



NEWSFLASH

Volume 4, Issue 2 • April 15, 2024

NACA is expanding. As you can see in the items covered in this issue, we have many exciting collaborative programs and events to share with our members and supporters. We want to thank you for your strong and continuous support. Please keep it coming as we venture into more productive and exciting collaborative efforts toward the end of this spring and into early summer. In the meantime, please register for the Annual Meeting 2024, if you haven't already (details inside).

In this issue, we are delighted to report several new developments. These include a summary report of the recently completed virtual workshop “Craft of Manuscript Writing,” jointly organized with Tribhuvan University’s Global Initiative; a news update on the NACA initiative to offer mentorship to the Nepal Policy Fellows 2024 from Daayitwa and the Government Lab Nepal; a reflective piece by Dinesh Paudel that highlights his research; and our regular features such as Members Spotlight, Publications, Awards and Updates, and Nepal Corner.

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NACA Annual Meeting 2024



The graphic features the NACA logo (Nepali Academics in America) in the top left. The main title 'Annual Meeting 2024' is prominently displayed. A yellow banner indicates the date 'APRIL 20, 2024'. Below this, the time is listed in both US Eastern Time (10:00 AM - 01:00 PM) and Nepal Time (07:45 PM - 10:45 PM). A QR code and the URL 'https://nepaliacademics.org/conference' are provided for registration. On the right, a circular portrait of Sumana Shrestha is shown, with her title as Hon'ble Minister of Education, Science, and Technology, and her government affiliation. Her keynote speech title, 'From Aspiration to Action: Reimagining Higher Education in Nepal', is listed, along with a note that it will be followed by a listening session on the future of NACA.

NACA
NEPALI ACADEMICS IN AMERICA

Annual Meeting 2024

APRIL 20, 2024

10:00 AM - 01:00 PM US Eastern Time
07:45 PM - 10:45 PM Nepal Time

 <https://nepaliacademics.org/conference>

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Sumana Shrestha
Hon'ble Minister of Education,
Science, and Technology
The Government of Nepal

***From Aspiration to Action: Reimagining
Higher Education in Nepal***

Followed by a listening session on the Future
for NACA and other exciting events

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Let's get ready for the NACA Annual Meeting 2024, which is less than a week away. If you have not registered, please do so by April 18 at:

<https://nepaliacademics.org/conference>

Honorable Ms. [Sumana Shrestha](#), the Minister of Education, Science and Technology (the Government of Nepal) will be delivering the keynote speech "*From Aspiration to Action: Reimagining Higher*

Education in Nepal." This speech will be followed by a listening session on the Future for NACA and several other exciting events. In these sessions, we would like to hear directly from our members about shaping the future of NACA.

All sessions, except for the Business Meeting (General Assembly), are open to all. Check out the meeting schedule below for program details.

NACA Annual Meeting 2024 Schedule

APRIL 20, 2024

(Final Program, 10:00 AM - 01:00 PM US Eastern Time, 07:45 -)

