

*Himalayan Journal of Development and Democracy, Vol 10, Number 1, 2015*



**Volume 10, Number 1, 2015**

**HJDD**

**Himalayan Journal of Development and Democracy**

**PROCEEDINGS AND  
PAPER ABSTRACTS OF THE**

**Tenth Annual Himalayan Policy  
Research Conference**

**Madison, Wisconsin, October 22, 2014**

**Nepal Study Center  
The University of New Mexico**

Published by *Nepal Study Center*, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, 87131, USA



PROCEEDINGS AND PAPER ABSTRACTS  
OF THE  
Tenth Annual Himalayan Policy Research  
Conference  
Nepal Study Center

Thursday, October 22, 2015, Madison Concourse Hotel and Governors' Club,  
Pre-conference Venue of the 44<sup>th</sup> South Asian Conference at the University of  
Wisconsin-- Madison

Department of Economics, The University of New Mexico, 1915 Roma Ave NE,  
MSC05 3060, Rm. 1019 Albuquerque, NM 87131  
<http://nepalstudycenter.unm.edu>, Ph: 505-277-5903, [nsc@unm.edu](mailto:nsc@unm.edu)

Nepal Study Center, University of New Mexico

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University of Colorado at Boulder

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University of New Mexico

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### **Session 2: Building Resilient Communities**

Chair:

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### **Session 3: Climate Change and Disaster Management**

Chair:

Sakib Mahmud, University of Wisconsin-Superior

Discussants:

Sunil Tankha, Institute of Social Studies Erasmus University  
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Wenmei Guo, University of New Mexico

Pradip Thapa, Everest International School Japan

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## **Welcome Note from Editors**

On behalf of the editorial board of the *Himalayan Journal of Development and Democracy (HJDD)* and the conference organizing committee, I would like to thank all the participants at the Tenth Annual Himalayan Policy Research Conference (HPRC) held at the venue of the University of Wisconsin's 44th Annual South Asian Conference, Madison, WI.

As usual, we had a very successful event with an enthusiastic participation from all over. A larger number of abstracts were carefully screened and ranked by a team of our dedicated NSC member scholars – Dr. Jennifer Thacher, Dr. Mukti Upadhyay, Dr. Vijaya Sharma, Dr. Sakib Mahmud, Dr. Prakash Adhikari, and Dr. Shikha Silwal. NSC was established at the University of New Mexico in 2004 with the objective to promote policy research related to the South Asian region and the countries of the Himalayan region. The NSC team remains dedicated to creating platforms for the enhancement of knowledge sharing, particularly in the areas of sustainable development, environment, poverty, governance, and health. Among its other prominent activities, NSC publishes an e-portal *Development Journal of the South* which is a peer reviewed journal and maintains an electronic repository *Himalayan Research Papers Archive* to allow scholars to upload, store, and disseminate policy research, coordinates the Himalayan study abroad program, and doctoral and post-doctoral research projects.

Nepal Study Center has added a milestone by facilitating the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of New Mexico and the Kathmandu University (KU) and the Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)'s 8-country Himalayan University Consortium (HUC). As a part of the international collaboration, NSC formed an interdisciplinary team at UNM and went to Nepal to advance understanding of the linkages and feedback mechanisms between biophysical and social factors. This is a research initiative developed with the Lumbini Center for Sustainability of Pratiman Neema Memorial Foundation.

Our inaugural HPRC in 2006 was ambitious in ensuring a significant convergence of researchers working on policy relevant issues on South Asia. That foundation work led to consecutive successes in the following years and has now made HPRC a durable annual event. We hope that

these conferences, together with research activities performed at NSC and by its research affiliates, will culminate in the formation of an *Association for Himalayan Policy Research*. In recognition of the activities directly and indirectly supported by NSC, many scholars from North America, South Asia, Europe, the Far East, and Australia have joined this network. Our policy research association will continue to expand this global network of scholars, professionals, and policy practitioners interested in the development of the South Asian region.

