

**Seminar and Film Launch**  
Jointly hosted by Ferguson Centre-SRA International Development  
and Inclusive Innovation- IKD

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Venue: Library Seminar Room 2**

Time: 09.45-15.00 (Lunch provided 12:00-12:30, please register)

Registration: contact Dawn Edwell ([dawn.edwell@open.ac.uk](mailto:dawn.edwell@open.ac.uk))

## **Arts approaches to international development in practice**

**Speakers: Sandip Hazareesingh, Tsveti Bandakova  
and Tom Wakeford**

### **Abstract:**

This seminar follows up the Ferguson Centre's 'Cultural capacity building' workshop held in October 2017. It will include a film launch, featuring four short videos produced by the Changing Farming Lives in South India project, in which women farmers talk about their life experiences, and two presentations on arts-based approaches to international development. There will also be an opportunity to find out more about current funding initiatives relating to the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).

### **Programme:**

09.45: Arrival and Coffee

10.00-10.15: Introduction by Karl Hack

10.15-10.45: GCRF Funding opportunities by Alessandra Marino

10.45-11.00: Q & A

11.00-11.30 Films from the Changing Farming Lives in South India, Past and Present project

11.30-12.00: Q & A

12.00-12.30: Lunch

12.30-13.15: Sandip Hazareesingh & Tsveti Bandakova: 'Doing Oral History with Women Farmers in Karnataka, India'

13.15-14.00: Tom Wakeford: 'Participatory Action Research: escaping the white-walled labyrinth of scientism'

14.00-14.15: Tea/Coffee break

14.15-15.00: Q & A

15.00: Close



## **Presentations:**

### **1) Doing Oral History with Women Farmers in Karnataka, India**

Speakers: Sandip Hazareesingh & Tsveti Bandakova

Even sophisticated and influential international development approaches tend to focus on material and secular aspects of rural livelihoods primarily predicated on the 'here and now'. This often leaves out historically-derived cultural and religious values, knowledges, and beliefs which people themselves see as important and meaningful when confronting economic, social, and climatic challenges. As an arts and humanities approach that enables people to articulate their experiences of the past through the lens of the present, oral history has the potential to offer a richer understanding of capacity and resilience building amongst rural communities by showing how aspects of the past are remembered, reworked and recreated to address needs and vulnerabilities in the present.

Moreover, oral history offers the promise to give a voice to poor and disadvantaged groups who are seldom heard directly in international development debates. In a world dominated by the written word, it gives recognition and esteem to spoken cultures. During 2018, the Changing Farming Lives in South India, Past and Present project conducted a pilot study featuring audio and filmed interviews with 17 women small farmers in 7 villages in the Indian State of Karnataka. Although women now make up the majority of agricultural workers in India and possess acknowledged expertise in seed conservation and crop management, they remain largely excluded from inheriting land and struggle to access credit and other productive resources.

This session will present some of the main stories narrated by the women farmers and explore their significance in relation to debates around 'resilience'. It will also reflect on the promises and challenges of conducting oral history interviews in rural households.

### **2) Participatory action research: escaping the white-walled labyrinth of scientism**

Speaker: Tom Wakeford

The institutionalisation of research took place during two centuries of European colonial dominance. As such the birth of what we now understand to be "research" was an integral part of a racist endeavour. Scientific institutions have systematically denied contributions to knowledge and understanding made by those who were not members of Western professional elites.

Over the centuries, the hegemony of a single, narrow approach to the production of what constitutes valid knowledge (often called scientism) has benefited some, but marginalised and excluded many, many more. This blinkered approach has also been to the detriment of humanity's overall knowledge base. Participatory action research (PAR) has emerged over the last half-century as a movement to counter this epistemic injustice.

This session will explore the extent to which PAR has been successful as well as its potential contribution to implementing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

**Seminar is FREE to attend**

**Please register contacting Dawn Edwell ([dawn.edwell@open.ac.uk](mailto:dawn.edwell@open.ac.uk))**

