



FEED^{THE}**FUTURE**

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

USAID Feed the Future Innovation Lab Council
2024 Regional Partners' Meeting

PROGRAM

*April 22-26, 2024
The Malla Hotel
Kathmandu, Nepal*

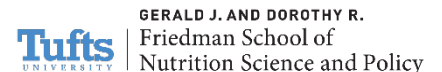


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WELCOMING REMARKS

WELCOME

to the Feed the Future Innovation Lab Council 2024 Regional Partners' Meeting *"Translating Research to Action – Opportunities for Evidence-Based Scaling of Agri-Food Systems Innovations"*

As part of the Feed the Future initiative, USAID draws on the expertise of top US universities and host country research institutions to develop and implement rigorous basic and applied research, policy analysis, capacity strengthening and stakeholder engagement through the Feed the Future Innovation Labs. The mandate of the Innovation Labs is to contribute to the achievement of the goals of USAID's Global Food Security Research Strategy. To do this, labs collectively, and together with their local partners, generate rigorous evidence on issues related to inclusive and sustainable agriculture-led economic growth, soil and water resources management, resilience, climate change adaptation and mitigation, current and emerging threats, food systems transformation, global hunger, poverty, and the nutritional wellbeing of vulnerable populations.

The 2024 regional meeting is being hosted in Nepal from April 22-23, 2024. The meeting will begin with an opening session followed by a series of science and policy dialogues, aimed at prioritizing knowledge needs and deepening understanding of actions to enable scaling. Through expert panels and interactive discussions, we will focus on identifying opportunities and strategies for evidence-based scaling of agri-food system innovations (individually and/or in bundles). Scaling innovations requires a shift in mindset from project focus to a systems perspective. Successful scaling thus needs the support of sound policies and a pro-active private sector.¹ This will also be an opportunity to identify avenues for aligning agri-food system actions to climate actions as recommended in the BIFAD commissioned report on operationalizing USAID's climate strategy.² We anticipate invigorating discussions and learning at this Regional Partners' Meeting will set the stage for a deeper dive, during and potentially in the run-up to the Annual Meeting, on how ILs collectively can organize their work to have greater scaling impact.



Shibani Ghosh

Chair, Feed The Future Innovation Lab Council

Director, Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Systems for Nutrition

Tufts University

¹ <https://foodsystemsnutrition.org/article/scaling-actions-that-link-smallholder-food-production-and-value-chains/>

² <https://www.usaid.gov/bifad/climatereport2023>

PROGRAM AGENDA

Time/Date	Session Title	Session Chair and Panelists
April 22, 2024		
8:30- 9:00 am	Registration, Tea/Coffee	
9:00- 9:05 am	Lighting of the Lamp	
9:05- 10:30 am	Scaling of Innovations: Setting the stage	<p>Session Chair: Shibani Ghosh, Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab, Tufts University</p> <p>Remarks from US Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Seuc, USAID Nepal • Jerry Glover, USAID REFS <p>Keynote Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrick Webb, Chief Nutritionist, USAID • David Tschirley, PRCI Lab, Michigan State University <p>Discussion</p> <p>Remarks from Government of Nepal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Govinda Prasad Sharma, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development
10:30- 11:00 am	Tea/Coffee Break (Networking)	
11:00- noon	Reflections from Women Leaders in Agri-Food systems research and development	<p>Session Chair: Erin McGuire, Horticulture Innovation Lab, UC Davis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabnam Shivakoti, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Nepal • Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, BIFAD, Michigan State University • Rudaba Khondker, GAIN Bangladesh, SUN • Haley Oliver, Food Safety Innovation

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		Lab, Purdue University Discussion
12:00- 1:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00- 2:00 pm	Inclusive and sustainable agriculture for economic growth	<p>Session Chair: Vara Prasad, Sustainable Intensification Lab, Kansas State University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vara Prasad, Kansas State University • Lyda Hok, CESAIN • Bikash Paudel, CRS Nepal • Timothy Krupnik, CIMMYT • Shakeb Nabi, Welthungerhilfe Nepal <p>Discussion</p>
2:00- 2:10 pm	IL Spotlight	MSI student working group- Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab
2:10- 3:10 pm	IL Spotlight: Multi-Stakeholder Platform interventions for public-private partnerships for increasing value chain integration: Examples from Nepal	<p>Session Chair: John Medendorp, Legume Systems Innovation Lab, Michigan State University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Namita Nepal, USAID Nepal Lentil Strengthening Activity • Sony KC, USAID Nepal Lentil Strengthening Activity • Sagar Pandey, Muktinath Krishi Company Limited <p>Discussion</p>
3:00- 3:30 pm	Tea/Coffee Break (Networking)	

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3:30- 4:30 pm	Mitigating and Managing Environmental Threats and Shocks	<p>Session Chair: Ahmed Kablan, USAID REFS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bipana Timilsena Paudel, Current and Emerging Threats Lab, Penn State • Thumbi Mwangi, Animal Health Innovation Lab, Washington State • Neena Gorkhali, National Animal Science Research Institute (NASRI) • Bishwas Gauchan, IIDS Nepal <p>Discussion</p>
4:30- 5:00 pm	Reflections and Closing Statement	
5:00- 6:00 pm	Side Event – Walking Tour (by registration only)	
6:30- 8:30 pm	Dinner and Networking (by registration only)	

PROGRAM AGENDA

Time/Date	Session Title	Session Chair and Panelists
April 23, 2024		
8:30- 8:50 am	Registration/Sign in (Tea/Coffee)	
8:50- 9:00 am	Reflections from Day 1	Ruhul Amin Talukder, Government of Bangladesh, GAIN and IFPRI
9:00- 10:00 am	Scaling of Innovations: Challenges and successes and opportunities for future action	<p>Session Chair: David Tschirley, PRCI, Michigan State University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Huisenga, USAID REFS • Andrea Bohn, Livestock Innovation Lab, University of Florida • Robin Shrestha, Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab, Tufts University • Erin McGuire, Horticulture Innovation Lab, UC Davis <p>Discussion</p>
10:00- 11:00 am	Building resilience to mitigate financial risks and managing shocks	<p>Session Chair: Kathryn Stahlberg, USAID</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Carter, Markets, Risks, Resilience Lab, UC Davis • Ujjal Tiwari, Livestock Innovation Lab, Agriculture and Forestry University • Vijay Kumar Gurung, Muktinath Bikas Bank • Pradyuman Pokharel, Muktinath Bikas Bank <p>Discussion</p>
11:00- 11:30 am	Tea/Coffee Break	
11:30- 11:50 am	IL Spotlight	Current and Emerging Threats- AI demonstration

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12:00- 1:00 pm	Supporting production and consumption of nutritious commodities	<p>Session Chair: Andrea Bohn, Livestock Systems Innovation Lab, University of Florida</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shahnaz Arefin, Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Planning • Bishal Shrestha, Horticulture Innovation Lab, Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal • Bishnu Bishwakarma, FORWARD Nepal • Nirnaya Bhatta, Sreenagar Agrofarm <p>Discussion</p>
1:00- 2:00 pm	Lunch	
2:00- 2:15 pm		<p>Promotion of nutrient dense millets and pseudo cereals in the hills of Nepal</p> <p>Dr. Ram Krishna Shrestha, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development</p>
2:15- 3:15 pm	Supporting food safety, reducing loss and waste, and ensuring nutrition	<p>Session Chairs: Kiran Rupakhetee, Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, Government of Nepal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mohammad Badrul Amin, Fish Innovation Lab/ ICDDRDB • Keshav Sah, Livestock Innovation Lab, Heifer International • Atul Upadhyay, NEFOSTA, Sun Business Network (SBN) Nepal • Sophiya Tamang, Mandala Agrifresh <p>Discussion</p>
3:15- 4:15pm	IL Spotlight: Engaging consumers, private sector and government to scale food safety systems	<p>Session Chair: Randy Worobo, Food Safety Innovation Lab, Cornell University</p> <p>Opening Remarks: Haley Oliver, Food Safety Innovation Lab, Purdue University</p>

