



RESEARCH REPORT (2025)

Development of Economic Corridors

to Strengthen Bordertown Security
and Wellbeing of Mae Sot District,
Tak Province and Muang District,
Prachuap Khiri Khan Province



By:
Prof. Dr. Supang Chantavanich and Team



Affiliation:
**Institute of Asian Studies,
Chulalongkorn University**



Supported by:
Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI) Promotion Fund
and the Area-based Development Funding
Management Unit (PMU A)

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Researchers

Prof. Dr. Supang Chantavanich (Project Leader)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Naruemon Thabchumpon (Deputy Project Leader)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chantana Wun'gao

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rattiya Bhula-or

Asst. Prof. Dr. Sineenat Sermcheep

Dr. Premjai Vungsiriphisal

Ms. Somying Soonthornwong

Mrs. Supaporn Phokaew

Ms. Waranya Jitphong

Dr. Supreecha Hiranburana

Dr. Kamonwan Roengsamran

Dr. Pasakorn Yothinneerarat

Mr. Itthiphol Promphai

Mr. Kritsanaphol Witchuphanth

Mr. Ukrit Saichumin

Experts

Prof. Surichai Wun'gao

Asst. Prof. Thiva Supajanya

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Charit Tingsabadh

Supported by: Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI)

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Executive Summary

The project "Development of Economic Corridors to Strengthen Bordertown Security and Wellbeing of Mae Sot District, Tak Province and Muang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province" aims to investigate the security, economic, and quality of life conditions in these border areas, and to formulate appropriate development guidelines through a multistakeholder participatory process. This study employs a mixed-methods research approach— incorporating interviews, focus groups, public forums, statistical analysis, and field surveys— alongside four rounds of Stakeholder Consultative Meetings (SCM) in each target area to cocreate a shared vision and development roadmap.

For the Mae Sot area, the findings indicate that illicit migration and informal/undocumented trade are critical challenges undermining border security and the local economy. The study therefore proposes establishing an "Integrated Border Province Command Center" to streamline inter-agency administration. This should operate in tandem with upgrading the Special Economic Zone (SEZ), establishing a local product standard and innovation center, and promoting agro-industry alongside the Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) economy model to add value to local products. Regarding quality of life, the report recommends enhancing cross-border public health cooperation, boosting the capacity of foreign migrant health volunteers, and providing online language and vocational training platforms. Furthermore, transboundary cooperation is urged to address toxic dust (PM_{2.5}), solid waste, wastewater, and forest degradation. The strategy also highlights driving identitybased local tourism and enacting a dedicated Border Area Management Act to support longterm development.

For the Prachuap Khiri Khan area, instability in Myanmar, the closure of the Singkhon border crossing, illegal border crossings, and border demarcation constraints significantly impact regional security and the economy. The study similarly proposes establishing an Integrated Border Province Command Center for this area, alongside fostering Thai-Myanmar bilateral cooperation built on mutual trust and shared benefits. The core development pathways focus on promoting the wellness economy, water resource management, upgrading agricultural products across the entire supply chain, and bridging business networks between entrepreneurs of both countries. On quality of life, the study emphasizes building a flexible border health system, reducing drug abuse and accidents, and enhancing skills in languages, border trade, and tourism. This can be achieved by leveraging local educational institutions and King Mongkut's Memorial Park of Science and Technology at Waghor as central learning

hubs, developing the Wing 5 Historical Museum into a peace learning center, and driving tourism based on the province's natural resources, history, and culture.

In the overall analysis, the research demonstrates that both Mae Sot and Prachuap Khiri Khan possess high potential to serve as model border towns. If informal border trade and migration regulations are brought into the formal system, citizen skills are upgraded, and international cooperation is continuously sustained, it will lead to economic growth, state security, and human security. Conversely, leaving these challenges unmanaged will exacerbate regional vulnerabilities across economic, health, environmental, and tourism dimensions. The most viable scenario involves driving joint policies between central and local authorities, establishing dedicated border area management mechanisms, promoting collaborative economics and investment, and reinforcing healthcare, learning, and environmental management alongside tourism and cultural cooperation. This approach relies heavily on multi-stakeholder participation and academic/knowledge support from PMU A to successfully drive sustainable development across these border territories.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance of the Project

Thailand shares land borders with four neighboring countries, spanning 31 provinces and 128 districts, which play a pivotal role in national security, the economy, and the citizens' quality of life. However, border territories consistently confront security issues, illicit cross-border trade, socio-economic inequality, inadequate infrastructure, and environmental challenges. In particular, the ongoing instability and unrest in Myanmar have substantially impacted irregular migration, border trade, and the delivery of public services in Thailand. Consequently, the research project titled "Development of Economic Corridors to Strengthen Bordertown Security and Wellbeing of Mae Sot District, Tak Province and Muang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province" aims to investigate the prevailing situation, potential, and constraints of these border regions. This study seeks to formulate appropriate development frameworks covering five key dimensions: migration security, the economy, health and wellbeing, learning and education, and environment and tourism. This is achieved through a participatory process involving the public sector, private sector, academic institutions, and civil society.

The ultimate goal of this research is to deliver policy recommendations that enhance state and human security, stimulate economic development, and elevate the quality of life for border populations, thereby fostering sustainable development at both local and national levels.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the current situations, potentials, and critical development gaps in the border areas of Mae Sot and Prachuap Khiri Khan?
2. What are the appropriate models of multi-stakeholder cooperation required to develop the target areas across the five core dimensions?
3. What are the specific development needs and constraints in these areas, particularly regarding cross-border migration?
4. What should be the appropriate policy guidelines for border town development and their integration with other border regions?

1.3 Project Objectives

1. To study and synthesize baseline data, current situations, stakeholder dynamics, and development gaps in the Mae Sot and Prachuap Khiri Khan areas.
2. To design cooperative development models across the five core dimensions: security, economy, health and wellbeing, learning and education, and environment and tourism.

