

ISA REGIONAL GUEST LECTURE

DISPLACED BETWEEN PROMISES AND REALITIES

GENDER INSIGHTS FROM CASE STUDIES OF DAM-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN MALAYSIA

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Gender is central to understanding and analysing forced displacement and resettlement by development projects such as large dams because women's and men's experiences of, and adaptive capacity to changes resulting from displacement and rehabilitation processes are mixed and varied. Yet, these processes and policies remain largely gender-blind and insensitive to these differential gendered dimensions. Drawing upon my case studies in various contexts of dam-displaced indigenous communities in Malaysia, combined with long-standing research and experience working on indigenous peoples in Malaysia, and several countries elsewhere, this talk addresses the gender issues and gaps in displacement and resettlement processes at policy and institutional levels in Malaysia. I question some of the key assumptions of compensation and resettlement processes, and decipher how gender inequalities and gendered roles are exacerbated within the affected indigenous communities. While the resulting impacts are gendered, I also argue that other social variables and power relations shape the ways in which indigenous women, men, youths and children experience dam-displacement and wider consequences in unique ways. I conclude with a call for a refocus on gender aspects of displacement and rehabilitation processes, policy and research.



Carol Yong holds a DPhil. in development studies from the University of Sussex (UK). She has done extensive scientific work on development-induced displacement and resettlement affecting Malaysia's indigenous peoples. She conducts continuous research on indigenous peoples in Malaysia and Indonesia, and other marginalised peoples globally, from an environment, gender, and community/indigenous peoples' rights perspective. She has published widely, in both peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes, and international NGO publications, on diverse issues including resource politics and corruption, gender, disasters and development impacts, climate change and the environment. She is an independent researcher/consultant and also serves as gender advisor to Indonesian NGOs.