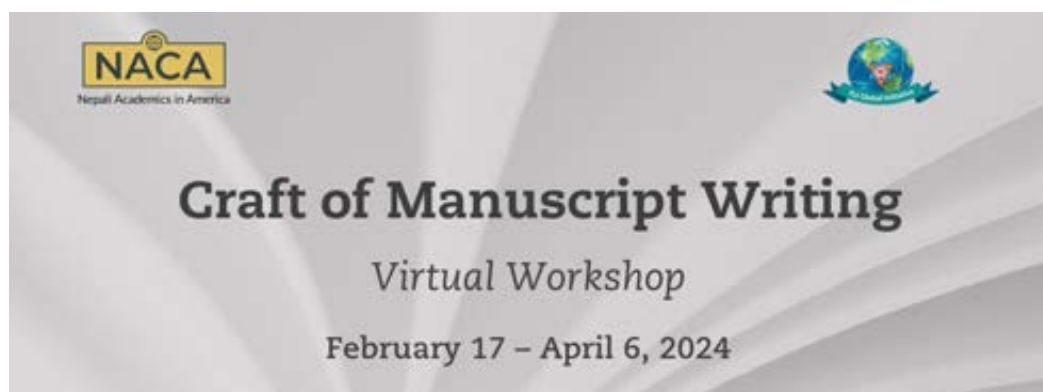
SESSION I

10:00 am -	<i>Opening, Brijesh Thapa (NACA EC member)</i>
10:00 - 10:10	<i>Welcome Message, Gyan Nyaupane (President, NACA)</i>
10:10 - 10:40	<i>Keynote Speaker, Hon. Ms. Sumana Shrestha (Minister of Science, Education, and Technology, the Government of Nepal)</i>
10:40 - 11:00	<i>Interactive Discussion</i>
11:00 - 11:15	<i>Announcement of NACA Biennial Conference 2025</i>
11:15 - 11:55	<i>Interactive Listening Session (Theme: The Future for NACA), Arati Maleku (Secretary, NACA)</i>
11:55 - 12:00	<i>Vote of Thanks/Wrap Up of Open Sessions, Gyan Nyaupane (President, NACA)</i>
12:00 - 12:05	<i>Break</i>

SESSION II

12:05 - 12:55	<i>Business Meeting (Members only) Opening, Gyan Nyaupane (President, NACA) Annual Activity Report: Milan Shrestha (Vice-President, NACA) Financial report: Treasurer: Pradeep Sapkota (Treasurer, NACA) Proposal for amendments: Neelam C. Poudyal (Member, NACA EC)</i>
12:55 - 01:00	<i>Closing</i>

Successful Completion of the Manuscript Workshop



NACA and Tribhuvan University Global Initiatives (TUGI), operating within the TU Center for International Relations, recently concluded a comprehensive two-month manuscript writing workshop tailored for faculty members in Nepal. From February 17 to April 6, 2024, this initiative targeted early-career faculty in the social and health sciences domain across Nepal's higher education landscape.

Among 63 applications received, 43 applicants were selected, representing various disciplines, including economics, public health, education, humanities, and management. Approximately 63% of the participants held assistant or associate professor positions, while around 28% served as part-time faculty members. Notably, half of the participants were female faculty from various regions of Nepal.

With the goal of building and supporting the capacity of faculty members in Nepal to publish in international peer-reviewed journals, the

workshop involved weekly interactive sessions led by 15 faculty members from NACA and TUGI, covering pivotal aspects of manuscript composition such as introduction and research inquiries, literature review, reference organization, research methodology, and discussion and conclusion sections. Extensive discussions were conducted on ethical considerations in research and details on quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research procedures. Additionally, over 22 faculty members from 12 U.S. institutions generously served as NACA mentors to provide weekly guidance to workshop participants in response to their scaffolded assignments. The program closed with 24 participants delivering presentations on their manuscripts.

The program's organization was overseen by four NACA committee members: Arati Maleku (Ohio State University), Sadeep Shrestha (University of Alabama at Birmingham),

Snehalata Sainjoo (Michigan State University), and Bhuwan Thapa (Appalachian State University). Core members of TUGI included Bandana Jain (Degree Campus, Biratnagar), Bal Ram Duwal (Tribhuvan University), and

Bhagawaty Kalikotay (Maharajgunj Nursing Campus). NACA would like to thank our presenters and mentors who volunteered their time to contribute to the success of the manuscript writing workshop.

Presenters	Mentors
Dr. Gyan Nyaupane, Arizona State University	Dr. Bilon Kambu, Tulane University
Dr. Devi R. Gnyawali, Virginia Tech. University	Dr. Gyan Nyaupane, Arizona State University
Dr. Sweta Baniya, Virginia Tech. University	Dr. Brijesh Thapa, Oklahoma State University
Dr. Anjay Mishra, Tribhuvan University	Dr. Krishna Poudel, University of Massachusetts
Dr. Shashidhar Belbase, Troy University	Dr. Deepak Shimkhada, Chaffey College
Dr. Nilesh Timilsina, Clemson University	Dr. Dinesh Paudel, Appalachian State University
Dr. Shishir Shakya, Appalachian State University	Dr. Binaya Subedi, The Ohio State University
Dr. Tashi Gurung, Arizona State University	Dr. Udaya Wagle, Northern Arizona University
Dr. Pratibha Shrestha, Washington University in St. Louis	Dr. Omkar Joshi, Oklahoma State University
Dr. Shyan Sharma, Stony Brook University	Dr. Shashidhar Belbase, Troy University
Dr. Suman Karki, University of Alabama at Birmingham	Dr. Milan Shrestha, Arizona State University
Dr. Kirshna Poudel, University of Massachusetts Amherst	Dr. Devi Gyawali, Virginia Tech. University
Dr. Sadeep Shrestha, University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)	Dr. Sadeep Shrestha, UAB
Dr. Arati Maleku, The Ohio State University	Dr. Arun KC, Save the Children USA
Dr. Bhuwan Thapa, Appalachian State University	Dr. Bhuwan Thapa, Appalachian State University
	Dr. Madhav Bhatta, Kent State University
	Dr. Kalpana Poudel-Tandukar, University of Massachusetts Amherst
	Dr. Tashi Gurung, Arizona State University
	Dr. Rojan Baniya, Hawaii Pacific University
	Dr. Suman Karki, University of Alabama at Birmingham
	Dr. Neelam Poudyal, University of Tennessee Knoxville