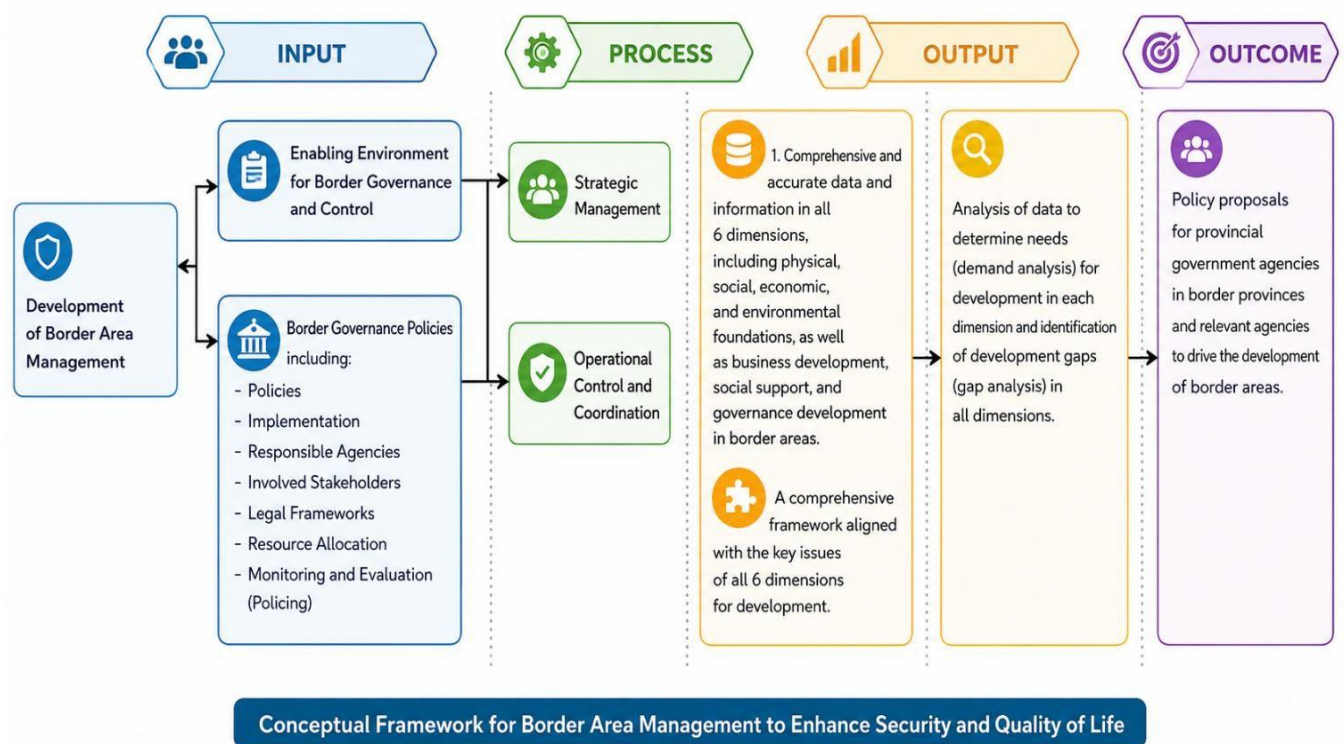
3. To analyze local needs and constraints in order to identify key priorities for border town development.
4. To formulate policy recommendations regarding population and cross-border migration for integration with other border area research initiatives.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study encompasses public sector agencies, private sector entities, academic institutions, and civil society organizations within the border areas of Mae Sot District, Tak Province, and Mueang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

1.5 Research Framework

Conceptual Framework for Border Area Management to Enhance Security and Quality of Life



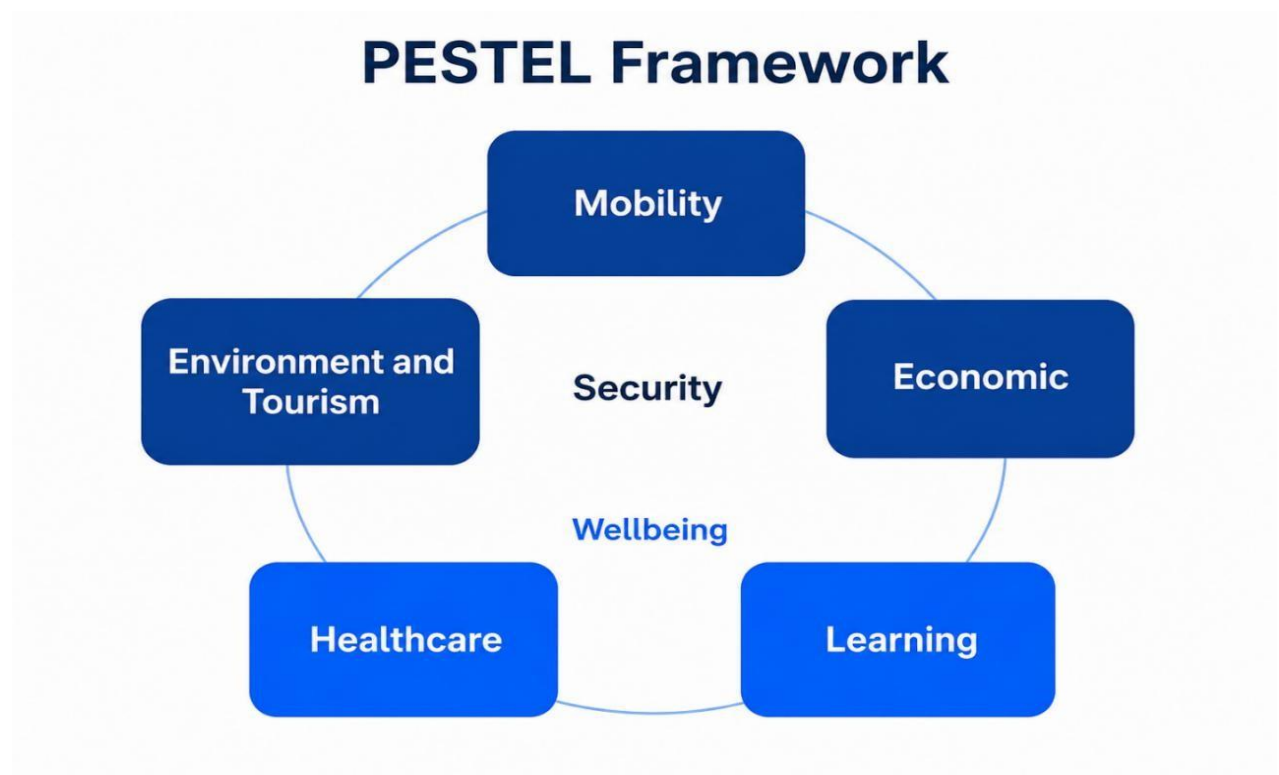
The research framework for border area management to enhance security and quality of life consists of a four-part research process.

The first part constitutes the primary inputs, which include the historical evolution of border area management, the immigration legal framework, and current immigration policies and practices that influence border management and cross-border migration control. The second part entails data regarding the five dimensions of security and quality of life. This represents the process resulting from border area management, which encompasses economic, environmental, health and wellbeing, learning, and tourism dimensions (see Figure 1.2: PESTEL

Model, which comprises Political (P), Economic (E), Social (S), Technological (T), Environmental (E), and Legal (L) factors).

The third part focuses on the analysis of both inputs and processes, leading to the determination of development needs (demand analysis) and constraints (gap analysis) across the five dimensions of security and quality of life. Conducted in collaboration with various stakeholder groups, this stage constitutes the research outputs.

The fourth part involves the development of the ultimate outcome, which delivers actionable policy recommendations for development to be integrated into the Provincial Development Plans.



Baseline Data on the 5 Dimensions of Security and Quality of Life Development

Source: Adapted from Rahman and Mishra's PESTEL Model (2023)

1.6 Outputs and Outcomes

This research project focuses on studying and developing the border areas of Mae Sot District, Tak Province, and Mueang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. The project spans a total duration of 12 months, divided into 4 quarters (3 months per quarter).

