

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

SPEAKERS' PROFILE

Day 1: 20 February 2025, Thursday

Emcee:



MADHAVI PUNDIT

Senior Economist
Asian Development Bank

Madhavi Pundit is a Senior Economist in the Economic Research and Development Impact Department. She leads a Technical Assistance that explores big data applications for disaster impact analysis in Asian economies. Her research areas include development economics and macroeconomics with policy relevance in developing and emerging economies. Madhavi completed her PhD in Economics from Boston College, USA and was Assistant Professor at the national Institute of Public Finance and Policy, in New Delhi, India prior to joining ADB.

Welcome remarks



Teoh Su Chin

Deputy Regional Director
Singapore Office, Asian Development Bank

Teoh Su Chin is the Deputy Regional Director, ADB's Singapore Office. She joined the office in November 2024. She was previously Senior Advisor to ADB's Vice President for East and Southeast Asia, and the Pacific. Su Chin has been active in agriculture, environment and natural resources space for most of her career, with ADB and organizations such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development. She played a key role in post-Typhoon Haiyan reconstruction activities, managing the emergency assistance and early recovery grant as well as the ADB extended mission in the field. Su Chin holds a degree in Development Economics from the Center for Studies and Research on International Development (France), and a post-graduate degree in Environment and Natural Resources Economics from the former National School of Rural Engineering, Water Resources and Forestry (ENGREF), now part of AgroParisTech.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

**Iqbal Singh Sevea**Associate Professor and Director
Institute of South Asian Studies

Iqbal Singh Sevea is the Director of the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) at the National University of Singapore (NUS). He is an internationally recognised scholar of contemporary and modern South Asia whose core research focuses on South Asian politics, social and political thought, governance and Islamic thought. He has held academic appointments in leading institutions globally and is the author of several publications.

Before joining ISAS, Iqbal was an Associate Professor with the Department of History at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where he was a faculty member from 2012 to 2021. Prior to this, he was an Assistant Professor and the Coordinator of the Contemporary Islam Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Iqbal holds a DPhil in History from the University of Oxford. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in history from NUS and a master's degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Presentation: Overview of the Sendai Framework Gender Action Plan (Sendai GAP)**Mary Picard**Director and Senior Consultant
Humanitarian and Development Consulting

Mary Picard is an Australian lawyer who has worked internationally in disaster risk management law and policy since 2006. Over the last decade she has focused on integrating gender equality into law, policy and action on disaster risk reduction and climate change, working with ADB, IFRC, UNDP, UNDRR and UN Women. With a background in anti-discrimination and human rights law, she is now a recognised global expert on the nexus of gender equality, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. In 2023 – 2024 Dr Picard was the UNDRR lead developing and drafting the Gender Action Plan to Support Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai GAP), in collaboration with UN Women and UNFPA. She is currently working with UNDRR supporting its implementation.

**Athena Denise Galao**Programme Coordinator Gender and Climate Action
UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Athena Denise Galao is a seasoned development practitioner with 15 years of experience in humanitarian action, disaster risk management, and climate change adaptation. Currently, Athena co-leads the EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies programme, a joint initiative by UN Women and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). This programme aims to accelerate gender-responsive and human rights-based climate and DRR actions across Asia and the Pacific, catalyzing partnerships that bridge various stakeholders to build resilience, with a focus on women and those most at risk. Athena holds a

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

master's degree in Women and Development, grounding her approach in promoting intersectional strategies in disaster risk reduction and climate action.

Panel Discussion: Implementation of Gender-Responsive Disaster Risk Management and the Sendai GAP**Moderator:****Zonibel Woods**

Senior Social Development Specialist
Asian Development Bank

Zonibel Woods is an expert in gender mainstreaming, policy development, and capacity building with leadership experience in civil society organizations like the International Women's Health Coalition and the Ford Foundation. Since the 1992 Earth Summit, she's been dedicated to environmental and sustainable development, especially in gender and climate change. Relocating to the Philippines in 2012, she's worked as a gender consultant on these issues. In 2020, she joined the ADB as a Senior Social Development Specialist. Zonibel has published on gender, health, climate change, and is also passionate about animal welfare.

