

CV

Name

Dr Supriya Akerkar

Contact info

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Sept 2012- 2013

Postgraduate certificate (PG cert) Teaching in Higher Education, with Distinction; Oxford Brookes University, UK

Nov 2007- June 2011

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
(Research Group: Disaster and Development Centre)
Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK

1993-94

Master of Arts (MA) Development Studies; (86.5%)
Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands

1988-90

Bachelor of Law (LLB), Bombay University, India

Affiliations

Fellow, The Higher Education Academy, UK

Member, Gender and Disaster Network

Member, UK alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction

Work Assignments undertaken so far include a number of countries:

India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Africa, Kenya, Haiti, and UK

Key Competencies:

Professional

Applied policy evaluation and research with a focus on gender, diversity and social equity

Extensive research skills and IT proficiency

Training of trainers and staff mentoring

Applications of participatory research methods

Project development and design with a focus on gender, diversity and social equity

Leadership skills, representation at various levels: Donors and international networks

Advocacy for policy change; working with groups, communities at different levels

Academic

Post-graduate and undergraduate teaching, course design and appraisal

Research in my disciplinary area: social inclusion in development, disasters, risk reduction and humanitarian responses

Research methods expertise: quantitative and qualitative methods

Research supervision for academic degrees

Research grants/application development

Applications of PRA as a research technique

Teaching and Learning:

I have designed, teach and lead two modules for MA Development and Emergency Practice, with the Centre for Development and Emergency Practice (CENDEP) in Oxford Brookes University. They are:

1. Critical inquiry in development and emergency practice: theory and policy
2. Disasters, risks, vulnerability and climate change

Both these modules engage with critical evaluations of policies and practices in relation to disasters and development. The lectures in these modules are informed by research led teaching.

I have also taught the module: 'sociology of developing societies' to the 3rd year undergraduate students at University of Warwick, Department of Sociology (October 2011-May 2012).

I have supervised 24 MA dissertations and am currently supervising one PhD candidate on themes such as social inclusion and humanitarian response and recovery, disaster and development, disaster and resilience building, gender and social equity, leadership and culture in disaster contexts, amongst others. These studies have been undertaken in relation to different country contexts in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Research Interest and Experience:

The key thematic areas of my research interest and experience are: social inclusion, promoting gender, age, disability and diversity inclusive actions and social equity in disaster/humanitarian preparedness, response and risk reduction policies. My research publications are aligned with building evidence for policy change and advocacy in these areas.

My research is applied, inter-disciplinary and crosses boundaries between development studies, anthropology, sociology, and built environment.

The application of my research is to improve the operational policy and practice of humanitarian and disaster response and risk reduction, resilience building, embedding of the rights of socially marginalised groups thereby promoting social inclusion and equity. Promoting social justice policies are central concerns of my research.

Career History in detail:

January 2012 till date: Senior Lecturer, Disaster Risk Reduction, CENDEP, Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment, Oxford Brookes, University, UK

As the senior lecturer in disaster risk reduction, with Centre for Development and Emergency Practice (CENDEP), I have designed, lead, and teach two modules on the MA Development and Emergency Practice (DEP) degree, namely: 1) Critical inquiry in development and emergency practice (Compulsory module) and 2) Disasters, Risks, Vulnerabilities and Climate Change.

These modules engage with a range of social justice related policy issues. They include: social inclusion policies and practices in humanitarian response, famine and entitlements policies and practices, social protection policies and practices, policies for environmental refugees among others.

I also teach qualitative methods for the research methods module.

Further, I am the course leader for the MA DEP programme. My responsibilities include overall course management, maintaining standards, and quality of teaching. As such I convene and participate in various university level mechanisms developed for the same, including liaison with external examiner, student representatives, academic managers and administrators on these issues. I am also the academic advisor for the students and take overall pastoral care of the students.

My core responsibilities include thesis supervision. I have supervised 24 MA thesis so far. Further, I am also a supervisor to a PhD candidate, who is working on culture and leadership in humanitarian work in South Asia.

My other responsibilities include enterprise and research development in my disciplinary area of disaster related policies. Please see the list of the publications for the same.

I am currently the principle investigator for the research project on Age and Disability Capacity Project (ADCAP) a consortium led initiative funded by DFID in which Oxford Brookes is a research partner. My latest publication, a book (2018): Good Practice Guide: embedding inclusion of age and disability in humanitarian policy and practice, is a product of this research.