The Center is undertaking this new initiative to promote scholarly dialogue on issues with a common theme affecting the three continents -- South Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The International Development and Sustainability--South-South Initiative (IDS-SSI) is a common platform scholars and students, who are doing development-related research in different cultural settings across the globe.

We are grateful to the University of Wisconsin's 44th Annual South Asian Conference for giving us the pre-conference venue. We are also thankful to those who have provided financial support to conduct this conference. We appreciate the help from the staff and graduate students of the Department of Economics, UNM, and the goodwill and support of many friends of NSC. We particularly thank UNM students Naresh Nepal, and Soumi Roy Chowdhury for their assistance. Finally, we would like to thank our guest editors Vijaya R Sharma and Soumi Roy Chowdhury for their help in preparing this issue of *HJDD*. NSC also would like to thank student volunteer from the University of Wisconsin, Rashesh Shrestha and NSC secretariat Tami Henri for their support.

Sincerely,



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Alok K. Bohara, PhD  
Editor, *HJDD*  
Professor, Department of Economics, University of New Mexico

### **Acknowledgement**

The Nepal Study Center and the conference organizing team would like to acknowledge financial contribution being made by various individuals and organizations.

### **Financial Support**

NSC would like to encourage all the friends of NSC to continue their financial support so that it can successfully undertake various tasks: update software, run conferences, produce proceedings, maintain the electronic research repository and e-portal. NSC is a not-for-profit organization registered under the College of Arts and Sciences, University of New Mexico.

Please send your tax deductible contribution payable to *Nepal Study Center* at the following address: Attn: Ms. Leah Hardesty, Department Administrator II; Department of Economics; University of New Mexico; Albuquerque, NM 87131, USA; Phone: (505) 277-5304; Fax: (505) 277-9445; Email: [LMayo@unm.edu](mailto:LMayo@unm.edu). Contact Ms. Hardesty for any direct wire transfer information.



**PAPER ABSTRACTS**

## **Education, Health and Inequality**

### **Schooling infrastructure and educational outcomes in Nepal**

**Vinish Shrestha**\*

Towson University

**Animesh Giri**†

Cornerstone

We estimate the impact of an increase in the number of schools on educational outcomes in Nepal. We combine the between-district differences in number of new schools with variation in exposure to these schools created by the virtue of individuals being of school-age. Our results and back-of-the-envelope calculations suggest that on average the increase in the number of schools can explain about a third of the total differences in the reading and writing abilities for the treated and control groups of women. These results underscore the continued importance of increasing access to schooling in developing countries like Nepal.

*For full working paper visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3518/3262>

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\* Towson University. Email: [shresthavinish@gmail.com](mailto:shresthavinish@gmail.com)

† Cornerstone. Email: [animesh1627@gmail.com](mailto:animesh1627@gmail.com)

**Emerging from “The Darkness”: The effect of school construction on educational and child health in Nepal**

**Vinish Shrestha<sup>‡</sup>**

Towson University

During the Rana regime in Nepal, rulers mostly prohibited educational practices. The fall of the Rana regime in 1951 introduced formal education in Nepal. The number of primary schools increased from 321 in 1951 to 3,163 in 1961. Using across-district variation in schools constructed and differences across cohorts affected by school construction, I evaluate the effect of school construction of 1950s on educational and infant health outcomes. I find that 1 new school increased ability to read and write by 1.8 and 1.9 percentage points among males and also reduced infant mortality. Using school construction of 1950s as instruments, I find that father’s ability to read reduces infant mortality.

*For full working paper visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3506/3252>

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<sup>‡</sup>Towson University. Email: [shresthavinish@gmail.com](mailto:shresthavinish@gmail.com)

## **Parents' decision-making on the consumption of private tutoring of school-going children: A game theoretic approach**

**Sakib Mahmud<sup>§</sup>**

University of Wisconsin-Superior

**Tanzeem Iqbal Ali<sup>\*\*</sup>**

University of Wisconsin-Superior

While private tutoring leads to a low social rate of return with substantive opportunity as well as transaction costs, research reveals that investments in private tutoring genders a high private rate of return for parents who are willing to allocate resources in terms of time and money to improve their wards' chances of getting higher scores in exams. Considering such stakes, this paper introduces game-theoretic models of parents' decision making on the consumption of private tutoring given the interactions among the public and private school going children as well as possible interventions by the government.