Panelists:**Razwanur Rahman**

Director General
Department of Disaster Management
Bangladesh

Razwanur Rahman, Additional Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh, is presently working as Director General, Department of Disaster Management (DDM) under Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief. DDM works to strengthen the capacity for reducing loss of life and property and improve response and recovery management at various levels. Director General supervises and monitors all these activities. Before joining here, he served in the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources. He also has vast experience of working in the field administration and was associated with rescue and rehabilitation of flood and cyclone affected people in different parts of Bangladesh.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

**Major General Udaya Herath (Rtd)**

Director General

Disaster Management Centre

Sri Lanka

Major General H.M.U. Herath (Rtd) is currently the Director General of Disaster Management Centre. He completed his MSc in Management Studies (1st Division) with a first-class merit pass in 2020 at Osmania university, India. He is a retired military officer who has 34 years of dedicated, extensive experience in challenging environments. Track record in strategic planning, strategic decision making, and effective problem-solving has led to numerous successes in the career and have undergone several specialized courses and peacekeeping UN missions. He held several appointments in Command, staff and training in tactical, operational and strategic levels in the military hierarchy. Currently he is working as the Director General of Disaster Management Centre. As the Director General of the Disaster Management Centre, he is responsible to observe, supervise and coordinate all the Disaster Risk Reduction activities in Sri Lanka.

**Anil Pokhrel**

Senior Advisor

Planeight Risk Consulting, Nepal

Anil Pokhrel is a Senior Advisor at Plan8 Risk Consulting based in Kathmandu, Nepal. In December 2024 he completed a five-year term as first Chief Executive of Government of Nepal's National Disaster Reduction & Management Authority (NDRRMA). Mr. Pokhrel played a critical role in establishing the NDRRMA as Nepal's apex institution for DRRM. Under his leadership, the NDRRMA has prepared and implemented nearly two-dozen guidelines, standards and strategies for building disaster resilience, such as the Gender Inclusion, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Guideline and the Shock Responsive Social Protection Standard, 2024.

**Sonia Akter**

Senior Lecturer

Crawford School of Public Policy

Sonia Akter is an Associate Professor at the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University. She earned her PhD in Environmental Management and Development from the Australian National University in 2010 and holds a Master's degree in Economics from York University in Toronto, Canada. Prior to joining the Crawford School in 2023, she was an Assistant Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore from 2015 to 2022. Dr. Akter has also held positions as a Scientist at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) from 2014 to 2015 and as a Senior Researcher at the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research-UFZ in Leipzig, Germany, from 2011 to 2013. Her research focuses on the intersection of agriculture, environment, and development within the Asia-Pacific region. She has conducted extensive work on agriculture and food policy, natural

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

disasters, and women's empowerment in South and Southeast Asia. Dr. Akter's research particularly examines how climate change disproportionately impacts various social groups, especially women.

Technical Session 1: Presentation of Technical Papers on Gender and Disasters**Session Chair:**

Farzana Munshi
Professor
BRAC University

Farzana Munshi has held the position of Professor of Economics at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences since 2018. Prior to her tenure at Brac University in 2009, she taught at Queen's School of Management, Queen's University, Belfast. At present, she holds the position of Professorial Research Fellow at the Global Development Institute (GDI), University of Manchester. Farzana teaches Macroeconomics, Labour Economics, International Trade and Finance. She has developed academic and research collaboration with Rand Corporation in the USA, University of Birmingham, Heriot-Watt University, University of Kent, International Institute of Refrigeration, France and University of Manchester.

Presenter:

Nedha de Silva
Research Fellow
Monash University

Nedha de Silva is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Emerging Technologies Research Lab, Monash University, where she completed her PhD. As an interdisciplinary researcher and ethnographer, her work examines the intersections of gender, financialization, climate related disaster, and Net-zero transitions, with a focus on marginalized groups. Nedha's interdisciplinary approach integrates Sociology, Anthropology, Development Studies, and Feminist Political Economy (FPE) to critically analyse structural violence, social reproduction, and the gendered dynamics of care and labour. She is deeply invested in exploring innovative research methodologies, including video ethnography, to document and amplify the lived experiences of marginalized communities.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

Discussant:



Sanchita Basu Das

Economist

Asian Development Bank

Sanchita Basu-Das is Economist at the Regional Cooperation and Integration Division of the Economic Research and Development Impact Department of ADB. She contributes to the division's flagship publications, knowledge products and analytical studies. She participates in various policy forums, including G20, ASEAN and ASEAN+3. Her core research interests include regional cooperation initiatives and issues related to them, such as trade, logistics, industrial corridors, tourism, digital economy, institutions and others. Sanchita has published in international journals including the Singapore Economic Review, Journal of World Trade and Asia Pacific Economic Literature, authored/ edited books and book chapters and wrote for media. Sanchita joined ADB in November 2018 and initially served as an Economist in the South Asia Regional Department.

