

A Report On

The climate change challenges: Any Road Map for Gender Responsive Climate Action



By: SathSathai

Kathmandu, Nepal

Introduction:

The impacts of climate change on different sectors of society are interrelated. Drought can harm food production and human health. Flooding can lead to disease spread and damages to ecosystems and infrastructure. Human health issues can increase mortality, impact food availability, and limit worker productivity. Climate change impacts are seen throughout every aspect of the world we live in. Worryingly, women, marginalized and other vulnerable groups of the society are at forefront of such impacts. So, there is an urgent need of gender sensitive climate action in adaptation, mitigation and climate security. The government has come up with slew of measures to address those issues but those efforts fall short of addressing those issues. On the one hand, there is a need to sensitize this issue among politicians and policy makers, on the other, this needs to be highlighted in the international level. In this context, COP28 is taking place in November in UAE, and Nepal is doing homework to raise these issues in the international platforms. So, it is a high-time to deliberate the issue and provide suggestions to the stakeholders about the agenda that Nepal should highlight in the COP 28. Considering the sense of urgency, Sath Sathai, a women-focused non-profit organization founded in November 2021, in association with Ministry of Forest and Environment, UN Women and K2K Belt, organized a one-day conference titled *'The climate change challenges: Any roadmap for gender responsive climate action,'* bringing ministers, politicians, experts, leaders of civil society among others together. Our special thanks to UAE Embassy in Kathmandu for all support and encouragement.

Sathsathai believes in women's participation in climate advocacy and action, nature conservation, tourism promotion, and achieving meaningful representation of women in the country-to-global sustainable development agenda.

It encourages women to initiate leadership for different activities, including through travel and targeted campaigns, by coming out of their comfort zones and inspiring others to do the same. It is why Sathsathai focuses its programs/activities on targeting strong, dynamic, and charismatic women who rise above the conventional norm and set new standards of their own.

Objectives of the Conference

Following were the objective of the one-day climate conference:

- To highlight the key agenda that Nepal needs to raise in COP 28
- To discuss the gender responsive climate action and impact of climate change on vulnerable groups
- To discuss about the loss and damage and climate finance in Nepal's context

About the program:



The program was held at Basera Boutique Hotel, Babarmahal with more than 180 participants.

The 5-hour program started at 2 PM and lasted at 7 PM followed by dinner.

The chief guest of the program was Birendra Prasad Mahato, Minister for Forest and Environment and other high-level guests were National Planning Commission member Dr. Prabhu Budathoki, National Assembly Member Bomana Rai Poudyal, Press Council Nepal Chairperson BalKrishna Basnet and Patricia Fernandez-Pacheco, Country Representative, UN Women and other high-level dignitaries were present in the program.



The program moved forward with the opening remarks from the chairperson of Sath Sathai, Ms. Prajeeta Karki. She started her speech with the quote by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, “The era of global warming has ended and the era of global boiling has arrived.” Karki extended the warm welcome to the guests and set stage highlighting the key environmental issues such as forest fires, drought among others. After expressing her gratitude to the guests she then highlighted the topics for the upcoming presentations and conference. The program was divided into three parts: opening session, conference session, Panel discussions and closing session. The seminar was inclusive as it saw the representation from diverse groups of the society. The program itself was designed to ensure the inclusive representation. The list of participants, photos, program schedule and program concept are included in the annex section.

Speeches and presentations

This section presents the speeches and presentations made by high-level guests in the program in their own words.

Dr. Birendra Prasad Mahato (Minister of Forest and Environment)

Birendra Prasad Mahato, Minister for Forest and Environment was the chief guest of the program. He made his speech highlighting the preparations made by government to attend COP 28 meeting.