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		<p>Engaging consumers, private sector, and government to scale food safety systems and improve the safety and accessibility of fresh produce in Nepal</p> <p>Aditya Khanal, Tennessee State University</p> <p>Panel Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aditya Khanal, Tennessee State University • Ram Hari Timilsina, Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal • Saligram Sharma, SAHAVAGI – Nepal • Rita Gurung, Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal • Bala Sharma, Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal <p>Closing remarks: Ahmed Kablan, USAID</p>
4:15- 4:35 pm	Tea/Coffee Break	
4:35- 5:00 pm	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>Kiran Rupakhetee, Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, Government of Nepal</p> <p>Scaling of innovations to achieve agri-food systems transformation- Government of Nepal perspective</p> <p>Shibani Ghosh, Chair, Feed the Future Innovation Lab Council Chair</p>	
5:30- 8:30 pm	Networking and Cultural Show (Open to all participants)	

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9:05-10:30 AM, SCALING INNOVATIONS – SETTING THE STAGE

The session will be chaired by Shibani Ghosh, Chair of the Innovation Lab Council and Director of the Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab at Tufts University.

This session will begin with opening remarks by the Jason Seuc, Director of Economic Growth, USAID Nepal, followed by Jerry Glover, Director for Center for Agriculture, USAID Bureau of Resilience Environment and Food Security (REFS).

In the keynote panel, David Tschirley, Director PRCI, Michigan State and Patrick Webb, Chief Nutritionist, USAID will present concepts of innovation bundling. Two key ideas will be brought forward to inform discussions. The first is the concept of *process innovations*, their relationship to the more commonly considered concept of product- or technical innovations, and how the two can work together to drive adoption and scaling. A second key idea, closely related to the first, is that innovations must typically consider the full value chain(s) they operate in if they are to achieve scale. Both ideas relate to the concept of bundling – the fact that, nearly always, a particular technical innovation reaches scale only if it is accompanied by some needed combination of policies, public- or private support services, and behavioral change among actors affected by the innovation.

The session will end with closing remarks by Govinda Prasad Sharma, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Government of Nepal

CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED GUESTS' INFO:

Shibani Ghosh, *Chair, Feed the Future Innovation Lab Council, Director, Feed the Future Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab*

Shibani Ghosh is the Director of the Feed the Future Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab and a public health nutritionist with over 20 years of research experience in the Middle East, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Ghosh is also a Research Associate Professor at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy within the Food and Nutrition Policy and Programs Division. Her research focuses on examining malnutrition in all its forms, formulating, and implementing evidence-based interventions focused achieving optimal growth and development of infants and young children and nutrition, health, and well-being of pregnant and lactating women. She designs and implements rigorous research with the objective of generating evidence and identification of actions for program and policy recommendation.

Jason Seuc, *Director of Economic Growth, USAID Nepal*

Jason Seuc joined USAID Nepal in August 2021 as the Economic Growth Office Director. Seuc's career has focused on balancing economic prosperity with environmental sustainability. He prioritizes partnership with governments and the private sector to achieve development impact for women, youth, and marginalized people. In Nepal, he leads a portfolio that strengthens market systems for agriculture, improves the country's

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trade and competitiveness, and advances locally led development in marginalized communities. Seuc has also served in Indonesia, El Salvador, and Bangladesh where he led low carbon and climate resilient development, biodiversity conservation, agriculture, water/sanitation, and clean energy programs.

Jerry Glover, *Deputy Director for Agriculture, USAID*

Jerry Glover, a National Geographic Explorer and Deputy Director for USAID's Center for Agriculture, works to develop innovative and sustainable strategies for small-holder farmers around the world. Jerry earned bachelor's degrees in soil science and philosophy and then a PhD in soil science at Washington State University in 2001. Jerry has studied native grasslands and farming systems, including no-till, perennial, organic and integrated systems. His work in soil science and perennial-based farming systems has been highlighted in documentary films, National Geographic, Scientific American, Science, and Nature, which identified Jerry as "one of five crop researchers who can change the world." Jerry has interpreted his scientific work for the public, serving as the technical content curator of the U.S. Botanic Garden's exhibit "Exposed: The Secret Life of Roots" in Washington, D.C. He is an Elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Society of Agronomy, the Soil Science Society of America, and the Crop Science Society of America.

Patrick Webb, *Chief Nutritionist, USAID*

Patrick Webb is USAID's Chief Nutritionist. Webb is one of the world's most influential voices working at the intersection of food policy, climate change, and nutrition, as well as on emergency humanitarian assistance. Webb most recently held the prestigious endowed McFarlane Chair in the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University. His research has involved humanitarian policy and practice, development policy, micronutrient deficiencies, food system transformation, aflatoxins and food safety, and nutrition in all its forms. He has extensive experience working in developing countries, and spent nine years in Ethiopia, Niger, and The Gambia.

David Tschirley, *Director PRCI, Michigan State*

David Tschirley is a Professor in the Department of Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics. He serves as co-Director of AFRE's Food Security Group (FSG) and Director of its flagship USAID-funded Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Policy, and Influence (PRCI). He has over 30 years of experience in applied food security research, mentoring researchers in developing country, and active policy outreach.

Govinda Prasad Sharma, *Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Government of Nepal*

11:00 -12:00 PM, SESSION TITLE: REFLECTIONS FROM WOMEN LEADERS IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

This session aims to address the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles within agri-food systems research, development, and policy. Despite evidence showing the benefits of women's leadership across

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various scientific disciplines, including agriculture, health, engineering, and mathematics, women remain significantly underrepresented in leadership positions. Only a third of researchers in STEM are women, and even in sectors where women make up most of the workforce, such as health, leadership positions are predominantly held by men.

The objective of this session is to learn from senior women leaders in agri-food systems research, development, and policy. By bringing together leaders from Nepal, Bangladesh, Nigeria, and the USA, the session aims to hear their stories and reflections on factors that enable the expansion of women's leadership in these crucial areas. Through sharing experiences and insights, the session seeks to identify strategies and best practices for promoting gender diversity and empowering women leaders in research, development, and policy within agri-food systems.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired and moderated by *Erin McGuire, Director, Horticulture Innovation Lab at UC Davis.*

Speakers for this session are as follows –

Sabnam Shivakoti, *Joint Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Nepal*

Sabnam Shivakoti is a Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Government of Nepal. She has also served as a Province secretary within the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives and as a Joint Secretary within the Agriculture and Livestock Business Promotion Division. She has a keen interest and experience in integrated planning and project formulation in food security and gender, policy research and analysis, policy facilitation, agricultural land management and cooperative related policy development. She has a Master's degree in Agriculture from the Asian Institute of Technology and a Bachelors in Agriculture and Agricultural Economics

Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, *Professor, Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) and Michigan State University*

Saweda Liverpool-Tasie is a tenured associate professor in the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics at Michigan State University. She has lived in East Lansing, Michigan for over 10 years. Her research focuses on emergent issues related to smallholder productivity and welfare within dynamic and transforming food systems in sub-Saharan Africa and alongside poorly functioning markets in the region. She has extensive experience with program evaluation in Africa using various quantitative methods. She has designed, implemented, and analyzed data from field surveys across the continent and has looked at gendered access to land and other inputs. Liverpool-Tasie's research work covers several countries on the continent including Nigeria, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Gambia, Niger, Malawi, and Zambia. She continues to lead efforts on designing and implementing capacity building projects in Africa. Currently, Liverpool-Tasie is the principal investigator of various research projects that strive to support policy processes with evidence, based on

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scientific research. She is active in several multidisciplinary teams focused on issues of food security, food safety, and value chain transformation in developing countries.