I am also a nominated member of the internally constituted REF panel within the faculty of Technology, Design and Environment. My current responsibilities include peer review of journal articles submitted by my departmental academic colleagues since 2014. I am also a member of the grants review panel and give constructive feedback on proposals developed by my colleagues for external funding. I also partake in other responsibilities within the faculty such as convening research seminars.

Oct 2011 –May 2012 Sessional lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Warwick, UK

Taught module: sociology of developing societies to 3rd year undergraduate students

In addition, I undertook other duties such as setting exam papers, assessments, marking and tutorials with the students.

Sept 2007-June 2011 Senior Researcher, Northumbria University, UK

As a senior researcher, I worked on MICRODIS project (funded by EU under FP 6) on the theme of social impacts of disasters.

As a part of the MICRODIS social impact team, I have contributed to this research in two country contexts, namely UK and India. During this time, I have worked closely with other academic universities and researchers in Asia and Europe. My research in UK focused on gendered effects of floods and mental health recovery following the Tewkesbury and Morpeth floods in UK in 2007 and 2008. This research evaluated flood response policies of the UK government.

During this time, I also completed my PhD thesis titled: "The production of rights in disasters in Uttar Pradesh, India: implications for theory and practice". My PhD thesis studies the relation between development, right based entitlement policies and disaster responses using ethnographic research methods.

Dec 2006-Sept 2007 Policy and Advocacy Leader, Action Aid International, Ethiopia

1. Lead the Action Aid Ethiopia policy team on policy research and rights based advocacy on following themes: Humanitarian Emergencies, Women's Rights, Food Security, Health and HIV, Education; and Just Governance.
2. Develop strategic policy papers on the above themes identifying rights based policy advocacy goals.
3. Training and capacity building of Action Aid staff and thematic team on research and people centred rights based policy advocacy

Nov 2005-Dec 2006 Women's Rights Advisor, Action Aid International Tsunami Response Centre, Colombo, Sri Lanka

1. On-going country reviews and evaluation of the tsunami recovery policies in the tsunami affected countries: India, Sri Lanka, Thailand; and Somalia to understand how these policies and practices affect women's rights and equity issues in tsunami response.
2. Using policy evaluations to advocate for policy change to make the tsunami response gender sensitive and inclusive of rights of marginalised social groups and women
3. Instituting and carrying out qualitative research in the tsunami affected countries on gendered impacts and women's rights of tsunami response policies.
4. Working with partners and civil society groups in the affected countries to mainstream women's human rights in tsunami response programs.
5. Training and capacity building of staff on women's rights and advocacy

Nov 2003-Dec 2006 Regional Manager, Action Aid International India, Bhubaneswar, India

During 2005-06, I had a dual responsibility: namely with Action Aid International, as the regional manager as well as women's rights advisor for tsunami response in affected south east Asian countries.

1. Leading the team to fulfil strategic goals of social equity, and institutionalizing its rights based approach in the region
- 2 Leading regional campaign advocating changes in social policies and practices to further forest land rights to tribals, food security, education for all and equitable responses to disasters in the region
3. Partnering with tribal communities for campaign for forest land law and policies to ensure access to forest land to tribals. The regional campaign was a part of the nation-wide campaign for survival and dignity initiated by the tribal groups in India. The campaign led to the passing of the forest land act in 2006 which enabled access to forest land to tribals across the country.
4. Management of funds from ECHO, commonwealth and other donors

April 2001-Nov 2003 Project Director, Action Aid International India; Gujarat earthquake and communal violence response programme

1. Leading the team on the strategic response to humanitarian situations: 2001 Gujarat earthquake, and communal violence in 2002
 2. Critical analysis of the entitlement policies of the Gujarat Government on earthquake recovery and rehabilitation; and its access to women and other socially excluded groups
 3. Working with the National Human Rights Commission, National Women's Rights Commission; Commissions of Inquiry to ensure justice to the affected persons
 4. Management of the DEC funds, and funds received from British High Commission
- Additionally, in the context of the response to communal violence, my role was to lead the team to address issues of justice, communal healing and recovery of the minorities.
5. Training of staff on rights based humanitarian advocacy

Jan 1999-March 2001 Social Development Consultant, Centre for Development Studies, University of Wales, for DFID supported Eastern India Rainfed Farming Project, India