The most affected groups by climate change are the women, children, and youth themselves. In rural settings, men work in industries or foreign countries whereas women are more oriented toward household work and looking after the children. In the agriculture sector, we see the involvement of women more than others and are thus closest to nature. This makes them more affected by the adverse effects of climate change. Even though the issue of climate change has been prevalent throughout the years, progressive change is seen more now than ever because of the youth's and women's involvement. Climate change related data and research are very less in Nepal. We have many delegates going to the UN Climate Change Conference of the

Parties (COP) in all these years. However, due to the lack of necessary data to claim the aftermath of climate change in Nepal, we have not been able to get as much funding as possible. Progressive change should be made in research areas so we can deal with the climate crisis as soon as possible. Pollution has been a big contributing factor to climate change. Rather than focusing on huge events, the first priority should be given to minimizing the day-to-day carbon emissions. Secondly, investments should be made in scientific and social research. The time is very limited so we should carry out the actions as soon as possible. As change always comes from within one individual, he/she must bring forth the change from within and it will eventually create a greater change.

Patricia Fernandez - Pacheco (UN Women Country Representative to Nepal)

Patricia Fernandez - Pacheco, UN Women Country Representative to Nepal, delivered her speech focusing in how climate change exacerbates the existing intercepting inequalities. Here is the full-text of her speech:



Global Climate Risk Index 2021 states that Nepal is in 10th rank to be affected by the impacts of weather-related losses. Climate change exacerbates the existing intercepting inequalities in society like age, gender, caste, and sexual identity. Marginalized groups including women and girls are more affected by climate change. Women are told to be responsible for household tasks like cooking, cleaning, and

resource collection but oftentimes these groups are excluded from the decision-making process. This results in their limitation to better their livelihood and environmental situation. Voices are powerful agents of change. Women have first-hand experience in handling real-life adaptation and integration. Their access to reliable and clean energy sources benefits can preserve their human capital and thus improve their quality of life both in these gender burdens and reduce carbon emissions. Gender-based violence like sexual violence and abuse can be seen especially after natural disasters. This can be linked to the increasing effect of climate change and its effect on women and girls. Even though there are plans and policies made, they cannot be carried out efficiently without the help of women.

Sama Shrestha (Program Specialist, UN Women)

Sama Shrestha, a program specialist at UN Women stated that Nepal is the most vulnerable country to be affected by climate change. Her theme was: ***Gender Responsive Climate Action – Priorities and Actions***

Here is the summary of her speech.



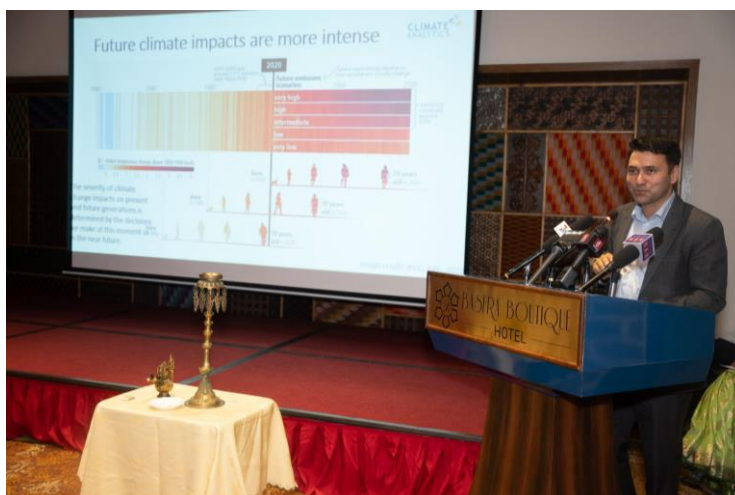
Nepal is the most vulnerable country to be affected by climate change. In the coming years, Nepal is facing many natural disasters like floods, droughts, and landslides.

‘Gaas, Baas, Kapas’ is the basic right of every human being. However, climate change

is targeting the absolute needs of humans like food, water, air, health, and housing. Climate crisis affects all but vulnerable groups are affected more as they face inequality, poverty, and violence. As a result, gender and social inclusion need to be talked about when talking about climate change. When initiating plans like NAPA and LAPA, budget and targeted activities need to be planned well so the marginalized community does not face many harsh challenges. The plans and policies should be made through a socially and gender-inclusive lens to get a better understanding of the situation. The technologies should also be user-friendly and energy-friendly. Half of the population are vulnerable groups and they are the ones to face the climate crisis at the forefront level. UN Women has contributed to making a climate smart village through gender action and empowering women-run, youth-run, and LGBTQIA+-run organizations to make climate change more gender inclusive than ever. These vulnerable groups should be put in many awareness programs related to climate change to create a better climate for the future. Major decisions should be made in the decision-making process and it should be made now so the effects will be less severe.

