

However, the presenters emphasized that one organization alone cannot address the broader structural challenges facing migrant youth. Sustainable support requires collaboration among universities, organizations, policymakers, and multiple stakeholders at national and international levels.



“

As migrant students, our true wish is to
contribute -to Thailand
and to our own community.
But we need a support
to make it happen.

-Nan Khin Thet Htar-



Empowerment and Future Opportunities

The paper argues that youth empowerment alone is insufficient if structural opportunities remain inaccessible. Young people require not only skills and preparation, but also access to educational spaces, scholarship pathways, and supportive institutions.



The presenters proposed youth summits, partnerships with universities, and collaborative platforms that allow marginalized youth to connect directly with educational and career opportunities.

As one presenter stated:

“Let’s not only prepare these young people but also open the doors for them. Together, we can build spaces where marginalized youth can access education and careers. Let’s build a future where no young person is left behind.”

Conclusion



This paper demonstrates how conflict, displacement, and legal insecurity continue to shape the educational and economic experiences of migrant youth in border communities. Despite these challenges, migrant youth continue to demonstrate resilience, aspirations, and a strong desire to contribute to both Thailand and their own communities.

The paper further emphasizes the importance of inclusive educational systems, cross-border collaboration, scholarship opportunities, and institutional support in creating sustainable futures for conflict-affected youth.



3

Education Life in Refugee Camps: A Journey with Unclear Future

By Minmahaw Higher Education Program (MHEP)



* Background

Education in refugee camps plays an important role in helping displaced children and youth develop their potential and imagine future opportunities beyond displacement. However, refugee education along the Thai–Myanmar border continues to face significant challenges related to limited resources, curriculum recognition, and educational continuity.

This paper examines the current situation of education in refugee camps along the Thai–Myanmar border and explores the challenges affecting refugee students and teachers. It also presents possible pathways for improving educational access and support for refugee youth.

“

Having an ID card
is not only known as citizen members,
there are many opportunities
such as education barriers,
security and healthcare.



Education in Refugee Camps

There are nine refugee camps located along the Thai–Myanmar border, including seven Karen camps and two Karenni camps. Across these camps, approximately 60 to 81 schools continue operating with around 28,000 students and approximately 800 teachers.

Despite the efforts of teachers and community organizations, refugee education systems continue to face structural limitations that affect both educational quality and future opportunities for students.





Current Challenges in Camp Education



One major challenge concerns curriculum limitations. Refugee camp schools often use adapted curricula taught in native languages that are not aligned with nationally or internationally recognized educational standards. This creates barriers for students seeking access to higher education and formal educational systems.

Resource limitations also affect educational quality. Schools frequently experience shortages of educational materials, insufficient numbers of teachers, and limited access to higher education resources.

Another major issue involves unrecognized certificates. Many refugee students complete their studies without receiving qualifications recognized outside the camps. This limits access to further education and employment opportunities while reducing student motivation and wasting educational potential.



Impacts on Youth Future

The educational barriers faced by refugee youth create broader social consequences. Limited educational opportunities contribute to declining student interest in education, early marriage, and child labor.

The paper also highlights long-term generational effects, including cycles of dependence and social exclusion. Without access to recognized educational pathways, refugee youth may remain marginalized from broader society and economic opportunities.

In addition, the absence of educational and economic opportunities may contribute to broader social problems such as drug-related cases and crimes associated with financial hardship.

Possible Solutions and Educational Support

The paper proposes several pathways for improving refugee education. First, governments and camp committees should collaborate to adjust curricula and establish standardized educational systems recognized beyond the camps.

Second, educational support should continue for refugee youth with academic potential through cooperation with NGOs, universities, and non-profit organizations.

Third, greater educational sharing and collaboration are needed. Teacher training, university outreach programs, and knowledge-sharing activities can strengthen educational opportunities within refugee camps.

As emphasized in the presentation:

"A classroom in a refugee camp may be small, but inside it dreams are bigger than the walls."





Conclusion

This paper highlights both the challenges and the resilience found within refugee education systems along the Thai–Myanmar border. Although refugee youth continue to study in conditions of uncertainty and limited resources, education remains an important source of hope, dignity, and future possibility.

