

WEEKLY ECHOES OF NDRI

VOLUME 248



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director of NDRI and Dr. Manjeshwori Singh, Vice President of the Executive Committee paid a courtesy visit to the Mekong Institute and the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI).

NDRI is an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit institution dedicated to addressing contemporary and emerging policy challenges and to influencing public policy through research.

HEADLINES FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

- NDRI participates in the FutureWORKS Asia Network Meeting
- NDRI engages with the Faculty of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources - FFANR, AIT
- Courtesy visit of NDRI to Mekong Institute and Thailand Development Research Institute
- NDRI visits the Faculty of Public Policy and Sustainable Development, FPPSD, AIT
- NDRI visits the Global Water and Sanitation Center, (GWSC)
- Dr. Shankar Shrestha visits (WEM) Program and (EEM) Program Offices in AIT, Thailand
- WCP/NDRI and SEI Asia Office in Bangkok Explores Collaboration Avenues
- Advancing Spring Water Research in Sindhuli: NDRI Conducts Isotope and Hydrochemistry Sampling Campaign



NDRI participates in the FutureWORKS Asia Network Meeting

Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director of NDRI, and Dr. Manjeshwori Singh Maharjan, GEDSI Program Lead, represented NDRI at the FutureWORKS Asia Network Meeting held from 9-12 June 2026 at Holiday Inn Bangkok Sukhumvit, Thailand.

The four days networking meeting focused on Project Updates & Peer Troubleshooting, Big Picture & Thematic Collaboration, and Research Findings & Research-to-Policy Pathways. In addition, a dedicated one-day roundtable discussion with the ILO Regional Office explored the theme of Digital Transformation, AI and Platform Work: Implications for Labour Markets and Social Protection.

On Day 1, The session commenced with welcome remarks and participant introductions, followed by project updates and discussions from the Development and Policies Research Center, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Good Business Lab, Women and Media Collective, and Nepal Development Research Institute. The day concluded with a

group activity and dinner, providing an opportunity for informal exchange, networking, and strengthening collaboration among partner organizations.



A group photo of one day roundtable discussion with the ILO Regional Office explored the theme of Digital Transformation, AI and Platform Work: Implications for Labour Markets and Social Protection.

On Day 2, The sessions featured project updates and discussions from the Centre for a Smart Future and the BPO Industry Employees Network, followed by a series of policy presentations by the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Centre for Poverty Analysis, Women in Global Health Philippines, and De La Salle University - Social Development Research Center. The program concluded with a wrap-up and reflection session, allowing participants to synthesize key insights

and identify opportunities for future collaboration.

On Day 3, The session focused on the "Future of Work," highlighting key emerging trends and facilitating a rich discussion among participants. This was followed by travel to Pullman King Power for a lunch and later with the next segment of the program, where a policy roundtable on Digital Transformation, AI, and Platform Work examined their implications for labour markets and social protection. The day concluded with a group dinner, providing a space for informal interaction and networking among participants.



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director of NDRI, and Dr. Manjeshwori Singh Maharjan, GEDSI Program Lead, with Dr. Ken, Country Director of ILO regional.

Whereas, On the 4 day, The program continued with breakout group discussions organized into

three thematic clusters, with tea served during the session, followed by lunch. In the afternoon, participants engaged in reflection sessions focused on joint dissemination and key learnings, including a structured review of what worked well and what could be improved, with tea served during the discussions.

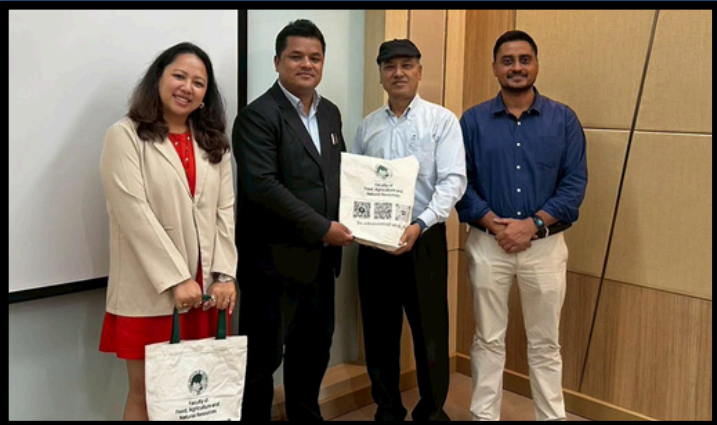
Thus, the meeting fostered regional learning, strengthened partnerships, and reinforced a shared commitment to collaborative research, impactful dissemination, and evidence-informed policy engagement across the FutureWORKS Asia network.