NACA-Daayitwa Collaboration






NACA is collaborating with [Daayitwa's Nepal Public Policy Fellowship](#) program on research mentorship. The fellowship program aims to mobilize talented Nepali youth in research and advocate for research-based policymaking in Nepal. This collaboration provides a unique opportunity for NACA members to work with fellows, government agencies, and policymakers and make positive impacts through policy-focused research.

This year's mentors will guide fellows who will be working with five government ministries, the National Planning Commission, and the Prime Minister's Office. The fellows work

closely with their research mentors on the research themes each agency has identified. The mentors will provide guidance and support to the fellows throughout the 3-months fellowship program from June through September. NACA will also provide several training sessions focused on research.

Our collaborators in Nepal, [Daayitwa Abhiyaan](#) and [Governance Lab](#), are in the final stage of selecting seven fellows from a pool of over 200 applicants for this year. The following NACA members are volunteering to serve on this mentorship program and we want to thank them for their support and generosity.

Public Partner	Research Themes	Mentors
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development	Strengthening Market Access	Dr Shiriniwas Gautam, University of Notre Dame 
Ministry of Communication and Information Technology	Innovative Practices in ICT	Dr Gokarna Sharma, Associate Professor, Kent State University 

Ministry of Finance	Climate Financing	<u>Dr Rajan Parajuli, NC State University</u>	
Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration	Local Governance and Sustainable Development	<u>Dr Udaya Wagle, Northern Arizona University</u>	
Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supply	Promoting Startups in Nepal	<u>Dr Devi Gnyawali, Virginia Tech University</u>	
National Planning Commission	LDC Graduation and Economic Development	<u>Dr Bishwa Koirala, University of North Carolina Pembroke</u>	
Office of the Prime Minister & Council of Ministers	Transforming Governance for Inclusive Development	<u>Dr Shikha Silwal, Washington & Lee University</u>	

Research Highlights

Dinesh Paudel, Ph.D.

Professor, Sustainable Development
Appalachian State University, Boone

“Dozer Aatank (डोज़र आतंक)” or Development Disaster in Nepal



Nepal is suffering from development and suffering for development simultaneously. The Nepali psyche at every level identifies the lack of development as the culprit or the reason for poverty, political instability, outmigration, unemployment, uprisings, conflicts, disaster or you name anything that has to do with the actual or perceived difficulties in the Nepali society.

More than 30 years ago an anthropologist Stacy Pigg named the Nepali development desire as a new religion. Development became an everyday ritual or something to pray for, and this became especially acute when western development donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

and development pandits collectively embarked on a mission of empowering Nepali people to prepare them to give up their traditional ways of living. Since then, development in Nepal is perceived as a societal goal where everyone is prepared to embrace changes coming from outside (becoming modern) and give up what they have (traditional or non-modern).

However, a particular strand of this development philosophy has emerged in the last two decades and it is manifested through building modern infrastructure particularly roads as a main measure of developmental success. The idea is that infrastructure would easily connect Nepali people with modern

consumerism, production circuits and labor markets. In my decade long research I have been arguing that the way road building is implemented resembles a form of *Dozer Aatank* (डोजर आतंक) as it terrorizes both rural communities and the fragile landscapes particularly in the mountains. The Aatank is led by the nexus of contractors, political elites and sections of bureaucracy and the overall motives of the nexus are developmental power and financial profitability. I am clear that infrastructure development is a necessary condition for overall wellbeing of the people but the way it is implemented has been destructive environmentally, economically and culturally.

