

Seminar

on

Gender Relations and Water Resource Management in Nepal: Toward a Dialogue between Feminist, Developmental and Transdisciplinary Perspectives

By

Dr. Stephanie Leder

Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU)

Venue: SIAS Meeting Hall, NK Singh Marg-306, Minbhawan, Kathmandu

Date: Wednesday, 5th Dec 2018

Time: 3:00-4:30 pm

Socially more inclusive approaches to water resource management have been on national and international policy and development agendas over the past three decades. Particularly gender has received a great deal of attention, although there remains a great divide between critical feminist and mainstream developmental research and practice: While feminist approaches stress the importance of broader power relationships and intersectionalities (of gender, class, ethnicity, age...) as roots of social inequalities, with challenges to implement, developmental gender approaches focus on applicable approaches which may face the risk of essentialising and reproducing existing gender inequalities despite, or maybe because of their transdisciplinary and community-based approaches.

Drawing from critical feminist, development and transdisciplinary research on gender and water management in the Far Western Hills and the Eastern Terai of Nepal, Dr. Stephanie Leder highlights the current challenges and opportunities for a dialogue to rethink the tensions between these diverse approaches. She unpacks the gendered access to and control over local water resources within Nepal's agrarian political economy which is strongly driven by (primarily male) rural out-migration, and critically reflects on the role of researchers, development practitioners and policy makers when designing gender interventions and surveys addressing women's empowerment. To reconcile diverse perspectives on gender, she presents her original approach which aims at providing space for critical discussions on gender norms, roles and relations in water resource management: the "Participatory Gender Training for Community Groups".



Stephanie Leder holds a PhD in Cultural Geography from the University of Cologne, Germany. She studied geography, English, biology and educational sciences at the University of Cologne and the University of New Brunswick, Canada. For her PhD thesis, she conducted in-depth research on Education for Sustainable Development in policy and practice by examining geography teaching on water resources at secondary schools in Pune, India. She was a Postdoctoral Fellow for Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development at the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) in Kathmandu, Nepal, and led studies in inter- and transdisciplinary projects within the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Program "Water, Land and Ecosystems" in India, Nepal and Bangladesh. Currently she is a Postdoctoral Researcher for Social and Environmental Justice at the Department of Urban and Rural Development at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Uppsala, Sweden. She received a four-year Formas Mobility Grant of the Swedish Research Council, "Revitalizing community-managed irrigation systems in contexts of out-migration in Nepal" (4.5 Mio SEK).

SIAS is a Kathmandu-based research institute involved in Nepal and in South Asia in several social science and environmental issues. Its research utilizes recent knowledge in Nepal and globally to understand, unravel and interpret unfolding social, political, economic and environmental dynamics. SIAS also promotes critical dialogues on research, policy and practice interface.