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director of NDRI, attending FutureWORKS Asia Network Meeting at Thailand

NDRI engages with the Faculty of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources - FFANR, AIT

On 12 June 2026, Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) delegation, Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director, and Dr. Shankar Shrestha, Secretary of the Executive Committee and AIT Alumnus 2013, met with Faculty of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources - FFANR, AIT, Deputy Dean, Dr. Sushil Himanshu, and senior faculty member, Prof. Rajendra P. Shrestha, to discuss potential joint initiatives in research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building.



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director, NDRI and Dr. Shankar Shrestha, Secretary of the Executive Committee with Dr. Sushil Himanshu and Prof. Rajendra P. Shrestha

The meeting between the NDRI delegation and FFANR, AIT, served as a platform to explore for better

opportunities for future collaboration and foster stronger institutional cooperation. The meeting highlighted shared interests in food security, climate resilience, livelihoods, and sustainable development and looks forward to developing this promising partnership into impactful regional collaborations.

Courtesy visit of NDRI to Mekong Institute and Thailand Development Research Institute

The delegation from Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) comprising Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director of NDRI and Vice President of the Executive Committee, and Dr. Manjeshwori Singh, Vice President of the Executive Committee paid a courtesy visit to the Mekong Institute and the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI).

At the Mekong Institute, an intergovernmental organization, the NDRI delegation met with Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director of the Trade and Investment Facilitation Department, and his team. This first meeting between NDRI and the

Institute served as an opportunity to exchange information on respective work and outreach, and to explore potential collaboration in the region. Given Mekong Institute's mandate, it was identified as a potential donor for NDRI's work in water and climate resilience.



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director, NDRI and Dr. Majeshwori Singh Maharjan, Vice President, of the Executive Committee, NDRI meets Dr. Somkiat, Director of Thailand Development Research Institute, TDRI

Subsequently, NDRI met with Dr. Somkiat Tangkitvanich, President of the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI). The discussion focused on sharing each institute's way forward. NDRI looks forward to learning from TDRI's experience in developing itself as a think tank capable of producing evidence-based research. Additionally, both sides expressed interest in future collaboration across various area including

education, energy, and other sectors.

NDRI visits the Faculty of Public Policy and Sustainable Development, FPPSD, AIT

A delegation from Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director, and Dr. Shankar Shrestha, Secretary of the Executive Committee and an AIT Alumnus 2013, met with the faculty members from the Faculty of Public Policy and Sustainable Development (FPPSD), Dr. Thi Phuoc Lai Nguyen, Dean of the Faculty, and Dr. Duanghathai Buranajaroenkij, Chair of the Gender and Development Studies (GDS) Program, for a constructive discussion on potential areas of collaboration.



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director, NDRI and Dr. Shankar Shrestha, Secretary of the Executive Committee with Dr. Thi Phuoc Lai Nguyen and Dr. Duanghathai Buranajaroenkij

The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange perspectives on shared research interests and institutional priorities. The discussions centered on exploring avenues for partnership in social research and the design and implementation of capacity development programs and expressed interest in fostering academic and research cooperation through joint initiatives, knowledge exchange, collaborative studies, and training activities aimed at generating evidence-based solutions and strengthening institutional capacities to address emerging development challenges.

Environmental Engineering at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT).

The meeting concluded with discussions involving Prof. Sangam Shrestha, Director of GWSC and former Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology; Mr. Agus Nugroho, Chief Operating Officer and leads from various hubs within GWSC. The discussions explored potential avenues for collaboration between GWSC and NDRI, with a particular focus on advancing joint initiatives in the areas of social protection and sanitation.

NDRI visits the Global Water and Sanitation Center, (GWSC)

A delegation from Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director, and Dr. Shankar Shrestha, Secretary of the Executive Committee and an AIT Alumnus 2013, held a meeting at the Global Water and Sanitation Center (GWSC), a center funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and housed within the Department of Water and



A group picture taken at Global Water and Sanitation Center, GWSC with Professors and Researchers

Dr. Shankar Shrestha visit to (WEM) Program and (EEM) Program Offices in AIT, Thailand

On 15 June 2026, Dr. Shankar Shrestha (as a Co-Lead of the Water and Climate Program (WCP), NDRI) visited Water Engineering and Management (WEM) Program and Environmental Engineering and Management (EEM) Program Offices in AIT, Thailand to explore collaboration avenues of WCP with WEM and EEM, respectively. The meeting concluded with an understanding to develop and conduct joint interdisciplinary action research and relevant trainings in future in the field of water resources, climate and water-induced disasters, among others.

The visit marked a significant step toward strengthening institutional ties between AIT and NDRI. The productive dialogues across multiple faculties, centers and programs have laid a strong foundation for joint initiatives in research, capacity building, and policy engagement. FFANR looks forward to translating these conversations into actionable partnerships that deliver tangible and lasting impact advancing sustainable development across the region, with particular emphasis on Nepal. Both institutions expressed enthusiasm for formalizing collaboration through a memorandum of understanding and identifying pilot projects for early implementation.