The paper further demonstrates that improving refugee education requires collaboration among governments, universities, NGOs, camp committees, and local communities. Through inclusive and supportive educational systems, refugee education can move beyond survival toward opportunity and long-term empowerment.

4

Understanding the Challenges of Accessibility of Education Among Vulnerable Myanmar Youth after the Military Coup

By Minmahaw Higher Education Program (MHEP)



* Introduction

The 2021 military coup in Myanmar created profound social, political, and educational disruption affecting young people across the country. Many youth were forced to leave their homes due to violence, political instability, forced military service, and growing insecurity. As displacement increased, educational access became increasingly difficult for vulnerable youth.

This paper examines how the absence of legal documentation and citizenship identification affects educational access and future opportunities for Myanmar youth after the military coup.

Political Instability and Displacement

Following the military takeover, many young people fled from conflict-affected areas to avoid violence and mandatory military service. Political instability disrupted educational continuity and created uncertainty regarding future opportunities.

The paper highlights that legal identification documents became increasingly difficult to obtain during the crisis. At the same time, many displaced youth crossed borders or relocated without formal identification due to fear, insecurity, and the urgency of displacement.

Documentation and Educational Barriers

The presentation emphasizes that identification documents are closely connected to educational access, healthcare, legal security, and mobility. Without Burmese identification cards, many young people face barriers in applying for visas, passports, and educational opportunities.

The absence of documentation therefore creates long-term educational consequences. Young people may be unable to continue higher education, travel for educational purposes, or access formal institutional support.

The paper argues that educational exclusion in this context is not caused by a lack of ability or motivation among youth, but by broader structural and political barriers created through conflict and displacement.





* Impacts on Youth Future

The loss of educational opportunities creates significant uncertainty for displaced youth. Interrupted education, restricted mobility, and lack of documentation limit future educational and employment pathways.

Many young people therefore experience anxiety regarding their futures and face increased vulnerability within host communities and border regions.

“
refugee students
continue to dream about better future
through an education.

To address these issues,
propose three possible solutions:
Modify, support, and share,
through professional training,
university partnerships,
and knowledge sharing.





Conclusion

This paper highlights how political conflict and displacement continue to affect educational accessibility for vulnerable Myanmar youth after the military coup. The absence of legal documentation creates barriers extending beyond citizenship status and directly influences educational access, healthcare, mobility, and future opportunity.

The paper further emphasizes the importance of institutional support, financial assistance, mentorship, and inclusive educational policies in reducing educational inequality among displaced youth.

5

Impact of University Closures and Job Losses on Myanmar's Students Post-Coup

Ma Esther Kyaw and Atip Jitwong



Highlight

Myanmar University students became one of the groups most significantly affected by the Military Coup 2021 experiencing educational disruption, economic insecurity, and uncertainty regarding future opportunities.

This paper examines the impacts of university closures and economic instability on Myanmar students following the military coup. Drawing on literature review and secondary data analysis, the paper explores educational disruption, political resistance, economic precarity, and alternative educational pathways emerging in post-coup Myanmar.

Educational Disruption after the Military Coup

Prior to the coup, Myanmar's higher education system had undergone gradual reforms that increased institutional autonomy and international academic collaboration. However, the military takeover in February 2021 interrupted these reforms and transformed universities into politically contested institutions.

Following the coup, universities were closed, academic activities were suspended, and many students and faculty members participated in resistance movements such as the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM).

Educational continuity was severely disrupted. Students experienced postponed examinations, delayed graduation, interrupted coursework, and reduced access to academic resources. Distance learning systems also remained limited due to unstable internet access and unequal digital infrastructure.



“

Myanmar students have experienced significant disruptions in higher education and employment, alongside increased political pressures.

These challenges could have lasting consequences for the economic growth.

—Ma Esther Kyaw—



* Political Resistance and Academic Consequences

Universities became important spaces of political resistance after the coup. Students and academics actively participated in protests and boycotts rejecting military control over educational institutions.