1. Ensure that gender and social equity objectives of the project are met.
2. Provide strategic social development inputs and advice to policy and practice of the project
3. Closely work with the livelihoods and natural resource specialists in the project to ensure that technical inputs are socially sound and further objectives of gender and social equity.
4. Assessing sustainable livelihoods and natural resource management policies of the project, monitoring their implementation and changing project practice to meet social equity objectives of the project.
4. Develop social development capacities within the project.
5. Training of staff on gender and participatory development

Dec 1998-Dec 1999 Social Development Consultant, Department of International Development, (DFID), UK; for Himachal Pradesh Forestry Project, India

1. Instituting gender, equity and women's rights goals in the project policy and practice
2. Identifying the key gender, equity and women's rights issues in the policy and program
3. Undertaking a preliminary research study into women's status, livelihood security issues in the project villages identifying policies that require change to further gender and social equity
4. Strategic guidance to forest department on addressing policies of poverty reduction and social equity in the project by changing forest policy and practice.
5. Training on gender and participatory development

April 1995-Nov 1998 Research and Editorial Associate, Centre for Science and Environment, India

1. Policy research on rights of marginalised communities and women in natural resource governance in India. Policy research papers were written on following themes:
Rural poor and joint forest management in India b) Rural livelihoods and degraded land use management systems in India c) Farm forestry, poverty and equity issues in India d) UN Desertification Convention and sustainable livelihood strategies for the poor of the southern countries. E) Intergovernmental negotiations on climate change, forests and the rights of the local communities in southern countries F) People, environment, and India's political parties
Research outputs from the above have been published in the journal *Down to Earth*.
2. Using the research outputs for advocacy and lobbying for policy changes in the legal and natural resource governance systems at international and national levels to protect the rights of the poor and marginalized communities and women.
3. Participation and advocacy in UN led intergovernmental forums from environmental justice and poverty reduction perspective.
4. Writing articles for *Down to Earth*, the journal on environment and science

Oct 1992-July 1993 Gender Consultant, DFID supported Kribhco Indo-British Rainfed Farming Project

1. Helping the project team to develop an understanding of women's views and perspectives on poverty, natural resource use and management of farming systems.
2. Reviewing and adapting the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques from a gender perspective for gender sensitive project planning in the natural resource development and farming systems.
3. Developing, in consultation with the project team, the longer term approach for women's active involvement in the developmental programs.

April 1992-Sept 1992 Researcher, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India

Data collection and analysis on the project "Understanding the sexuality of women living in slums of Mumbai

Select Journal, Books and Research Publications:

Book:

- 1) Akerkar S and Bhardwaj R (2018), *Good Practice Guide: embedding inclusion of older people and people with disabilities in humanitarian policy and practice*, ADCAP, London.
Download at:
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Good%20Practice%20Guide%20ADCAP.pdf>

Journal and other research publications:

- 2) Akerkar S and Fordham M (2017), 'Gender, Place and Mental Health Recovery in Disasters: Addressing Issues of Equality and Difference', *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, vol 23, pp 218-230 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2017.03.014>)
- 3) Akerkar S, Joshi PC, Fordham M (2016) "Cultures of Entitlement and Social Protection: Evidence from Flood Prone Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, India" *World Development* vol 86, pp. 46 - 58 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2016.06.004>)
- 4) Akerkar S (2015), 'Development of a normative framework for disaster relief: learning from colonial histories in India', *Disasters*, vol 39(S2), pp.219-243.
- 5) Akerkar A, Devavaram J (2015), 'Understanding Rights Based Approach in Disasters: A case for affirming human dignity', *Hazards, Risks and Society*, Collins et al, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Oxford, UK; Waltham, USA: Elsevier.
- 6) Fordham M, Gupta, S with Akerkar S and Scarf M (2011) 'Leading resilient development: grass roots women's priorities, practices and innovations, Groots International and UNDP, <http://huairou.org/leading-resilient-development>
- 7) Akerkar S (2007) "Disaster Mitigation and furthering women's rights: Learning from the Tsunami"; in journal *Gender, Technology and Development*; vol 11 (3); see <http://gtd.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/11/3/3576>)
- 8) Akerkar S (2005) "Rights, development and democracy: a perspective from India" in *Reinventing Development: Translating Rights-Based Approaches from Theory into Practice*, Ed Gready, Paul, Ensor Jonathan,, ZED publications, UK and USA.
- 9) Thompson, K; Sundaray S; Akerkar S and Daniel U (2005) "*Bolangir to Hyderabad and the politics of poverty*" co-author, published by Action Aid International, London.
- 10) Akerkar S (2001) "*Gender and participation*", publication by Bridge, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, UK. See <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/cep-part-rep.pdf>
- 11) Akerkar (1998) "Women in panchayat" ; in journal *Down to Earth*, Vol7, No 13, Nov 30, pg 36-39.
- 12) Akerkar (1998) "Green money", in journal *Science Tech Entrepreneur*, Vol VI, No 5, Pg 20-26, Sept –Oct 1998, DST, Govt of India.

