



International Conference on Mental Health Support in Conflicted Areas

Building Resilience of Conflict Affected Vulnerable Groups
through Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

February 9th-10th, 2026

Laguna King Grand Ballroom
Laguna Grand Hotel & Spa Songkhla
Muang District, Songkhla, Thailand

Project Brief

Globally, more than 1.8 billion people live in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Protracted insecurity, displacement, and armed conflict disrupt daily life and limit access to basic services (World Bank, 2023). Evidence indicates that around one in five people in these settings experience mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (WHO, 2025). The psychological impacts of conflict extend far beyond the individual—undermining social cohesion, weakening educational outcomes, reducing labor force participation, and constraining economic productivity. These effects can fuel a cycle of fragility that hinders peacebuilding, recovery, and sustainable development.

Addressing mental health challenges and providing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in fragile settings requires an integrated, multi-sectoral approach. This entails moving beyond an exclusive focus on strengthening clinical services to also addressing the social determinants of health, which are key drivers of psychological distress.

These efforts have laid foundations for rebuilding trust, strengthening referral pathways, and engaging local leaders to reduce mental health stigma. However, service coverage remains uneven, and there is still a need for scalable, evidence-based models to support long-term implementation.

Against this backdrop, the International Conference on Mental Health Support in Conflict-Affected Areas is convened under the theme “Building Resilience of Conflict-Affected Vulnerable Groups through Mental Health and Psychosocial Support.” The conference provides a platform to present experiences from Thailand’s southern border provinces as a regional case study, linking local lessons with global knowledge to catalyze a new step forward in community-centered, evidence-driven action that integrates mental health and livelihood strategies to strengthen resilience in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.



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Conference objectives

- 1) To strengthen participants' understanding of key components and good practices in delivering psychosocial services in fragile and conflict-affected settings.
- 2) To provide a platform for exchanging experiences, lessons learned, and practical approaches among experts, practitioners.
- 3) To build and expand partner networks to promote collaboration and develop referral pathways for future socio-psychological support initiatives.

Expected results

- 1) Participants gain knowledge of the key components of good practices in delivering psychosocial services in fragile and conflict-affected.
- 2) Participants are able to apply and adapt the knowledge and lessons from the conference to their own national or local contexts.
- 3) Participants build relationships and professional networks with peers and experts—both domestic and international—to strengthen future collaboration.



Program Schedule

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Day 1: Monday, February 9th, 2026

Time	Program details
08.30-09.00	Registration 
09.00-09.20	Conference Overview and Opening Remarks by Dr. Nantawat Sitdhiraksa Professor in Psychiatry, Mahidol University
09.20-09.30	World Bank Opening Remarks by Pamornrat Tansanguanwong Senior Social Development Specialist, the World Bank Group 
09.30-09.40	Setting the Direction for Regional Collaboration “Strengthening Cross-Sectoral Collaboration at National and International Levels in Mental Health” Explores strategic directions for strengthening regional collaboration in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), with a focus on cross-sectoral cooperation at national and international levels  by Dr. Prakasit Kayasith Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Acting Managing Director of ThaiHealth Academy, Thai Health Promotion Foundation and the Project Director
09.45-10.30	Setting the Tone for Regional Collaboration “Regional Imperatives: Mental Health, Psychosocial Support, and Livelihoods in Conflict-Affected Areas” Presents regional practices and a major shift toward building MHPSS systems to transform global mental health services through rights-based, person-centered, and community-driven perspectives. It emphasizes multi-sectoral integration that is culturally responsive in conflict-affected communities, with a focus on capacity strengthening, participation, reducing social and structural inequities, mental health care, and livelihood recovery for affected populations.  by Dr. Andrea Bruni The Mental Health Regional Advisor, WHO South-East Asia Regional Office