Manjeet Dhakal (Climate Change expert)

Manjeet Dhakal, climate change expert shed light on the various aspects of the climate change. His theme was: *The Climate Change Challenges: where are we with the loss and damage issue?*



IPCC states the temperature in the coming years will be increasing at a very high rate. This shows that the actions regarding climate change must be taken now otherwise climate change cannot be reversible if we delay the actions any longer. To improve the climate of the world, the focus should be given to the reduction of carbon emissions, and less energy consumption, and should depend on renewable energy. The less we consume the energy, the loss and damage will also be less. But in the current scenario, many developed countries have been using energy in huge amounts resulting in a huge energy consumption. That makes the countries that are more prone to the damages of climate change face lots of loss and damage in the climate. Powerful countries prioritized the development aspect only and disregarded the climate situation when compared. Due to the decision they made, the whole world is the one to face all the challenges and hardships. Loss and damage are considered as the situations that are very hard to get out of which require more manpower and budget. The effects of climate change are categorized as slow and steady events like the melting of ice, drying of land, and extreme events like floods, and droughts. People usually focus on extreme events but slow and steady events should also be focused. According to science, the effects of climate change can be minimized but it cannot be reduced to zero. In Egypt, the loss and damage course is planned to be carried out by 2023, the budget will be taken by developed countries as well as the airline sector. The discussions have not come to any conclusion making it hard to carry out the plans for climate crisis. In Nepal, life-threatening issues are being seen more frequently. The data and research have not been collected making it hard to know the actual loss dealt with. So, the plans and policies should be made while also focusing the the stakeholders, and research committee.

Dr. Buddhi Sagar Poudel (Joint Secretary Ministry of Forest and Environment)

Buddhi Sagar Poudel, head of Climate Change Division at Ministry of Forest and Environment highlighted the Nepal's preparations for the COP 28 and other issues. His theme was : *Climate Change Policy: what next?* Here are the key points of his speech:



Nepal has been formally engaged internationally with the issue of climate change past 30 years. There are further developments and changes to be made but in these past 10 years, Nepal has been actively and progressively contributing to better climate change. Various policies like The National Adaptation Plan (NAP), National Change Policy, National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), and so on. While carrying out these policies, we became certain that climate change will severely impact Nepal and thus we should get help and grants to carry out all the policies.

Major three forums are made are:

- *Net zero carbon emission by 2045.*
- *Adapt to capacity and resilience and minimize vulnerability by 2030*
- *Nature-based solutions and 45% forest coverage in Nepal*

Policies of the Ministry of Forest and Environment talk about important sectors like food, security, and tourism. health that are majorly affected by the climate crisis. They have also made policy regarding the green approach being followed by many development sectors.

Nepal's NDC has been counted as a gender inclusive. Nepal has submitted its second

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in December 2020.

Dibya Gurung (Manager of the Naya Srijanshil Cooperatives)

Dibya Gurung, Climate Activist and Manager of the Naya Srijanshil Cooperative spoke about the various aspects of climate change. Her theme was: *Gender-based vulnerability to climate change. Here are the major points made by her.*



Women are seen as playing a critical role in climate change. Women are also in charge of the conventional everyday domestic tasks like food preparation, water supply for the home, and energy for heating. In contrast, if women have to go further to obtain items, these jobs are expected to become longer and more challenging as the effects of climate change worsen. This proves to be an extra source of stress for women, increasing their vulnerability to health problems and illnesses and, consequently, their risk of health risks and illnesses. Additionally, women are always busy with small tasks that are deemed unworthy. Due to this business, women are not able to actively participate in decision making process, and even if they are able to sometimes they are discouraged from participating. While we've seen notable progress in recent years, it's crucial to acknowledge that this progress hasn't been uniform across all aspects of society. The participation and inclusion of women in decision-making processes remain uneven, and there is still much ground to cover. It's imperative that we focus on

addressing these disparities and ensuring that no woman is left behind. Special attention should be directed towards the more vulnerable segments of the female population. This includes women from marginalized communities, those facing economic hardships, and those living in environmentally vulnerable regions. Empowering these women is not just a matter of gender equality but also a vital step towards building a more resilient and sustainable world. By working together, we can create a more equitable, inclusive, and environmentally conscious world for generations to come.