By applying a three-stage behavioral game theoretical set up, we develop private tutoring game models using the key stakeholders comprising the higher authority of both public and private schools, teachers involved with private tutoring, and the parents. Our preliminary results reveal that teachers' dutifulness increases with salary but with professional development, the result is ambiguous. A teacher's expected income is decreasing in school infrastructure through fall in private tuition demand but increasing in teacher's salary. However, from higher authorities' point of view, if they care only about the total education of the students and is unmindful of the sources of student education, they would not mind lowering the teachers' wage, even if the policy reduces teacher dutifulness. Given such developments, parents are expected to support policies that encourage more private tutoring from the teachers since it leads to higher parental utility and overall education level for the students.

*For full working paper visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3513/3257>

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<sup>§</sup>University of Wisconsin-Superior. Email: [smahmud@uwsuper.edu](mailto:smahmud@uwsuper.edu)

<sup>\*\*</sup> University of Wisconsin-Superior. Email: [tanzeemiqbalali@yahoo.com](mailto:tanzeemiqbalali@yahoo.com)

## **How do household conditions affect children's educational attainment: The case of Bangladesh?**

**Nusrat Farah**<sup>††</sup>

Eastern Illinois University

**Mukti Upadhyay**<sup>‡‡</sup>

Eastern Illinois University

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "The job of the school is to teach so well that family background is no longer an issue." In reality, however, children's educational outcomes are affected by family, social and economic backgrounds. In Bangladesh, as in many other developing countries, quality of education is always a subject of policy debate. But a bigger issue is whether a child will go to school to complete middle or high school education or will the child drop out before graduation.

Free tuition and transportation is usually inadequate for schools to retain children if a factor such as high poverty, low parental education, or larger family size makes the child work long hours to contribute to family income. Parents' understanding of the importance of education is crucial. An uneducated parent may have a school going child simply because the parent understood the value of education through his or her experiences. In general, a disadvantaged child will face more challenges to fulfill her educational goal than an advantaged child.

To study how the household conditions affect a child's school going decisions in Bangladesh, we turn to data from Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). We examine proximate factors associated with school dropouts by developing OLS and probit models to see if our models can explain the Bangladesh DHS data well. We pay special attention to any differential effects of the gender of the household head or across regions.

*For full working paper visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3517/3261>

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<sup>††</sup> Eastern Illinois University. Email: [nfarah@eiu.edu](mailto:nfarah@eiu.edu)

<sup>‡‡</sup> Eastern Illinois University. Email: [mpupadhyay@eiu.edu](mailto:mpupadhyay@eiu.edu)

**Balance of power, domestic violence and health consequences:  
Evidence from demographic and health survey of Nepal**

**Soumi Chowdhury**<sup>§§</sup>

University of New Mexico

**Alok Bohara**<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

University of New Mexico

**Brady Horn**<sup>†††</sup>

University of New Mexico

A large literature studying Domestic Violence (DV) has documented a complex relationship between intimate partner violence, domestic risk factors, women empowerment and health outcomes. In this paper we attempt to disentangle this complex relationship using data drawn from Nepal Demographic and Health Survey, 2011. Empirically, a two-equation system is estimated, where the first equation models the relationship between domestic violence and health outcomes (physical injuries) whereas the second equation models the relationship of domestic violence to domestic risk factors and women's empowerment. The study finds evidence that both education and cooperative environments lessen the likelihood of violence. Additionally, a number of household and cultural factors influence DV including alcoholic husband, multiple unions and religion. Finally, in terms of health outcomes we find that the likelihood of facing all the negative health outcomes increases exponentially with higher intensities of violence.