Alternative educational initiatives such as the Virtual Federal University (VFU) emerged to preserve educational continuity outside state-controlled systems. These initiatives reflected broader struggles for academic freedom, democratic governance, and institutional autonomy.

However, participation in resistance movements also exposed students and faculty members to surveillance, repression, and insecurity, contributing to further instability within higher education systems.





Economic Precarity and Job Loss

Economic decline following the coup significantly affected students and their families. Many students previously relied on part-time employment in retail, hospitality, and service sectors to support educational expenses.

Political instability and economic contraction led to widespread job losses, increasing financial hardship among students and contributing to educational dropout and delayed graduation.

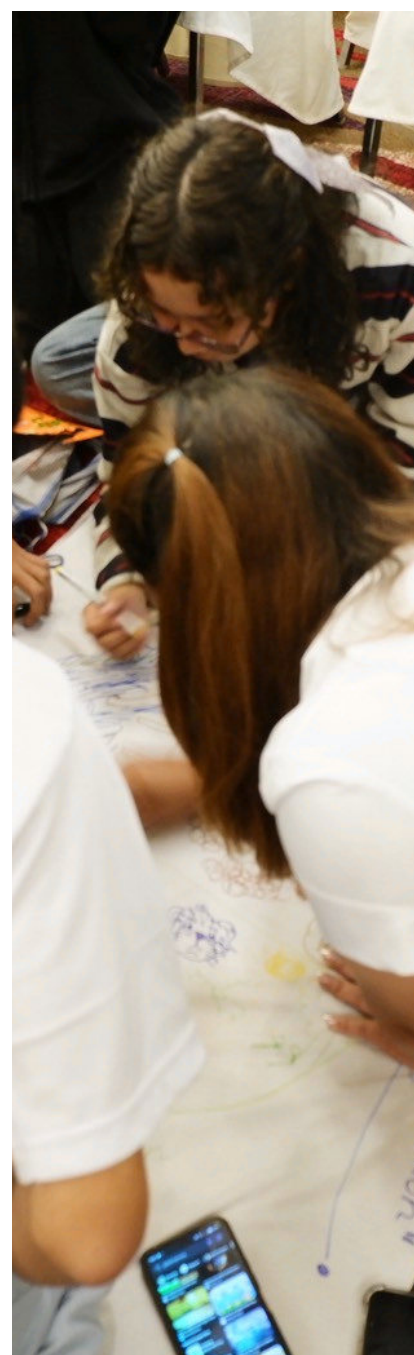
The paper demonstrates how educational disruption and economic precarity together created broader forms of social exclusion and uncertainty among university youth.

Impacts on Youth Future

The collapse of higher education systems in post-coup Myanmar has long-term implications for youth development and national reconstruction. Many students remain unable to complete their studies or pursue stable career pathways.

Political instability has also contributed to increasing cross-border migration and brain drain, as students seek educational and employment opportunities abroad.

The paper further argues that the fragmentation of higher education institutions may weaken public trust in universities and reduce opportunities for inclusive academic development in the future.





* Alternative Pathways and Recommendations

The collapse of higher education systems in post-coup Myanmar has long-term implications for youth development and national reconstruction. Many students remain unable to complete their studies or pursue stable career pathways.

Political instability has also contributed to increasing cross-border migration and brain drain, as students seek educational and employment opportunities abroad.

The paper further argues that the fragmentation of higher education institutions may weaken public trust in universities and reduce opportunities for inclusive academic development in the future.

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ODA will help mitigate the negative effects of the military coup on Myanmar's higher education system, especially supporting both immediate needs and long-term learning platforms.

—Atip Jitwong—





In Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that the higher education crisis in post-coup Myanmar reflects broader structural consequences of political instability, armed conflict, and institutional collapse. University closures, economic insecurity, and political repression have collectively disrupted educational continuity and increased vulnerability among students.

Rebuilding higher education therefore requires more than reopening universities. It also requires restoring academic freedom, institutional trust, and equitable access to educational opportunities for future generations.

The paper further emphasizes the importance of long-term institutional rebuilding and collaborative approaches to supporting conflict-affected youth in Myanmar and border communities.

