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**Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-Nepal  
(ISET-Nepal)  
2016**

# GOVERNING BOARD

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## Who Are We

**ISET-Nepal** is a research organization that conducts inter-disciplinary research and engages in policy dialogues. The organization was established in 2001, a time when significant social, environmental, and political change processes, along with climate change impacts, were emerging as major threats across the globe, including in Nepal. Since then, ISET-Nepal has examined these social and environmental challenges with the aim of contributing to building a society capable of addressing such challenges through improved knowledge and capacities.

It conducts interdisciplinary research and holds interactions on crosscutting issues involving environment, water, technology, politics, and society with a wide spectrum of the Nepali society as well as with global actors. ISET-Nepal produces high-quality evidence-based knowledge products like reports, policy briefs and newspaper articles in order to inform and influence existing policies and practices. Furthermore, we engage, educate, as well as train and enhance capacity of young professionals and influence youths to come up with innovative solutions to emerging challenges. We also collaborate and partner with diverse national and international academicians, researchers and organizations.

## What Do We Do

ISET-Nepal conducts research and generates evidence for policies on the following six themes:

- **Disaster Risk Reduction:** Nepal faces risks from recurrent and episodic hazards that can escalate into disasters that disrupt and lower development gains. The damage from non-climatic disasters is further exacerbated by climate change-induced impacts, and disaster risks intertwine with existing political, social and institutional conditions, compounding their impacts. ISET-Nepal is exploring both climatic and natural hazards and associated risks on the one hand and the social, economic, technology and institutional context and dynamics on the other in disaster response and recovery.
- **The Changing Rural-Urban Continuum:** High social disparities and inequalities in income, health, and education will characterize urbanized areas and more people will be living in urban areas in the next 20 years. Urbanization transforms ecological landscapes, creates new patterns of resource extraction and degradation and increases air and water pollution. Collectively, these changes will produce new vulnerabilities, especially for the poor and marginalized. ISET-Nepal is generating evidence-based knowledge to inform urban development policies and planning processes to address such vulnerabilities, inequalities, and spatial injustices that emerge from urbanization and ensure that urban communities and systems are resilient.
- **Climate, Water, Ecosystem, Food, and Livelihood Interdependence:** The dynamics of water, food, and livelihoods are central to the productive use and protection of water resources. Climate change severely complicates these dynamics. ISET-Nepal is exploring the further impact of climate change on water, food, and livelihoods as it is critical to integrating adaptive practices across all societal activities in order to create a climate-resilient society.
- **Energy System and Management:** Nepal faces constraints in its supplies of electricity and other commercial forms of energy, constraints which affect macro and micro

economies in fundamental ways. Recent shortages stemming from geo-political tensions and dependence on imports of fuel, food, medicines, and other essentials highlight the country's systemic vulnerability. Since energy security is fundamental to shaping Nepal's development pathways, the promotion of decentralized and renewable energy systems and energy-efficient technology and practices needs critical examination and ISET-Nepal is working to this endeavor.

- **Public-Sector Governance:** The ongoing political transition has weakened Nepal's formal governance at the central and the local levels and impeded development gains leading to Institutional erosion which has severely limited the regulatory roles and functions of the government. We are making effort to examine systematically and evidence generated to improve governance.
- **Poverty, Inequality and Social Development** Nepal ranks very poor in Human Development Index (145th in 2014). Rural communities are more vulnerable in social development paradigm. Social issues keep significant importance in development projects, which needs to be carefully dealt with. ISET-Nepal therefore is exploring research on this theme as these are crucial issues to be examined during research in climate change, disaster risk reduction and other themes.