Raju Pandit (Global Fund Expert)

Raju Pandit Chhetri spoke about the climate change and climate justice. His theme was:

Global Climate Fund: Where are we with the Climate Finance? Here are the major points made by him.



Climate finance indeed plays a pivotal role as a tool for addressing the profound challenges posed by climate change. However, true climate justice cannot be achieved without embedding sustainability at its core. As we approach COP negotiations, it becomes evident that the negotiation process must prioritize the sustainability of climate finance mechanisms. Nepal, like many other vulnerable nations, is more impacted than impacting in the climate change equation. It is not only our right but a necessity to receive adequate funds from developed countries, along with the requisite infrastructure, facilities, and programs, to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate

change. The challenge arises when these financial resources are allocated. Nepal, like many other developing countries, faces hurdles in crafting effective plans and policies due to limited resources and capacity. Given the country's limited resources and infrastructure, international collaboration and support are vital. However, building the local capacity to effectively manage and utilize these funds is equally essential. Therefore, a balanced approach that leverages international expertise while strengthening national capabilities is crucial for ensuring that climate finance leads to sustainable outcomes for Nepal and other vulnerable nations.

Panel Discussion: Women, Youth and Climate Change: Risks and Hopes



After the presentation of papers by experts, a panel discussion on Women Youth and Climate Change: Risks and Hopes was initiated. Climate change activist Sarita Shree Gyawali moderated the sessions and Panelist were Sonam Lama, Deepika Das, Shreya K.C, Apsara Lamichhane, Umesh Pradhan Magar. With the feeling of motherhood in mind, she expressed that climate change is a major problem and gender responsive climate action is close to her heart. She also lightened the atmosphere by saying that during the past times, grandparents left monetary resources for their offspring, she might not be able to do so but she surely wants to give her children a clean earth. With this feeling of maternity and a responsible climate change activist, she started with the questions.

Deepika Das, Gender Responsive Agriculture Researcher

Moderator: As a media person it is our responsibility to aware people. We have been saying women, indigenous community, children, marginalized groups are vulnerable time and again. Should not climate change affect everyone equally? As a PhD student you have been researching the same, why are the above mentioned groups particularly affected more?

When we say that women are vulnerable to climate change, she thinks we should see the situation at our own homes first. The power dynamics in the households makes the women stand a little behind. Even in the indigenous and marginalized groups, a male member is leading the group. However, all the meticulous work is done by the women. These women are more dependent on the natural resources which are directly linked to climate change. So any amount of change in the climate directly impacts them the most.

Moderator: Indigenous people are affected by climate change. What can be done for the indigenous women to make their lives easier? As someone who has studied and researched in the terai region, what can be done? What are the solutions? How can they help the country?

The panelist straight went to the answer and stated that we first need to identify their weaknesses and access. Their less access to technology is one of the major problems. Migration is one leading cause of the problem. Even though the country is getting rich through remittance, our villages are being empty. To build a resilient community from the shock of climate change, we should focus on access. Giving them access and control of it empowers the indigenous communities. We also need to include them and bring more personal examples so that they learn from it.

Sonam Lama, Climate Journalist

Moderator: You have been working in the community for the past many years. How aware do you think Nepali people are about climate change?

Talking about climate change, the panelist divided the citizens into two groups. First the citizens from urban areas and the other being the citizens of rural areas. The people in the urban area are aware about the issues in the present day scenario. They are also introduced to organisations, and materials they can use for the betterment of the climate. Having worked with people from the rural areas, they are the guardians of the environment but they lack awareness about climate change. Bajura is a drought stricken district, this has caused major

health issues for the children as well as the adults. There is a huge gap in the level of awareness between these people and the people from urban areas.

