

Gender Mainstreaming at the Institute of Technology Tribhuvan University Nepal: A Collaborative Approach to Architecture and Design Education

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Abstract : There has been a growing recognition that sustainable development needs to consider economic, social and environmental aspects including gender. In Nepal, the majority of the population lives in rural areas, and many households do not have access to electricity. In rural areas, the difficulty of accessing energy is becoming one of the greatest constraints for improving living conditions. This is particularly true for women and children, who spent much time for collecting firewood and cooking and thus are often deprived of time for education, political- and business activities. The poster introduces an education and research project financed by the Norwegian Government. The project runs from 2015-2020 and is a collaboration between the Norwegian University of Science (NTNU) and Technology Institute of Engineering (IOE), Tribhuvan University. It has the title Master program and Research in Energy for Sustainable Social Development Energy for Sustainable Social Development (MSESSD). The project addresses engineering and architecture students and comprises several integral activities towards gender mainstreaming. The following activities are conducted; 1. Creating academic opportunities, 2. Updating administrative personnel on strategies to effectively include gender issues, 3. Integrating female and male stakeholders in the design process, 4. Sensitizing female and male students for gender issues in energy systems. The project aims to enable students to design end-user-friendly solutions which can, for example, save time that can be used to generate and enhance income. Relating to gender mainstreaming, design concepts focus on smaller-scale technologies, which female stakeholders can take control of and manage themselves. Creating academic opportunities, we have a 30% female students' rate in each master student batch in the program with the goal to educate qualified female personnel for academia and policy-making/government. This is a very ambitious target in a Nepalese context. The rate of female students, who completed the MSc program at IOE between 1998 and January 2015 is 10% out of 180 students in total. For recruiting, female students were contacted personally and encouraged to apply for the program. Further, we have established a Master course in gender mainstreaming and energy. On an administrative level, NTNU has hosted a training program for IOE on gender-mainstreaming information and -strategies for academic education. Integrating female and male stakeholders, local women groups such as, e.g., mothers group are actively included in research and education for example in planning, decision-making, and management to establish clean energy solutions. The project meets women's needs not just practically by providing better technology, but also strategically by providing solutions that enhance their social and economic decision-making authority. Sensitizing the students for gender issues in energy systems, the project makes it mandatory to discuss gender mainstreaming based on the case studies in the Master thesis. All activities will be discussed in detail comprising an overview of MSESSD, the gender mainstreaming master course contents', and case studies where energy solutions were co-designed with men and women as lead-users and/or entrepreneurs. The goal is to motivate educators to develop similar forms of transnational gender collaboration.

Keywords : knowledge generation on gender mainstreaming, sensitizing students, stakeholder inclusion, education strategies for design and architecture in gender mainstreaming, facilitation for cooperation

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