*For full working paper visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3507/3253>

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<sup>§§</sup>University of New Mexico. Email: [sroychowdhury@unm.edu](mailto:sroychowdhury@unm.edu)

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>University of New Mexico. Email: [bohara@unm.edu](mailto:bohara@unm.edu)

<sup>†††</sup>University of New Mexico. Email: [bhorn@unm.edu](mailto:bhorn@unm.edu)

## **Low-skilled migration and educational investment in Nepal**

**Rashesh Shrestha<sup>†††</sup>**

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Migrating to resource-abundant Gulf countries under short-term contracts represents a very lucrative labor market option for many young individuals in South Asian developing countries, for which higher educational qualifications are not often demanded. In this context this paper studies whether access to low-skilled jobs in construction and service sector leads to a reduction in schooling investment. Utilizing the Nepal Census data and instrumental variables method to account for endogeneity of migration, I estimate the impact of migration boom in Nepal by comparing average education across cohorts and across areas with different rates of migration. The study finds that increase in low-skilled migration possibilities reduced educational investment in Nepal by 3%. Given the importance of human capital accumulation in long-term development, providing additional incentives to keep individuals longer in school would help maximize the benefits from migration.

*For full working paper visit*  
[http://www.aae.wisc.edu/rmshrestha/Rashesh\\_Shrestha\\_JMP.pdf](http://www.aae.wisc.edu/rmshrestha/Rashesh_Shrestha_JMP.pdf)

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<sup>†††</sup> University of Wisconsin-Madison. Email: [rmshrestha@wisc.edu](mailto:rmshrestha@wisc.edu)

## **Building Resilient Communities**

### **Building resilient communities**

**Wenmei Guo** §§§

University of New Mexico

**Alok Bohara** \*\*\*\*

University of New Mexico

Damages of health infrastructure caused by two back-to-back earthquakes in 2015 led to a worsening of reproductive health situation in Nepal. We propose that providing certain valuable programs and services through a grass-root level infrastructure will improve women's well-being. For providing the evidences of the benefits of the suggested programs, we use primary data collected from two pilot studies done in Bahunepati, Nepal in 2013 and 2014. One such suggested program is a micro finance program as an example.

We focus on households' nutrition status and participants' health outcome. We use an ordinary least square and Ologit methods to estimate two separate models. Results show that the micro-finance program improves households' nutrition status and participants' health status. We recommend building a resilient center, such as a Women Community Center (WCC) in Bahunepati, to provide various beneficial programs to women. Estimated benefits of the center will be restoring medical services and ensuring healthy lives to women.

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§§§ University of New Mexico. Email: [wenmei@unm.edu](mailto:wenmei@unm.edu)

\*\*\*\* University of New Mexico. Email: [bohara@unm.edu](mailto:bohara@unm.edu)



## **Climate Change and Disaster Management**

### **Disaster management in mountain economy: A case of Uttarakhand State of India**

**Ishwar Chandra Awasthi<sup>††††</sup>**

Giri Institute of Development Studies

**Background:** The mountain habitats share certain similar bio-climatic features and concerns across the world, whether they are the Alps mountain regions of European countries or Andean mountain ranges of the South America (Venezuela, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina) or Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region countries of the South Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar). These relate primarily to the changing mountain environment due to degradation of resources owing to their excessive use. This has resulted in reduction in biomass production, marginalization and low human welfare. Many of these mountain regions are prone to natural hazards (landslides, earthquakes, avalanches, diseases etc. (Li Tianchi et.al. 2001). Human conflict and wars also concentrated in many of the poor regions (Libiszewski and Bachler, 1997) making the life of the mountain people more vulnerable. The minority inhabitants in certain mountain regions suffered not only from the resources exploitation but also from ethnic conflict, violence and wars (Ives, 1997). But then, there are major differences in the mountain economies of the developed countries of Europe and that of Andean regions and HKH regions in respect of their development trajectories.

