

NACA NEWSFLASH

News and Events for the Friends of NACA

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Thank you!



On behalf of the 2023 NACA Conference Committee, we would like to sincerely thank everyone who joined and supported us to make our very first hybrid conference held in Phoenix, Arizona on April 14-15 a great success. We are so grateful that you were able to participate in the conference either onsite in sunny Arizona or virtually and be part of the enlightening and engaging sessions and panel discussions. With 15 sessions and 52 presenters, the conference showcased some of the most brilliant minds from Nepal, the Nepali diaspora, and Nepali-focused research. The conference was attended by 77 registered participants and several hundred via our livestream feeds on social media. The meaningful scholarly discussions and interactions during the conference did not only contribute to advancing our scholarship related to Nepal and beyond from a multidisciplinary perspective but also provided a forum to engage Nepal and Nepali scholars globally. Simply, your presence was instrumental in cultivating a vibrant environment that NACA aims to foster for learning, networking, and collaboration opportunities.

We would like to express our gratitude to the members of the program and local organizing committees for their outstanding contributions. Their dedication, hard work, and tireless efforts were instrumental in making the conference a tremendous success. The program committee, comprising of Ananta Acharya, Sushil Adhikari, Buddhi Gyawali, Omkar Joshi, Arun KC, Madhukar KC, Prajjawal Panday, Soni Pradhanang, and Amir Sapkota, put together an outstanding program. Similarly, the local organizing committee, consisting of Maheshwor Kafle, Shasta Shakya, Samridhi Shrestha, and Avinaya Tripathi, played a critical role in ensuring the smooth execution of the conference. Their tireless efforts behind the scenes and attention to every detail helped make the conference run seamlessly.

Finally, we extend our sincere appreciation to the sponsors, speakers, and volunteers who made the conference possible through their invaluable contributions and commitments. Their dedication and support were crucial in ensuring the conference's success. Besides conferences, NACA also organizes webinars and provides other forums to bring together Nepal and Nepali diaspora scholars to discuss contemporary issues and explore solutions. Please join us to support our efforts and expand this young organization.

Gyan Nyaupane and Milan Shrestha
Conference Co-Chairs

Members Spotlight

Soni M Pradhanang, Ph.D.



Dr. Pradhanang is an Associate Professor at the Department of Geosciences, Director of the Minor Program in Global Water Resources, and Chair of Wetlands and Watershed Ecosystem Sciences, Master of Environmental Management Program at the University of Rhode Island (URI). She is also a faculty advisor of URI's Cooperative Water Extension Program. She has been a principal investigator of various US and international (South and Southeast Asia) research projects. Her research work ranges from developing and evaluating hydrogeologic and water quality models, studying the fate and transport of nutrients and contaminants of emerging concern, assessing innovative treatment technologies, and analyzing source water protection measures for informed decision-making. She has authored and co-

authored more than 50 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters and serves as the editor and guest editor of various journals in the field of water research. Dr. Pradhanang served as a review committee member for the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. She has more than 15 years of experience in water quantity and quality studies in Asia and North America, particularly focusing on the development and evaluation of innovative treatment technologies including floating wetland treatment systems, and monitoring and modeling of source water protection measures. Dr. Pradhanang is also passionate about community service and outreach. She regularly collaborates with regional and global organizations to promote sustainable water resource management. She serves on the NACA's annual conference organizing committee.

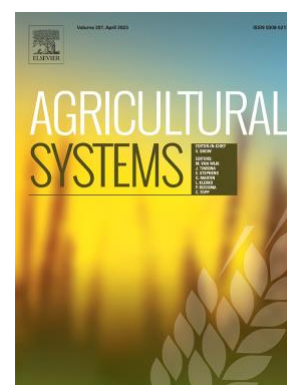
Recent Publications, Awards & Updates

Peer-reviewed Articles

Yang, F., & Paudel, K. (2023). Nutrition, Multidimensional Poverty, and Income: The Case of Nepal." *Journal of International Development* <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/jid.3760>. This study aims to assess the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) of farm households in Nepal and investigate the influence of various forms of livelihood capital on their income. The calculation of MPI incorporates the nutrition dimension along with health, education, and living standards using the Alkire-Foster method. The results show that farm households in Nepal face severe multidimensional poverty (MPI = 0.433, using poverty cut-off criterion = 0.3). The incidence of income poverty for Nepali farm households is around 20%, which indicates that income-based poverty may mask the true poverty of farm households in Nepal.