## Our Approach

We use the following approaches to achieve our organizational objectives:

- **Interdisciplinary research:** Technological, societal, environmental, economical, and political perspectives resonates with policy needs more than research that is reductionist, therefore we conduct systemic study to bring out evidence of power, politics, social differentials, and the interests of government departments and other local bodies, all important information for policy making.
- **Reflective learning:** ISET-Nepal builds on local trials and pilots to ground its policy engagement processes. The learning from pilot projects will be used to improve implementation and upscale learning from the local to the national.
- **Communication and outreach:** ISET-Nepal's internal communication focuses on promoting sharing and exchanges among researchers involved in different thematic areas and using such exchanges as a means to build research capacity. Its external communication aims to enhance visibility and dissemination of its knowledge-based products.
- **Policy engagement:** ISET-Nepal's experience shows that influencing policy encompasses four interconnected elements in a continuum—opinion-building, discourse-setting, knowledge-uptake, and policy-change actions. ISET-Nepal shapes opinion and proceed toward policy uptake by engaging with policy agents vertically and horizontally within the socio-political space.
- **Organizational development:** ISET-Nepal's organizational development approach will focus on effective governance; robustness of financial and human resources; develop *management and research synergy*; provide exposure of researchers to academic arena and build staff capacity; and institutionalize in-house colloquium.

## Governance

ISET-Nepal governing board provides the overall guidance, directives and supervision. The board members come from different educational and professional background with several years of experience in the research, development and policy-making. Their representation on the governing board has strengthened ISET-Nepal's efforts to streamline its governance structure and strategic planning process. ISET-Nepal has brought changes to its leadership and governance. Last year, new functionaries on its governing board were elected. Organization's human resources and financial policies have been updated.

## Quality Control

ISET-Nepal developed research ethics and a protocol to ensure the quality of its research and products. The process is led by senior researcher Professor Ashutosh Shukla. He facilitates regular in-house colloquiums at which we researchers discuss research issues.

To maintain quality control a more robust internal and external peer review mechanisms have been established. Researchers within the organization provide input through internal review. National and international professionals with expertise on specific topics are invited to provide external inputs on our methodological approaches and analytical rigor. External reviewers comprise senior faculty members of universities, experts working in international agencies, and independent scholars and intellectuals. Senior officers in the government also review our research outputs and reports. The findings are shared to local and national level stakeholder workshops to solicit comments/suggestions.

## Partnership

ISET-Nepal is building partnership and alliances with like-minded organizations to foster innovation and research. These collaborations have enhanced ISET-Nepal's legitimacy as an organization committed to producing knowledge rooted in local contexts and based on analytical rigor which thereby has value for constructive engagement in policymaking. Last year ISET-Nepal worked with community-based organizations, local non-governmental organizations, universities, private-sector agencies, and village, district and national governments. In Nepal, our partners are Action Aid, Practical Action Consulting (PAC), Practical Action Nepal, NITI Foundation, National Association of Community Electricity Users-Nepal (NACEUN), Clean Energy Nepal (CEN), Resource Himalaya Foundation (RHF), Nepal River Conservation Trust (NRCT), Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDRC), Science Teacher's Association of Nepal (STAN), Federation of Computer Association Nepal (CAN), and South Asian Watch on Economics and Environment (SWATEE). At the governmental level we have worked with the ministries of Science, Technology and Environment (MoSTE), Federal Affairs and Local Development (MOFALD), and Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC). We also worked with Japan International Cooperation (JICA) in Nepal. At the non-governmental level we worked with community service and community police service centers and with Tribhuvan University (TU).

Outside Nepal we partnered with International Research Development Centre (IDRC) Canada, Give2Asia USA, Centre for Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) and the Public Affairs Centre (PAC) of India, British Geological Survey (BGS), INTASAVE-CARIB of the U.K., NIVA of Norway, Climate Action Network in South Asia (CANSAs) and UNEP Thailand. These partnerships helped us further our work on climate change, disaster risk reduction, sustainable development, and technology as well as enabling us to begin to engage the private sector.

## Projects

### 1. **Assessing Vulnerability and Impacts due to Climate Change and Preparing Adaptive Strategies for Panchase Area in Nepal**

The Ecosystem based Adaptation Nepal (EbA-N) was implemented in Panchase Mountain Ecological Region (PMER) of Kaski, Parbat and Syangja districts of West Nepal. The project aimed to enhance capacity of local communities, demonstrate EbA measures for continued provision of ecosystem services, and support in strengthening the institutional capacity of key national Nepalese actors to build and better integrate ecosystem resilience options in national, sub-national and local level plans. EbA options were developed as part of overall adaptation strategies in Nepal to reduce the vulnerability of communities. The project also aimed to develop ecosystem-focused decision-making tools, demonstrating EbA results at the local level, building the economic case for EbA and using knowledge and learning derived from the project to influence formulation of national and local policies and strategies for adaptation.