Mountain regions of European countries (Alps) had much similar situations during the 18th Century to what exists today in the mountain regions of Andean or HKH regions. These Alpine inhabitants, for instance, had witnessed high poverty, out-migration, malnutrition and even outright starvation during Little Ice Age (1500 to 1850 AD) (Ives, 1997). European mountain regions developed fast primarily because of their strong external linkages with the developed regions experiencing industrial revolution, and in this process, mountain regions benefited significantly from this strong linkage effect (Messerli and Ives, 1997). Development of transports – both navigation and railways – had facilitated

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<sup>††††</sup>Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow (India). Email: icawasthi@gmail.com

long distance trade. Large-scale out-migration helped in reducing the demographic pressure, and unlike most developing countries today, Europe at that time experienced faster growth of income than the population, thereby improving their standard of living. The potato, railway development after the mid-19th Century and later mass tourism and large-scale winter sports helped these economies to transform rapidly (Ives, 1997). Industrialization in the Alps has been closely related to the development of hydropower-based industries, and today, more than 50 per cent of the population of the region lives in urban areas. The tourism industry in Alps is most dynamic and competitive. Also, mountain-peasants in these countries receive large sum of subsidies from the governments and other institutions to encounter the limited incomes from mountain agriculture. Many countries (Austria, Switzerland, Germany, France, UK and Norway, for example) have some sorts of institutional mechanisms and state protection in place with considerable political will to ameliorate the in-built inequalities in the mountain economies. The strong linkages with the economically growing areas have thus been the main driving force for development of these mountain economies, and it is argued that further boost in linkages would have far-reaching positive impact on these regions.

The other mountain regions have, by and large, embraced the development model that neglected the specific character of mountain regions which was entirely different than the plain regions. The main reasons behind for disregarding the mountain perspectives are defined as such “explicit or implicit consideration of specific mountain conditions and characteristics and their operational implications while conceiving, designing, implementing and assessing interventions in mountain areas” (Jodha et al., 1992). There are evidences of large infrastructural projects (dam and hydro-power projects, mineral exploration, for instance) coming up in the region particularly in HKH region disregarding the fragility and associated environmental hazards. When mountain perspective is disregarded in development planning and execution of projects and programs, it has severe implications to the ecology, environment and livelihoods of people in the region. The frequent disasters such as landslides, earthquakes, floods and related destruction of human and animal lives and loss of livelihoods is a testimony of the development trajectory underway in the HKH region.

After a brief discussion of mountain economies in general and their disaster proneness in the first section, the second section deals with the

mountain regions in the Indian Himalayan regions that are vulnerable to various disasters. The third section, in particular, deals with one of the mountain states of India namely, Uttarakhand that has witnessed many disasters and the worst disaster occurred in June 2013, entailing enormous loss of human and animal lives and devastation of property and infrastructures. The fourth section examines the damage and need assessment of June 2013 disaster and fifth section describes the pain and sufferings of people that have come out distinctly from discussions of the disaster affected people during field visit. The sixth section analyses the issues relating to rehabilitation and recovery policy measures and the last section concludes by suggesting policy measures from short, medium and long term perspectives.

*For full working paper, visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3508/3254>

**Aiding the distressed compatriots: Scope, impacts and potential of support activities of Nepalese diaspora community in Japan post-Nepal-earthquake 2015**

**Pradip Thapa\*\*\*\***

Everest International School, Japan

In response to the disastrous M7.8 earthquake and subsequent aftershocks that struck Nepal, Nepalese diaspora community living across the world came to the immediate aid of Nepal in organizational as well as personal capacities. This paper expounds the role of Japan-based Nepalese diaspora community in marshalling resources in Japan and administering support for the earthquake victims of Nepal.

Analyzing the support activities of Nepal Earthquake Victims Rescue and Help Association 2015 (NEVRHA 2015) and various other Nepalese community organizations in Japan, this paper argues that the support from Nepalese diaspora community in Japan has been substantial in terms of fundraising and administering of the fund for relief activities. The paper calls for policy innovation on the part of Nepal Embassy in Japan and Nepal Government to tap the immense philanthropic potential of Nepalese diaspora communities in Japan and other countries.