Rudaba Khondker, *Country Director, GAIN Bangladesh and Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)*

Rudaba Khondker is the country director of the Global Alliance of Improved Nutrition in Bangladesh, where she works with a variety of public and private sector partners to improve nutrition outcomes for the most vulnerable people. She is a medical doctor with expertise in child health and with 15 years' experience of working in leadership and advisory roles in humanitarian, post-conflict, and development contexts in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.

Haley Oliver, *Director, Food Safety Innovation Lab*

Haley Oliver is a 150th Anniversary Professor Chair at Purdue University, Director of the USAID Feed the Future Food Safety Innovation Lab, Sr. Research Fellow at the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy at Purdue, a Purdue University Health Equity Champion, and Showalter Fellow. As Director of the Food Safety Innovation Lab, she develops and oversees USAID's food safety research portfolio currently implemented in Senegal, Kenya, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nigeria, and Nepal. She has over 10 years of food security field experience in low- and middle-income economies. Oliver has received the United States Department of Agriculture and the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities John Morrill Award, Purdue University Carine Alexander Spirit of the Land-Grant award, the USDA Food and Agriculture Science Excellence in Teaching Award, Purdue University's highest teaching honor the Charles B. Murphy Teaching Award, the IAFP Young Scientist Award, IAFP James M. Jay Diversity in Food Award, and is a AAAS Leshner Fellow. She completed her Bachelor of Science degrees in Molecular Biology and in Microbiology at the University of Wyoming and received her PhD in Food Science, with minors in Epidemiology and Microbiology, at Cornell University.

1:00 - 2:00 PM, SESSION TITLE: INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

The 2024 Regional Partners meeting of the Feed the Future Innovation Labs aims to explore opportunities and strategies for evidence-based scaling of agri-food system innovations, emphasizing a shift from a project focus to a systems perspective. The goal is to achieve scaled adoption of innovations, emphasizing the importance of supportive policies and proactive engagement with the private sector. Panel discussions will focus on inclusive agriculture for economic growth, strengthened resilience, and food systems transformation, aligning with climate actions as recommended in a BIFAD-commissioned report on operationalizing USAID's climate strategy.

The objective of this session is to review evidence on sustainable intensification and climate-smart innovations, share success stories on private sector engagement in supporting collective actions, identify barriers to scaling

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up proven innovations, and explore opportunities and requirements for moving from research to scaling within the context of climate-smart sustainable agricultural innovations.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired and moderated by *Vara Prasad, Director, Sustainable Intensification Lab, Kansas State.*

Speakers for this session are as follows –

Vara Prasad, *Director, Sustainable Intensification Lab, Kansas State.*

Lyda Hok, *Center Director, CeSAIN Cambodia*

Lyda Hok is currently a faculty member and director of USAID-funded Center of Excellence on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification and Nutrition (CE SAIN) housed at Royal University of Agriculture, Cambodia, and aimed to help improve food and nutritional security in Cambodia by supporting agricultural research and education and fostering innovation. He has built and nurtured a strong network with local and international stakeholders to facilitate partnership opportunities and mobilize resources. He has coordinated several agriculture-related activities focused on building and strengthening the teaching, research, and extension capacity of local institutions in general and in particular improving extension mechanisms for sustainable agricultural intensification and nutrition practices in Cambodia through various pathways.

Bikash Paudel, *Head of Programming, Catholic Relief Services Nepal*

Bikash Paudel is a development professional with expertise in agriculture and climate change adaptation with more than decades of experience in designing and implementing action research in agrobiodiversity and climate smart agriculture as well as resilient livelihood projects in Nepal, India, and Tajikistan. He holds a MS in Agriculture Economics from India followed by PhD in Natural Resources and Environmental Management from University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA. Interestingly, He did his PhD under one of Innovation Lab research (The Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program (SANREM CRSP)). He is currently working as Head of Programming in CRS Nepal, CRS is implementing one nutrition innovation lab project in Nepal. Before this, he worked as Resilience Livelihood Coordinator in WFP Tajikistan; Agribusiness and Value Chain Lead in WFP Nepal; and involved in various action research projects in LI-BIRD, a Nepali NGO and Practical Action, an INGO. Notably, he led couples of projects with CGIAR – involving identification of climate-smart agriculture technologies and practices for different agro-ecologies of Nepal and developed scaling out strategies for champion technologies and practices.

Timothy Krupnik, *Regional Director, Sustainable Agrifood Systems Program, Asia | CIMMYT Country Representative and CGIAR Country Convener for Bangladesh*

With over 20 years of research and senior leadership experience in Asia, West Africa, and the Caribbean, Timothy Krupnik's professional experience focuses on overcoming innovation systems challenges related to land, water, climate, and environmental management. Tim is Regional Director for the Sustainable Agrifood

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Systems Program in Asia at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT). He is also CIMMYT's Country Representative in Bangladesh and CGIAR Country Convener for Bangladesh. Timothy has a proven track record building a high-performing multicultural science team whose efforts raise farming systems productivity, increase resilience, and improve livelihoods through transdisciplinary, mixed-methods and applied research. A passionate advocate for science partnerships, he prioritizes interdisciplinary, systems-oriented research, and has a strong track-record in effective science communication and public-private partnerships. He has authored over 150 peer-reviewed papers, books and book chapters, research notes and policy briefs, and has developed a range of widely used digital agriculture and climate adaptation tools. Timothy maintains a strong commitment to research that catalyzes development impact, and developed numerous and award winning extension training materials, infographics and educational videos. Prior to his work in Asia, Timothy was affiliated with the University of California and AfricaRice as a Fulbright Scholar in West and East Africa. He has also conducted research and consulted for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the FAO, and NGOs.

Shakeb Nabi, *Country Director, Welthungerhilfe Nepal*

Shakeb Nabi is a development professional with expertise and two decades of strategic experience on inclusive, sustainable, and resilient agri-food systems, change management and providing leaderships to large & complex programs. He holds a postgraduate diploma (equivalent to MBA) on Natural Resources Management followed by a master's in international development management from UK. He also has a Masters in Humanitarian Action (NOHA) from Uppsala University, Sweden. Shakeb is passionate about addressing development challenges through multi-sectoral interventions and multi-stakeholders' engagement. He has worked in various countries in the region like India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Myanmar etc. Currently Shakeb is working as Country Director for Welthungerhilfe, an International NGO in Nepal.

