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The International Institute Graduate Student Summer Fieldwork Award in summer 2017 allowed me to spend two months, between June 23, 2017 and August 22, 2017, in Bangkok, Thailand. This opportunity served as preliminary research for my dissertation project, which is concerned with the relationship between knowledge and educational policies and practices in different political and cultural spaces.

When I first arrived in Bangkok, my intention was to focus on the United Nation's 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). SDG4 pertains to the provision of quality education and lifelong learning for all. My plan was to map out international and regional actors who are in one way or another involved with programs that seek to facilitate the transition of youth to formal and/or informal economy through the provision of formal and/or informal education and training. I was curious to see how these actors constructed the arena of youth livelihood skills development and how they attached meaning to the changes they had encountered in the course of their career.

As Bangkok is a hub for a number of international development organizations whose work is concerned with the Asia-Pacific region, I had the opportunity to conduct formal interviews as well as numerous informal conversations with a range of actors. These interviews and conversations helped me gain better understanding of different perspectives, various definitions of youth and sustainability, challenges of providing livelihood skills in different places, and hopes and fears of individuals who are trying to navigate the complex arena of international education and development. In the next stages of my research, I will explore the

principles that underlie these constructs and will historicize the systems of ideas that make possible the multiplicity of these definitions.

In addition to conducting interviews, I had the opportunity to attend the 3rd Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 between July 4th and July 7th. Hosted by UNESCO, Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) and UNICEF, the annual meeting brought more than 200 participants from different ministries of education, civil society organizations, and (I)NGOs to Bangkok. The conference focused on target 7 in SDG4, which is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, a culture of peace, global citizenship, and so forth. The intriguing space of the conference in terms of the networks of human beings, documents, time and space, and different materials and technologies was an incredible opportunity to see the process and practice of policy-making. In addition, the observation of the conference events highlighted the relevance of certain theories and concepts as analytical-methodological tools to understand the socio-materiality of knowledge. In September 2017, part of the data collected during my fieldwork in Thailand was presented in the Theory and Data in Curriculum, History, and Educational Studies Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Not only did my research experience in Bangkok allowed me to collect data and improve my interviewing skills in English, but also did set the stage for the next phases of dissertation research in a variety of ways. First, I made valuable contacts with different actors from different organizations and countries. Second, while I initially had no intention of including conference venues as the sites of my project, I learned through the course of my brief fieldwork in Bangkok that they are intriguing spaces for understanding the politics of knowledge and thus decided to include conferences in my dissertation fieldwork. Finally, after the interviews, observations, and

conversations in Bangkok, I concluded that shifting the focus of my research from SDG4 to entrepreneurship education will allow me to delve deeper into epistemic formations of contemporary educational policies and practices. Although my fieldwork in Bangkok lasted only two months, I have been repeatedly surprised at the timeliness of this research in terms of developing my dissertation project. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to conduct this research which became possible only thanks to the generous support from IRIS.



Figure 1. Education for Sustainable Development, Photo taken at the 3rd APMED conference, Dusit Thani Hotel, Bangkok