### 2. **Climate Adaptation and Resilience in South Asia**

The study aimed to understand how vulnerability is experienced in poor communities of Palpa and Kapilvastu districts of Nepal's Gandaki River Basin and five villages in the



Researchers measuring water discharge in Madanpokhara

Thanjavur District of Tamil Nadu, India who rely on agriculture for their livelihoods and how this would change with increasing effects of global warming. The multifaceted project implemented with four consortium partners of South Asia led by Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) aims to contribute to the study of vulnerability to climate change. The research was carried out at different scales, both top-down and at bottom up approach to derive a connection between livelihood, governance and climate variation.

### **3. Think Tank Initiative –II**

ISET-Nepal received the Think Tank Initiative support from IDRC. This institutional grant provides assistance to enhance research quality, improve organizational performance and promote policy linkages and communication. The assistance from the Think Tank Initiative (TTI) has enabled ISET-Nepal to initiate a process of fundamental changes, which have enhanced its overall organizational capacity. The support has been provided to achieve the following objectives in the long run:

- Develop and implement a strategic plan with a strong organizational development component.
- Explore the new areas of research.
- Update the organization's information technology infrastructure such as library.
- Enhance the capacity of employees through training and various HRD activities.
- Invest in physical infrastructure such as power backups, water cleaning and storage.
- Strengthen financial management system.
- Hire consultants to delve into specific areas of research.
- Provide research support to Master's level students.

### **4. Nepal: Integrating Urban and Peri – Urban Agriculture and Forestry in City Climate Change Strategies**

The objective of this study was to monitor the impact of the Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture and Forestry (UPAF) pilot project in Kathmandu on climate change mitigation, adaptation and co- benefits. The study involved collection of the data on the co-benefits of the roof top farming like ambient temperatures, reducing storm water runoff and enhancing infiltration, reducing energy use by lowering food miles, replacing fertilizers by composted organic wastes and lowering vulnerability of urban poor. Other purpose was to provide feedback on local adaptation of the monitoring and scenario development guidelines and tools developed by RUAF Foundation. One of the major parts of the project was to engage with Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) officials in integrating UPAF in climate change and development plans.

### **5. Mainstreaming Climate Change Risk Management in Development (ADB TA-7984 NEP: Study of Indigenous Practices for Climate Change Adaptation in Nepal)**

This project studied the prevailing indigenous and traditional climate change adaptation practices in different parts of Nepal to contribute knowledge and shared with planners



*An operator using Pani Ghatta (Water Mill) in Sindhupalchowk*

and policy makers. The study aimed to identify and analyze climate change issues and adaptation priorities from local and grassroots communities’ – especially those of women and indigenous people – perspectives by capturing their national and sub-national programs and policies to strengthen climate resilience and adaptive capacity of Nepalese society and institutions. Asian Development Bank provided support to conduct the study. ISET-Nepal carried out the study in association with IDS Nepal.

## **6. Strengthening People’s Perspective on Water Commons in South Asia**

The objective of this study was to generate qualitative evidences on the impact on riparian communities - on poverty reduction, livelihoods, access to benefits, floods, displacements etc by the installation projects such as hydropower, irrigation, embankment and dams etc. Investigation of water governance and role of local communities is being done. The study aimed to identify specific campaign and advocacy issues at basin level and assess policies that guide Koshi, Gandak and Mahakali river basins.

## **7. Strengthening Transparency and Access to Information on Trans-boundary Water Governance in South Asia**

The project mapped the availability and accessibility of data and information related to selected trans-boundary rivers through in-country assessments in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. The aim of the project was to test the efficacy of the right to information (RTI) as a tool to gather data and information on trans-boundary rivers in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Similarly, it aimed to build the capacity of civil society actors and the media in the region to use RTI to access data and information on trans-boundary rivers.