You mentioned a gap between the citizens. Looking from the lens of a journalist, how can we minimize this gap?

Looking at the data of last year by FNJ, there are 18% women journalists out of which 8 % are in high positions. The history of the media started in 1851. It took a century before women were allowed in this field. Comparing this record with the present record, we cannot see progress. Journalism is a very big tool. It is important for the news to come through the media. When we talk about climate change we should not forget climate resilience. Our strengths should be realized and our weaknesses should be minimized. We now have a solution journalism network. This works on not only highlighting the problem but also finding its solution. She said that it is high time journalists start focusing on bringing forward more positive news.

Shreya K.C, Climate Activist

Moderator: We hear the word women empowerment a lot. We also hear that empowerment of women is the solution for climate change. How is that possible?

The panelist started her answer with a short exercise. She asked everyone to stand up, close their eyes and imagine the time after 30 years where we have achieved climate justice. What is the role of women and youth for that? She then stated that whatever we have been listening to is a prejudice we have made in our mind. As it is our imagination we can change it. She then expressed that her interest in climate justice is because of hope. A hope that we will achieve climate justice and nature will be back to its true essence. Coming back to the question, K.C stated that women empowerment is essential for climate action. Their empowerment brings solutions for climate issues. It is the first step. We cannot ignore the climate crisis anymore. We also cannot expect that people with individual problems will advocate for climate change. Inclusivity of women in decision making also helps us find problems. She gave an example of sustainable empowerment; you go to a village and give them a fish. They will eat it for two

days. But if you teach them fishing, they will eat throughout their life. Focusing on this sustainable empowerment she advised the use of the term “climate change leaders” instead of victims of climate change.

Previously you made us close our eyes and imagine a world. What did you imagine? What kind of earth will the upcoming generation receive?

As a local of the mountainous regions of Nepal, she expressed concerns over the climate change affecting predominantly the glacial lakes and mountains and the threats possessed to the indigenous people of the region. The high risk of outburst floods has put the locals of the areas in great vulnerability and risk. The youths shouldn't be watching all this from afar, by stepping into the matter themselves, they not only provide aid to the entirety of the situation but also attract other individuals to join the cause. The group of people already marginalized and discriminated against in society seem to be at even greater threat and long term vulnerability when it comes to consequences of natural disasters.

The lack of awareness in the youths regarding climate change can not necessarily be attributed to only them, but the fault lies in the government as well. Inclusion of climate change, human contributions to it, its severities and consequences, and other related topics in the school curriculums from early on can greatly influence the awareness levels throughout the nation. Further, in the current state of affairs, a big chunk of the politicians and political leaders need to be made aware about the dimensions of the problems caused by climate change and the demographics under the risk in order to expect any sort of constitutional provisions to be put in place. Capacity building, empowerment and education directed towards youths and especially women can lead to long term positive impacts. The provision of resources and finances to marginalized communities as well as third world countries who are at a greater risk of facing the overall consequences of climate change is a requirement in present time.

Apsara Lamichhane, Deputy Chairperson of Helambu Rural Municipality

So many rules are made. But as long as we don't implement it, it doesn't bring the desired change. We got to know about the natural calamities in the past and recently I heard that a school was flooded out. As a title holder in the district office, the netizens will surely complain to you. What are the plans for the future if such problems are to arise again? Are there any risk mitigating plans? The flood of 2078 Ashad, brought immense disruption to the district, which was brought into attention through social media and news media outlets. This flood proved that the rules were only in the written and lacked its practice. This year we have started a climate justice program, also a climate act which might be the first in Nepal. Additionally, the locals are opting to gain self-sufficiency and independence for the future, aided by empowerment programs from the local government, focusing especially on agricultural and tourism development. It was observed that both directly and indirectly, women were affected even more by the immediate and long-term consequences of the disaster. The speaker addressed the need for women empowerment and additions of legal provisions pertaining to women which can greatly minimise complications brought upon by unforeseen situations like such.

Is the municipality ready if any natural disasters are to occur?