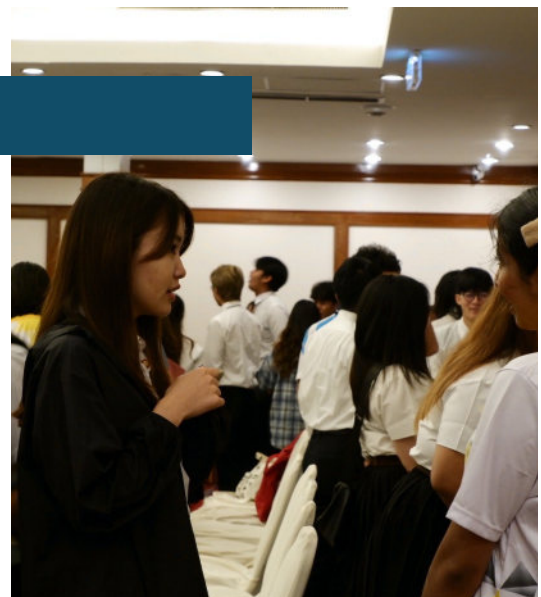
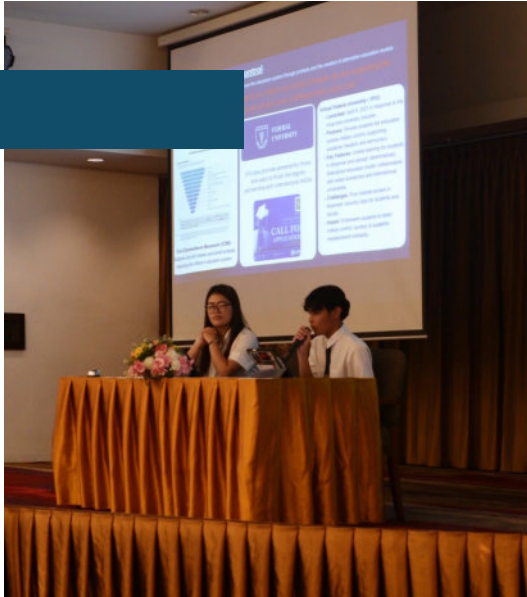


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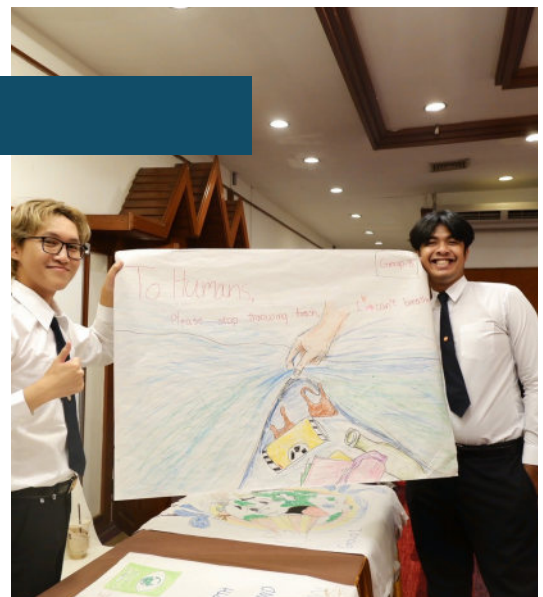
The students engaged in academic discussions and youth-led presentations addressing educational disruption, migration, displacement, and youth experiences in conflict-affected border communities.



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Session 2:

Community-Based Workshop

*Reconfiguring Youth Future:
Education, Displacement, and Community Engagement
Along the Thai–Myanmar Border*



Workshop 1:

Meaning of Food in Indigenous Societies: Identity, Spirituality, Survival, and Social Relations



Workshop 2:

Education for All: Rethinking, Designing, and Framing Social Policy through Youth Participation

INTRODUCTION



SESSION 2: COMMUNITY-BASED WORKSHOP



The Community-Based Workshops session of the International Conference of Sustainable Development and Youth Participation in Conflict Resolutions extended the conference beyond academic discussion and created opportunities for experiential learning, intercultural exchange, and direct community engagement. While the Paper Presentation Session explored structural challenges affecting migrant and refugee youth, the workshops encouraged participants to learn through participation, reflection, and interaction with local communities along the Thai–Myanmar border.