## **8. Empowering Local Engagement on Adaptation and Resilience Finance: Making Finance Transparent, Accessible and Accountable—The Adaptation Finance Accountability Initiative**

The project focused on exploring how funds for climate change adaptation flow from the national to sub-national levels. Five ongoing development projects were examined in which funds supported adaptive activities at the watershed/ecosystem, community, and household levels: Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA), Nepal Climate Change Support Program (NCCSP), Hariyo Ban, Multi-stakeholder Forestry Program (MSFP), and Community-based Flood and Glacier Lake Outburst Program (CFGORRP). The study systematically reviewed project documents, carried out field observations, and interacted with stakeholders at all levels—central, sub-national and local—to understand the dynamics of fund flow and examine the share of funds actually being used in adaptation.

The five projects focused on reducing the vulnerability and increasing the adaptive capacity of the poor, marginalized groups, women, and the disadvantaged. The projects also engaged multiple institutions in decision-making regarding fund flow and implementation. However, each project used a different approach to assessing climate change vulnerability at the local level and to ensuring that its activities would reach the most vulnerable sections of the population.

## **9. Hydro Aid : Effective Support for Energy and Development**

The project seeks to increase the understanding of how effective aid to support energy has been in Nepal and Tanzania. Energy is perceived to be an important prerequisite for development, and given the challenges of climate change, finding ways to support the creation of clean energy sources is a priority of much development assistance. With primary objective to assess the effectiveness of Norwegian aid to water and energy in two key partner countries, the project will examine the processes and outcomes of aid. The Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA) is the lead of the project, while the Norwegian Institute for Regional and Urban Research (NIBR), the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), the University of Dar es Salaam (UDS), the University of Sokoine (USO), and the Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-Nepal (ISET-Nepal) are the consortium partners. ISET-Nepal takes lead in studying Nepal case study - Khimti I Hydropower Project (KHP-I).

## **10. Post Event Review of Nepal Flood Disaster 2014**

ISET-Nepal, ISET-International and Practical Action collaborated to develop and refine an approach to post-event analysis which can be applied more broadly and will support a systematic understanding of how to build resilience and develop mechanisms to avoid losses in the future, particularly at the scale of communities, urban areas, or rural regions. This framework would be helpful to generate approaches to post-event analysis that enable implementation of practical risk reduction activities and systematic data collection on what works. The project was supported by Zurich Insurance Company Ltd, Switzerland.



Local community and researchers during focused group discussion at Kaski

## II. Perception of Climate Change by Population and Adaptations

The study aimed to assess vulnerabilities and identify population living in the Mangaltar VDC of Khotang District and Bhadgau Sinwari of Inaruwa Municipality, Sunsari District and then suggest adaptation options. To meet the objectives of the research study, ISET-Nepal worked in collaboration with Centre for Himalayan Studies. Output from this project is expected enhance in house capacity of ISET-Nepal to conduct similar studies on Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Change Adaptation.

### Local Collaborative Studies

ISET-Nepal ventured into unexplored arenas of research in the country. In one such study, we examined the viability of using Moringa (*Moringa oleifera*) as a source of agro-based small enterprise. The climate-resistant Moringa, or “miracle tree,” is a multi-purpose species with high nutritional and medicinal properties. The tree and its harvest of edible fruits can be promoted as a cash crop in semi-arid zones of South Asia including Nepal's Chure Hills and Tarai. A small private-sector company requested our support in exploring various aspects of the species as well as in developing a business model for its use. We facilitated research on the plant's characteristics, conducted field visits to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu in India, and districts in Nepal and organized a stakeholder meeting.

A second study, in collaboration with the Federation of Computer Association Nepal and Japan International Cooperation Agency, took a stock of the computer hardware and software components available in Nepal. A first of its kind in Nepal, this study established a baseline useful for policy dialogue processes related to information technology in the country.

## Policy Engagement

Policy influence occurs vertically and horizontally within the socio-political space, and ISET-Nepal engages with agents within these bandwidths. We organize conferences, workshops, advocacy meetings, policy briefs, and shared-learning dialogues. At the national level we intend our discourse to inform public dialogue. At the local level, we disseminate our findings using local channels. We also capacitate community members to spread our finding, by, for example, training radio managers and local program directors to design and co-produce local radio programs. The programs produced are broadcast locally. We also organize immersion courses for local schoolteachers, leaders, and other agents of change. The following efforts highlight our approach in the policy-influence continuum:

- **Ministry-level partnership:** Joint publication on indigenous knowledge and practices on climate change adaptation with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MoSTE) was a policy engagement success.
- **Sub-national level partnership:** We have received formal request from Kathmandu District Development Committee to help them draft a district-level environmental policy. We will seek similar engagements with other government departments and agencies in the future.
- **Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) to climate change:** We have developed a vulnerability assessment tool and a scenario-development method to plan for local resilience. UNEP Bangkok has commissioned ISET-Nepal to apply the method in ten sub-watersheds of the PMER. Our output is expected to add to our knowledge on ecosystem-based vulnerability assessment and adaptation in ways with practical, theoretical and policy relevance. ISET-Nepal worked closely with the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) to implement this research.
- **Disaster Compensation:** ISET-Nepal's one tangible but indirect example of policy influence involved the massive hailstorm that struck Mugu District's Khatyad Region on 25 October, 2014. Altogether 2,068 families across eight VDCs suffered damage to crops, including rice, worth 130 million Nepali rupees. Executive Director of ISET-Nepal Ajaya Dixit was one of the panelists in the public hearing facilitated by BBC Nepal at the bank of Rara Lake. Dixit also highlighted this disaster in his bi-weekly magazine column and affected families continued their campaign for compensation in the district. ISET-Nepal researchers also discussed the disaster with the parliamentarians from Mugu District. Eventually, Nepal's Prime Minister instructed the Finance Minister to allocate 200 million rupees to compensate the affected families. The Khatyad hailstorm disaster is one of the seven events examined in detail in a Nepali disaster monograph currently being developed by ISET-Nepal.
- **Disaster Recovery Discourse:** Immediately after the earthquake of April 2015, we held discussions with researchers, development professionals, and media persons and conceived of the "*surakshit thath-thalo*," or resilient homestead and livelihoods. We partnered with a community radio group to record what survivors felt about resilient homestead and what they wanted their new homes to be like. The victims' views incorporating earthquake safe shelter for family members and livestock, feed and fodder

storage, a nearby production base, community solidarities, traditions and practices were shaped into 10 radio programs titled *surakshit thath-thalo*. Twelve community radio stations located in the earthquake-affected areas broadcasted the program every week for two-and-a-half months.

The radio programs brought the notion of the *surakshit thath-thalo* to the center stage, demonstrating that safety is not only about physical construction but also about secured livelihoods and access to basic services and a production base and that all these elements must be integrated in reconstruction-and-recovery efforts. The National Planning Commission, government departments, non-governmental actors, and development professionals immediately embraced the concept and newspapers began to highlight the public's opinions on *surakshit thath-thalo*. Because of the volatile political environment that Nepal currently faces, we cannot say how this policy opinion will translate into policy uptake and action, especially given that the institutional arrangement for earthquake recovery and reconstruction is still in the doldrums, but, at the very least, our research was able to shape a strong and timely policy opinion.

## Activities

### Conference

- ***Graduate Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development***

The Central Development of Environment Science (TU-CDES), Resource Himalaya Foundation (RHF) and the Institute for Social and Environmental Transitions-Nepal (ISET-Nepal) organized first graduate conference on environment and sustainable development on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2015. The conference aimed to establish an interdisciplinary knowledge-sharing platform for young researchers, with a particular focus on environment, resource conservation, management, economic development and natural science. Post graduate students presented their research and reviewed each other's work. In total there were 46 presenters (43 oral presenters and 3 poster presenters), 120 participants, 66 guests, 15 volunteers and 15 exhibitors. In this conference Nepalese student from nine different universities (4 national and 5 international universities) participated. Similarly guests present were from 35 different national and international organizations.

- ***National Summit on Technological Justice, Kathmandu***

ISET-Nepal, the Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), and Practical Action, along with the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre, Nepal Agriculture Research Council, Department of Agriculture, Nepal Engineering Association, Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training, Kathmandu University, and Institute of Engineering jointly organized a national summit on technological justice on 30 March, 2015, at NAST premises. The participants discussed ideas regarding technologies that different organizations promote in order to develop a common understanding of the issue of technological justice.