After the flood of 2078 BS, we conducted various training sessions. The municipality is now working on saving the water resources and to do so they have also separated the budget for it. The rivers in the Helambu district have been drying. This is a result of climate change; it is a crisis. She stated that they have been working with communities one at a time to tackle the aforementioned problems. She also said that these workshops/sessions can be an example for other districts as well.

Umesh Pradhan Magar, Youth Climate Activist

Whenever we talk about climate change, we involve youths. Why is it that we do so?

About 1.3 billion people of the total world population are youths. 85% of this number of youths are from developmental countries. Talking about Nepal itself, Magar expressed that climate change will be a bigger problem in the future. As the youth are the future, it is normal for us to link climate and youth. The panellist conveyed his worry that the ones affected in the global boiling are the youths. The other group that will be affected by this is people with disabilities. They do not have access to the resources to eliminate climate change.

Previously you mentioned that we, youths, are the one boiling. What are the things that the youths have been forgetting? And in the coming future, what are the steps that you will suggest?

Magar voiced that advocacy is very important. He gave examples on how we should advocate about the things that are and aren't useful to us. Advocacy should also be done in time. The second thing is migration. Brain drain is a major problem. If we create local level opportunities, youth engagement will be high solving this outmigration. Similarly, youths should also be given access to resources. Giving the example of Helambu District, he explained the importance of access, be it to natural resources or resources needed for better lifestyle. Education is of utmost importance for youths. The education system should start teaching climate change from the primary level. The more the youths are educated, the higher the chance of getting climate justice. All these things add together to build capacity development. We have been talking about these things for the past 2-3 years. As the youths of developing countries are more affected, the government must work on providing different facilities for them. When they are given access, capacities are developed. These will be the solutions we are looking for.

Closing session

Mrs. Indira Ranamagar, deputy speaker at House of Representative provided the closing remarks of the seminar. She reminisced about the time she spent with underprivileged women of Solukhumbu districts and also reported the problems the women seemed to be facing like wage issues, inflation, lack of food security, etc. Furthermore, she recollected the various impacts of climate change in such mountainous areas like irregularity in snowfall and precipitation, agriculture and food insecurity, drying of water sources, etc. She also recounted her visits to Terai and her observations of the problems prevalent there, such as shortage of food in various areas as well as large prevalence of malnutrition in children.



The deputy speaker also recognized the crucial importance of youth in minimizing the impacts of climate change and in prevention of consequences and complications. She recognized youth as the power required to begin the initiative of change in the issue of climate change, and the energy and time possessed by the youths to start and spread the awareness and education regarding climate change and its consequences as compared to other age groups. She also encouraged the fusion of youth labor as well as digital and modern technology to enhance the efforts towards minimizing climate change. She further highlighted many assets that our

country possesses like religions that worship nature and especially trees, biodiversity and geodiversity, unity in diversity and harmony amongst the people, etc.



She opined that we will surely be able to overcome climate change if we have our hearts in the right place. The session officially closed with the vote of thanks by Dr. Sidhartha Bajracharya who acknowledged the diversity in the gathering and congratulated the program team for tackling a dynamic issue, covering areas like science and technology, current affairs, states of loss and damages by natural disasters and so on.

The key takes away of the seminar

- Climate change exacerbates the existing intersecting inequalities in society like age, gender, caste, and sexual identity. Marginalized groups including women and girls are more affected by climate change
- Climate crisis affects all but vulnerable groups are affected more as they face inequality, poverty, and violence. As a result, gender and social inclusion need to be talked about when talking about climate change.
- In Nepal, life-threatening issues are being seen more frequently. The data and research have not been collected making it hard to know the actual loss dealt with. So, the plans and policies should be made while also focusing the stakeholders, and research committee.
- Due to the lack of necessary data to claim the aftermath of climate change in Nepal, we have not been able to get as much funding as possible.
- Special attention should be directed towards the more vulnerable segments of the female population. This includes women from marginalized communities, those facing economic hardships, and those living in environmentally vulnerable regions
- . Nepal, like many other vulnerable nations, is more impacted than impacting in the climate change equation. It is not only our right but a necessity to receive adequate funds from developed countries, along with the requisite infrastructure, facilities, and programs, to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.
- The lack of awareness in the youths regarding climate change can not necessarily be attributed to only them, but the fault lies in the government as well