- 13) Akerkar (1998) "Money plants": the plantation companies, in journal *Down to Earth*, Vol 7, No 2 June 15 pg 34-37
- 14) Akerkar (1997) "Whose forest is it anyway?" in journal *Down to Earth* Jan 15 Vol 5, No16. Pg 37-39 New Delhi..
- 15) Akerkar S (1997) "Feminist voices" in *Seminar*, July 1997, New Delhi, Pg34-37.
- 16) Akerkar S (1997) "Women, ecology and development" in *Women's Link*, Volume 46, No3, published by Social Action Trust, New Delhi,
- 17) Akerkar (1997) "Deep disappointment, a review of Earth Summit II achievements" in journal *Down to Earth*, July 31 1997, Vol 6, No 5, Pg27-35.
- 18) Akerkar (1996) "Promises to keep, an analysis of green promises and actions of India's political parties" in journal *Down to Earth*, May 15 pg 23-48.
- 19) Akerkar (1996) "The disposal debate, analysis of World Bank funded sanitation project" in journal *Down to Earth*, July 31 1996, Vol5, Pg 20-21.
- 20) Akerkar (1995) "Global governance, the democratic way" in journal *Down to Earth*, Sept 15, Vol 4, No 8, Pg 33-38
- 21) Akerkar (1995)"Sustainability & southern perspective" in journal *Down to Earth*, July 15 1995, Vol 4, No 4 Pg 32-36, .
- 22) Akerkar S (1995)"*Theory and practice of women's movement in India: A discourse analysis*", Working Paper Series No 193, Published by Institute of Social Studies, Hague, Netherlands. The Paper is also published in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XXX, No 17, Pg WS 2-WS-23, April 1995. This can be downloaded from publishing.eur.nl/ir/repub/asset/18894/wp193.pdf.

External Examiner:

PhD External Examiner, UCL, London, May 2017, for PhD thesis titled Addressing urban inequalities through community-based disaster risk reduction: a study of responses to periodic flooding in the low income suburbs of Dakar, Senegal

PhD External Examiner, Northumbria University, February 2017 for PhD thesis titled Psychosocial Wellbeing of Adolescent Girls and Young Women After the 2005 Pakistan Earthquake

External Examiner: Validation of the MSc Emergency Planning and Management for Coventry University, UK (March 2016)

Recent conference papers and invitations as speaker:

- 1) Invited speaker on social inclusion in disasters for a public lecture and study school by University of Leicester, 26th March, 2018
- 2) Invited speaker on Disability in Humanitarian Responses, 13th March, 2018, organized by Human Rights Festival, Oxford, Oxford Brookes University, UK
- 3) Invited speaker on challenges on making invisible visible: Age and Disability Inclusion in humanitarian responses, 29th June 2016, workshop organized by CENDEP, Oxford Brookes University, in Oxford
- 4) Invited speaker on *mainstreaming gender, age and disability in humanitarian response* in Conference organised by UCL, London and Tohoku University, Japan on 23rd October 2015 in London
- 5) Invited speaker on “Gender mainstreaming of information during disasters: learning from best practices” to the Serbian Ministry on Environment and Agriculture in Belgrade on 28th May 2015, on invitation by OSCE (EU led Organisation for security and cooperation in Europe) mission to Serbia.
- 6) Invited speaker on *Trust, emergent learning and building of communities of practice: Learning from Drought and DRR in India* at the 3rd world conference in Sendai Japan, in parallel conference session hosted by University of Leicester and Kansai University, 16th March 2015
- 7) Invited speaker and facilitator for conference session on best practices in gender mainstreaming in disaster response, in Manila, Philippines 24th-25th November, 2014 on invitation by Wilton Park (foreign office of Government of UK), organised by Wilton Park and ADPC
- 8) Invited speaker on *Disasters, vulnerability reduction and rights* for the conference “Human rights in Asia”, organised by University of Essex, UK, 31st May 2012
- 9) Invited speaker on *Disaster Cultures and Human Rights in India* in the Dealing with Disasters conference co-organised by Northumbria University, Glamorgan University and Sunderland University on 23rd-24th November 2010 held at Newcastle. The presentation can be downloaded from www.northumbria.ac.uk/static/powerpoint/beppts/supriya_akerkar
- 10) Invited speaker on “*local entitlements, reciprocity and disaster recovery*” in the Asian MICRODIS conference organised at Hue, Vietnam by the Hue University on 25th-27th August 2010.
- 11) Invited speaker on “*social impacts of Tewekesbury floods*”, in the conference organised by the National Flood Forum, UK in Birmingham on 25 February 2010
- 12) Invited discussant on *Gender and Climate Change* in the conference organised by the Institute of Development Studies, UK in June 2007