- ***Rara Conference, Mugu Nepal***

ISET-Nepal supported and participated in the National Conference on Climate Change and Environmental Threats: Protecting Lives and Livelihoods of Mountain People. The conference was organized by KIRDAC in partnership with other organizations on 30 to 31 October, 2014, at Rara Lake in Mugu District, West Nepal. The conference brought the vice chair of the National Planning Commission, secretaries of ministries, other government officials, and experts together to discuss the consequences of climate change.

- ***Vulnerability and Adaptation Conference***

The consortium partners Centre for Science Technology and Policy (CSTEP), Public Affairs Centre (PAC), Bangalore and Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET) Nepal organized Vulnerability and Adaptation Conference on August 26-27, 2014 at Bangalore, India. One of the objectives of this conference was to share preliminary findings from a recently completed short consortium project on climate change vulnerability and adaptation in South Asia and invite comments from experts. The project involves both top-down and bottom-up methods to understanding vulnerability in two separate regions in South Asia. Another objective of this conference was for participants to gain a broader understanding of the methods being used to assess vulnerability to climate change at the local level and at larger scales for certain sectors or across a state or region.

- ***National River Summit 2014 Nepal***

ISET-Nepal in collaboration with Nepal River Conservation Trust (NRCT), Tribhuvan University (TU), Kirtipur, and Kathmandu University (KU), Dhulikhel organized four days National River Summit 2014 that brought stakeholders together to share knowledge and identify gaps in the information and management of Nepal's Rivers. The aim was to create a forum for continued communications between stakeholders, and recommend measures to help develop policies to manage and govern rivers.

## **Workshops/Seminars/Training/Capacity Building**

- ***Climate Finance Meeting, Kathmandu***

ISET-Nepal partnered Climate Network Nepal and Oxfam to organize a meeting on climate finance in Nepal. Fifty representatives of the government, donors, and civil society participated in the meeting held on 13 February 2015 in Kathmandu.

- ***ISET Network meeting, Kathmandu***

Organizations from within the ISET network comprising of ISET-Nepal, ISET-International, ISET-Pakistan and members from the India office came together for a strategic planning workshop on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014. This meeting discussed the various issues confronting the network and the coming transition. As member of ISET cohort, this will provide ISET-Nepal with new opportunities to link with and co-produce knowledge with ISET-International and SILC.

- ***Immersion Course on Climate and Development***

ISET-Nepal organized immersion course on Climate Change and Development: Knowledge Transformation and Dissemination with collaboration of Science Teacher's Association of Nepal (STAN) at Biratnagar, Morang on May 13-14, 2014. About 26 science teachers participated in the immersion course. This course aimed to generate climate change awareness among the teachers of local government schools of Morang districts so that teachers can effectively contribute in knowledge building of students.

- ***National Dissemination and Sharing Workshop on Climate-Resilient Indigenous and Local Practices in Nepal, Kathmandu***

ISET-Nepal and IDS-Nepal, another research group in Nepal, with support from the MoSTE and the Nepal Mission of the ADB jointly organized a one-day dissemination workshop on November 14, 2014, in Kathmandu. This workshop was conducted to disseminate the findings of a study conducted in 22 districts of Nepal documenting local and indigenous knowledge about and practices in dealing with climate change vulnerabilities.

- ***Local Shared Learning Dialogues***

Last year ISET-Nepal carried series of shared learning dialogues with local communities, local-level government officials and other stakeholders. Dialogues were conducted during the implementation of the following projects: Post-2014 Karnali Floods, Vulnerability Impact Assessment at PMER, and Hydropower Study in Dolakha District. Two dialogues were particularly conducted to explore politics of policy and knowledge.

- ***Guidance Group Meeting on Tracking Adaptation Finance***

ISET-Nepal organized consultative meeting in collaboration with Oxfam GB and Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) on August 8, 2014 at Hotel Mayur, Baluwatar. The meeting focused on developing a methodology for tracking climate adaptation finance in Nepal. Effective methodology helped track the climate adaptation finance flows.