Recommendations for the future seminars

On the basis of this seminar following recommendations are made for the future conference

- There is a need of a more focused discussions on the impact of climate change on marginalized communities including women
- Similar conferences should be organized in the local level where impact of climate change is more vulnerable
- Seminars should be organized to inform and education the politicians about the issues related to climate change
- Specific programs should be organized targeting the youth wings of major parties
- There is a need of a specific program targeting the women lawmakers of both House of Representative and National Assembly

Thank You.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Photos























S.N	Name of Participants	Gender F/M	Age	Disability	Designation/ Organization	Contact/Phone	Email	S
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Annex 3- Program Schedule



Sath Sathai Foundation

The Climate Change Challenges: Any Road Map for Gender Responsive Climate Action?

CLIMATE CONFERENCE

**Venue: Basera Boutique Hotel, Babarmahal
Friday, 1 September, 2023**

01:30	Tea and Registration
1:55	National Anthem
<u>OPENING SESSION</u>	
02:00 pm	Welcome Remarks by Ms. Prajeeta Karki, Chairperson, SathSathai
02:10 pm	Opening of the seminar by the Chief Guest, Dr. Birendra Prasad Mahato, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Forests and Environment
02:20 pm	Special Remarks by Ms. Patricia Fernandez-Pacheco, Country Representative, UN Women, Nepal

<u>CONFERENCE SESSION</u>		
UAE Video Presentation		
02:30 pm	The Climate Change Challenges: where are we with the loss and damage issue?	Mr. Manjit Dhakal
2:50 pm	Gender Responsive Climate Action – Priorities and Actions	Ms. Sama Shrestha
03:10 pm	Gender-based vulnerability to climate change	Ms. Dibya Gurung
03:25 pm	Climate Change Policy: what next?	Dr. Buddhi Sagar Poudel

03:40 pm	Global Climate Fund: Where are we with the Climate Finance?	Mr. Raju Pandit
4:05pm	Inaugural Speech by the Chief Guest, Dr. Birendra Prasad Mahato, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Forests and Environment	Ministry of Forest and Environment
04:15 pm	Networking Break	

<u>PANEL DISCUSSION</u>	
04:15 pm - 5:05 pm	<p>Women, Youth and Climate Change: Risks and Hopes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shreya K C, Socio-Climate Justice Activist 2. Dipika Das, Gender in Agriculture Researcher 3. Sonam Lama Hyolmo, Journalist 4. Apsara Lamichane (vice chairperson) Helambu Rural Municipality 5. Umesh Bala Magar, Yourth Climate Activist <p>Moderated By: Ms Sarita Shree Gyawali</p>

<u>CLOSING SESSION</u>	
05:15 pm	Remarks by Hon. Dr Prabhu Budhathoki
5:25	Closing Remarks by Honourable, Indira Ranamagar, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives
05:30 pm	Vote of thanks by Dr. Siddhartha Bajra Bajracharya
05:35 Onwards	Reception followed by dinner

Annex 4- Program Concept

“WOMEN UNITED FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE”

The Climate Change Challenges: Any Road Map for Gender Responsive Climate Action?



Prepared By
Siddhartha Bajra Bajracharya, PhD for
Sathsathai Foundation

August 2023

Background of the Organization

Sathsathai Foundation is a women-focused non-profit organization established in November 2021 with the aim to develop women's leadership by challenging conventional belief systems and addressing the prevailing economic and socio-cultural barriers that inadvertently marginalize and discriminate against women. Sathsathai believes in fostering women's leadership in climate advocacy and action, nature conservation, tourism promotion, and achieving meaningful representation of women in the national-to-global sustainable development agenda. It encourages women to step out of their comfort zones and inspire others to take on leadership roles in various climate and environmental justice activities. This is why Sathsathai focuses its programs and activities on empowering strong, dynamic, and charismatic women who break free from conventional norms and are willing to set new standards of their own.