2:10 - 3:10 PM, INNOVATION LAB SPOTLIGHT: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM INTERVENTIONS FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR INCREASING VALUE CHAIN INTEGRATION – EXAMPLES FROM NEPAL

This insightful session will highlight the success of a Multi-Stakeholder Platform intervention in catalyzing local government and private sector collaboration. Led by the Lumbini Provincial Government and Muktinath Krishi Company, this partnership has spurred co-investments in value chain integration, driving tangible outcomes in lentil productivity at the farm level. Learn how this innovative approach is fostering sustainable growth and transforming agricultural landscapes in the region.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired and moderated by *John Medendorp, Deputy Director, Legume Systems Innovation Lab*.

Speakers for this session are as follows –

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Namita Nepal, *Coordinator, USAID Nepal Lentil Strengthening Activity*

Currently Namita is working as a Coordinator for the USAID Lentil Strengthening Activity, a USAID/Nepal Mission Buy-In. She holds a Master's degree in Natural Resource Management from Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand. Her recent work experiences include lentil commercialization, climate smart agriculture, value chain for cash crops like ginger and cardamom, vegetable and goat value chain, gender and social inclusion in agriculture and livelihoods projects. Developing and promoting the small and medium scale enterprises are other areas of expertise. In addition, she has worked in different research projects including local food production systems, climate change and its impact on food security, sexual and reproductive health rights, an assessment of the socio-economic condition of squatters and Mushar communities. She is also adjunct faculty in Himalayan College of Agricultural Science and Technology.

Sony KC, *Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Lead, USAID Nepal Lentil Strengthening Activity*

Sony K.C., is a Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) expert based in Nepal and has contributed as a social science researcher since 2012. She has extensive research experience under various thematic areas such as livelihoods and well-being, feminization of agriculture and rural employment, women empowerment and women with disabilities. As a social science researcher, Sony has explored the highlands and lowlands of Nepal, from the East to West working closely with diversified population inclusive of their caste and ethnicity, social status, geographical location, age, gender etc.

Sagar Pandey, *Research and Development Manager, Muktinath Krishi Company Limited*

Sagar Pandey is a native of Kathmandu, Nepal, and is a dedicated professional in the field of agriculture research and extension. Holding a M.Sc. Ag Plant Pathology, he has polished his expertise in understanding crop diseases and their management strategies. Currently serving as the Research and Development Manager at Muktinath Krishi Company Limited, Nepal for the past four years, Sagar leads initiatives to execute research, development and demonstration of tools, technology and services that are beneficial for enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability. Before his role at Muktinath Krishi Company Limited, Sagar gained valuable experience working as technical personnel at Mato-Golyan Agro and N-Agro. His tenure at these organizations equipped him with practical insights into agricultural operations and management, further enriching his skill set.

3:30 – 4:30 PM, SESSION TITLE: MITIGATING AND MANAGING ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS AND SHOCKS

This session will delve into the critical shift towards evidence-based scaling of agri-food system innovations, individually or in bundles. From a focus on projects to a holistic systems perspective, the session will explore how to foster scaled adoption of innovations, emphasizing the crucial role of sound policies and proactive private sector engagement. Panelists will engage in an interactive discussion on inclusive agriculture, resilience building, and food systems transformation, and unpack strategies for addressing challenges such as reducing loss and waste, ensuring food safety, and enhancing food accessibility. The session will also examine the intersection of agri-food actions with climate initiatives, aligning with recommendations from the BIFAD

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commissioned report on operationalizing USAID's climate strategy. The objective is to review evidence, share success stories, and identify barriers and necessary ingredients for scaling innovations, with a focus on mitigating environmental threats and fostering sustainable impact.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired by Ahmed Kablan, Senior Science Advisor, USAID

Speakers for this session are as follows –

Bipana Timilsena Paudel, *Research Scientist, Current and Emerging Threats Innovation Lab*

Bipana Paudel Timilsena is an Assistant Research Professor at Pennsylvania State University and an Integrated Pest Management Specialist for the Current and Emerging Threats to Crops Innovation Lab/PlantVillage.

Bipana was born and raised in Palpa, Nepal. She pursued a master's degree in agriculture science (with a major in Agronomy) from the Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS) at Tribhuvan University in 2014. Following her studies, she worked as a Technical Officer at Nepal Agriculture Research Council for six months. In 2015, she began her PhD journey at Pennsylvania State University, focusing on Entomology with a dual-title degree in International Agriculture and Development. During her PhD research, she focused on utilizing plant-produced chemical compounds, specifically volatiles, to enhance plant defense mechanisms and reduce reliance on chemical pesticides. She also developed a model predicting the risk of fall armyworm invasion and establishment worldwide under current and changing climate conditions. After her PhD, she joined PlantVillage at Penn State as a Post-Doctoral Scholar in October 2021 and was promoted to Assistant Research Professor in October 2023. In her current role, Bipana is committed to advancing integrated pest management (IPM) strategies that are not just effective, but also sustainable, and accessible to farmers globally. Her focus is on finding a balance between the immediate needs of agricultural production/productivity and long-term environmental health, thus contributing to a more resilient and productive global food system.

Thumbi Mwangi, *Director, Animal Health Innovation Lab*

Thumbi Mwangi is an infectious disease epidemiologist using applied epidemiological modelling and data science to improve the speed and quality of policy decision making in human and animal health. He trained as a veterinarian at the University of Nairobi (2005) and received a PhD in Infectious Disease Epidemiology from the University of Edinburgh (2012). His current research focuses on implementing research for the elimination of dog-mediated human rabies, syndromic surveillance for early detection of zoonotic spillover, understanding transmission and control of zoonoses, livestock interventions for improvement of human nutritional status, and more recently transmission dynamics and control of SARS-CoV2 in Kenya.

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Neena Gorkhali, *Director of National Animal Science Research Institute (NASRI) under Nepal Agricultural Research Council*

Neena Gorkhali has specialized in Animal Genetics, Breeding and Reproduction Sciences with a focus in Conservational Genetics, Functional Genomics, Bioinformatics and Computational Biology. She has been working on Animal Genetics, Breeding and Reproduction Sciences for more than 26 years, with involvement in farm animal genetic resources conservation, breed development and genetic improvement of farm animals. She is a pioneer in initiating molecular work in Animal Science in Nepal where she had performed genetic diversity, differentiation, and relationship of various indigenous animal genetic resources. She is also working on association of genes with production traits. She has identified a potential novel molecular mechanism for high altitude adaption in Nepalese sheep at the Himalayas. She has published her research findings in various reputed journals such as Scientific Reports of NATURE journal, Molecular Biology and Evolution, Genomic Biology and Evolution etc.

Bishwas Gauchan, *Executive Director, Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS)*

Biswash Gauchan is the Executive Director at the Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS). He served in UNDP both in Nepal and Africa for 10 years in different capacities and went on to become a Chief Executive Officer of a Commercial Bank in South Sudan where he served for two years. He is the founder chairman of Shangri-la Development Bank and co-founder of Quest International College and Omega International School. He writes extensively on economic policy and geo-strategic issues relating to Nepal and South Asia. He is a Fellow Chartered Accountant and holds a Ph.D. degree in Economics.

4:30 – 5:00 PM, SESSION TITLE: REFLECTIONS AND CLOSING STATEMENT

5:00 – 6:00 PM, SIDE EVENT: WALKING TOUR OF KATHMANDU, BY REGISTRATION ONLY

Experience the enchanting streets of Kathmandu through a guided evening walking tour by colleagues at Harvestmoon Expedition. Stroll through the vibrant alleys of Thamel, soak in the cultural richness of Basantapur, and explore the treasures of the Palace Museum. Immerse yourself in the history, art, and flavors of Kathmandu as our knowledgeable guides lead you on this memorable journey.