- ***4<sup>th</sup> Regional Meeting (TTI-RM4) Kathmandu***

TTI member organizations in South Asia have been conducting annual regional meetings to share and learn experiences of the TTI funded think tanks. Three TTI grantee regional meetings have been organized, two in India and one in Sri Lanka, along with an international gathering in South Africa. This regional meeting is the fourth in South Asia, which ISET-Nepal hosted in Nagarkot, Nepal. This 4th Think Tank Initiative Regional Meeting (TTI-RM4) on 9-10 June 2014 brought executive directors and representatives from sixteen TTI grantee organizations from across South Asia. TTI funded institutions acknowledged that this grant has helped to strengthen their organization's focus on enhancing research and also improving its policy linkages.

## National Dissemination and Sharing Workshop on "Climate Resilient Indigenous and Local Practices in Nepal"

ISET-Nepal and IDS-Nepal with support from MOSTE and ADB, Nepal Mission jointly organized one day national dissemination and sharing workshop on local adaptation practices for climate change adaptation in Nepal on November 14, 2014. The purpose of the workshop was to share findings of the study including local knowledge, practices and insights gathered from different parts of Nepal. The team shared thematic and cross cutting adaptation practices and presented analysis and insights in terms of change process, knowledge generation, transfer and evolution of adaptation practices.

## EbA Vulnerability Impact Assessment Tool Training

Vulnerability Impact Assessment (VIA) tools training was conducted at Pokhara, Kaski from 8-10 December, 2014. The VIA tools training was based on the project Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) in Panchase Mountain Ecological Region that covers the collective 17 Village Development Committee (VDC) of Kaski, Parbat and Syanja districts. The participants were regional and district level government officials, VDC secretaries and representatives of Panchse Forest Conservation Committee from Kaski, Parbat and Syanja districts. The main objective of the training was to build the capacity of the participants from government offices working at Panchase conservation area. This two days training program was followed by half day field visit at Bhadaure Tamagi VDC of Kaski District.

## Capacity Building of TEWA Staffs and Grantee

TEWA is a philanthropy organization supporting single women. ISET-Nepal provided training on climate change to TEWA staff and TEWA grantee to build their capacity to understand issues related to climate change and environment.

## Inter-School Art Competition on Schools

Investing in schoolchildren is and has always been a priority for ISET-Nepal. We see it as one way of meeting our long-term objective of enhancing research quality. ISET-Nepal has used art competitions on topical themes for students in grades 8-10 in order to involve students in building high-quality research and knowledge.

- **Basantapur, Kathmandu:** In partnership with the Science Teachers Association of Nepal, we held a competition on 9 November, 2014, at Basantapur, Kathmandu's main palace square. Forty-four students from 22 community schools took part. Their paintings were displayed publicly. All participants were awarded certificates of participation and the best three won book prizes. The twelve best paintings were included in a calendar for wide-scale distribution.



*Professor Sudarshan Tiwari delivering lecture at Radisson Hotel, Lazimpat*

- **Paanchkhaal, Kavrepalanchowk:** The positive response to our first art competition encouraged us to reach out to students outside Kathmandu Valley. In coordination with Maina Balbikash Samittee, a local NGO working for the welfare of conflict-affected children, we sponsored a competition on climate change for high school students at Sarvamangala Higher Secondary School of Kavrepalanchok, a district east of Kathmandu, on January 30, 2015. Twenty students from 10 community schools participated. Again, we awarded prizes to the best three and certificates to all. The event was recorded and broadcast by Sagarmatha Radio in Kathmandu.
- **Tudaldevi, Kathmandu:** We organized our third art competition at Universal Secondary School in Baluwatar on June 12, 2015, soon after the Gorkha earthquake. Twenty-six high school students from 13 private and community schools in the locality where ISET-Nepal office is situated participated. We worked in partnership with the NGO Baluwatar Community Service Center as well as, for the first time, Baluwatar Community Police Center. The police center supports local communities, helping them in particular to deal with issues such as drugs, safety, and community engagement. The best paintings were awarded prizes and all participants were provided with educational materials as encouragement. A compendium of the painting is being published for wide-scale distribution.