In collaboration with my colleagues, I have been exploring the concerns related to development disaster and I have found a clear trend in how infrastructure desire is turning into a disaster. First, it is clear that the current infrastructure development model is not suitable to the fragile landscape of the mountain systems. Built infrastructures are very fragile and they are becoming extremely expensive over time. The destruction of the landscapes and traditional means of production/livelihoods is unprecedented resulting in a massive out-migration from the rural areas. Second, mountain communities are becoming economically more vulnerable and subjected to further exploitation as their subsistence means of livelihoods are deteriorated/displaced systematically. Third, frequent disasters such as flooding and landslides, almost all working age

young people migrating out of the rural areas, declining agricultural production massively due to the lack of farm labor, wildlife encroachments and increased production costs are creating a vacuum in the mountain region. In some places more than 70% farmland is uncultivated and the population size has declined to half in the last ten years. Nepal's mountain system is experiencing unprecedented crises in the current political, economic and development conjuncture of Nepal.

However, the idea of *samriddhi* (prosperity), is becoming a new national slogan in the country by which Nepal aims to advance its own path of development. How to achieve *samriddhi* making it just and sustainable using the existing development framework that is driven by the *Dozer Aatank* is the most pressing question we have. Nepali development model is also suffering from multiple forces of natural disasters, geopolitical power pressures and economic hardships. What would be the model of development that would counter the *Dozer Aatank* literally and conceptually so that the meaningful *samriddhi* is achieved? Nepali desire for *samriddhi* could be helped by researchers and intellectuals from around the world by conceptualizing development models that are truly decolonial and foster harmonious and self-reliant economic prosperity and socio-ecological wellbeing. We can all try to add a little to this endeavor, and I am aiming to contribute to these ideas as much as possible.

The ideas expressed in this research highlight section are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the author's institution, NACA, and NACA partners.

New Life Member Spotlight

Kalpana Poudel-Tandukar, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, the Elaine Marieb College of Nursing
University of Massachusetts (UMass), Amherst



Dr. Kalpana Poudel-Tandukar is an Associate Professor in the Elaine Marieb College of Nursing, UMass Amherst. She received her Ph.D. in from the University of Tokyo, Japan, and her Masters from the Flinders University of Australia. She has a broad background in public health, epidemiology, biostatistics, social science, and general medicine. Her expertise includes causal analysis, mediation, moderation, and multilevel modeling of social determinants of health to disease outcomes; development, testing, and scaling up of multi-component intervention; dyadic longitudinal data analysis of randomized control trial design; community-engaged participatory action research on mental health disparities with mixed methods.

For the last 15 years, Dr. Poudel-Tandukar has been researching global mental health, HIV, and nutrition. She has received grants from the National Institutes of Health, State and Foundations to evaluate the effect of mental health promotion interventions among Bhutanese, Ukrainian, and Afghan refugees resettled in the U.S. She has been honored with a prestigious “Distinguished Community Engagement Award for Research,” and “ADVANCE Faculty Peer Mentor Award,” from the UMass Amherst. Her publications have appeared in high-impact journals such as *The Lancet*, *the Journal of American Medical Association*, and *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*. She is a “subject matter expert” and “standing reviewer board member” for the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute.

As a member of NACA, she is interested in collaborating with other colleagues to expand interdisciplinary research to address social determinants of health for global health promotion and to strengthen the research skills of young researchers working in resource-poor settings.

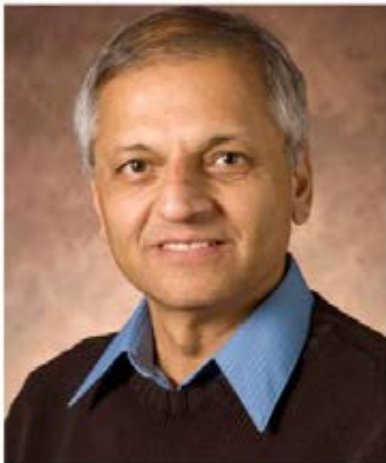


Member Spotlight

Keshav Bhattarai, Ph.D.

Professor of Geography, Department of Physical Sciences

University of Central Missouri



Dr. Keshav Bhattarai, a Geography Professor at the University of Central Missouri, specializes in contemporary environmental, geopolitical, and economic issues. His recently published book, "Contemporary Environmental Problems in Nepal," explores the intricate relationship between Nepal's natural environment and its socioeconomic conditions.

Currently, Keshav is delving into the geopolitics of the Middle East through a comprehensive study spanning from 3,500 BC to the recent Israel-Hamas War. This research sheds light on how climate change, resource distribution, economic factors, and ethnic/religious conflicts contribute to political unrest, particularly among the youth demographic, with a median age of 27 years that is trending

younger. He also investigates the cascading impacts of climate change on water resources in the Middle East and is actively researching strategies to build resilient communities in Nepal by addressing youth emigration issues.