For further details, please reach out to the organizing team registration desk at the Malla hotel lobby.

6:30 – 9:00 PM, DINNER @ DEWACHHEN NEPAL BY LITTLE TIBET, BY REGISTRATION ONLY

Join us for a delightful networking dinner at **Dewachhen Nepal by Little Tibet in Baluwatar Kathmandu**, where you can savor authentic Nepali, Tibetan, and Asian cuisine. Enjoy a diverse array of flavors while mingling with fellow attendees. Transportation to the restaurant will be arranged by the organizing team.

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Please note that registration is compulsory for the side event. Dinner expenses (between \$15-\$25 per person, exclusive of alcoholic beverages) are to be covered individually. Please do carry cash with you. We look forward to seeing you there! For further details on the restaurant, menu, and further details, please reach out to the organizing team registration desk at the Malla hotel lobby by **April 22, 9:00 AM**.

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9:00 – 10:00 AM, SESSION TITLE: SCALING OF INNOVATIONS: CHALLENGES, SUCCESSES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE ACTION

This dynamic session will focus on dissecting the scaling process of innovations, shedding light on successes, challenges, and future opportunities. The session kicks off with a presentation offering insights into the scaling journey of USAID-supported innovations, accompanied by actionable recommendations for future endeavors. Following this, two Innovation Labs—the Livestock Innovation Lab and Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab will share their approaches to supporting the scaling up of USAID innovations, providing real-world examples of effective strategies in action. Finally, the session will engage in a thought-provoking discussion on the importance of innovation choice and bundling, exploring how these factors can maximize impact and sustainability in scaling efforts. Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights and contribute to shaping the future of innovation scaling within the IL community.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired by David Tschirley, *Director, Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI) Michigan State University.*

Speakers for this session are as follows –

Mark Huisenga, *Senior Program Manager, USAID*

Mark Huisenga is an expert in institutional arrangements for scaling innovations across commercial, public, and public-private sectors. With a specialization in seed systems, he has spearheaded USAID's work on early generation seeds and agricultural input systems.

His background includes roles as an agricultural investment analyst at Cargill, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and Winrock International where he conducted due diligence and crafted agricultural development strategies around commodity value chains within market systems, and at the University of Maryland's Department of Economics where he managed an informal sector development initiative.

During his tenure at USAID, Mark has overseen programs encompassing fertilizer, cocoa, seed systems, commodity traceability, and post-harvest processing, contributing to his breadth of experience in agricultural development. Beyond his professional roles, Mark actively contributes as a technical advisor and board member for various organizations and programs. With over three decades of experience in the food and fiber industries, he has worked extensively across more than 40 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, delivering impactful solutions and driving sustainable agricultural development.

Andrea Bohn, *Project Manager, Livestock Systems Innovation Lab*

Andrea Bohn is the project manager for the USAID funded Feed the Future Innovation Lab on Livestock Systems implemented by the University of Florida, USA. With fifteen years of experience implementing

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agricultural development projects, Andrea designs responsive projects and manages the long-term and daily requirements that ensure these projects thrive. Through her ability to coordinate activities and connect actors, research for development initiatives become engaging platforms for knowledge sharing and for building sustainable capacity within individuals and organizations. Originally from Germany with experience living in Nigeria and Indonesia and having worked in many other countries including Bangladesh for shorter engagements, Andrea understands the complexities of working with partners and staff internationally. She is skilled in efficient and flexible management across borders and cultures, including management of knowledge, on-ground partners, and staff. After earning her Masters of Science in Agricultural Economics from Ohio State University, Andrea focused on internationalizing higher education and curriculum reform, a strength that lends itself well to building knowledge across institutions and organizations worldwide. She later gained an Executive Master's in Business Administration from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Robin Shrestha, *Associate Director, Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab*

Robin Shrestha is the Associate Director of the Feed the Future Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab at Tufts University. He is a Medical Doctor and has a Master of Science degree in Food Policy and Applied Nutrition and Humanitarian Assistance with specialization in international health and nutrition interventions, focusing especially on food security and humanitarian assistance programs in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Erin McGuire, *Director, Horticulture Innovation Lab*

Erin McGuire is the director of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Horticulture, in this work McGuire spearheads global research and partnerships aimed at enhancing the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and fostering community empowerment through horticulture, with a strategic focus on local-led research. McGuire specializes in innovating and scaling for social transformation and developed GenderUp, a conversational method for more effective scaling, with Wageningen University and Research and the Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT. She has an ongoing relationship with One CGIAR, mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in their systemwide scaling efforts.

Prior to her current position, McGuire served as the policy director for the National Farm to School Network, where she championed children's nutrition and bolstered small farm income. Erin has worked for the United States Congress, where she formulated policies that significantly benefited rural communities by advocating for increased investments in locally sourced agricultural products. She has PhD from University of California, Davis, focused on equity in small-scale farming innovation systems.

10:00 – 11:00 AM, SESSION TITLE: BUILDING RESILIENCE TO MITIGATE FINANCIAL RISKS AND MANAGING SHOCKS

The Session will embark on a journey of transformative insights to explore the shift from project-centric approaches to holistic systems perspectives in scaling innovations, featuring diverse stakeholders from academia, public, and private sectors, who will delve into the intricacies of scaled adoption, emphasizing the pivotal role of processes, practices, and policy support. The session will prioritize knowledge needs, uncover

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facilitators, and dissect barriers to uptake, considering factors such as financing, risk management, and differential access to resources for women and youth. With a keen focus on climate-smart actions, the session will also navigate the complexities of scaling while ensuring sustainability and resilience in agri-food systems. Join us as we catalyze collaborative action towards unlocking the full potential of scalable innovations.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired by Kathryn Stahlberg, *USAID REFS*.

Speakers for this session are as follows –

Michael Carter, *Director, University of California, Davis USA & MRR Innovation Lab*

Michael Carter is Distinguished Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of California, Davis and Honorary Professor of Economics, University of Cape Town. He directs the BASIS Markets, Risk & Resilience Innovation Lab, and the Resilience+ Innovation Facility. Author of numerous scientific publications, Carter's current research projects examine poverty dynamics and productive social safety nets, evaluation of interventions to boost small farm uptake of improved technologies, and feature a suite of projects that design, pilot, and evaluate index insurance contracts as mechanisms to alleviate chronic poverty and deepen agricultural and rural financial markets. Carter is an elected fellow of NBER (the National Bureau of Economic Research), BREAD (Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development) and the American Agricultural Economics Association. He has won awards for research quality and impact and has served in an editorial capacity with multiple journals devoted to economic development and food security issues. A past member of the boards of directors of Oxfam America and the Grameen Foundation, he currently serves on multiple scientific advisory panels.

Ujjal Tiwari, *Assistant Professor, Agricultural and Forestry University, Chitwan, Nepal*

Ujjal Tiwari is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness Management at Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU), Nepal. He holds a PhD degree (Agricultural Economics) from Justus-Liebig University, Germany; an MSc Ag (Business Economics) from Wageningen University, the Netherlands; and an MA (Rural Development) from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Tiwari has worked for different organizations in different positions, including Research Assistant at the World Bank in Washington, D.C., and Planning Director at FORWARD Nepal. He has over twelve years of experience in developing and managing projects related to agricultural research and development, including projects related to food and nutrition security (FNS), climate change, and agricultural risk management. His publication record has key papers addressing climate change issues in agriculture and risk management in the agriculture and livestock sectors.

