

# **Transnational Labour Migration in the Global South: Emerging Narratives of Prosperity, Precarity and Vulnerability from Nepal**

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## **Abstract**

People are increasingly migrating for work outside their countries of origin in the global South. The scale of transnational labour migration (hereafter migration) from poor countries including Nepal is considerable, and these transnational sojourns are generating significant transformations in migrant-sending communities and agrarian landscapes. Rising labour mobility is closely related to the inadequacy of agrarian livelihood options, the emergence of new forms of social and environmental vulnerabilities, and changing rural aspirations, particularly among the youth. While dominant narratives suggest that migration provides a livelihood pathway out of poverty, there is also emerging evidence that it can create new forms of vulnerability and precarity. In this seminar, drawing on the comparative insights gained from Nepal, Indonesia and Laos, I address three key questions: 1) How are gender and social (including caste) relations linked to the processes of labour migration?; 2) To what extent is migration creating possibilities of prosperity among the rural poor?; and 3) How is migration shaping agrarian change – land relations and agricultural production – amidst rising food imports?

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## **About the Presenter**

Dr. Ramesh Sunam is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the United Nations University (UNU), Tokyo. His research interests include labour migration, poverty, human dimensions of environmental change and social justice. He has published several articles in the leading international journals including Journal of Peasant Studies, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies and Anthropological Forum. He holds a PhD from the Australian National University (ANU).