Key Outputs:

1. A comprehensive baseline dataset encompassing cross-border migration security, economic conditions, quality of life, health and wellbeing, environment and tourism, and learning and education.
2. Cooperative development plans across the 5 dimensions, established in partnership with public, private, civil society, and academic sectors.
3. Analysis of development needs (**Demand analysis**) and constraints (**Gap analysis**) across the 5 core dimensions.
4. Two area-based and policy-level border area development roadmaps (one plan per province).
5. Actionable policy recommendations focused on expanding growth hubs in border town territories.

Key Outcomes:

The utilization of research data and strategic plans by relevant agencies, including the Immigration Bureau, Provincial Police Stations, and the Customs Department, leading to:

1. Increased awareness regarding the critical need for multi-stakeholder cooperation in border area development.
2. Collaborative formulation and advancement of localized development cooperation proposals by on-site agencies.
3. Submission of policy recommendations to the Tak and Prachuap Khiri Khan Provincial Offices for integration into the **Provincial Development Plans (2028–2032)**.
4. Practical utilization of the database and development roadmaps by provincial authorities and core local agencies.
5. Establishment of strong cooperative networks among the public, private, civil society, and academic sectors.

Development of Research Tools and Methodologies:

Specifically through the utilization of civil society forums for data collection and analysis, this project demonstrates the vital importance of participatory action research in border area development. It emphasizes multi-sectoral integration and the generation of practical knowledge that can be tangibly translated into public policies and local development plans.

การพัฒนาระเบียงเศรษฐกิจพิเศษเพื่อยก
ระดับความมั่นคงและคุณภาพชีวิตเมือง
ชายแดนของอำเภอแ่สออด จังหวัดตาก
และอำเภอเมือง จังหวัดประจวบคีรีขันธ์
Development of Economic Corridors
to Strengthen Bordertown Security
and Wellbeing of Mae Sot District, Tak
Province and Muang District,
Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

วิจัยทัศนร่วม:

- ✓ ความมั่นคงที่แท้จริงของชาวมอแกน เริ่มต้นจากศักดิ์ศรีและสิทธิของประชาชนในพื้นที่
- ✓ เมืองชายแดนไม่ใช่พื้นที่ชายขอบ แต่คือศูนย์กลางแห่งการเชื่อมโยงภูมิภาค พหุวัฒนธรรม และภาคโลกใหม่
- ✓ การพัฒนาอย่างยั่งยืนต้องอิงบนแผนบูรณาการที่เคารพบริบท ความหลากหลาย และพลังของชุมชนท้องถิ่น
- ✓ ความมั่นคงและความภาคภูมิใจจะก้าวไปพร้อมกันได้ ถ้าได้เนื้อรัฐพลีเสียจากความกลัวและละเลยอย่างที่เป็นระบบ

ศูนย์วิจัยการย้ายถิ่นแห่งเอเชีย สถาบันเอเชียศึกษา จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

**“แม่สอดคือประตูสู่การปฏิรูปบนความมั่นคง
ทาง ที่ตั้งอยู่บนฐานของสิทธิ ศักดิ์ศรี และ
ประสิทธิภาพการที่ยึดมั่นกับหลักการ”**





**การประชุมนำเสนอข้อค้นพบ
และข้อเสนอแนะโครงการวิจัย
“การยกระดับความมั่นคง
ของพื้นที่ชายแดน”
อ.แม่สอด จ.ตาก
20 พฤษภาคม พ.ศ.2568
เวลา 13.00 – 17.00 น.,
ห้องประชุมโรงแรมขอนแก่น แอสโตร**

“แม่สอดเมืองน่าอยู่”



กำหนดการ

- ๑3.00 – 13.20 น. • กล่าวต้อนรับและรายงานผลการดำเนินงานโครงการ,
กล่าวเปิดการประชุม
- ๑3.20 – 14.00 น. • ดำเนินการนำเสนองาน
- 14.00 – 14.30 น. • ดำเนินการตอบข้อซักถาม
- 14.30 – 15.00 น. • ดำเนินการสรุปความหมายและ
- 15.00 – 15.15 น. • พักการประชุม
- 15.15 – 15.45 น. • ดำเนินการให้เกียรติแก่แขกอาคันตุกะ
- 15.45 – 16.25 น. • ดำเนินการรับประทานอาหารว่าง
- 16.25 – 16.40 น. • นำเสนอแผนดำเนินงานระยะต่อไป
- 16.40 – 17.00 น. • ปิดงาน และมอบเงินรางวัลกิตติม และสรุป
วิธีลงมือปฏิบัติราชการ กล่าวปิดการประชุม

**ผู้ร่วมอภิปราย
ผู้ทรงคุณวุฒิ**



ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศ. ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศ. ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



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อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



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**ผู้ร่วมอภิปราย
ผู้ทรงคุณวุฒิ**



ดร.ศ. ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศ. ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศ. ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศ. ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



ดร.ศ. ดร.ศุภมาส สุพรรณิการ์
อธิบดีกรมการศาสนา



Chapter 2: Literature Review

Conceptual Frameworks

- **Border Management & Migration Control:** Based on Karamaidou, Kasperek, and Hess (2018), this study examines national legislation and historical immigration policies. It emphasizes immigration legal frameworks and border policing to address security challenges through multi-stakeholder participation, aligned with the *UN Global Compact on Migration 2012*.
- **Development and Conflict Outcomes:** Utilizing the *United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)* model for conflict-prone borders, this framework focuses on strengthening border stability and security while simultaneously expanding crossborder exchange activities.

2.1 Baseline Data: Mae Sot District, Tak Province

- **Geography:** Mae Sot (1,986 \$km²) is Thailand's most critical western gateway. It connects Tak Province's 580-km border with Myawaddy, Myanmar, serving as a primary link to South Asia.
- **Economy:** Operating under the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and designated as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) since 2015, Mae Sot features two Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridges. Its border trade value reached 106,835 million Baht in 2023, doubling its 2014 figures to become the nation's second-highest border trade port.
- **Demographics & Migration:** In 2022, the registered population was 145,488 (excluding an estimated equal number of informal populations), concentrated in the Mae Sot and Tha Sai Luat municipalities. As of April 2024, Tak Province registered 40,876 migrant workers, with 89% (36,691 workers) concentrated in Mae Sot. Of these, 99% are Myanmar nationals employed heavily in garment manufacturing, wholesale/retail, and construction across 37 natural border crossings (piers).
- **Displacement & Humanitarian Crises:** Escalating military conflicts in Myanmar in 2024 triggered massive displacement. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), over 200,000 Myanmar migrants fled to Thailand between July and September 2023 alone, driven heavily by Myanmar's conscription laws.
- **Public Health:** Mae Sot Hospital treats 61,000–76,000 outpatients and 21,000–28,000 inpatients annually; foreign patients account for one-third of outpatients and nearly half of all inpatients. Additionally, the Mae Tao Clinic (founded by Dr. Cynthia Maung)

treats 50,000–110,000 patients annually, where only 22–60% possess health insurance and 7–42% cross directly from Myanmar.

- **The Twin City (Myawaddy):** Located in Myanmar's Kayin State across the Moei River, Myawaddy hosts the Myawaddy Trade Zone (1,150 Rai) and Industrial Zone. It acts as a vital distribution hub connecting Southeast Asia to South Asian markets, establishing a functional "Twin City" framework with Mae Sot.