Vijay Kumar Gurung, *MSME Banker, Muktinath Bikas Bank, Nepal*

Vijay Kumar Gurung is the Head of Research, Innovation and Product Development in Muktinath Bikas Bank Limited having more than 15 years of experience in Banking and Development Sector in Nepal. Currently,

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Gurung is engaged in collaborating with the like-minded organization for business expansion along with fulfilling the demand of the people in bottom of the pyramid. He has been involving in field of agriculture, value chain, climate smart technologies and access to finance and has successfully completed various project in those areas. Gurung has completed his Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) from Symbiosis University, India.

Pradyuman Pokharel, Chief Executive Officer, *Muktinath Bikas Bank, Nepal*

Pradyuman Pokharel is an inspirational leader with a vision and firm knowledge in the financial sector. He always leads mainly by example, always doing his best and encouraging others to do the same. Intuitive, critical thinker, hardworking and determined are the characters that define him.

He believes in excellence in all aspects and hopes that it is reflected in the products and services of the Bank as well. His commitment is that all the hard work being done shall benefit all the stakeholders i.e. the public, shareholders, and employees.

He has successfully established himself as an efficient Banker with over 30 years of Banking experience over various areas such as Credit, Deposit, Remittance, Treasury, and other Business/Operation area. He holds his Master's in Business Administration from Tribhuvan University. He has undertaken top leadership roles at previous organizations (Nabil Bank Limited. & Mega Bank Ltd) that he worked in with utmost dedication. Currently, he is also the President of Development Bankers Association Nepal and executive member of Management Association of Nepal.

11:30 – 11:50 AM, INNOVATION LAB SPOTLIGHT: CETCIL AIL DEMOSNSTRATION

12:00 – 1:00 PM, SESSION TITLE: SUPPORTING PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF NUTRITIOUS COMMODITIES

This session will review evidence on strategies to support production and consumption of nutritious commodities as well as discussion on challenges pre and post farm gate in making nutrient dense commodities more affordable and desirable to consumers. Panelists will discuss the role of policy and the ingredients needed for scaling innovations successfully and how private sector engagement can be enhanced with a supportive enabling environment. Panelists will examine how research and development activities can be localized (and/or are being localized) and provide insights on projects that are focused on increasing youth engagement into research and development.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired by Andrea Bohn, *Livestock Systems Innovation Lab*.

Speakers for this session are as follows –

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Shahnaz Arefin, *Secretary of Statistics and Informatics Division (SID), Government of Bangladesh*

Shahnaz Arefin took charge as the Secretary of the Statistics and Informatics Division of the Planning Ministry in late October 2021. Previously, she worked as an Additional Secretary in the Cabinet Division. She started her career in the Bangladesh Civil Service in 1991 as an officer of the 10th batch of the administration cadre. She has garnered knowledge and experience from working in a diverse range of other ministries, including but not limited to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, the Ministry of Expatriate and Welfare, the Parliament Secretariat and the Economic Relations Division, including field administration. Aside from these, she has worked for reputable international organizations outside of the government. She has worked extensively in a wide spectrum of training programs and fields, including child welfare, trafficking of children and women in the SAARC regions, women and technology, environmental law, and policymaking, as well as in the field of environment and climate change, including aspects covered by COP's. Shahnaz got her bachelor, master, and M. Phil in Public Administration from the University of Dhaka. Then she went on to get another Master of Public Administration (MPA) from the University of Canberra, Australia in the year 2000, followed by a Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Public Administration from Jahangirnagar University in 2013. Lastly, she completed her NDC course from the National Defence College in 2018. Several of her research papers have been published in various reputable journals.

Bishal Shrestha, *Assistant Professor, Horticulture Innovation Lab/AFU*

Bishal Shrestha, a permanent resident of Bharatpur-12, Chitwan is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Horticulture, Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU), Rampur, Nepal. He has dedicated the past decade of his career to advancing research and education in the horticultural sector. He has completed his postgraduate from the Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS), Nepal with the fellowship of PSLP project, Central Queensland University, Australia. His expertise lies in the pomology sector, where he has made significant contributions through research and practical applications. He has also published numerous research articles in related fields and co-authored horticultural textbooks. Driven by the vision of sustainable urban development, Shrestha advocates for urban horticulture transforming unutilized urban spaces into green spaces within cities not only for aesthetic purposes but with a major goal of sustainability, food and nutritional security, as well as community wellbeing.

Bishnu Kumar Bishwakarma, *Principal Investigator, Horticulture Innovation Lab/FORWARD Nepal*

Bishwakarma is a young and energetic research and development professional. He holds an M.Sc. Agriculture degree from Tribhuvan University, and PhD degree in Development Studies from Agriculture and Forestry University. Bishwakarma is currently engaged as principal investigator of one of the research initiatives under Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Horticulture in Nepal funded by USAID. Bishwakarma has been engaged in research and development related to livelihood, agriculture enterprising, governance and service delivery in Nepal with bilateral, multilateral, government organizations for 17 years. Bishwakarma has provided technical assistance (TA) to Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development and local governments in designing pluralistic agricultural services, agriculture value chain development and increasing farmers access to

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agricultural services, youth entrepreneurship. Bishwakarma has published a dozen of resource books and manuals related to sustainable agriculture and agriculture governance and Twenty research articles in National and International Journals.

Nirnaya Bhatta, Chief of Party, USAID Partnership for Poultry, *Sreenagar Agrofarm*

Nirnaya Bhatta boasts a diverse professional background garnered from institutions such as The Economist Intelligence Unit, WSP Solutions USA, The World Bank, ILO, Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI), Asia Competitiveness Institute (Singapore), and various government agencies where he served as a technical advisor. His experience encompasses project management, private sector development, labour/employment programs, and economic research. Currently, he serves as the Chief of Party for the Feed the Future Nepal USAID Partnership for Poultry, aiming to fortify the poultry value chain and enhance the livelihoods of stakeholders involved.

Nirnaya earned a Master's degree in Public Policy with a specialization in Economics and Development from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, supported by a prestigious Singapore government scholarship. Furthermore, he attained an M.A. in International Relations from the University of Warsaw, Poland, and completed his B.A. in Political Science at the Hindu College, University of Delhi, India.

2:00 – 3:00 PM, SESSION TITLE: SUPPORTING FOOD SAFETY, REDUCING LOSS AND WASTE, AND ENSURING NUTRITION

This session will present evidence around innovations and actions to support food safety, reduce loss and waste and ensure nutrition including the type of climate smart innovations and/or behavioral innovations that exist and/or are needed along the supply chain for perishables including the potential for scaling these. Discussions will also focus on how research and development activities can incorporate principles of localization and strategies to engage with private sector to facilitate the uptake of tested innovation and subsequent scale up.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired by Kiran Rupakhetee, *Joint Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, Government of Nepal*.