Presenter:



Jenna Allard

Associate Director of Research and Policy
Inclusion Economics at Yale University

Jenna Allard is an Associate Director of Research and Policy at Yale Inclusion Economics, where she supports environment and governance-related research evaluations and policy engagements in India and Nepal. Her current portfolio includes an impact evaluation of community-disseminated early warning systems, a public-sector scale-up of a successful digital application to improve social protections delivery, and a series of interventions to promote women's political leadership in local governments. She has previously worked as a Senior Research Manager at the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), and has additional experience working on environment, energy, and climate issues as the co-founder of non-profit and for-profit enterprises. Jenna holds a MA in Public Policy with Certificate in Research Methods from the University of Chicago Harris School, and a MA in Global Development Economics from Boston University.

Discussant:



Olivia Jensen

Deputy Director and Lead Scientist (Environment and Climate)
IPUR, National University of Singapore

Olivia Jensen is the Deputy Director and Lead Scientist for Environment and Climate of the LRF Institute for the Public Understanding of Risk (IPUR) at the National University of Singapore. She is a social scientist with a background in public policy and economics. Her research is concerned with how people perceive and communicate risks relating to water, climate and natural hazards, and the design and evaluation of interventions to manage these risks and strengthen community resilience. She works mainly with survey data and 'deep' qualitative data. At IPUR, she partners with government agencies and

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

international organisations including the World Bank and ASEAN to develop and deliver risk communication strategies; she is also the lead instructor on the EdX online course “Understanding and Communicating Risk.” Olivia holds a PhD and MSc in Development from the London School of Economics and a BA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Oxford. She has lived and worked throughout Asia, including in China, Japan and India and has been based in Singapore since 2011.

Presenter:**Deepak Malghan**

Assistant Professor

Indian Institute of Management Bangalore

Deepak Malghan, an associate professor at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, is a chemical engineer and ecological economist at the thermodynamics and scale theory interface. Scale in ecological economics refers to the proportional relationship between the economy and the ecosystem that contains and sustains it. Among other recognitions for his contributions to scale theory, Malghan received the 2015 VKRV Rao Prize in Social Sciences and the 2023 T N Khoshoo Memorial Award. Since 2018, Malghan has served as an editor at Ecological Economics, the field’s flagship journal.

Discussant:**Lydia Law**

Co-Director

Heat Resilience and Performance Center Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine

National University of Singapore

Trained as an engineer at Imperial College and Stanford University, Lydia Law started her career at the DSO National Laboratories as a research engineer focused in the areas of heat stress and human performance. She went on to establish herself as an effective bridge builder with an impressive track record of over 15 years leading and managing cross-disciplinary projects and programs at DSO National Laboratories. Drawing upon her engineering background, Lydia has developed a robust technical skill set and in-depth knowledge in her areas of research interest, which encompass human performance, thermal physiology and biomechanics. Her leadership has been instrumental in spearheading significant projects, including the development of a pioneering return-to-duty thermoregulatory assessment, and the first prospective cohort study investigating training-related injuries, bringing about notable improvements in policy and practice. Lydia’s current role as Co-Director of the Heat Resilience & Performance Centre sees her leveraging her systems thinking and strategic management abilities to not only lead the team in the execution and delivery of research to solve today’s issues but also strategizing and building bridges and partnerships to catalyse advancements in the field of heat resilience and performance research to address the challenges of tomorrow.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

Technical Session 2: Presentation of Technical Papers on Gender and Disasters

Session Chair:



Amitendu Palit

Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead
Institute of South Asian Studies

Amitendu Palit is Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics) at the Institute of South Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore. He is an economist specialising in international trade and investment policies, free trade agreements, supply chains, connectivity, cross-border data flows and the Indian economy. He sits on the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Trade and Investment. He is Senior Research Fellow (Honorary) at the Wong Centre for Study of MNCs and Adviser for Athena Infonomics. Earlier, Amitendu worked for several years in the India Ministry of Finance and in the Ministries of Industry and Civil Supplies. He handled macroeconomic policies, including trade, investment, industrial development, small-medium enterprise, entrepreneurship and futures trading. He wrote annual economic surveys and participated in annual budgetary consultations. He was on the Advisory Committees of the Planning Commission of India and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Presenter:



Joyita Roy Chowdhury

Associate Professor
FLAME University

Joyita Roy Chowdhury is an Associate Professor of Economics at FLAME University in Pune, India. Previously, she served as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Economics at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York. She received her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Utah, USA. She completed her M.Phil. in Development Studies with Economics, an M.Sc. in Economics, and a B.Sc. in Economics from the University of Calcutta, West Bengal. Her primary research interests include Environment and Development Economics, Economics of Disasters, Gender Economics, Behavioural Economics, and Public Policy. A major theme in her work examines the socioeconomic impacts of disasters and climate change, particularly how such disaster events disproportionately affect women in India.

Discussant:



Caroline Brassard

Adjunct Assistant Professor (Executive Education)
LKYSPP

Caroline Brassard is an Adjunct Assistant Professor (Executive Education) at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) at the National University of Singapore. She has been teaching at LKYSPP since 2002 on topics such as development economics, econometrics, research methods and policy analysis. She has been an Academic Adviser at the Centre for Peace and Justice, BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh since 2017. She is also a member of the

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

Research Board of the World Meteorological Organisation and a member of the task team on social science and geophysical science integration. Her current research focuses on developing policies to build societal resilience to concurrent shocks in the Asia-Pacific and disaster governance in urbanising contexts. Prior to joining LKYSPP, she worked in Madagascar for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in Bangladesh for CARE and in Vietnam for her post-graduate research. Caroline holds a PhD in Economics from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies. She enjoys creative writing, improvisation and learning with her three children.

Presenter:**Sonia Akter**

Senior Lecturer

Crawford School of Public Policy

Sonia Akter is an Associate Professor at the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University. She earned her PhD in Environmental Management and Development from the Australian National University in 2010 and holds a Master's degree in Economics from York University in Toronto, Canada. Prior to joining the Crawford School in 2023, she was an Assistant Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore from 2015 to 2022. Dr. Akter has also held positions as a Scientist at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) from 2014 to 2015 and as a Senior Researcher at the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research-UFZ in Leipzig, Germany, from 2011 to 2013. Her research focuses on the intersection of agriculture, environment, and development within the Asia-Pacific region. She has conducted extensive work on agriculture and food policy, natural disasters, and women's empowerment in South and Southeast Asia. Dr. Akter's research particularly examines how climate change disproportionately impacts various social groups, especially women.

Discussant:**Ranjita Dilraj**

PhD Candidate

South Asian Studies Programme

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

National University of Singapore

Ranjita Dilraj is a PhD Candidate with the South Asian Studies Programme at the National University of Singapore. Her current ethnographic research focuses on the intersections of gender, disaster resilience and response of flood affected riverine communities. Ranjita has a Master's degree in Gender, Society and Representation from University College London. Prior to her PhD studies, she worked with the Climate Change, Energy and Resilience Unit of the United Nations Development Programme in New Delhi, India, and the United Nations Women Regional Office for Asia and Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

Presenter:



Minhaj Mahmud
Senior Economist
Asian Development Bank

Minhaj is a Senior Economist at the ADB Economic Analysis and Operational Support Division, Economic Research and Development Impact Department. Minhaj's research areas include behavioral economics, health economics and development economics, with a focus on field experiments and impact evaluation in health, education, labor, gender, welfare, and climate change issues. He works in the teams supporting economic analysis of health and social sector projects as well as impact evaluation of ADB projects.

Discussant:



Liu Tong
Assistant Professor
LKYSPP
National University of Singapore

Tong Liu an Assistant Professor of Economics at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. His research focuses on the causes and consequences of environmental, development and health issues in developing and developed economies with an interdisciplinary perspective from economics and science to facilitate sustainable development. The topics include human capital accumulation, information provision, behaviour, technology, regulation and inequality. His research has been published in top economics and science journals, including American Economic Review: Insights, Journal of Development Economics and BMJ, among others. Previously, Tong Lui was a research assistant professor at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and a postdoctoral fellow at Stanford University. He obtained his PhD from HKUST and bachelor's degrees from Peking University.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

Day 2: 21 February 2025, Friday**Opening Remarks****Abdul Abiad**

Director

Macroeconomics Research Division

Economic Research and Development Impact Department

Asian Development Bank

Abdul Abiad is Director of the Macroeconomic Research Division at the Asian Development Bank in Manila, where he oversees the ADB's flagship publication, the Asian Development Outlook. He also oversaw the production of ADB's inaugural Asia-Pacific Climate Report in 2024. From 2000 to 2015, he was with the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC, where he worked on the World Economic Outlook. His research has focused on financial sector development and international financial integration, fiscal policy, monetary policy, exchange rates and trade, economic resilience, and infrastructure. A Philippine national, he has a BS in Mathematics from the University of the Philippines and a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Pennsylvania.