Keshav's impactful research has been acknowledged at the University of Central Missouri for its practical implications. His extensive publication record includes scientific papers on urban planning, transportation modeling, land use dynamics, and geopolitics, such as conflicts in the Red Sea involving the Houthis and the Western World. Additionally, he co-authored the "Historical Dictionary of Nepal," published by Scarecrow Press.

His book "Contemporary Environmental Problems of Nepal" was published by Springer (Nature) in 2021, and his upcoming work, "Geopolitics in the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future," is set to be published by Springer (Nature) in 2024.

Keshav is an engaging speaker who frequently addresses various forums on contemporary environmental issues, Nepal's geodemography, socioeconomic challenges, and Middle Eastern affairs.



Snehalata Sainjoo

Ph.D. Student, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
Michigan State University



Snehalata Sainjoo is a Ph.D. candidate at Michigan State University with a dual major in Fisheries and Wildlife and Environmental Science. Her expertise lies in the areas of livelihood, climate risk, and adaptation governance, with a focus on examining the complex interplay between adaptation decisions and environmental sustainability. With a decade of experience working with scientists and local communities in Nepal and Cambodia, she contributed significantly to the projects addressing food security, livelihood, climate adaptation, and community resilience, extending her impact beyond academia.

Her Ph.D. work focuses on exploring the multifaceted dynamics of farmers' adaptation

amidst uncertainties stemming from dam construction, climate change, and resource shifts in the Lower Mekong Region. Currently, she is engaged in research and teaching at Michigan State University, where she actively contributes to the [Mekong Culture WELL project](#). Her efforts have garnered recognition through several awards and fellowships, including the Dr. Delia Koo Global Student Scholarship and the Environmental Science and Policy Program (ESPP) Doctoral Research Fellowship.

As a member of Advancing Earth and Space Science and the Michigan State University Nepalese Student Association, Snehalata plays an active role in the academic community. She envisions the Nepali Academics in America (NACA) as a pivotal platform for academic growth, offering invaluable networking and collaborative opportunities to further her research endeavors.

Sainjoo aims to leverage her expertise to bridge the gap between academia and communities and develop tailored climate solutions. You can follow her professional journey on her LinkedIn profile at [linkedin.com/in/sainjoos](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sainjoos), where she continues to share insights and collaborate on transformative projects.



New Members

Please welcome our new members listed below (from February 12, 2024 to April 13, 2024). We thank our members for their continuous support and engagement.

NAME	MEMBERSHIP LEVEL	AFFILIATION
Ukash Nakarmi	General Member (Life)	University of Arkansas
Bonita Sharma	General Member (Life)	University of Texas at San Antonio
Bobby Thapa	Student Member (Annual)	University of Maine
Lalmani Wagle	Student Member (Annual)	New Mexico State University
Shriniwas Gautam	General Member (Annual)	University of Notre Dame
Suraj Upadhaya	General Member (Annual)	Kentucky State University

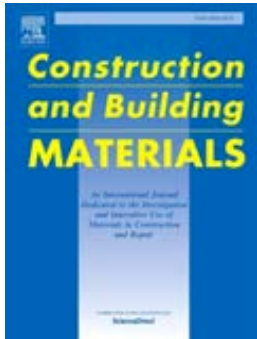
Membership Champion

We would like to recognize Dr. Arati Maleku, our NACA Secretary and Associate Professor of Social Work at The Ohio State University, as the Membership Champion for this reporting period (February 12-April 13, 2024). She has led the recruitment of the most new members. Thank you!

We also thank Sadeep Shrestha, Milan Shrestha, and others for helping us recruit new members.

Please tell your friends and colleagues about the [benefits of becoming a NACA member](#) and help us recruit more new members.

Recent Publications



Nair, S. A., **Tripathi, A.**, & Neithalath, N. (2024). Constitutive response and failure progression in digitally fabricated (3D printed) concrete under compression and their dependence on print layer height. *Construction and Building Materials*, 411, 134246.

This paper examines the influence of layer height on the constitutive response and failure of 3D printed concrete specimens under compression, investigated along the direction of layer build-up (or perpendicular to the layer interfaces), which is the dominant plane of loading in 3D printed walls and columns.



sustainability

Byers, A., Shrestha, M., Zackary, A., Coburn, B., Watanabe, T., Chand, M.B., and Byers, E. (2024). The Changing Ecology of a High Himalayan Valley: The Case of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area, Eastern Nepal. *Sustainability* 16(6), 2434.