2.2 Baseline Data: Mueang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

- **Geography & Connectivity:** Situated along the southern Thai-Myanmar border corridor (linking Myeik, Tanintharyi, and Kawthaung to Ranong and Prachuap Khiri Khan), this area boasts strong socio-economic networks. The physical terrain slopes from the Tenasserim Range down to the Gulf of Thailand. The primary trade portal is the Singkhon Pass (Khlong Wan Sub-district), connecting to Mudong, Tanintharyi, and Myeik in Myanmar.
- **Economy:** In 2012, the Provincial Gross Gross Product (GPP) was driven by Agriculture (22.9%), Manufacturing (22.3%), Hospitality/Food Services (14.1%), and Wholesale/Retail (12.3%). Per capita income stands at 192,326 Baht/year (\$18th nationally). The province heavily utilizes the "OTOP Innovation-Based Tourism" strategy to boost grassroots economies.
- **Demographics & Migration:** In 2022, the provincial population was 553,298. In April 2024, the province recorded 34,609 migrant workers (33,517 low-skilled), with 65% (21,847 workers) being Myanmar nationals.
- **Public Health & Education:** Mueang District houses 2 hospitals and 14 sub-district health promoting hospitals. The main 278-bed Prachuap Khiri Khan Hospital treats 300,000 outpatients and 10,000 inpatients annually, managing high rates of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) for both Thai citizens and cross-border migrants. The province operates 291 schools.
- **The Counterpart City (Myeik):** Located in Myanmar's Tanintharyi Region, Myeik is an ancient, culturally diverse port city vital for fisheries and border trade. The transboundary population includes diverse ethnic groups such as the Moken (sea nomads) and the "Displaced Thais" (Thai-descended Myanmar citizens who maintain southern Thai Buddhist and Muslim traditions).



Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This study employs a Mixed Methods Research design, integrating qualitative research, action research, participatory research, and quantitative research. The methodology is designed to investigate the border areas of Mae Sot District, Tak Province, and Mueang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. It aims to analyze the current situations, design cooperative models, evaluate local needs and constraints, and formulate policy recommendations for border town development.

3.1 Research Methods

- Qualitative Approach: Utilizes in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and Participatory Action Research (PAR) workshops to gather primary data and synthesize recommendations from various stakeholders.
- Quantitative Approach: Analyzes secondary statistical data obtained from relevant government agencies and utilizes field surveys (Mini-Surveys) to evaluate development priorities and needs in the target areas.

3.2 Population and Sample Selection

The target population comprises key stakeholders across the public, private, academic, and civil society sectors, as well as local residents—including Thai nationals, Myanmar nationals, and stateless persons—in Mae Sot District, Tak Province, and Mueang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. Key informants were purposively selected from core agencies operating in security, economy, public health, education, and community development.

3.3 Research Instruments

The primary instruments developed and deployed for this study include:

1. In-depth interview guidelines.
2. Focus group discussion (FGD) protocols.
3. Field survey questionnaires.
4. Digital data recording tools (e.g., photographs, video recordings, and electronic documents).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis is structured into four consecutive phases:

1. Baseline and Situational Analysis: Examining current local contexts and identifying development gaps.
2. Cooperative Model Design: Developing collaborative frameworks across the 5 core dimensions.

3. Strategic Evaluation: Conducting Demand Analysis and Gap Analysis regarding local constraints.
4. Policy Formulation: Crafting actionable policy recommendations for border town development and cross-border migration management.

3.5 Research Procedures and Implementation Steps

The research process involves a comprehensive literature and statistical review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions, and on-site participatory workshops. Concurrently, a field survey was administered to a sample size of 450 respondents, covering economic, learning, and health dimensions. Finally, the findings are synthesized through consultative dialogues with stakeholders to ensure the policy recommendations are both practical and actionable.

3.6 Research Sites

Field operations were conducted extensively within the border zones of Mae Sot District (Tak Province) and Mueang District (Prachuap Khiri Khan Province). Engaging stakeholders from the public, private, academic, and civil society sectors, as well as local communities, ensures that the collected data comprehensively reflects the distinct local contexts and genuine needs of each area.



Chapter 4: Research Findings

The research findings fulfill Objectives 1, 2, and 3 across five core dimensions, analyzed separately for the two target border areas.

4.1.1 Migration Security

- **Current Situation & Baseline:** Bordering Myanmar's volatile Kayin State, Mae Sot faces unpredictable migration spikes driven by Myanmar's 2021 coup and 2024 conscription laws. Formal trade checkpoints have plummeted to 35%, while informal trade has surged to 65%. The population includes 77,436 displaced persons across shelters, alongside irregular post-2021 arrivals. Mae Sot holds 89% (36,691 workers) of Tak's registered migrant workforce, 99% of whom are Myanmar nationals employed in garments, retail, and construction.
- **Stakeholder Analysis:** The National Security Council (NSC) drives policy with the Ministries of Defense and Interior handling policing and registration, while the MFA coordinates with international bodies (UNHCR, IOM). Operationally, integrating these entities during emergencies remains a critical bottleneck. • **Critical Gaps:**
 - **Screening & Data:** Acute lack of mechanisms to differentiate economic migrants from conflict asylum seekers; no integrated central database.
 - **Economic & Governance:** 65% informal trade dominance weakens the formal SEZ economy. Overlapping local administrative structures hinder cross-agency implementation, and the Immigration Bureau faces severe staff shortages along the 70km natural border.

4.1.2 Economic Security

- **Current Situation & Connectivity:** As the terminal hub for the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC), Mae Sot is Tak's primary economic engine, capturing over 90% of the SEZ's corporate registrations. However, geopolitical instability has caused extreme volatility: new limited company registrations plummeted from 153 in 2023 to just 15 in 2025, and BOI applications dropped to zero.
- **Trade & Disruptions:** Border trade between Mae Sot and Myawaddy reached 103,210.57 million Baht (Oct 2022 – Aug 2023), yielding a 73,978.31 million Baht surplus. Primary exports are electronics and fuel; top imports are animal feed corn and agricultural goods. Conflict disrupted the 2nd Friendship Bridge in April 2024, halting formal trade by 90% and dropping trade volumes from 132,078 million Baht in 2022 to 76,469 million Baht in 2027.
- **Critical Gaps & Targets:** The 2023–2027 Tak Development Plan targets a 3% annual growth in household income, tourism, and GPP via flagship projects like the Mae Sot

Inland Port. However, execution is bottlenecked by centralized policy mismatches, localized institutional silos, and rapid institutional staff turnover.

4.1.3 Quality of Life: Health and Wellbeing

- Situation & Infrastructure: Spanning 1,986.12 km^2 , Mae Sot is Tak's most densely populated district, causing severe urban congestion (5,500 m^3 daily wastewater; 50 tons daily solid waste). Infrastructure includes one 420-bed state hospital and two private hospitals. Foreign nationals account for 25% of outpatients and 50% of inpatients. Non-governmental hubs like the Mae Tao Clinic treat 50,000–110,000 foreign patients annually.
- Disease Profile: Chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like hypertension and diabetes lead outpatient data. For inpatients, pneumonia and diarrhea dominate. Foreign patients show high rates of neonatal jaundice and anemia, and Tak records the highest malaria infection rate in Thailand.
- Critical Gaps: Overcrowded migrant housing (13–15 persons per bedroom), low treatment continuity due to high population mobility, and severe hospital financial strain because centralized per-capita funding excludes the massive informal population.