Select Assignments on Social Assessments, Evaluation and Training include:

1. Team leader for mid-term review of Age and Disability Capacity Project (ADCAP) funded by OFDA and DFID, December 2015. The ADCAP project is implemented in Kenya, Pakistan and UK.
2. Development of Early Warning Information and Preparedness Strategy: Gender Dimensions; for the Serbian Ministry on Environment and Agriculture, Belgrade on

invitation by OSCE (EU led Organisation for security and cooperation in Europe) mission to Serbia, May 2015

3. Training of Trainers on Mainstreaming Gender in Disaster Risk Reduction, December 14-17, 2009, Banda Aceh, Indonesia for Aceh Government and United Nations Development Programme, "Making Aceh Safer Through Disaster Risk Reduction in Development (DRR-A)" (Maureen Fordham, Supriya Akerkar and Kristinne Sanz)
4. Midterm evaluation of social development progress in Western India livelihoods project for DFID, 2001 (David Mosse and Supriya Akerkar)
5. Qualitative monitoring & impact evaluation report on Eastern India Livelihoods Project (Shiv Kumar, Supriya Akerkar et al) Centre for Development Studies, Swansea, UK for DFID, May 2000
6. Social development assessment reports (1-15); Eastern India Rainfed Farming Project, Jan 1999- May 2001; Centre for Development Studies, University of Wales, UK for DFID
7. Social development assessment reports (1-12); Himachal Pradesh Forestry Project, India for DFID Jan-Dec 1998
8. Impact assessment of drought response for Save the Children, India; Jaipur Regional office; 1999 (Supriya Akerkar, Meenakshi Batra, Manish Kumar)

Experience with the Intergovernmental forums:

1. Participated and lobbied as a delegate representing Centre for Development and Emergency Practice, Oxford Brookes University at the IRDRR intergovernmental forum in Sendai, Japan, 2015, where Sendai Framework for Action (2015-2030) was adopted.
2. Participated and lobbied as a NGO delegate – representing Action Aid International in the meeting of African Union ministerial conference; Addis Ababa Ethiopia; May 2007 successfully lobbied for the call for inclusion of the financing of HIV response by the G-8 into the final statement of the Ministerial conference.
3. Participated and lobbied for inclusion of rights of local communities in Protected Areas as a NGO delegate in the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) assembly, New Delhi, March 1998
4. Participated and lobbied as a NGO delegate at the first Conference of Parties of UN Convention against Desertification, Rome, Nov 1997; addressed the UN official plenary session on behalf of the NGO network on "Partnership building". See <http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/enb04116e.pdf>
5. Participated and lobbied as a NGO delegate in the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (Earth Summit II), New York, June 1997; worked along with the Southern NGOs and

the Indian Delegation on the issue of forest negotiations, climate change.

Expertise in Research Methods:

Fluent in qualitative research methods: Narratives, Oral history, Ethnographic research methods, use of N vivo for qualitative analysis.

Fluent in quantitative research methods: Statistical analysis, Survey, questionnaire designing, statistical analysis; use of SPSS and Excel for quantitative analysis.

Fluent in research methodologies involving both qualitative and quantitative methods: Use of case studies, systematic reviews, meta analysis, policy analysis and evaluations

November 2007 – 2009: Undertook Training sessions on qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis; Northumbria University, Newcastle

June 2008: Undertook training on quantitative research methods at CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium. Received Certificate in APHES (10 credits) (Assessing Public Health in Emergency Situations)

28th-30th March 2010: 3 day course on Qualitative methodologies organised by Durham University, UK as a part of the ESRC supported training of PhD scholars.