This research article offers a holistic perspective on the changing ecology of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area; it's a protected area in eastern Nepal, which is currently undergoing enormous socioeconomic and environmental change due to outmigration, new road construction, booming adventure tourism, and above all, some of the adverse impacts of climate change.



Byers, A. C., Somos-Valenzuela, M., Shugar, D. H., McGrath, D., Chand, M. B., and Avtar, R. (2024). Brief communication: An ice-debris avalanche in the Nupchu Valley, Kanchenjunga Conservation Area, eastern Nepal, *The Cryosphere*, 18, 711–717

Beginning in December 2020, a series of small to medium, torrent-like pulses commenced upon a historic debris cone located within the Nupchu Valley, Kanchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA), Nepal. Sometime between 16 and 21 August 2022 a comparatively large ice-debris avalanche event occurred, covering an area of 0.6 km² with a total estimated volume of order 10⁶ m³. The area of the debris cone left by the August 2022 event increased the historic debris cone area by 0.2 km² (total area 0.6 km²). Although no human or livestock deaths occurred, the increase in torrent-like pulses of debris upon this historic debris cone since 2020 exemplifies a style of mass movement that may become increasingly common as air temperatures rise in the region.



Giri, A.K., Litkowski, C., **Subedi, D.** and McDonald, T.M. (2023), "Change in US farm sector's financial position and performance in 2020 compared to pre-pandemic expectations: An analysis using financial ratios", *Agricultural Finance Review*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print.

We examine the financial performance and position of the US farm sector in 2020, the first year of the pandemic, as there were significant supply and demand shocks due to the pandemic using 19 financial ratios published by the USDA. We found solvency ratios (which are indicators of the sector's ability to repay financial liabilities via the sale of assets) worsened in 2020 relative to pre-pandemic expectations whereas most of the profitability ratios were stronger. Efficiency ratios (which evaluate the conversion of assets into production and revenue) and liquidity ratios (which are indicators of the availability of cash to cover debt payments) showed mixed outcomes for the realized results in 2020 relative to the pre-pandemic forecasts.



Bhattarai, K., Gautam, S. P., & **Gyawali, B. R.** (2023). Assessing Food Security Scenario at the Ward Level in Nepal: An Analysis of Caloric Needs from Diverse Crops Based on Location-Specific Factors and Policy Implications. *Nepal Public Policy Review*, 3(1), 195-220.

Our analysis revealed that it is essential for Nepal to implement policies that will encourage crop diversification comprising both major and minor crops and inform the public about the nutritional values of various crops that can be grown utilizing location-specific environments in different geographic regions of seven provinces.



Bhattarai, K., Adhikari, A. P., & Gautam, S. P. (2023). State of urbanization in Nepal: The official definition and reality. *Environmental Challenges*, 13, 100776.

This paper analyzes various criteria needed for defining urbanization that are internationally accepted to assess Nepal's official definition of urban settlements. We found that using the road as the main variable but keeping agriculture, forest, and shrubland constant, a one percent increase in road length will lead to an increase in the geographical area of urban settlements by 0.47 percent.



Bhattarai, K., & Adhikari, A. P. (2023). Promoting urban farming for creating sustainable cities in Nepal. *Urban Science*, 7(2), 54.

This paper responds to the research question, “can urban farming in Nepal help create sustainable cities?” Especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, urban residents have begun to realize that food transported from long distances is not always reliable. This paper draws on a literature review, uses remote-sensing imagery data and data from National Census Nepal 2021, and the authors’ professional experiences related to best practices in the areas to analyze the benefits and challenges related to urban farming both in Nepal and Arizona, USA.



Karkee, R., Gurung, M., Poudel, L., Baral, C., Adhikary, P., Kc, R. K., ... & Gurung, G. (2023). Management of health information of nepalese labour migrants. *Globalization and Health*, 19(1), 30.

Many Nepalese go abroad as labour migrants (LMs). The monitoring and improvement of the health of labour migrants (LMs) require sufficient health data to be recorded and managed. This article gives information on the status of collection and management of health information of Nepalese Labour Migrants (NLMs).



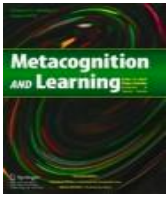
Cavazos, K., **Poudyal, N. C.,** Brunner, J. L., Warwick, A. R., Jones, J., Moherman, N., ... & Gray, M. J. (2023). Exploring business stakeholder engagement in sustainable business practices: Evidence from the US pet amphibian industry. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 32(8), 5909-5921.