*Working paper is not available for distribution, interested individuals please contact the author.*

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\*\*\*\* Everest International School. Email: [praedip@gmail.com](mailto:praedip@gmail.com)

## **Institutional and organizational capacities for adapting to climate change in the least developing countries**

**Sunil Tankha**<sup>§§§§</sup>

International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam

**Introduction:** How can the least developed countries (LDCs) deal with the effects of global climate change, to which they contributed little and over which they have little control? With many analyses now concluding that some degree of climate change is all but inevitable, attention must shift increasingly to adaptation measures but in this task the LDCs are particularly challenged. The adaptation and resilience literature generally agrees that adaptation capabilities are a function of both the intensity of the impacts of climate change on the community and the resources it can marshal to respond to them. Resource constraints, particularly but not just of the financial kind, are therefore the major limiting factor on the LDCs' response to climate change.

Evaluating the institutional capacities of developing countries to facilitate adaptation to climate change requires a critical theoretically--informed empirical analysis of organizational capabilities, governance structures and the political economy of climate change adaptation practices and potential. In this paper, we analyze these capacities in the case of Nepal, which can be considered in many ways to be an archetypical LDC with problems associated with internal socio---ethnic cleavages, weak governments, political conflict and uncertainty, severe organizational constraints, and of course, widespread poverty. In this conference paper, we report on our main findings related to analyzing the organizational capacity of government structures in Nepal for dealing with issues related to climate change adaptation. Our full research program, which is currently ongoing, investigates broader institutional analysis and includes assessment at the village level.

**Methodology:** Our focus is on investigating the institutional setting because it sets the policy context in which adaptation decisions are or are not taken. Our methodology incorporates a content analysis of several of the policy documents most relevant to climate change adaptation complemented by interviews with various critical actors in the corresponding institutional settings. As part of the content analysis, we

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<sup>§§§§</sup> International Institute of Social Studies. Email: tankha@iss.nl

first listed explicit statements regarding (a) climate change in general and, more importantly (b) adaptation to climate change. We then enumerated the actions and instruments listed in the policies. At the third stage, we discussed the organizational capacities and institutional capacities required to execute them and realize the *formal written policy intent*. We state this in italics to emphasize that for the national and local level actors, their intents (preferences) might be quite different from that which is adopted as the written policies, for a variety of factors which we discuss in the section on the political economy of climate policies in the LDCs.

In our research, we focus on three action arenas: village development, agriculture and forestry. The reason for this is that adaptation capacity is a function of both the intensity of the impacts caused by climate change and the resources to which a community has access and entitlement. Local development therefore is a key issue in increasing adaptive capacities, and in this area the relevant government organizations are the Village Development Committee (VDC), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC). In each of these ministries and departments, we conducted several key informant interviews at all levels of the organization, from the head offices to the field outposts. We also conducted long open-ended interviews in the villages.

*Working paper is not available for distribution, interested individuals please contact the author.*

**Farmers' perception of climate change and willingness to pay for weather-index insurance in Bahunepati, Nepal**

**Wenmei Guo**\*\*\*\*\*

University of New Mexico

**Alok Bohara**††††

University of New Mexico

This paper is a pioneering study of investigating effects of farmers' perception of climate change on their willingness to pay (WTP) for a weather-index crop insurance in Nepal. We use contingent valuation data collected from a primary household survey conducted in Bahunepati, Nepal to examine the topic. The research improves on the previous literature by analyzing two crop insurance products which incorporate both crop and livestock. We find that around 87% of them commend that the insurance program is the best protection tool against abnormal weather. We also find that the existing adaptation strategies crowd out households' tendency to engage in the insurance program. But the awareness of climate change is a factor contributing to people's willingness to pay for the insurance products. Moreover, females are found to be less likely to pay for the insurance, compared to males. Finally, the annually mean WTP for product A is around 3% of household income, and around 10% of household income for product B. Policy recommendations will be that Nepalese government may consider designing and implementing creative and effective protection tools such as the insurance program to protect households' livelihood. Our findings of education about climate change, empowerment of women, and prices of the insurance are also vital reference for the policy design.