4.1.4 Quality of Life: Learning and Education

- Baseline & Logistics: Mae Sot houses 67 formal schools serving 54,000 students. Conflict-fleeing children lacking legal documentation are excluded from public schools and rely on 64 informal, NGO-funded Migrant Learning Centers (MLCs). Higher education infrastructure includes Mae Sot Technical College, Tak Community College, and KPRU Mae Sot Campus, which serve local and resident Myanmar students. •

Critical Gaps:

- Primary/Secondary: Severe language barriers (undocumented students make up 80% of some classrooms) delay reading lessons for Thai students, driving local flight to private schools. Public schools face severe teacher shortages and cannot legally access provincial development funds.
- Higher Education: Thai youth show low interest in local options, causing brain drain. Curriculum mismatches leave recent graduates unemployed, disconnected from the border's cross-border commercial opportunities.
- Recommendations: Recruit bilingual (Thai-Burmese) educators, launch market-driven digital and e-commerce vocational tracks, and draft a 10-Year Border Education Development Master Plan.

4.1.5 Quality of Life: Environment and Tourism

1. Environmental Dimension

- **Baseline & Land Use:** The terrain is 80% rugged mountains and forests. Agriculture is dominated by single-cropping feed corn and sugarcane (323,658 Rai). Limited urban zoning forces over 400 textile factories into residential zones. Speculative land transfers and informal real-estate expansions by foreign buyers utilizing local proxies have priced local citizens out of the market.
- **Crises & Gaps:** Severe transboundary PM2.5 pollution peaks annually (Feb–March) from biomass burning on the Myanmar side. Rapid urbanization generates 70 tons of solid waste daily, overloading the 70-Rai municipal landfill; a planned waste-to-energy plant was halted for years by political litigation. Centralized planning bottlenecks local execution, causing the abandonment of the 2,000-Rai logistics center in Tha Sai Luat.

2. Tourism Dimension

- **Situation & Realities:** Mae Sot's annual tourism revenue remains stagnant under 5,000 million Baht. In 2024, visitor numbers grew by less than 5% (against a 13% national average). Tourists cite traffic congestion, poor parking, low service standards, and unmanaged garbage as primary deterrents.
- **Strategic Gaps & Recommendations:** There is a failure to commercialize Mae Sot's multicultural assets (Tai Yai, Karen, Chinese, Muslim communities) into premium products, paired with a lack of localized capacity to manage sustainable eco-tourism. Recommendations include executing cultural mapping to develop high-value products, expanding green recreation spaces, and transitioning to decentralized urban planning led by younger local entrepreneurs.

4.2 Mueang Prachuap Khiri Khan District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

4.2.1 Migration Security

- **Current Situation & Baseline:** Dubbed "The City of Three Bays," Mueang District functions as a tranquil administrative and coastal tourism hub. Geographically, it borders Myanmar's Tanintharyi Region via the Singkhon Special Relaxation Point. Armed conflict in Myanmar has not caused mass refugee influxes here, but it has disrupted trade logistics. In 2023, border trade at Singkhon reached 1.67 billion Baht (1.55 billion Baht imports, 115 million Baht exports). As of July 2024, the province hosted 33,876 registered migrant workers, primarily under special relaxation schemes () and MOU frameworks ().

- Stakeholder Analysis: Policies are set by the Ministries of Interior, Agriculture, Labour, and Public Health. Frontline execution is handled by the District Office, Customs, Immigration, and ISOC Prachuap Khiri Khan, which bridges civil-military security coordination.
- Critical Gaps & Recommendations: Upgrading Singkhon to a Permanent Border Checkpoint remains stalled by bilateral security sensitivities. Local hospitals face overcrowding and bad debt from treating uninsured foreign patients. Administrative and security agencies (specifically ISOC) should deploy an integrated securitydevelopment blueprint, establish a central coordination hub, and upgrade migrant classification systems to balance humanitarian relief with border integrity.

4.2.2 Economic Security

- Provincial Economic Overview: In 2022, Prachuap Khiri Khan's Gross Provincial Product (GPP) reached 102,844 million Baht (6.39% growth post-COVID-19), with a GPP per capita of 211,209 Baht. The economic structure is driven by Services (48.47%), Agriculture (26.33%), and Industry (25.21%).
- Sectoral Performance & Trade: The province is Thailand's largest cultivation base for mature coconuts (359,670 Rai) and industrial pineapples (266,067 Rai). It features highvalue Geographical Indication (GI) products like Phala-U Durian and Thap Sakae Coconut, while pursuing registration for the *Siam Gold* pineapple. Border trade via Singkhon surged 122.16% in 2023 to 2,828.74 million Baht, dominated by seafood imports. However, escalating conflict along Myanmar's primary Myawaddy-Mae Sot corridor has forced operators to evaluate Singkhon as a strategic alternative land route to Yangon and Myeik.
- Critical Gaps & Recommendations: The agricultural sector faces severe headwinds from climate change (droughts and caterpillar outbreaks), labor migration to the hospitality sector, and a lack of tailored smallholder machinery.

Key Recommendations:

- Form public-private-academic ventures to engineer localized, small-scale agricultural tech.
- Accelerate GI registration for *Siam Gold* pineapple and *Tenasserim Khiri Khan* durian to secure premium pricing.
- Push diplomatic resolutions to permanently upgrade the Singkhon checkpoint into an international transit corridor.

4.2.3 Quality of Life and Health Well-being

- Situation & Infrastructure: The province has a population of 553,298 (12% elderly, 71.6% working-age). High population mobility across the porous 200km border strains

local resources. Mueang District operates 18 public health facilities. Prachuap Khiri Khan Hospital acts as the region's primary secondary/tertiary referral hub, managing 1,319 outpatients and 252 inpatients daily with 856 staff. Foreign patients constitute 10% to 35% of its total volume.

- **Critical Gaps:** * **Environmental Strain:** Expanding populations place heavy operational burdens on municipal solid waste management, utility water supplies, and recycling frameworks.
 - **Financial Leakage:** Porous natural borders facilitate irregular migration. Weak health insurance tracking for informal laborers leaves hospitals to absorb unrecoverable medical fees, compounding bad debt from uninsured foreign patients and underinsured expats.
- **Recommendations:** Institutionalize Migrant Health Volunteers (MHVs) to bridge language and epidemiological gaps, expand private insurance mandates, and build cross-border bilateral cooperative frameworks with Myanmar counterparts.

