Personalising the middle-income trap: An inter-generational migrant view from rural Thailand

Using the experiences of first and second generation migrants from three villages in Thailand, this paper ‘personalises’ the middle income trap, seeking to understand how and why migrants with growing levels of education and human capital remain rooted to their natal villages. Agrarian change is such that the village remains the locus of familial belonging and livelihood security, limiting engagement with the knowledge economy, sometimes for good reason given the precarity of much non-farm work. The argument pursued is that the middle-income trap for these villages in Thailand is as much personal as it is institutional and structural.

Jonathan is a Professor of Geography at the National University of Singapore, having moved from Durham University in the UK last year. He has been working on issues of development in the Asian region since the 1980s, often with a rural focus. Jonathan is the author of six books and some 60 journal papers. His most recent books are Unplanned development: tracking change in Southeast Asia (Zed Book, 2012) and, co-edited with Peter Vandergeest, Revisiting rural places: pathways to poverty and prosperity in Southeast Asia (NUS Press, 2012). He is currently working on a new book with the working title Shadows of success: challenging development in Southeast Asia.

Discussant

Professor Kevin Hewison
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Learning Link Building 513 Level 1.005
12.30 to 1.30pm
Light lunch & refreshments provided
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