## ISET Platform Lecture

### **Lecture I**

ISET-Nepal started a lecture series called "ISET Platform Lecture". The first lecture was delivered by Professor Sudarshan Raj TiwarionBuilding The Green City of Future "Inclusive" Technologies And Materials at Hotel Radisson on September 11 2014. Professor Tiwaricompleted his Master's degree in Architecture from the University of Hawaii, USA

in 1977, specializing on housing in tropical countries. He received his PhD from Tribhuvan University for his dissertation on ancient settlements of the Kathmandu Valley in 1995. He served in the faculty of Tribhuvan University's Institute of Engineering Department of Architecture for almost 40 years, and was Dean of the institute of Engineering between 1988 and 1992. Among his published work are: *The Brick and the Bull: An account of Handigaun, the ancient capital of Nepal* (2001) and *Temples of Nepal Valley* (2009).

## Lecture II

On March 1 2015, Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed delivered 2<sup>nd</sup> Lecture of ISET Platform at Kathmandu. Dr. Ahmed spoke on the topic: *Dhaka City: Stressed but Alive*. He has years of experiences in International Relations who completed his Ph. D in Political Science from the Carlton University, Ottawa, Canada in 1991. He is a visiting Professor at the Sagesse University, Beirut and has authored, co-authored, or edited 18 books and 6 monographs. More than 110 research papers and scholarly articles have been published in leading journals and chapters in edited volumes.

## M.Sc. Grant

ISET-Nepal provided grants to students to conduct research for their M. Sc. theses. Last year we selected four students using the following process: a call for proposals, short-listing of candidates, interviews, and presentations before a selection panel. The candidates are required to report on progress in their work and to submit a copy of their completed theses. We mentor those who request help. In the last five years, we have supported 26 grantees.

## Abishkar Fellowship

As a part of mentoring younger generation, we have designed the Abiskhar (invention in English) Fellowship to provide financial support for four or five undergraduate students in Nepal to further their creative learning and professional growth. We will fund innovative proposals to address Nepal's social, economic and environmental challenges. The announcement of this scholarship will be released shortly, a bit later than expected due to the earthquake.

## Community Radio

Last year ISET-Nepal trained community radio station managers in capturing local issues and supported them to produce radio programs. This training aimed to build the capacity of station managers to include contemporary local issues and those related to climate change into their programs. Each manager had his or her station broadcast programs on climate change.

Immediately after the earthquake, we held discussions with researchers, development professionals, and media persons and conceived of the "*surakshit thath-thalo*," or resilient homestead and livelihoods. We partnered with a community radio group to record and broadcast what survivors felt about resilient homestead and what they wanted their new homes to be like. Twelve community radio stations located in the earthquake-affected areas broadcasted the program every week for two-and-a-half months.

## Publications

Publications are the main way ISET-Nepal engages the policy arena. Last year we published the following publications:

## Reports

- Building Urban Resilience: Assessing Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture in Kathmandu, Nepal (Research by ISET-Nepal published by START Washington in October 2014)
- Indigenous Local Knowledge and Practices for Climate Resilience in Nepal (February 2015) and following associated case studies:
  - Case Studies of Indigenous and Local Knowledge and Practices in Nepal-Water Management
  - Case Studies of Indigenous and Local Knowledge and Practices in Nepal-Forest and Pasture Management
  - Case Studies of Indigenous and Local Knowledge and Practices in Nepal-Rural Transport Infrastructure
  - Case Study of Indigenous and Local Knowledge and Practices in Nepal-Settlements and Housing
  - Case Studies of Indigenous and Local Knowledge and Practices in Nepal-Introduction, Objectives and Methodology
- Groundwater Resilience Nepal: Preliminary Findings from A Case Study in the Middle Hills (February 2015)
- Risk Nexus Urgent Case for Recovery: What Can We Learn from the August 2014 Karnali Floods in Nepal (July 2015)

## Briefing Papers and Short Documentaries

- a. Video documentary of Argeli Irrigation System of Palpa (November 2014)
- b. Groundwater Resilience Nepal: Preliminary Findings from A Case Study in the Middle Hills (March 2015)
- c. Post-Event Review of Karnali River Floods 2014 (March 2015)
- d. Computer Hardware and Software in Nepal (April 2015)
- e. Utilizing RTI to Access Information on the Kosi River in Nepal
- f. Opening Up Access to Information on Trans-boundary River- Review of Proactive Disclosure of Information in Nepal
- g. Status and Implementation of Trans-boundary River Agreements on Koshi River of Nepal

## Contact us:

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