



### Panel Discussion

On

## Understanding the gap in gendering Water and Climate Science and engineering education, research and professional realm: A Glocal perspective

### Background

Gendered vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and water insecurity is well-acknowledged, yet there is a noticeable absence of comprehensive social and gendered research within the field of water and climate science (WCS). Water and climate science and engineering research is often approached with a dominant focus on core physical sciences, incorporating other disciplines merely through multidisciplinary (a variety of disciplines but clearly separated) and only narrow interdisciplinarity between similar and related disciplines. Notably, social and gender theories, rooted in social science and humanities, often face challenges in seamlessly integrating into STEM education and research. The objective of the panel discussion is to explore the factors hindering interdisciplinary and gendered research in water and climate science and engineering. It seeks to determine whether these constraints arise from traditional gender-related challenges persisting in STEM higher education, the absence of institutional support for interdisciplinary curricula, the shortage of trainers with interdisciplinary backgrounds, a lack of industry demand, or the deficiency in training on intersectionality and gender analysis in WCS research.

### Host

**Dr. Sreenita Mondal**

Regional Research Lead

Gendering Water and Climate Science Research in South Asia



### Discussant & Moderator

**Dr. Anushiya Shrestha**

Research Director

South Asian Institute of Advanced Studies



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### Project Contact information

**Mr. Robert Dongol**, Associate Professor, Nepal Engineering College

Co-PI, Gendering Water and Climate Science Research in South Asia

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**For more info-** <https://idrc-crdi.ca/en/project/gendering-water-and-climate-science-research-south-asia>





## Programme Details:

Date: 05 February 2024  
Time: 02:30 pm - 5:00 pm  
Venue: Stupa Conference Hall, Manaslu Hotel, Lajimpat, Kathmandu

## Session format

1. This session will begin with presentations by each panelist (approx. 10-12 minutes each/5-7 Slides) outlining important emerging issues related to the topic as outlined above.
2. After these presentations, there will be round-table dialogues to look more closely at these issues for 25-30 minutes. These dialogues will seek to draw together evidence from the practices of those in the room, to advance our understanding of the issues and identify potential ways forward.
3. The session will conclude with a summary of the discussion. We aim to ensure gender balance in representation.

## Expected outcome

This session will provide a platform for the policy shapers including academicians, researchers, government officials, and practitioners to discuss their views on narrowing the gender disparity in STEM education and professions in general and within the Water and Climate Science sector in particular in Nepal.

Additionally, the outcomes of this session will include a brief that enhances scholarly discussions and adds to the existing literature on gender gaps in WCS education, research, and careers, particularly within the Nepalese context.

## Session Plan:

### 2:30 – 2:40 PM NPT

Welcome address by Dr Sreenita Mondal

- A short presentation about the project
- Introduce the panelists and discussant

The discussant Dr. Anushiya Shrestha will explain the format of the discussion.



**Panelist:**

**Prof. Peter P Mollinga**

Senior Fellow,  
Center for Development Research (ZEF),  
Former Professor (SOAS)



**2:40 – 2:50 PM NPT**

**1. *The global context of gendering STEM education with a focus on Water and Climate Science.***

- The gender imbalance in the STEM field: is this a problem specific to South Asia, or of the global south?
- how is this issue being addressed elsewhere and is there a demand for inter-disciplinary water professionals/ is it changing?

**2:50 – 3:00 PM NPT**

**2. *Need and Approaches to incorporating gender perspectives into WCS research***

- What was the trigger for you to author the proposal in connection with which the current workshop is happening?
- What kind of results do you anticipate from the project?

**Panelist:**

**Ms. Shreya Chakraborty**

Researcher,  
Climate Change Policy and Adaptation,  
IWMI, India



**Panelist:**

**Dr. Vishnu Prasad Pandey.**

Professor (Water Resources)  
Institute of Engineering, Nepal



**3:00 – 3:10 PM NPT**

**3. *Prospects for Integration GESI into WCS Curriculum***

- Do you see a potential for reforming current curricula in your institute/ department to better reflect concerns of gender and social inclusion in water and climate science?
- What do you see as the important barriers to integrating gender and social inclusion in water and climate curricula? How can they be overcome?

**3:10 – 3:20 PM NPT**

**4. *Gendered Challenges in the Field of water and climate science***

- As an alumna of the SAWA Programme, what was your experience as a woman water professional?
- How did the programme equip you to operate as a professional in the water world? what were your challenges?
- Do you think that there is a demand for interdisciplinary water and climate professionals? If yes, where is such a demand located? If not, how can such a demand be created?

**Panelist:**

**Ms. Beena Raj Khannal**

SAWA Alumna &  
Vice chair, Women in Science and  
Engineering (WISE) Nepal



**Panelist:**

**Ms. Pramila Devi Bajracharya**

Secretary, Ministry of Education,  
Science and Technology, Nepal



**3:20 – 3:30 PM NPT**

**5. Gendering STEM education in Nepal**

- The gender imbalance in the STEM field in Nepal
- How is the issue being addressed by the ministry in Nepal?
- Do you see any changes in the last 2 decades in terms of reducing gender gaps in higher education in the STEM fields?

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**Tea Break**

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**4:00 – 4:20 PM NPT**

**6. Gendered Challenges in the STEM jobs in the field of water and climate science in Nepal**

- What are your views on the gendered challenges faced by women in the Water Sector (in terms of recruitment, promotion, or leadership positions) especially in STEM jobs?
- Do you think there are unique challenges for female professionals in the WCS sector, compared to males in the same position?
- Do you think that there is a demand for interdisciplinary water and climate professionals in your ministry?
- Does the ministry follow any GESI policy?

**Panelists:**

**1. Dr. Rajan Bhattarai:**

Deputy Director General,  
Department of Hydrology &  
Meteorology,  
Nepal



**2. Mr. Hari Bahadur Thapa**

Under Secretary,  
Ministry of Water Resources and  
Irrigation



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**4:20 – 5:00 PM NPT**

**Q & A Session**

Discussion and Summary

( recommendations, opportunities, challenges, and ideas for the way forward)

**Closing Remarks.**