*For full working paper visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3511/3255>

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\*\*\*\*\* University of New Mexico. Email: [wenmei@unm.edu](mailto:wenmei@unm.edu)

†††† University of New Mexico. Email: [bohara@unm.edu](mailto:bohara@unm.edu)

## **Archiving the 2015 Nepal earthquake**

**Sarah Calhoun**\*\*\*\*

Yale University, USA

**Gary Hausman**\*\*\*\*\*

Columbia University, USA

**Research Question:** Spur of the moment web archiving is near impossible for most libraries or individual scholars to manage. Most projects need to be planned out months or years in advance. This paper discusses an ongoing project to archive web traces of the April 2015 Nepal earthquake using the tool [Archive-It](#). We discuss both the merits and challenges of this recent project, and suggest that the growing field of disaster management should incorporate web archiving methods of preparation along with more standard techniques of on the ground physical forms of preparation. Successful web archiving demands rapid response to various questions—social, technical, legal (concerning copyright), political—that can best be addressed by long term preparation. Drawing from our own recent attempts to grapple with such challenges, we provide lessons for future projects.

**Data and Methods:** This project started with a faculty request to web archive and preserve Internet resources relating to the 2015 Nepal earthquake. Since Columbia University libraries already has established protocols for collaborative spontaneous event collecting, Columbia University Library and Yale University Library teamed up (with assistance from Archive-It Partner Services) to select URLs, social media sites, and blog postings for web archiving. The Bodleian Library (at the University of Oxford) later joined as a third contributor. The results of our 2015 Nepal Earthquake project include (as of June 30, 2015) 107 web capture links: <https://archiveit.org/collections/5764>. Our criteria for selection emphasized non-US sources, digital ephemera, personal blogs of key actors, resources that might not be archived via other endeavors, and items that seemed free of copyright infringement.

**Results:** We consider this to have been a relatively successful project. Yet, owing to lack of immediate preparation, the archived results missed

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\*\*\*\* Yale University. Email: [sarah.calhoun@yale.edu](mailto:sarah.calhoun@yale.edu)

\*\*\*\*\* Columbia University. Email: [gjh2119@columbia.edu](mailto:gjh2119@columbia.edu)



the first few days immediately following the earthquake. In addition to discussing the background of our own decision making regarding this project, we will review the Nepal disaster literature for other projects that might benefit by incorporating technologies of web archiving. We will also explore potential methods of making web archiving of disasters more of a routine, rather than simply spontaneous, tool of collection management in the Himalayan region.

*For full working paper visit*

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3512/3256>

## **New Initiative**

### ***Development Journal of the South***

Development Journal of the South (DJS) is an open-access peer-reviewed multidisciplinary journal published by the Nepal Study Center at the University of New Mexico. The journal intends to spur critical debate on issues faced by nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, collectively known as the Global South.

DJS invites innovative papers grounded on theoretical and empirical work addressing sustainable economic, social and political issues of a nation or subnational units. The Journal emphasizes the integration of quantitative and qualitative information from natural, social and behavioral sciences. Insightful reviews of comparative development between two or more regions, between the North and the South, or between South and South are welcome. The goal of the Journal is to inform development debate from public policy and social welfare perspectives. The first issue of the Development Journal of the South (DJS) is out. All the papers published in Vol. 1, No. 1, 2015, of DJS are available in pdf format and are fully downloadable from <https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/djs/issue/view/509/showToc>

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Robert.mcnown@colorado.edu

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cfmpu@ux1.cts.eiu.edu

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apahari@comcast.net

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pkm@augustana.edu

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Tribhuvan University, Nepal  
pitara100@yahoo.com