Cavazos, K., **Adhikari, R. K., Poudyal, N. C.,** Warwick, A. R., & Gray, M. J. (2023). Natural area visitors’ willingness to pay for amphibian conservation in a global biodiversity hotspot. *Journal for Nature Conservation*, 76, 126499.



Ghimire, S., & **Kapri, K.** (2023). Household income, migration networks, and migration decisions. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 35(6), 1484-1507.



Nepal, K., & Kafle, R. C. (2024). Who can predict their performance more accurately? An investigation of undergraduate students' self-assessment behavior in mathematics courses. *Metacognition and Learning*, 1-17.



Bhusal, P., Awasthi, K. R., Low, M., Shrestha, N., Neupane, A., Paudel, N. S., ... & **Parajuli, R.** (2024). What Determines the Adoption of Agroforestry Practices in Farmlands and Public Lands? A Case Study from the Terai Region in Nepal. *Society & Natural Resources*, 37(2), 234-250.

In this study, we explored the context and factors influencing the adoption of agroforestry practices on farmlands and public lands in the Terai region of southern Nepal. Results suggest that adoption of agroforestry practices on both farmland and public land could contribute to mitigating conflicts between northern and southern settlers in Nepal's Terai region. The adoption of agroforestry practices can be explained by socio-demographic and economic factors such as education, ethnicity, well-being, and gender. Strong cooperation between agroforestry initiatives and local institutions such as forest user groups and local governments in educating and empowering local people from lower socio-economic backgrounds is critical for widespread adoption of agroforestry practices in similar resource-use conflict regions.

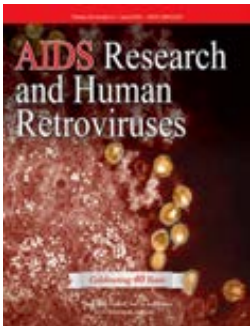


Thapa, R. B., Coupal, R. H., Dangi, M. B., & Stahl, P. D. (2024). An Assessment of Plant Growth and Soil Properties Using Coal Char and Biochar as a Soil Amendment. *Agronomy*, 14(2), 320.

Using carbon-rich coal char and biochar as a soil amendment increases soil organic carbon and water-holding capacity. Soil organic carbon is an important factor in soil health improvement that contributes to increased plant growth and crop yield. This study's results indicate that coal char and biochar co-applied with manure could increase plant growth and soil properties in semiarid dryland soil.



Tiwary, E., Berryhill, T. F., Wilson, L., Barnes, S., **Prasain, J. K.**, & Wells, J. M. (2023). LC-MS/MS method for proline-glycine-proline and acetylated proline-glycine-proline in human plasma. *Journal of Chromatography B*, 1228, 123815.



Poudel-Tandukar, K., Bertone-Johnson, E. R., & Poudel, K. C. (2023). Serum selenium and inflammation in individuals with human immunodeficiency virus infection. *AIDS Research and Human Retroviruses*, 39(12), 671-676.

The role of serum selenium levels in inflammation has not been studied among individuals with HIV infection, though serum selenium deficiency and chronic inflammation have been linked to HIV infection. This paper highlighted the role of serum selenium levels in inflammation among individuals with HIV infection. This cross-sectional study assessed the relationship of serum selenium levels to C-reactive protein (CRP), a marker of inflammation, among 233 individuals with HIV infection living in Kathmandu, Nepal. The mean serum CRP levels were 40.8% lower in the highest selenium tertile than in the lowest among the individuals with HIV infection, suggesting that high serum selenium levels may reduce inflammation levels in individuals with HIV infection.



Poudel, K. C., **Poudel-Tandukar, K.**, Silwal, R. C., Chalise, B. S., Bertone-Johnson, E. R., & Vidrine, D. J. (2023). Feasibility, Acceptability, and Preliminary Effects of a Video-Based Intervention for Smoking Cessation Among People with HIV in Kathmandu, Nepal: A Single-Armed Pilot Study. *AIDS and Behavior*, 27(10), 3468-3477.