Practice and Policy: Integrating Gender in Disaster Risk Management**Moderator:****Madhavi Pundit**

Senior Economist

Asian Development Bank

Madhavi Pundit is a Senior Economist in the Economic Research and Development Impact Department. She leads a Technical Assistance that explores big data applications for disaster impact analysis in Asian economies. Her research areas include development economics and macroeconomics with policy relevance in developing and emerging economies. Madhavi completed her PhD in Economics from Boston College, USA and was Assistant Professor at the national Institute of Public Finance and Policy, in New Delhi, India prior to joining ADB.

Presenters:**Veronica Cedillos**

President & CEO

GeoHazards International

Veronica Cedillos is President & CEO of GeoHazards International (GHI), a small, global nonprofit with the mission to save lives by empowering at-risk communities worldwide to build resilience ahead of disasters and climate impacts. She is responsible for the strategic and financial management of the organization, including headquarters in California and field offices in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic.

Cedillos is a structural and earthquake engineer by training whose professional experience has focused on the reduction of impacts from natural hazards. She has extensive experience managing international, multi-disciplinary groups from government, academia, non-profit, and industry sectors. Cedillos has

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

directed numerous efforts on disaster resilience throughout the world, including major projects in Indonesia, Armenia, Haiti, Kyrgyz Republic, Peru, and the United States. As part of this work, she lived in Indonesia, India, Haiti, and Peru for extended periods.



Fahmida Khatun

Executive Director
Centre for Policy Dialogue

Fahmida Khatun is the Executive Director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a leading think tank in Bangladesh. She is also a Non-resident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council, USA. Dr Khatun is a Board Director of the Central Bank of Bangladesh and a Member of the Task Force on Re-strategising the Economy and Mobilising Resources for Equitable and Sustainable Development formed by the current interim government of Bangladesh. She is also a member of the BRAC Board, the largest non-governmental organisation in the world. Dr Khatun is also a member of the high-level advisory board of the Productive Capacities Index of UNCTAD. She is a member of Boston University's Task Force on Climate, Development and IMF. She was the Co-Chair of the T20 Task Force on "Accelerating SDGs: Exploring New Pathways to the 2030 Agenda" during India's Presidency of the G20 in 2023. Dr Khatun's expertise includes macroeconomic policy, financial sector, aid effectiveness, climate change, and women's contribution to the economy, among others.



Krishna Karkee

Coordinator
Women Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Platform

Krishna Karkee holds two Master's degrees: one in Geography from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, and another in International Environmental Science from Lund University, Sweden. A highly regarded professional in the fields of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), humanitarian response, climate action, and local governance, Ms. Karkee has extensive experience working across Nepal, Bangladesh, and Yemen. She has held key positions in prestigious organizations, including UNDP, Progressio UK, CARE International in Nepal, DanChurchAid (DCA), and DAI Global for USAID's Tayar Nepal, contributing her expertise in both mid-level and senior roles. Ms. Karkee is a founding member of the Women Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Platform (WHDRRP) in Nepal, which promotes women's leadership in DRR, humanitarian action, and climate change. She has also served as the General Secretary of the Disaster Preparedness Network (DPNet) Nepal, the secretariat of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Platform (NPDRR), led by the Government of Nepal, and also served as a Co-coordinator of Association of International NGOs Task Group on Disaster Management and Climate Change (AINTGDMCC). These roles demonstrate her leadership and commitment to advancing inclusive and impactful disaster risk reduction & management, and climate change initiatives.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

**Ramona Miranda**

Steering Committee Member/Director

Duryog Nivaran

Ramona is a Development Communications Specialist, with a keen interest and involvement in participatory development approaches, appropriate technologies, DRR and gender. Ramona has over 20 years' experience in South Asia, in full time and part-time positions in development organizations such as UN-Habitat and Practical Action. Ramona holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Peradeniya and a Master of Arts in Communication from the Ohio State University. She currently holds the voluntary post of Director/Steering Committee member of Duryog Nivaran, a South Asian network for disaster mitigation, advocating development-DRR links, with a focus on gender, technology and communication aspects. As Duryog Nivaran leads the Gender Stakeholder Group of the UNDRR Asia Pacific Partnership, Ramona has been engaged with it over the years.