Dr. Shankar Shrestha (as a Co-Lead of the Water and Climate Program (WCP), NDRI) with Senior Research Specialist at WEM



Dr. Shankar Shrestha (as a Co-Lead of the Water and Climate Program (WCP), NDRI) with a Faculty at EEM at AIT

WCP/NDRI and SEI Asia Office in Bangkok Explores Collaboration Avenues

On 11 June 2026, Dr. Shankar Shrestha (Senior Research Specialist and Co-Lead of the Water and Climate Program (WCP), NDRI) visited Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia Office in Bangkok, Thailand and met with senior leadership team: Dr. Chayanis Kittasudthacheewa (Deputy Director), Dr. Thanapon Piman (Senior Research Fellow and Water Cluster Lead) and Dr. Ridhi Saluja (Research Fellow) to explore collaboration avenues between WCP and SEI.



Dr. Shankar with Senior Leadership Team in SEI Asia Office, Bangkok, Thailand

SEI team presented on their research focus and key activities in Thailand and the region. Similarly, Dr. Shrestha provided an overview of NDRI's research focus with in-depth sharing of WCP's recent/ongoing projects. The meeting concluded with an understanding to develop and conduct joint research, especially when Nepal is a research site (among others).

Advancing Spring Water Research in Sindhuli: NDRI Conducts Isotope and Hydrochemistry Sampling Campaign

Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) successfully completed its first field campaign under the Muhan Project from 1-5 June 2026 in Kamalamai Municipality, Sindhuli. The mission focused on collecting water samples for isotope, hydrochemistry, and tritium analyses to better understand spring recharge processes and groundwater dynamics in Nepal's mid-hills.

The field team, comprising NDRI's researchers Garima Bindari and Girish Raj Lamsal, trained local

enumerators on sample collection protocols, handling procedures, and quality assurance measures. Practical demonstrations were conducted at the Gwang Khola catchment to build local capacity for year-round monitoring.

During the visit, water samples were collected from springs, streams, and dug wells for laboratory analysis. In addition, rainfall collection stations were established at different elevations in Sindhuligadhi and Pipal Bhanjyang to support future isotope and tritium monitoring. The team also gathered information on local water uses, abstractions, and diversions along the Gwang Khola catchment to contribute to ongoing water accounting studies.



A glimpse of enumerators briefing on isotope campaign.

The collected samples will help determine recharge elevations, groundwater residence times, and hydrochemical characteristics of local water sources.

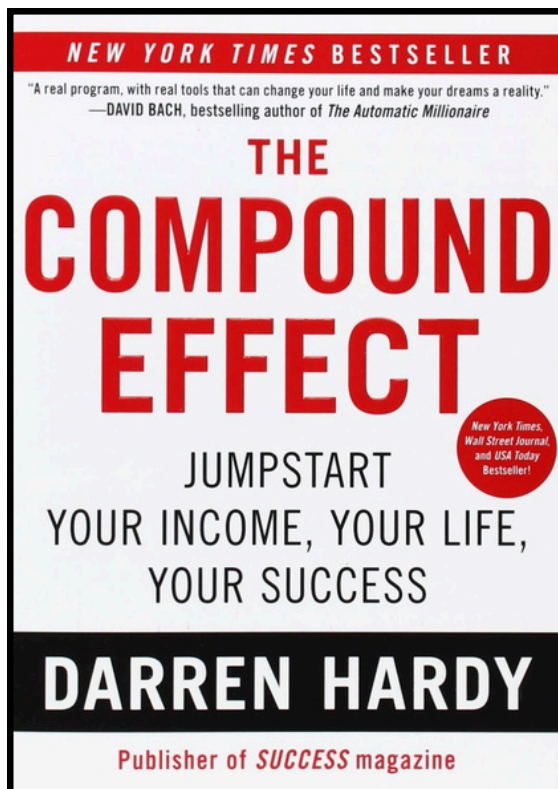


NDRI team guiding the field enumerators on sample collection.

These findings will contribute to an improved understanding of spring systems and support evidence-based water resource management in Nepal's mountain regions. The insights generated will help identify patterns of spring recharge, seasonal variability, and emerging vulnerabilities associated with climate and environmental change.



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director, NDRI and Dr. Shankar Shrestha, Secretary of the Executive Committee presenting on NDRI at AIT



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

"Growth begins the moment you decide to try again."

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

KAREENA NEPALI
OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION
ASSISTANT

SHIKHA THAPA MAGAR, PHD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar and Dr. Majeshwori Singh
Maharjan at Mekong Institute

CLICK THE ICONS TO CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