Speakers for this session are as follows –

Mohammad Badrul Amin, *Associate Scientist, ICDDR, B and Principal Investigator Bangladesh, Fish Innovation Lab*
Badrul Amin is a trained Microbiologist with more than 10 years of experience in the field of food safety, infectious disease, and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) research. Currently, Badrul has been serving as an Associate Scientist and Head, Food Safety and One Health Laboratory at icddr,b. His research extends to the

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realm of transmission dynamics of microbial infections, and pathogenesis in the community and hospital settings using One Health approach. As a Principal Investigator, Badrul have successfully executed numerous research projects, and published many articles with the collaboration of US Universities, and support from the funding agency like NIH, USAID, SIDA etc. He recently completed one of the projects as host-country PI under Fish Innovation Lab program. His long-term goal is to continue conducting rigorous and innovative research to expand the scientific knowledge and translates them into actionable strategies to improve public health outcomes at local and global level.

Keshav Sah, *Director of Programs, Animal Well Being Heifer Project International, Livestock Innovation Lab*
Keshav Shah is the Director of Programs at Heifer International Nepal. He is a veterinarian with 23 years of professional experience in livestock development sector working for private sector, government, and international organization.

Atul Upadhyay, *NEFOSTA, Sun Business Network (SBN) Nepal, Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab*
Atul Upadhyay is a distinguished food scientist with a PhD in Food Science and Nutrition and postdoctoral training in Pharmacognosy. He currently serves as the President of the Nepal Food Scientists and Technologists Association and CEO of the Baliyo Nepal Nutrition Initiative, bringing over 20 years of experience to his roles. He is also the Country Lead for the SUN Business Network in Nepal, where he integrates the private sector into the national food safety movement. Upadhyay's work includes serving on high-level committees such as the WHO/FAO Codex Committee on Nutrition and advocating for resilient food systems. Additionally, he holds an Associate Professor position and an Executive MBA, emphasizing the fusion of academic research with impactful policy initiatives.

Sophiya Tamang, *Co-Founder and CEO, Mandala Agrifresh*

Sophiya Tamang is a marketing and hospitality professional with over 10 years' experience in the Nepalese market. She brings diverse entrepreneurship and business experience. Besides managing the business and operations, she uses her network to increase commercial transactions between B2B companies. She holds a bachelor's degree from Kathmandu University.

3:30 – 4:30 PM, INNOVATION LAB SPOTLIGHT: FEED THE FUTURE FOOD SAFETY INNOVATION LAB

The Food Safety Innovation Lab (FSIL) will discuss their strengthening and scaling efforts of Nepal's fresh produce food safety system in partnership with Tennessee State University, Agriculture and Forestry University, and SAHAVAGI. FSIL engages consumer, private sector, and government entities through knowledge transfer, capacity building, and policy advocacy to motivate collective action that improves food safety. FSIL will highlight research conducted to better understand consumer and producer demand for food safety; producer trainings held in five produce hubs across the country that trained more than 240 farmers and extension workers in safer production practices; and a recent national policy consultation with local and

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national policy makers to inform and engage officials who can advocate for sustained food safety systems strengthening.

MODERATOR AND SPEAKERS' INFO:

The session will be chaired by Randy Worobo, *Cornell University*, with opening remarks from Haley Oliver, *Director, Food Safety Innovation Lab at Purdue University*.

Speakers for this session are as follows –

Aditya Khanal, *Associate Professor, Tennessee State University*

Khanal works in a variety of areas in agricultural and applied economics. His research has primarily focused on agricultural finance, production economics, risk management of farm households, food security, technology adoption and impacts, and economic development. He has worked in the areas of food demand analysis and consumer behavior, economics of food safety, land use, productivity analysis, and factors influencing farmer's decisions in insurance, marketing, and crop choice in developed and developing countries. His research activities have resulted in nearly 60 research publications including peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, referred conference papers, proceedings, and research reports. He has presented his papers and has served as moderator and panelist in many national and international professional conferences. He also serves as a reviewer and topic editor for selected journals in the discipline of agricultural and applied economics. Khanal has received around 3.5 million extramural grant funds as PI and Co-PI.

As an agricultural economist, Khanal is interested in determining profitable and risk minimized practices for large and small farms, predictive and analytical models, farm and food business and entrepreneurship for different farm types, factors influencing farm household's decisions in land use, technology adoption, capital structure, credit, government programs and their effects on farm, productivity, household incomes and food security.

Ram Hari Timilsina, *Associate Professor Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal*

Ram Hari Timilsina is an Assistant Professor and PhD Scholar in Agricultural Extension at Agricultural and Forestry University, Nepal. Timilsina has completed M.Sc. Ag in Agricultural Extension in 2008 from Tribhuvan University. He has working experience on production and marketing management of agricultural inputs (veterinary medicine and supplement, seed, biological fertilizer, and pesticides). Besides, he has working experiences with several I/NGOs and Governmental Research Organizations in Nepal. Timilsina has written several popular articles and few research articles in academic journals.

Saligram Sharma, *Executive Director, SAHAVAGI Nepal*

Rita Gurung, *Assistant Professor, Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal*

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Rita Gurung works as an assistant professor of agricultural extension in the College of Natural Resource Management of the Agriculture and Forestry University, Pakhribas, Dhankuta, Nepal. Gurung is an aspiring early career professional with her research interest in the areas of gender, environment, agricultural extension, and development. Gurung earned her MS in Agricultural Extension Education from Banaras Hindu University, India. She received her BS degree in agriculture from Banaras Hindu University, India.

Bala Sharma, *Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal*

4:30 – 5:00 PM, CLOSING REMARKS

5:15 – 8:00 PM, NETWORKING SESSION, MALLA HOTEL GARDEN AREA, OPEN TO ALL PARTICIPANTS, NO REGISTRATION NEEDED!

Step into a world of Nepali cultural wonder at our networking event, where diversity takes center stage. Prepare to be enchanted by a **captivating 1.5-hour cultural extravaganza showcasing the rich heritage of Nepal's diverse ethnic groups**. From mesmerizing dances to soul-stirring music, immerse yourself in the vibrant tapestry of Nepali traditions.

While you network and mingle with fellow attendees, tantalize your taste buds with an array of delectable snacks provided by the hotel. And for a **hands-on experience, seize the opportunity to learn the art of making 'momo', a beloved Nepali dumpling dish**, under the guidance of seasoned experts.

To complement your evening, our **cash bars** will be stocked with an assortment of alcoholic beverages, ensuring there's something for every palate.

Join us for an unforgettable evening of cultural exploration, culinary delights, and meaningful connections. We can't wait to share this experience with you!

DAY 3 | HALF DAY EVENT

8:00 AM-1:00 PM, PROGRESS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE HEALTH FOOD SYSTEMS IN SOUTH ASIA – A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE MEETING

Join us for Day 3 featuring **exclusive half-day event accessible by invitation only**. Reserved for distinguished guests that have been invited by the National Academy of Sciences and Feed the Future Food Systems for Nutrition Innovation Lab (FSN-IL), this event promises enlightening discussions and valuable networking opportunities on the theme, titled, “Progress Towards Sustainable Healthy Food Systems in South Asia - A Regional Perspective Meeting”.

A separate agenda for this half-day event has been shared with the participants by the National Academy of Sciences and FSN-IL.

1:30 – 4:30 PM: CLOSED MEETING FOR IL DIRECTORS AND USAID STAFF ONLY

DAY 4 & 5 | INNOVATION LABS FIELD TRIPS

Participants will embark on enriching field trips to Feed the Future Innovation Lab (IL) and CIMMY project sites during Days 4 and 5, April 25th and 26th, 2024.