Time	Program details
10.30-10.45	Refreshments
10.45-12.30	<p>Panel Discussion: “From Blueprint to Real-World Impact: Lessons from Asia on Planning, Implementing, and Scaling Psychosocial Interventions in Conflict-Affected Area Contexts”</p> <p>Sharing lessons learned from practical experience in advancing psychosocial services across Asia, grounded in contextual understanding and evidence-based approaches, covering planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation to enable effective services and potential scale-up</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Datuk Dr. Anis Yusal Yusoff, Principal Fellow Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Panelist Dr. Katy Robjant Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Vice president of vivo international</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Dr. Nantawat Sitdhiraksa Professor in Psychiatry, Mahidol University</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Moderated by Bon Prisa Jakobsen</p>
	International Conference Group Photo
12.30-14.00	Lunch Break and Poster Presentations on Community Project Best Practices
14.00-16.00	<p>Presentations: “From Knowledge to Practice: Best Practices from Thailand’s Deep South”</p> <p>Knowledge sharing and discussion based on case studies from “Thailand’s southern border provinces: community-centered psychosocial services and confidence building in an Asian context”</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>14.00-14.30 hrs. Dr. Kiflan Dolah, Psychiatrist Psychiatrist, Naradhiwasrajanagarindra Hospital</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>14.40-15.10 hrs. Nan Ei Research Manager, Community Partners International (CPI)</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p>15.20-15.50 hrs. Farida Tiboron Mangcaan Head of office, Iligan Sub-Office, Community and Family Services International (CFSI)</p> </div>
16.00-16.30	Refreshments

Time	Program details
16.30-18.00	<p>Group Activity: World Café A World Café format enabling all participants to exchange views through rotating group discussions on project-specific themes (e.g., stigma reduction, referral pathways for target groups, integration with livelihood support, children and youth, and women in conflict settings). This supports cross-regional learning, co-creation of systematic solutions, and synthesis of ideas across groups. Topics follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Livelihood by Dr. Sutthana Vichitrananda, The World Bank Group 2) Resilience by Pattaraporn Kong-in, M.D., Prince of Songkla University 3) Referral System by Dr. Bussabong Witsetpholchai, Senior Project Manager, Research Specialist & Evaluator Assistant Professor Dr. U-Maporn Kardkarnklai, Project Academic Researcher, ThaiHealth Academy 4) Elderly Mental Health: A Cross-Cultural Perspective by • Baiyah Sami, Community Labor Graduate, Na Ket Sub-district, Pattani Province • Nawaree Chanphum, Tonkla Phan Mai Deep South Network, Yala Province 5) Youth & Education by • Tiyanee Yeewangkong, Teacher, Benjamratchutit School, Pattani Province • Suwarin Toburee, Teacher, Ban Tha Sap School, Yala Province • Aesah Bahek, Teacher, Tadeeka Jah Yomurane School, Narathiwat Province 6) Gender & Empowerment by • Suhaila Wuthangkul, Muslima Women's Association, Narathiwat Province • Sainab Hohya, Nusantara Foundation, Narathiwat Province 7) Adolescent Mental Health by • Wannawawee Waeyoh, Fah Sai Association • Adam Jemah, Tonkla Phan Mai Deep South Network, Yala Province 8) Community Mental Health • Muhammad Cheddoloh, Thammasat University Research & Consultancy Institute • Nureeda Suvanavong, APASS Organization, Narathiwat Province • Phatimoh Duangchinda, Southern Border Wisdom Bridge Association
19.00-20.30	<p>Welcome Reception All participants are warmly invited to join the Welcome Reception. This informal gathering offers an opportunity to connect with colleagues and engage in networking in a relaxed setting. Venue: 1st Floor, Laguna Queen Grand Ballroom at Laguna Grand Hotel & Spa Songkhla, Thailand Dress code: Casual</p>
19.00-19.05	<p>Welcome remarks: by Pamornrat Tansanguanwong, Senior Social Development Specialist, the World Bank Group</p>
19.05-19.10	<p>by Dr. Prakasit Kayasith, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Acting Managing Director of ThaiHealth Academy, Thai Health Promotion Foundation and the Project Director</p>



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Day 2: Tuesday, 10th February, 2026

Time	Program details
09.00-12.00	<p>Group Dialogue Summary Presentation - Learning from real practice: Key lessons synthesized: representatives from each breakout group present key points from the World Café discussions to the plenary</p> <p>by Group representatives</p> <p>Project Results “From Dialogue to Policy Pathways” The policy-makers/senior leaders share perspectives and synthesize inputs into feasible, actionable recommendations, and outline multi-stakeholder collaboration for sustainable future work.</p> <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nith Thongphetsri, Director, Mental Health Center 12• Yusin Chitphakorn, Deputy Mayor, Yala City Municipality• Kanokrat Kueakit, Secretary-General, Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC)• Dr. Narissara Ngamkhachornwiwat, Director, Thanyarak Pattani Hospital <p>[Open the floor for Q&A]</p>
12.00-12.10	<p>Closing Ceremony by Pamornrat Tansanguanwong, Senior Social Development Specialist, the World Bank Group</p>
12.10-13.30	Lunch Break and Networking



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