Ranabhat, S., Acharya, S., Upadhaya, S., Adhikari, B., Thapa, R., Ranabhat, S., & Gautam, D. R. (2023). Climate change impacts and adaptation strategies in watershed areas in mid-hills of Nepal. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-023-00817-w>. Climate change has negatively impacted the least developed and developing countries, including Nepal, due to lower adaptive capacity and higher dependency on agriculture and natural resources. Our results reveal that the temperature around Begnas and Rupa watersheds has been increasing for the last 30 years while precipitation has both been decreasing and becoming more erratic. These fluctuations and anthropogenic activities impact agricultural productivity, degrade ecosystems, and reduce socio-economic status. Local people use several adaptation strategies in response, including improved seeds, changing cropping patterns, cleaning invasive species in wetlands, constructing irrigation canals, diversifying income-generating activities, and launching sensitization and awareness campaigns. To support climate change adaptation, we recommend that the local government focus on participatory-based planning as well as mainstreaming climate change adaptation in the planning process.

Khatri-Chhetri, A , Sapkota T.B., Maharjan, S. Konath, N .C., & Shirsath P., (2023). Agricultural emissions reduction potential by improving technical efficiency in crop production. *Agricultural Systems*, 207, 103620. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agsy.2023.103620>. This study assesses a relationship between technical efficiency and GHG emissions and tests the hypothesis that improving technical efficiency reduces GHG emissions from crop production. Results suggest that improving technical efficiency in crop production can reduce emission intensity but not necessarily total emissions. Moreover, our analysis does not support smallholders tend to be technically less efficient and the emissions per unit of food produced by smallholders can be relatively high. A large proportion of smallholders have high technical efficiency, less total GHG emissions, and low emissions intensity. This study indicates the levels of technical efficiency and GHG emission are largely influenced by farming typology, i.e. choice and use of existing technologies and management practices in crop cultivation. This study will help to promote existing improved technologies targeting GHG emissions reduction from the agriculture production systems.



New Life Member

Arati Maleku, Ph.D.



Dr. Arati Maleku is currently an Associate Professor at the College of Social Work at The Ohio State University. She is a community-engaged scholar and a mixed methodologist investigating the social, cultural, and structural contexts of migration, social rights, and health equity among transnational communities, including immigrants, refugees, and international students.

Dr. Maleku's research program explores how social and structural determinants of health influence immigrant and refugee well-being and inclusion outcomes. Transformative research practice is central to her research orientation. She employs multilevel participatory research approaches, using research as an intervention and leveraging community partnerships to build community capacity and promote community resilience. Dr. Maleku's work builds on existing community knowledge, embracing protective cultural norms and social practices that

promote inclusive healing spaces for immigrant and refugee populations.

Dr. Maleku has over ten years of social work practice experience in national and international settings, from grassroots community-based organizations to the macro-level philanthropic sector. She currently serves as the President of Nepal Rising, a 501c (3) non-profit organization geared towards building diaspora engagement and philanthropy to support community resilience efforts in Nepal, which she co-founded in the aftermath of the 2015 devastating earthquake in Nepal. She has served on national leadership positions, including the Board of Directors for the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR), and co-chaired SSWR's Research Capacity and Development Committee. Dr. Maleku was recently recognized as the 2023 SSWR Fellow for her accomplishments, leadership and contribution to SSWR as a scientific society. As a Co-Founder and Chair of the South Asian Social Work Educator's Association, an affiliate group of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), she has also served on CSWE's Diversity Commission. She also currently serves as the Associate Editor for The British Journal of Social Work, a leading international social work journal.

Nepal Corner

Why is the number of students decreasing in all Nepali universities?

The number of students is drastically decreasing in almost all Nepali universities of Nepal.

<https://english.onlinekhabar.com/students-fall-nepali-universities.html>

Bill to form Nepal University lands in House

Nepal University, the first of its kind varsity in the country conceptualized by a group of academicians and other professionals

<https://kathmandupost.com/national/2023/02/25/bill-to-form-nepal-university-lands-in-house-committee>

The 12th national census in Nepal reveals interesting details

The results from the 12th census are out; Nepal's population is 29,164,578. Kathmandu is the most populated district. Half of the population of Nepal lives in Terai.

<https://www.nepalitimes.com/editorial/counting-on-nepal>

Groundwater problem in Kathmandu Valley

Overuse of groundwater and less recharge is leading to water scarcity. Three deep borewells at the TU Teaching Hospital have gone defunct, an example of the crisis.

<https://kathmandupost.com/climate-environment/2023/02/22/overextraction-and-shrinking-open-spaces-cause-groundwater-depletion-in-kathmandu-valley>

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NACA New Executive Council

New Executive Council Formed

Nepali Academics in America (NACA) elected a new [Executive Council](#) for the next two years. Congratulations to the new committee and appreciation to the outgoing committee, led by Dr. Udaya Wagle (past president), for their unwavering dedication, hard work, and commitment to laying the groundwork for the organization's success.

NACA is seeking volunteers to serve on various committees and activities. If you are interested in serving NACA leading these committees or in other capacities, please let us know. info@nepaliacademics.org

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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