Participants have the option to explore IL projects beyond Kathmandu for a two-day excursion or opt for a one-day IL-site visit within Kathmandu and Kavrepalanchowk. For the two-day journey, participants cover the costs of airfare and accommodation, while local transport expenses are handled by the meeting organizers.

Alternatively, delve into the local field site visits of Kathmandu on a one-day field trip on April 25th and a CIMMYT project site in Kavre on April 26th, with transportation costs covered by the organizers. Whichever you choose, prepare for unforgettable experiences and immersive learning opportunities."

Details of the individual field trips are provided below:

FIELD TRIP 1: KATHMANDU, APRIL 25, 2024

Join us for an immersive field trip to explore innovative agricultural practices and post-harvest management in Kathmandu. Coordinated by the Feed the Future Innovation Labs, this excursion offers a unique opportunity to engage with local private sector stakeholders and gain insights into cutting-edge initiatives.

Date: April 25, 2024

Departure: Malla Hotel, 8:30am

Participant Limit: 15

Itinerary:

Site 1: Muktinath Krishi Company 9:00am-11:00am

Discover how Muktinath Krishi Company supports lentil farmers through extension services, input provision, and buy-back guarantees. Learn about their utilization of innovative agricultural practices and their plans for future seasons.

Site 2: Mandala Agrifresh 11:30am-1:00pm

Explore Mandala Agrifresh's pioneering efforts in post-harvest management, aimed at reducing food loss and empowering rural farmers. Witness their integration of low-cost technologies into Nepal's fresh produce supply chain.

Lunch Break: 1-2 pm

Site 3: CIMMYT Nepal 3:00pm-4:30pm

Gain insights into the Digital Soil Map (DSM) developed by CIMMYT and NARC, providing location-specific

DAY 4 & 5 | INNOVATION LABS FIELD TRIPS

information on soil properties. Learn how this innovative tool facilitates efficient agricultural management decisions and business strategies.

Join us for a day of discovery and learning as we delve into the forefront of agricultural innovation in Kathmandu.

FIELD TRIP 2: KAVRE, APRIL 26, 2024

CIMMYT Nepal has coordinated to organize a field trip to interact with a cooperative society in Bela, Kavrepalanchowk.

Participants will be picked up from the Malla Hotel at 9:00am.

Departure Date: April 26, 2024

Participant Limit: 20

Departure from the Malla Hotel to Shree Aatmanirbhar Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd., Bela, Kavrepalanchowk.

Local transportation to the site will be arranged by the organizing team.

Departure time: 9:00am

Field Visit Details:

Field Visit Schedule: 10:30am-1:00pm Shree Aatmanirbhar Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd. (SAMCS) was established in 2000 with the objective of providing services to members (1,620 HHs) including 1,011 males and 609 females in agriculture focusing on saving and credit service, dairy, maize and rice seed and grain production, fresh vegetable collection and marketing, providing agriculture inputs (seed, fertilizer, and plant protection), demand-based agriculture training, postharvest and advisory services. The Nepal Seed and Fertilizer project has been partnering with the cooperative since 2019 to strengthen the capacity of cooperatives' member in seed production & marketing, scale up integrated soil fertility management strategies for maize grain production, and develop market linkages through training, demonstration, visits, and market linkage meetings. Participants will have an opportunity to interact with the members of the cooperative on the business model, innovations in input supply, production, and marketing. They could also observe the cold storage chamber and fertilizer stock of the cooperative.

Note: The team will stop for lunch between 1:00pm-2:00pm and drive back to the Malla Hotel.

DAY 4 & 5 | INNOVATION LABS FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIP 3: CHITWAN AND MAKWANPUR, APRIL 25 & 26

Join us for an enlightening field trip showcasing the impactful work of three Feed the Future Innovation Labs (ILs) - CETCIL, HIL, and FSIL - in the districts of Chitwan and Makwanpur.

Date: April 25, 2024

Departure: The Malla Hotel, Kathmandu

Participant Limit: 25

Itinerary:

April 25, 2024:

Early morning flight from Kathmandu to Bharatpur (Chitwan).

Transfer from the airport to project sites via buses.

Field trip duration: 7-8 hours, including local commute.

Accommodation: Soaltee West End Resort.

April 26, 2024:

Breakfast and check-out from Soaltee West End Resort.

Return flight to Kathmandu.

Field Visit Details:

Site 1: HoPE, Horticulture Resource Center, Makwanpur

Location: Hetauda, Makwanpur

10:00am-12:30pm: Travel from Bharatpur, Chitwan to Hetauda, Makwanpur

12:30pm-1:30pm: Visit to the Horticulture Resource Center

1:30pm-4:00pm: Return travel from Hetauda, Makwanpur to Bharatpur, Chitwan

Site 2: Agriculture and Forestry University in Rampur

4:00pm-5:00pm: Visit to a commercial vegetable farm followed by a presentation about the project by FSIL.

Site 3: Fall Army Work (FAW) Biological Control Lab

5:00pm-5:30pm: Visit to the FAW Biological Control Lab at Agriculture and Forestry University, Rampur, Chitwan.

Immerse yourself in the innovative initiatives of these ILs as we explore advancements in horticulture, food safety, and crop protection. Prepare for a day filled with learning and inspiration.

Note: Check-in at the hotel by 5:45pm.

DAY 4 & 5 | INNOVATION LABS FIELD TRIPS

FIELD TRIP 4: KAPILVASTU AND RUPANDEHI, APRIL 25 & 26

Join us on an insightful field trip to witness the impactful work of three Feed the Future Innovation Labs (ILs) - CETCIL, HIL, and LSIL - in the districts of Kapilvastu and Rupandehi.

Date: April 25, 2024

Departure: The Malla Hotel, Kathmandu

Participant Limit: 25

Itinerary:

April 25, 2024:

Early morning flight from Kathmandu to Bhairhawa (Rupandehi).

Transfer from the airport to project sites via buses.

Field trip duration: 7-8 hours, including local commute.

Accommodation: Tiger Palace Resort, Bhairhawa.

April 26, 2024:

Breakfast and check-out from Tiger Palace Resort.

Return flight to Kathmandu.

Field Visit Details:

Site 1: Bihani Social Entrepreneur Women's Cooperative

Location: Kopwa, Banganga municipality, Kapilvastu

11:00am-1:30pm: Visit to the dairy value chain cooperative led by women entrepreneurs. Explore technologies developed/tested by LSIL and engage in interactions with cooperative officials and farmers.

Site 2: YUVA Project

Location: Dharampur village, Buddhabhumi Municipality, Kapilvastu

1:30pm-2:30pm: Discover youth entrepreneurship initiatives in horticulture, aiming to identify economically viable ventures for local youth. Engage with project leaders and participating farmers.

Site 3: Biochar Production and IPM Demonstration

Locations: Durganagar, Rupandehi (Biochar production site); Manglapur, Rupandehi (IPM demonstration and biochar research site)

DAY 4 & 5 | INNOVATION LABS FIELD TRIPS

4:00pm-5:30pm: Witness biochar production from agricultural waste and invasive weeds, enhancing soil and plant health. Explore Integrated Pest Management practices and biochar research at demonstration plots.

Immerse yourself in innovative agricultural practices and entrepreneurship initiatives, contributing to sustainable development in Lumbini province. Prepare for a day filled with learning and inspiration.

Note: Check-in at the hotel by 5:45pm.