**Zonibel Woods**

Senior Social Development Specialist

Asian Development Bank

Zonibel Woods is an expert in gender mainstreaming, policy development, and capacity building with leadership experience in civil society organizations like the International Women's Health Coalition and the Ford Foundation. Since the 1992 Earth Summit, she's been dedicated to environmental and sustainable development, especially in gender and climate change. Relocating to the Philippines in 2012, she's worked as a gender consultant on these issues. In 2020, she joined the ADB as a Senior Social Development Specialist. Zonibel has published on gender, health, climate change, and is also passionate about animal welfare.

Finance and Insurance Solutions**Moderator and Presenter:****Andreas Lunding**

Senior Climate Change Specialist (Climate Finance) / Fund Manager

Asia-Pacific Climate Finance Fund (ACIiFF)

Asian Development Bank

Andreas Lunding is the Fund Manager for the Asia-Pacific Climate Finance Fund (ACIiFF), based within the Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where he is concurrently a Senior Climate Change Specialist (Climate Finance). Andreas leads the project development and deployment of financial resources for ACIiFF, focused on supporting the design and implementation of innovative financial risk management products to unlock investments in climate change mitigation and adaptation and address climate-induced extreme weather risk across ADB's Developing Member Countries (DMCs).

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

Presenters:



Bijal Brahmabhatt
Director
Mahila Housing Trust

Bijal Brahmabhatt is the Director of Mahila Housing Trust (MHT). She is a recognized expert in habitat improvement through women's empowerment, community development, climate resilience and housing finance. She has worked extensively at the intersection of urban development, women in informal economy and climate change. She is a finalist for United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction, women champions for 2021. She supervises the MHT's operations at the national level and has proven experience in conceptualizing planning, and managing slum up-gradation programs across India. Her professional experience has focused on a range of poverty alleviation issues, particularly with women, entrepreneurship, slum up gradation, Water and Sanitation, climate resilience, urban planning, housing finance, housing technology etc. Bijalben guides and leads climate resilience program, promotes a community based resilience model that is women-led, integrated, evidence based, and focuses on innovative communication strategies to promote a culture of resilience action.



Manoj Pandey
Regional Coordinator - Asia Pacific
UNEP FI – V20 Sustainable Insurance Facility

Manoj Pandey is the Regional Coordinator for Asia-Pacific at UNEP-FI - V20 Sustainable Insurance Facility. He works across the most climate vulnerable countries in the Asia-Pacific Region, developing a pipeline of climate-smart insurance and risk financing solutions for MSMEs and the financial ecosystems they operate in. This involves working with the Ministries of Finance of the V20 member countries as well as the Banks, Financial Institutions, Insurers and Re-insurers, MSMEs, state and international agencies etc. in these countries. Manoj has a cumulative experience of 18 years working in the inclusive finance, inclusive insurance, digital financial services and regulatory advisory spaces with entities such as GIZ's Access to Insurance Initiative, MicroSave Consulting, SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) etc. in multiple South and South-East Asian and African markets. Manoj has a Master's in Business Administration from IRMA, India and is a PRINCE2® certified project management practitioner.

International Workshop on Gender and Disasters

Singapore | 20–21 February 2025

Uthpala GunawardanaDeputy Manager Sustainability Unit
Regional Development Bank, Sri Lanka

Uthpala Thilini Gunawardana is a sustainability and environmental professional with over six years of experience in banking. As a professional banker in Environment & Sustainability at the Regional Development Bank (RDB) of Sri Lanka, she leads ESG strategy implementation, sustainable finance initiatives, and climate risk management since 2019. She holds a Master of Science in GIS & Remote Sensing from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from the University of Jaffna. Uthpala is RDB's first Environmental & Social Safeguard Officer, contributing to the Strengthening the Regional Development Bank Project (ADB-funded) and the Climate Insurance Product Development Project (UNEP TA Facility).