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Reader of Political Science, Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS)  
Tribhuvan University, Nepal  
wl2599@wlink.com.np

Nav Raj Kanel, Ph.D.  
Professor, Department of Economics  
Tribhuvan University, Nepal  
nkanel@wlink.com.np

Anand Aditya, Ph.D.  
Professor, Department of Political Science  
Tribhuvan University, Nepal  
anandadityapragya@yahoo.com

Kishor Gajurel, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Rural Sociology and Demography  
In-charge of a Masters Program in  
Human and Natural Resources Studies  
Kathmandu University, Nepal

kgajurel@ku.edu.np

Gunanidhi Sharma, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Department of Economics  
Tribhuvan University, Nepal  
profgnsharma@gmail.com

*India*

Shrawan Acharya, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
School of Planning,  
Center for Environmental Planning and Technology Ahmedabad, India  
shrawanacharya@hotmail.com, shrawan.acharya@gmail.com

Mahendra P. Lama, Ph.D.  
Professor of South Asian Economies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
mahendra\_lama1961@yahoo.co.in

Tanka Subba, Ph.D.  
School of Human and Environmental Sciences  
North-Eastern Hill University  
Associate Editor Peace and Democracy  
Shillong, India 793 014  
Tel +91-364-231854 (o) 551717 (r)  
Fax +91-364-550076

*USA*

Ms. Shanta Pandey, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
George Warren Brown School of Social Work  
Washington University, Box 1196  
St. Louis, MO 63130, U.S.A.  
Phone: (314) 935-4878  
Fax: (314) 935-8511  
pandey@wustl.edu

Kamal Upadhyaya, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Department of Economics

New Haven University  
KUpadhyaya@newhaven.edu

Vijaya R. Sharma, Ph.D.  
Department of Economics  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
sharmav@spot.colorado.edu

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Texas A&M  
hjsmith@bushschool.tamu.edu

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Professor  
Helen and Roy Ryu Chair of Internal Affairs  
Bush School of Public Policy  
Texas A&M  
kgawande@bushschool.tamu.edu

Gyan Pradhan, PhD  
Associate Professor of Economics  
Westminster College  
Fulton, Missouri  
pradhang@westminster-mo.edu

Ambika Prasad Adhikari, Ph.D.  
Urban and Environmental Planner, and  
Adjunct Professor, Arizona State University  
Phoenix, Arizona  
Ambika\_adhikari@yahoo.com

Shiva Gautam, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Medicine  
Harvard Medical School  
Biostatistics Director  
Harvard-Thorndike General Clinical Research Center  
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center  
Boston, Massachusetts  
Shiva@anmf.net

*Bangladesh*

Ms. Forhad Shilpi, Ph.D.  
South Asia Rural Development  
Development Economics Research Group  
World Bank, MSN Mc3-305  
1818 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20433  
Tel: (202) 458-7476 Fax: (202)522-1151  
Fshilpi@worldbank.org

*Canada*

Ramjee Parajulee, Ph.D.  
Lecturer, University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, Canada  
parajulee@hotmail.com

Ritendra Tamang, Ph.D.  
Simon Fraser University  
ritendra@shaw.ca

John Cockburn, Ph.D.  
Dept. of Economics  
Université Laval  
Québec, Québec G1K 7P4 CANADA  
Phone: 1-418-656-7744  
jcoc@ecn.ulaval.ca

*UK*

Surya Subedi, Ph.D.  
Professor of International Law and Head of the Centre for Legal Research  
Middlesex University, UK  
S.P.Subedi@leeds.ac.uk

Mark Turin, Ph.D.  
Director  
Digital Himalaya Project  
Department of Social Anthropology  
University of Cambridge  
Free School Lane  
Cambridge  
CB2 3RF, UK

mt272@cornell.edu

Neil Mitchell, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Department of Politics and International Relations  
University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen  
AB24 3QY, UK  
n.mitchell@abdn.ac.uk