Despite the evidence of the disproportionate burden of tobacco use among people with HIV (PWH), little effort has been made to design and test smoking cessation interventions for PWH in resource-limited countries. This study assessed the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary effects of a video-based smoking cessation intervention consisting of eleven 3-8-minute sessions among 48 PWH in Nepal, a lower-middle-income country. The 1-week point prevalence abstinence (self-report supported with expired carbon monoxide levels < 5ppm) at 3-month follow-up was 39.6%. Overall, this pilot trial demonstrated the feasibility, acceptability, and high-level efficacy of the video-based smoking cessation intervention, highlighting its potential for scaling up in Nepal and other resource-limited countries.

Awards and Updates



Dr. Soni Pradhanang promoted to Full Professor

NACA congratulates Prof. Soni Mulmi Pradhanang on her promotion to the rank of Full Professor. Dr. Pradhanang joined the Department of Geosciences, University of Rhode Island in 2014 and has made significant contributions to the field of hydrology and water quality research. She is a highly respected scholar and teacher, and her promotion is a well-deserved recognition of her accomplishments.



Dr. Kalpana Poudel-Tandukar received 2024 ADVANCE Faculty Peer Mentor Award

Dr. Kalpana Poudel-Tandukar received the “2024 ADVANCE Faculty Peer Mentor Award” from the Provost Office of the University of Massachusetts Amherst for mentoring and supporting colleagues’ professional development. Nominators quotes:

“Nominators laud the commitment that Professor Poudel-Tandukar brings to mentoring, including her use of active listening skills, empathy in sharing her own experiences, and a humility and willingness to learn in a true mutual mentoring relationship with fellow faculty. One writer notes: “She is committed to creating and sustaining an inclusive space for all her mentees, especially those from minoritized backgrounds. She intentionally created space for us to share the challenges we face as international women of color navigating academia and doing community-engaged research.” Another writer wrote: “From the outset of our professional relationship, Dr. Poudel-Tandukar exhibited a deep understanding of the challenges faced by immigrant, Asian-female faculty members. ...Amidst the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Poudel-Tandukar's support became invaluable...[providing] me with the necessary support and guidance to navigate these challenges successfully.”

Learn more: https://www.umass.edu/advance/2024_awards

Events and Announcements

Martin Chautari Annual Conference - 2024

Martin Chautari (MC) is organizing the Chautari Annual Conference in Kathmandu, Nepal on November 27–29, 2024. The aim of this conference is to promote research culture in the humanities and social sciences in Nepal. MC invites submission of abstracts of research papers or abstracts of the theme-based panels from eligible researchers or institutions who will have completed their research by the abstract submission deadline.

Call for Papers at:

<https://www.martinchautari.org.np/events/call-for-papers-panels-chautari-annual-conference-2024>

Abstract Submission Deadline: June 18, 2024.

Nepal Corner

New leadership in Tribhuvan University

After Prof. Keshar Jung Baral was appointed as the Vice-Chancellor (VC) back in February 22, Tribhuvan University now has the Rector and the Registrar's positions filled by Prof. Khadga KC and Prof. Kedar Rijal respectively.

<https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/baral-appointed-vice-chancellor-of-tribhuvan-university/>

<https://kathmandupost.com/national/2024/04/12/kc-appointed-tu-rector-rijal-registrar>

USAID announces up to \$85 million to support quality education in Nepal

This funding, subject to the availability of funds, focuses on marginalized youth and early grade students through three key activities: 1) early grade learning, 2) education direct financing through the Ministry of Education, and 3) equity and inclusion in education program implemented through Plan International and its consortium

<https://np.usembassy.gov/usaaid-announces-up-to-85-million-to-support-access-to-quality-education-in-nepal-2/>

Achyut Wagle's Op-Ed "Behind the Higher Education Crisis"

Nepal has failed to set its national development objectives in the absence of a higher education policy

<https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2023/08/01/behind-the-higher-education-crisis>

Shristi Kari's Op-Ed "Class Act" published in NepaliTimes

Education Minister Sumana Shrestha from the independent RSP has, in the month since she took office, determined to undo half-a-century of neglect, political interference and mismanagement.

<https://nepalitimes.com/news/class-act>

Publish your accomplishments, updates, or any sharable news (e.g., grants, awards, publications, new job, promotion, fieldwork experience) in our next issue. Our members want to hear about other members, and the Newsflash has been a valuable tool to our mission: Engage, Network, and Collaborate. Submit the items [here](#).

For feedback or comments, email us at info@nepaliacademics.org.

About Us

Editorial Team

Milan Shrestha | Samridhi Shrestha | Suman Acharya | Nilesh Timilsina | Arun KC



info@nepaliacademics.org



www.nepaliacademics.org



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