



Partnering for Change: Link Research to Societal Challenges

Video Transcript

Making migration safer: working abroad has risks

[Prof. Dr. Susan Thieme] Think of a group of 30 persons sitting on a school bus, maybe, or in a conference room. In the global average, one of these 30 people does not work in his home country. Taken together, we get the impressive figure of roughly 200 million men and women who work abroad.

A lot of them send money home. Thus, they help to support their families, while at the same time contributing to the development of the nation they left. In fact, these funds currently account for a sum that is more than twice the amount of global development spending.

Our case involves Nepal. Nepal's economy depends heavily on labour migration. Nepalese workers go chiefly to India, Southeast Asia, and the Gulf states. The remittances they send home amount together to about one quarter of Nepal's gross national product.

However, the workforce itself often works and lives abroad and precarious circumstances. Migrants and their families lack information about safe migration procedures, living and working circumstances in host countries, and their rights as migrants.

During the last years, researchers studied this topic increasingly. At the same time, governmental, social, and political activists intensified their efforts to address migrants' needs and rights. Thus, a lot of actors are involved in projects that address the labour migrants' situation. The field asks for a transdisciplinary approach.

In our case, you will become familiar with the complex situations and challenges this generates. We will explore several questions. Why and how is migration important for Nepal? What are the key challenges and opportunities related to migration? Who are the diverse actors involved? How can research and practice jointly identify the best measures to address key challenges? How can both contribute to these measures?

Addressing these issues supports sustainable development. It builds not only on remittances and the safety of the workers. We also need to understand that they have unequal access to mobility and that they lack information about labour rights, as well as financial literacy. A lot of the services they use for safe money transfer are inadequate.



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Our case focuses on a community outreach project in Delhi, India. It is an example of how research and practice can collaborate. Researchers from a university work together with an NGO to build on migrants' capacities. The goal was to improve the conditions in which they live and work and to reduce their vulnerabilities.

What are the possibilities, challenges, and limitations of transdisciplinary collaborations? We will explore this question as we look at the lifecycle of such a partnership. This includes the steps of how to identify partners, how to develop the project design and the aims as well as outcomes of the project. I look forward to reading your thoughts, comments, and discussions.