



Ecomaps and Gendered Journeys: Introduction to an interactive data collection tool

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This workshop aims to engage participants in an interactive session using ecomaps exploring the gendered journeys of respondents into higher education. Eco-maps create a visual representation of important events and relationships in an individual's life (Bennett and Grant, 2016). By using eco-map (see Figure 1), we will engage our participants in a deeply reflective process that focuses on key events and people in their journey through higher education (particularly STEM fields), onto employment and into their future aspirations.

The workshop will be connected to the ESRC-funded international research project – *Gendered Journeys: the trajectories of STEM students through Higher Education and into Employment*, particularly in India, Rwanda and the UK. Participants in the workshop will:

1. Describe their relationships and life events that have supported or obstructed their journeys into higher education.
2. Identify the opportunities and challenges in accessing STEM fields (or other educational areas).
3. Develop an understanding of institutional and environmental influences they consider important in their higher education journeys.

During the workshop, the participants will be divided into small groups. First, we will ask each individual to draw a diagram of their relationship and communication patterns with family, peers, employers, and other environmental factors that have influenced their higher education journey. An example of ecomap will be provided to each group. Second, the participants will be encouraged to discuss their narratives in their groups. Third, we will bring all of the groups together and collate the important points related to the use of ecomaps in exploring the STEM and higher education journeys of individuals. Finally, our partner from India and Rwanda will share their experiences of using ecomaps during their fieldwork.