In its efforts to highlight the differential impacts of climate change on women, the Sathsathai Foundation raised women's voices from Kalapatthar, Everest region, on 8th March 2022 with the slogan "Women United for Climate Justice" to mark International Women's Day. On the eve of the event, 40 women representing diverse professional backgrounds embarked on a trek to Kalapatthar in the Everest region of Nepal as ambassadors of climate justice. The trek encompassed the high mountain ecological, cultural, and social settings, providing participants with an opportunity to witness the effects of climate change in the Himalayas, the climate hotspots, and its impact on the life and livelihood of communities residing in this environment.

Recognizing the fundamental gender dimension of climate change impacts and the urgency to address climate-related challenges, the Sathsathai Foundation firmly believes in the need for active and meaningful participation of women and youth in the upcoming national-level climate conference. Women and youth play pivotal roles in climate advocacy and action, and their inclusion is crucial to achieve sustainable and equitable solutions. In the context of Nepal, where the effects of climate change are acutely felt due to the rapid warming of the Himalayan mountains, women, in particular, face disproportionate risks and vulnerabilities due to existing social inequalities. Therefore, empowering and engaging women and youth in climate justice activities can not only enhance resilience but also foster innovative approaches to address climate-related issues and promote sustainable development. The Sathsathai Foundation aims to create a platform for diverse perspectives, including those of strong, dynamic, and charismatic women leaders who have risen above conventional norms, inspiring and leading climate action initiatives. By encouraging inclusive participation, the conference seeks to explore new avenues for climate finance, community adaptation, and policy insights that can benefit both people and the planet, forging a path towards a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

Context

Globally, the severity of climate change is on the rise, and Nepal is no exception. Studies have established the fact that the Himalayan mountains are warming between 0.3 - 0.7°C faster than the global average, causing glaciers to shrink at alarming rates, snowlines to recede, and increasing the risks of floods from the expansion of glacial lakes. Extreme weather events have become increasingly common in the mountains, threatening food security and basic livelihoods, while disaster preparedness and community adaptation capacities remain inadequate.

Climate change impacts are not gender-neutral. The risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change have a fundamental gender dimension, affecting men and women differently, with profound adverse effects on women due to existing social inequalities. Children, women, and the poor are more disproportionately affected, reinforcing and exacerbating existing gender and social inequalities. The risk factors are even more critical when considering gender intersectionality. Furthermore, already struggling with limited resources, poverty, and lack of opportunities, climate change is exacerbating existing inequalities among places and peoples. Therefore, solving the climate crisis will require new ways of doing business and allocating resources that can benefit both people and the planet.

The Conference

The foundation is planning to organize a national-level climate conference titled "**The Climate Change Challenges: Any Road Map for Gender Responsive Action?**". The conference will provide important insights from national-level experts on the critical issue of climate change and climate justice, drawing from various perspectives and disciplines. It will facilitate discussions and debates on climate change challenges and opportunities in our context, loss and damage issues, implications on vulnerable communities including youth and women, as well as important policy insights on the issue and exploration of climate finance opportunities. The conference is being organized in collaboration with the Government of Nepal.

A special dedicated panel discussion on youth and women with the title '**Women, Youth and Climate Change: Risks and Hopes**' will also be organized. Youth can play a key role in tackling climate change and empowering youth in climate change could take adaptation and mitigation actions. This will also help to enhance effective participation of youth in climate change and could be a valuable contributor to climate actions. Similarly, women experience the greatest impacts of climate change, which increases existing gender inequalities and poses unique threats to their livelihoods, health, and safety. The rural women of Nepal whose livelihoods depend on agriculture and natural resources are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events, droughts, floods and temperature rise. The panel discussion will bring up many pertinent issue related to youth, women and climate change.

Outcomes

The conference aims to achieve the following key outcomes:

- An outline of a roadmap for gender responsive climate action, which includes technological and nature-based solutions,
- Opportunities for climate finance and financing mechanisms,
- National climate change policy insights, and
- Explore hopes and risks to women and youth from on-going global debate and climate actions.