4.2.4 Quality of Life and Educational Learning

- **Baseline Data:** Mueang District contains 48 primary/secondary schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), alongside private networks like Phra Mae Mary School. Higher education and specialized learning are supported by Phetchaburi Rajabhat University (PBRU) regional services, the Distance Learning Television (DLTV) Foundation, Wang Klai Kangwon College, and the Waghor Science Park. PBRU hosts 6,015 students, including 17 Myanmar nationals in its international hospitality program.
- **Critical Gaps:** Local vocational tracks are generic and disconnected from the border's unique economic trajectory. There is a lack of proactive language planning (ThaiBurmese) and an absence of specialized short courses in cross-border logistics, **customs administration, and advanced agro-fishery processing.**
- **Recommendations:** * **Wang Klai Kangwon College:** Design short-term vocational training engineered for border logistics and tourism management.
 - **Waghor Science Park:** Foster public-private partnerships to host interdisciplinary innovations in marine commerce.
 - **PBRU:** Serve as an educational conduit by establishing formal linkages with Myanmar entities for vocational upskilling and synchronized language training.

4.2.5 Environmental Quality of Life and Tourism

- **Geography & Asset Breakdown:** Integrated into the "Royal Coast" tourism development zone, Mueang District links natural assets ("The City of Three Bays," Khao Ta Mong Lai Forest Park) with historical sites (Waghor Aquarium, Sue Suk Road). It sits

at an "Ecological Crossroad" within the globally biodiverse Tenasserim Ecoregion, serving as a historical land bridge between the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea.

- **Critical Gaps:** Unmanaged tourism growth lacking carrying-capacity frameworks has triggered beach and marine ecosystem degradation.
 - Resource Deficits: Chronic annual water scarcity threatens agriculture, while municipal waste collection lacks the vehicles and infrastructure to process tourist garbage and marine debris.
 - Human-Wildlife Conflicts: Crop-raiding by wild elephants compromises pineapple farms, and urban macaque overpopulation harms the town's image.
 - Value-Addition Deficiencies: Tourism assets lack narrative-driven curation, and local community souvenirs suffer from basic packaging and weak branding.
- **Recommendations:** Deploy evidence-based waste-management research directly to local jurisdictions. Leverage the 2,000-volunteer NEV-Net network to co-design ecotourism models that preserve natural capital while fostering grassroots agribusiness innovation to retain local youth.

4.3 Conclusion

The research team has formulated a draft Border Area Development Plan for Mae Sot District (Tak Province) and Mueang District (Prachuap Khiri Khan Province) across 5 key dimensions to be presented in Chapter 5.

4.3.1 Shared Vision and 5-Dimension Cooperation Plan for Mae Sot Development

1. Border Security and Holistic Development

- **Vision:** Shift from state-centric military security to "Human Security," prioritizing the safety and dignity of border residents. Establish a "Flexible and Responsive Boundary Management System" via an integrated Provincial Border Command Center.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Integrate multi-agency border management with AI databases; regulate natural channels via CCTV, drones, and sensors; deploy One-Stop Service systems for migrant workers and refugees; and position Mae Sot as a Thai-MyanmarInternational coordination hub.
- **Key Actors:** Tak Provincial Office, 14th Infantry Regiment Task Force, Tak Immigration, Mae Sot Customs, and local NGOs.

2. Border Economic Dimension

- **Vision:** Drive area-based "Inclusive Growth" by empowering local entrepreneurs, expanding medium-to-high value products, and fostering multicultural sustainable tourism networks.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Upgrade transport routes and launch a High-Value Product Research Center; connect young startups with established businesses; secure Geographical Indication (GI) registries for flagship crops (coffee, cocoa, avocado); establish community carbon markets; and deploy the "ECONOMAP" digital production platform.
- **Key Actors:** Tak Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Thai Industries (Tak), Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University (KPRU), and ThaiHealth.

3. Health and Well-being Dimension

- **Vision:** Build a border healthcare system rooted in humanitarianism and equitable access using flexible instruments like the M-Fund insurance scheme for undocumented populations under the "4C Framework" (Community, Capacity, Cooperation, Connectivity).
- **Cooperation Plan:** Restructure hazardous border residential zones; mitigate hospital budget strains via Co-Pay and Charity Funds; expand M-Fund coverage; upskill medical staff in telemedicine; and deploy mobile clinics alongside joint Thai-Myanmar disease surveillance networks.
- **Key Actors:** Tak Provincial Public Health Office, Mae Sot Hospital, Mae Tao Clinic, and local charitable foundations.

4. Educational Learning and Skills Development

- **Vision:** Forge a flexible, area-based education system that treats migrant youth as vital economic assets through multilingual, digital, and practical "Upskill-Reskill" frameworks.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Launch targeted e-commerce, logistics, and agro-processing curricula; utilize MOOC and DLTV networks for remote populations; solidify ThaiEnglish-Burmese-Karen instructional models; and repurpose local infrastructure into multi-generational learning hubs.

- **Key Actors:** KPRU Mae Sot, Mae Sot Community College, Tak Chamber of Commerce, and Migrant Learning Centers (MLCs).

5. Environment and Tourism Dimension

- **Environmental Plan:** Focus on Public-Private-Community Partnerships (PPCP) and Green Funds to protect forest coverage. Empower communities in watershed restoration, suppress crop burning via precision agriculture (NSTDA), build Moei River waste processing systems, and establish the "Mae Sot Happy Living" surveillance network.
- **Tourism Plan:** Pivot to "Workation" and Community-Based Tourism. Short-term goals include mapping creative tourism assets and curating historical narratives. Long-term goals focus on urban "Place Making," homestay circular economy standards, and establishing a provincial Green Fund.
- **Key Actors:** Tak Office of Natural Resources and Environment, TAT Tak, and local civil society networks (e.g., Huai Pla Lod).

4.3.2 Shared Vision and 5-Dimension Cooperation Plan for Prachuap Khiri Khan Development

1. Border Security and Holistic Development

- **Vision:** Elevate "Holistic Security" by linking economic expansion with humanitarian relief, anchored by upgrading the Singkhon checkpoint into a Permanent Border Checkpoint to eliminate ad-hoc directives.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Deploy an integrated security-labor-trade command dashboard; push legislative frameworks to permanently upgrade Singkhon; train frontline personnel in human rights and anonymous corruption reporting; host annual bilateral crisis drills; and safeguard natural passes while expanding border road/utility infrastructure.
- **Key Actors:** Prachuap Provincial Office, Border Patrol Police (Company 14), Chong Ang Suek Task Force, and Prachuap Customs.

2. Border Economic Dimension

- **Vision:** Transform Singkhon into a strategic trade conduit linking Yangon and Myeik to the Andaman Sea, serving as a back hinterland for the national Landbridge project while optimizing agricultural and fishery value chains.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Build bonded warehouses and freight consolidation yards at Singkhon; streamline regulations for local agricultural exports; co-develop climate-resilient crop strains; integrate Thai-Myanmar supply chains (Myanmar raw materials + Thai technology); and **upskill community enterprises in e-commerce and microfinance.**
- **Key Actors:** Prachuap Chamber of Commerce, Provincial Offices of Commerce/Agriculture/Fisheries, and local community enterprises.