This session emphasized the importance of community-based learning as a meaningful approach to understanding sustainable development, social inclusion, and youth participation in conflict-affected contexts. Rather than positioning local communities solely as subjects of academic analysis, the workshops created collaborative spaces where participants, community members, and youth could exchange knowledge, experiences, and perspectives through shared activities and dialogue.



The second workshop, Education for All: Rethinking, Designing, and Framing Social Policy through Youth Participation, focused on inclusive education and participatory learning within marginalized border communities. Through educational and recreational activities with local children, participants explored how community-based educational engagement can strengthen empowerment, inclusion, creativity, and social participation among marginalized youth.



Together, the workshops highlighted that sustainable development and conflict resolution are closely connected to everyday community practices, social relationships, and participatory forms of learning. The session further demonstrated that education extends beyond formal institutions and can function as a process of empowerment, cultural preservation, relationship-building, and collective participation.



By integrating academic reflection with lived community experiences, the Community-Based Workshops contributed to the broader goals of the conference in promoting inclusive dialogue, intercultural understanding, and collaborative approaches to social development in conflict-affected border communities.

WORKSHOP 1:

Meaning of Food in Indigenous Societies: Identity, Spirituality, Survival, and Social Relations

* Background

This workshop explored the cultural and social meanings of food within indigenous communities in border areas. Food was approached not only as a source of nutrition, but also as an expression of identity, spirituality, survival, and social relationships.



* Objectives

- To understand the relationship between food and indigenous identity
- To explore local knowledge and traditional food practices
- To encourage intercultural learning through participatory cooking activities





* Activities

Participants engaged in collaborative cooking activities with community members in Ban U Hu. Traditional ingredients, cooking methods, and food-sharing practices were introduced and discussed within their cultural and social contexts.



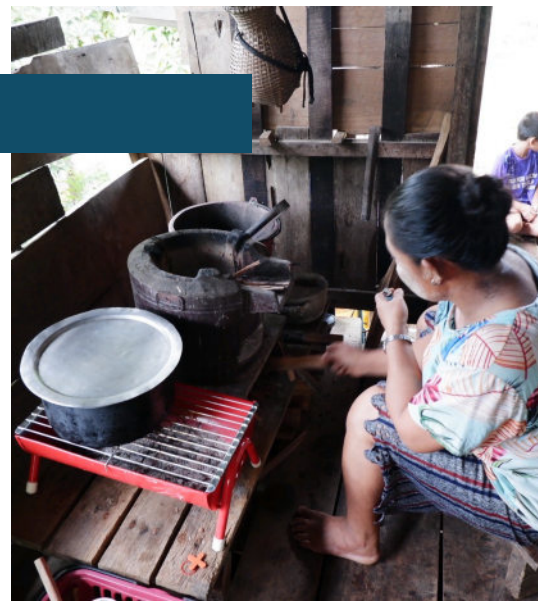
Reflections and Key Learning Points

The students engaged in collaborative cooking activities with community members in Ban U Hu. Traditional ingredients, cooking methods, and food-sharing practices were introduced and discussed within their cultural and social contexts.



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The students engaged in participatory cooking activities and intercultural learning with local communities, exploring the cultural meanings of food, identity, spirituality, and community relationships in indigenous societies.



WORKSHOP 2:

Education for All: Rethinking, Designing, and Framing Social Policy through Youth Participation

* Background

This workshop focused on youth participation and inclusive education within marginalized border communities. The activity encouraged participants to rethink educational access and social policy through direct engagement with local children and community members.

