

Displaced Communities, the Power of Storytelling, and Institutional Actions for Inclusion

Ferowza Swapnil
AIBS Fellow 2025

Millions of forcibly displaced migrants—often from conflict zones—struggle to access the tools needed to rebuild their lives and integrate into broader society. While data on their struggles is scarce, their stories hold immense power. Drawing on the experiences of Rohingya and Afghan women seeking opportunities, in this talk I will explore the realities of displaced students, the systemic challenges they face in higher education, and the role of storytelling in amplifying their voices. I will also share initiatives we have developed at the Asian University for Women (AUW) as an example of how institutional support at the tertiary education level can create practical pathways for integration. Why does this matter? Because empowering displaced individuals not only transforms their lives but also enriches communities and builds a more inclusive future for all.



Ferowza Swapnil is a Visiting Fellow from the Asian University for Women (AUW) in Bangladesh, where she works as the Chief Teaching Fellow and Program Coordinator for the Master of Arts in Education Program. She holds a bachelor's degree in Economics with a minor in Mathematics and a Master's in Economic Policy. Her work and research are primarily concentrated around improving access to higher education for conflict-affected displaced migrants and indigenous communities across South Asia. Beyond her responsibilities in managing the graduate program at AUW, Ferowza also leads an online preparatory learning initiative designed to provide secondary education opportunities to female students in Kandahar, Afghanistan, where such opportunities are critically limited.



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