3. Health and Well-being Dimension

- **Vision:** Construct a resilient border health ecosystem backed by cross-sector databases tracking all migrant labor and foreign expatriates while mitigating local nursing shortages and hospital financial leakage.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Secure long-term municipal drinking water infrastructure; implement community waste-to-energy recycling; develop Wellness Centers for international retirees; expand M-Fund and private health insurance mandates to eliminate uncollectible hospital bad debts; and deploy joint Thai-Myanmar epidemic warning networks.
- **Key Actors:** Prachuap Provincial Public Health Office, Prachuap Hospital, and Singkhon Border Health Centers.

4. Educational Learning and Skills Development

- **Vision:** Build a technology-driven Upskill/Reskill framework aligned with border logistics, positioning Waghor Science Park as a regional PPP learning hub and Wing 5 as an international ASEAN Peace Studies destination.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Form digital learning networks (MOOC/DLTV) at Waghor covering environmental science and agribusiness; task PBRU with anchoring cross-border logistics and digital commerce training; form a joint Thai-Japanese historical committee to digitally upgrade the Ao Manao WWII landing site; and establish specialized hospitality training centers.

- **Key Actors:** Phetchaburi Rajabhat University (PBRU), Waghor Science Park, Wing 5 Historical Museum, and Primary Educational Service Area Office 1.

5. Environment and Tourism Dimension

- **Vision:** Capitalize on the Tenasserim Eco-region as a global biodiversity corridor, transitioning border towns into sustainable sub-hubs of Wellness, Sport, and MICE tourism targeting long-stay international expatriates and medical tourists.
- **Cooperation Plan:** Deploy 3R (Restoration, Reconnection, Regeneration) strategies to rehabilitate upstream community forests; implement frontline source-separation waste and wastewater systems to manage tourism carrying capacity; develop sustainable nature trails and agro-tourism surrounding GI-certified coconut plantations; and link tourism to local OTOP markets via green festivals.
- **Key Actors:** Prachuap Tourism Association, Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports, TAT Prachuap, and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Research Conclusions for Mae Sot and Prachuap Khiri Khan Areas

5.1.1 Research Conclusion for the Border Area of Mae Sot District, Tak Province

The study of the Mae Sot border area highlights an urgent need to shift the security paradigm from a traditional military and control-oriented approach to a **"Human Security"** framework that prioritizes the rights, safety, and dignity of border populations. This shift is reflected in a shared vision across multiple leadership levels, pointing toward a flexible, area-based border management system supported by integrated mechanisms. This ensures that Mae Sot can effectively serve as both a crisis-response zone and a catalyst for regional development.

- **Shared Vision: Border Security is People's Security** Insights gathered from experts, academics, government representatives, and civil society organizations indicate that development in Mae Sot must be grounded in human security. Given its geopolitical role as a frontline entry point managing migration, cross-border trade, and cultural exchange, the shared vision aims to develop Mae Sot into a **"Multidimensional Hub of the Thailand-Myanmar Border."** This encompasses economic, humanitarian, health, and social security dimensions. Key proposals include establishing a *Holistic Provincial Border Command Center* to integrate data, drive strategies, and agilely govern area-based policies. Concurrently, the study recommends drafting a specialized *Border Area Management Act* to provide a legal framework for these novel management models tailored to the Thailand-Myanmar border context.
- **5-Dimension Integrated Development Plan: The Convergence of Policy and Real Life** To develop Mae Sot effectively, policies must systematically integrate and address five core dimensions:
 1. **Border Security:** Focuses on holistic management regarding refugees, migrant workers, and the instability in Myanmar. Key proposals include real-time interagency data systems, human rights training for personnel, standardized shelters, and cross-border cooperation mechanisms with Myanmar ethnic representatives to cultivate long-term trust. These mechanisms must align with local governance plans to facilitate rapid responses during crises.
 2. **Border Economy:** Advocates developing Mae Sot as a flexible and sustainable Special Economic Zone. Focus areas include supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs), investing in logistics infrastructure, launching digital trade platforms, and establishing bonded warehouses. It also promotes business matching and co-production models between Thailand and

Myanmar, backed by comprehensive labor rights protection and a *Border Innovation Zone* to test new policies and technologies.

3. **Border Health and Well-being:** Proposes Mae Sot as a pilot model for crossborder health systems by establishing a *Border Health Center* providing services to Thais, migrant workers, and displaced persons. It emphasizes mobile health units, epidemic warning systems, accessible alternative health insurance (such as the M-Fund) for vulnerable groups, and interventions for often-overlooked areas like mental health, adolescent pregnancy prevention, and female migrant worker health.
4. **Educational Learning:** Focuses on addressing border cultural diversity by establishing multicultural learning centers, promoting local border history, and launching upskilling/reskilling curricula aligned with the economy (e.g., logistics, e-commerce, and manufacturing technologies). It promotes lifelong learning and vocational certification systems through alliances with border universities, vocational institutes, and non-formal education networks.
5. **Environment and Tourism:** Proposes a "**Green Border Town**" model by developing green public transit, wastewater management, natural resource conservation, and eco-cultural/wellness tourism. It suggests using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to build sub-district and district-level environmental master plans, complemented by cross-border cultural tourism networks that honor Mae Sot's local identity.

These five dimensions are profoundly interdependent. The security plan relies on health data; economic sustainability depends on workforce upskilling and education; tourism requires environmental and grassroots economic integration; and health services must cover social and human rights dimensions. Designing Mae Sot as a strategic border city of the future demands policy integration that links area-based, place-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems with national and regional mechanisms, translating local aspirations into adaptive, courageous policy realities.

5.1.2 Research Conclusion for the Border Area of Mueang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

The study of the Mueang District border area in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province reflects the complex, dynamic nature of the Thailand-Myanmar border across security, economic, social, environmental, and cultural identity dimensions. Development here cannot be handled in isolation; it requires a holistic approach that integrates all sectors and connects every facet of the population's life into a systematic framework.

- **Shared Vision: Transforming the Border from a Periphery to a Development Sub-Hub** Academic forums and stakeholder consultations indicate that border development must begin by redefining the border—moving away from seeing it merely as a geographical edge or a military buffer zone, and recognizing it as a strategic area rich in economic, social, cultural, and environmental potential. Upgrading the Singkhon checkpoint to a Permanent Border Checkpoint is not simply a trade facilitation measure; it is the vital core of opening a gate connecting Thailand and Myanmar to accommodate future regional transitions. Furthermore, stakeholders propose a *Holistic Provincial Border Command Center* to serve as a central mechanism syncing the missions of public, private, and civil sectors, utilizing centralized data and strategic monitoring under good governance.
- **5-Dimension Integrated Development Plan: Integrating Policy from Real-Life Contexts** The integrated development plan for the Prachuap Khiri Khan border encompasses five deeply linked dimensions:
 1. **Border Security:** Focuses on designing cooperative mechanisms that respect human rights and local identity—specifically regarding border land management, local development, and the systematic regulation of Burmese migrant workers, displaced persons, and international long-stay expatriates. Security is redefined not through weaponry, but by securing long-term livelihoods. It also details disaster and epidemic preparedness through personnel training, surveillance technologies, and local-level cross-border alliances.
 2. **Border Economy:** Prioritizes logistics, bonded warehouses, and promoting local products (such as new economic crops and processed agricultural goods). Key strategies include Thai-Myanmar business matching, packaging upgrades, commercializing Geographical Indication (GI) products, and stimulating co-production investments. It also proposes model border markets and circular economy frameworks to foster community-level sustainability.
 3. **Border Health and Well-being:** Aims to develop culturally responsive health service networks, focusing on mobile healthcare, epidemic alerts, and training foreign health volunteers. It advocates expanding alternative health insurance to cover vulnerable, uninsured populations and securing long-term budget commitments for healthcare staff, while intersecting health policies with social developments for the elderly and migrant sectors.