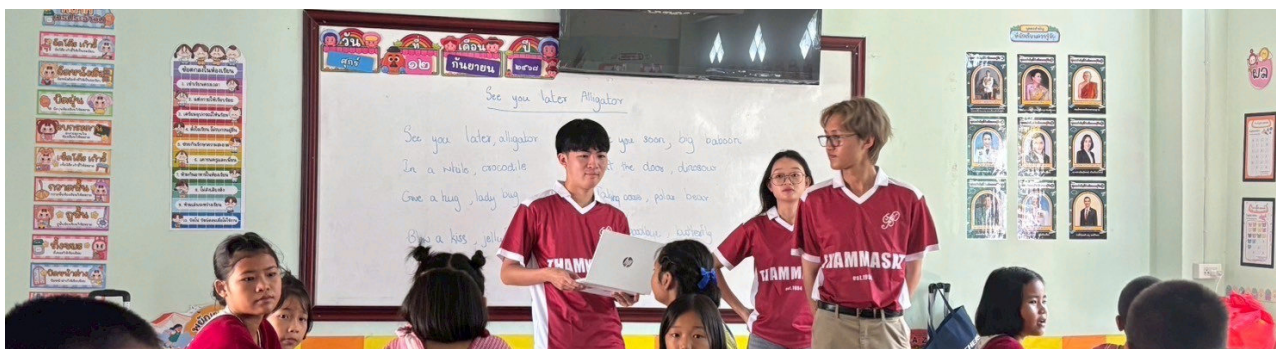
* Objectives

- To promote participatory learning and youth engagement
- To explore inclusive approaches to education
- To connect social policy discussions with community realities



Activities

The students organize educational and recreational activities with children in the community. The workshop emphasized collaborative learning, creativity, and inclusive participation.





Reflections and Key Learning Points

The workshop highlighted the importance of community-based educational engagement in promoting inclusion and social participation among marginalized children and youth. Participants reflected on the role of education not only as formal instruction, but also as a process of empowerment, relationship-building, and social inclusion.



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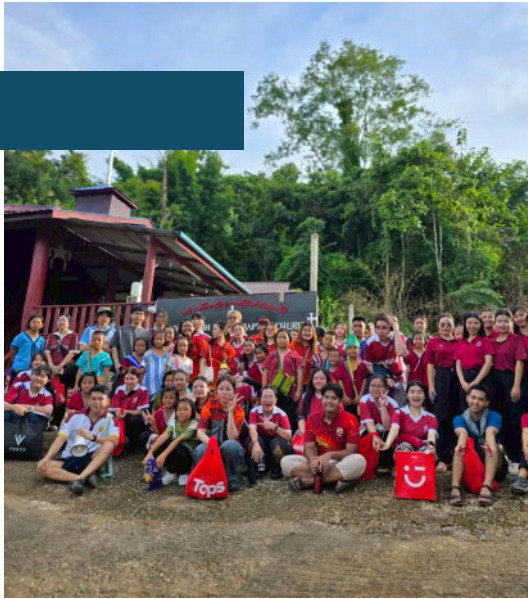
The students collaborated with local children and community members through educational and recreational activities, reflecting on inclusive learning, youth participation, and community-based approaches to education and social policy.



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LOOKING TOWARD SHARED FUTURE

“Voices Beyond Borders”

The stories, experiences, and reflections presented throughout this proceeding reveal not only the challenges faced by youth along the Thai–Myanmar border, but also their resilience, aspirations, and capacity to imagine alternative futures.

Amid conflict, displacement, educational disruption, and uncertainty, young people continue to create spaces of learning, solidarity, and hope. Their experiences remind us that education is more than access to classrooms, and participation is more than representation in policy discussions. Both are deeply connected to dignity, belonging, and the possibility of shaping a more just and inclusive future.

This conference was not only a space for academic exchange, but also a space for listening, collaboration, and shared humanity across borders and communities.

As we move forward, the voices and experiences of marginalized youth should not remain at the margins of policy and development discussions. Rather, they must be recognized as central to building sustainable peace, inclusive societies, and collective futures grounded in justice and human dignity.

*“A classroom may be small,
but the dreams inside it
are larger than the walls
that surround them.”*

Social Policy and Development Program (SPD)
Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University



“A classroom may be small,
but the dreams inside it are larger
than the walls that surround them.”

-voice from Myanmar youths-



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