4. **Educational Learning:** Emphasizes creating upskilling/reskilling pathways for border laborers, youth, and marginalized groups. This includes developing learning facilities within King Mongkut's Memorial Park of Science and Technology at Waghor and upgrading the Wing 5 Historical Museum at Ao Manao into an ASEAN digital peace-studies learning site. It also encourages online systems, virtual classrooms, and skill certification frameworks to tie learning directly to career advancement.
 5. **Environment and Tourism:** Directs natural resource and community forest management toward eco-tourism, cultural tourism, and transforming border towns into wellness tourism destinations (creating specialized *Restination Areas* and cross-border MICE events). This involves utilizing a green-economy master plan governed by the 3R concept: **Restore** (nature), **Reconnect** (local communities), and **Regenerate** (cultural ways of life and natural ecosystems), backed by localized environmental databases.
- **Inter-sectoral Connectivity: A Pilot Model of Integration** Structurally, these five dimensions form an interconnected loop where the Singkhon checkpoint serves as a strategic crossroads for security, economics, and health enforcement. Logistics investments drive the economy and healthcare accessibility; mobile health and lifelong learning elevate workforce capacity; and eco-cultural tourism vitalizes the grassroots economy and community identity. Crucially, this plan is explicitly built around "development for the local people," using flexible, participatory mechanisms. Consequently, developing the Prachuap Khiri Khan border serves as a blueprint for Thailand's overarching border policies, demonstrating how understanding localized foundations successfully merges national security with sustainable development.
- ## 5.2 Comparative Summary of Proposed vs. Actual Activities and Outputs
- The following details outline the alignment between the original project proposals and the actual research execution completed by the research team: **Document Analysis and Baseline Inputs**
- **Proposed Plan & Output:** Conduct an extensive document analysis to compile baseline data, inputs, and primary contexts regarding cross-border migration, security, economy, environment, and quality of life (health and learning). The output mandate was one comprehensive baseline input dataset.
 - **Actual Implementation & Output:** Successfully completed document reviews and field data collection. The finalized output consists of comprehensive situational profiles, baseline indicators, stakeholder analyses, and critical gap matrices published

for Tak Province (Page 17) and Prachuap Khiri Khan Province (Page 64), covering migration security, economics, health, education, and eco-tourism. **Qualitative Data Collection and Stakeholder Workshops**

- **Proposed Plan & Output:** Execute in-depth interviews and hold stakeholder focus groups to gather qualitative experiences, views, and structural feedback covering security, economic, environmental, and quality-of-life parameters.
- **Actual Implementation & Output:** Fully executed in-depth key informant interviews and qualitative focus groups across both target zones. These interactive exchanges and data-gathering sessions are detailed and documented in the report (e.g., Page 53).

Field Assessments and Strategic Action Mapping

- **Proposed Plan & Output:** Conduct key informant interviews, qualitative focus groups, and collaborative stakeholder workshops across Mae Sot and Mueang Prachuap Khiri Khan districts. Implement a quantitative micro-assessment (Mini-Survey) covering a combined sample size of 450 respondents using localized brief questionnaires. The required output was a 6-dimension cooperative development framework involving public, private, civil, and academic sectors.
- **Actual Implementation & Output:** Successfully carried out all strategic interviews, focus groups, workshops, and the 450-respondent quantitative mini-survey across both project sites. The finalized output delivered a comprehensive *Integrated Border Town Strategic Development Plan* for Tak Province (Page 100) and Prachuap Khiri Khan Province (Page 117), providing multi-sectoral cooperation models spanning public, private, civil society, and academic institutions.

5.3 Recommendations for Action Plan Formulation to Drive Border Policy Proposals

To translate these research-backed policy proposals into actionable, concrete results tailored to local contexts, provinces must institute operational frameworks founded upon **Multi-stakeholder Engagement** and a **Provincial Co-governance Mechanism**. The foundational implementation phases are structured as follows:

5.3.1 Establishment of a Provincial Joint Task Force

A primary joint task force shall be officially commissioned within each pilot province, chaired directly by the Provincial Governor. The organizational structure must be highly diverse, integrating representatives from:

- Relevant public sector organs and line agencies (both central ministries and provincial offices).

- Private sector bodies (particularly commerce chambers, industrial chapters, and border trade networks).
- Local academic institutions and educational entities.
- Civil society organizations (NGOs and community-based groups).
- Frontline border community representatives and residents.

This joint task force will be responsible for defining shared agendas, supervising subcommittees, monitoring milestones, and serving as an open provincial policy forum responsive to real-world data from border sites.

5.3.2 Formation of 5 Specialized Technical Working Groups

To drive deep, metrics-based implementation within each strategic dimension, provinces should establish five specialized technical working groups:

1. Working Group on Security, Labor, and Cross-Border Mobility
 2. Working Group on Border Economy and Transnational Trade
 3. Working Group on Health, Well-being, and Public Services
 4. Working Group on Learning Systems and Capacity Building
 5. Working Group on Natural Resources, Environment, and Ecological Security
- Each technical working group will comprise relevant line officers, private industry specialists, domain academics, civil society practitioners, and citizens with direct experiential insight into the respective field, serving as a central mechanism to codesign and monitor execution.

5.3.3 Execution of Action-Planning Workshops

Following the official appointment of the technical working groups, a series of structured planning workshops must be deployed to:

- Define clear operational metrics and targets split into short-term, medium-term, and long-term horizons.
- Draft detailed action plans and project proposals categorized by activity, budget source, and primary executing agency.
- Construct a participatory, multi-stakeholder monitoring and evaluation framework to verify policy implementation.

McKinsey 7S Framework



Furthermore, the structure of these workshops may implement the **McKinsey 7S Model** to systematically analyze operational readiness across seven core dimensions:

1. **Shared Values / Vision:** The alignment on a shared vision to sustain and drive the policies forward (Already established).
2. **Systems / Regulations:** Legal readiness, regulatory frameworks, and compliance mechanisms.
3. **Strategy:** Strategic readiness for policy execution and deployment.
4. **Structure:** Organizational and administrative management structures.
5. **Skills:** The capabilities, expertise, and competencies of the involved stakeholders.
6. **Staff:** The readiness and allocation of dedicated teams to champion the initiatives.
7. **Style:** The cultural and leadership styles operating within the area, evaluating whether they act as catalysts or barriers to implementation.

In this regard, emphasis must be placed on **Collaborative Planning** processes and the systematic integration of community voices. This approach ensures that the resulting roadmap transforms into an "area-based plan that is genuinely accepted and collectively driven by the local people.

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