



# Understanding Vulnerabilities through Intersectional Lens in Khokana

## Presenter



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Physical presence : SIAS Meeting Hall  
Virtual presence : <https://bit.ly/3HQjlap>  
Date: 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022  
Time: 10:30 AM to 12 PM

## About Future Himalayan Research Seminars

*Future Himalayan Research Seminar Series on Environment and Development* is a research sharing platform to present recent and ongoing studies where researchers can meaningfully engage with each other and share knowledge. Not limiting itself to presentation and feedback loop, the seminar is also a platform for researcher to build social and intellectual relationship with contemporaries and experts from diverse array of research tradition within the overarching theme. Research seminar series is a bi-monthly event with open access to everyone interested. The seminar is planned for 1.5 hours, with first 45 minutes for presentation and the later half to engage with the audience for discussion and debate.

## Seminar Overview

Nepal is ranked as 4th in global climate risk and 11th in occurrence and impact of earthquakes globally (UNDRR, 2019), which makes it one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of multiple hazards. Understanding how hazards turn into disasters, and have differential impacts on individuals and communities, can help understand how root causes of disasters are not the 'natural' phenomena but the socio-political context where it plays out. This study starts with an understanding that hazard and disaster situations do not create vulnerability, but create a situation where pre-existing vulnerabilities manifest in a myriad of ways. Thus, the study of vulnerability(ies) requires this understanding - of its (their) existence prior or beyond the extent of a particular potentially hazardous event. The conventional study of vulnerability in the Nepali context is largely directed towards finding the variables and indicators that determine social vulnerability. In this presentation, the presenter aims to draw attention towards the dynamic and complex nature of vulnerability, that is, how vulnerability changes according to context (time and space) and hence cannot be encapsulated under a static and monolithic socio-demographic category. As an alternative to current policy discourse and in tune with more critical scholarly work, an intersectional understanding of vulnerability(ies) is proposed. The use of this intersectional lens allows us to understand vulnerability as "the result of different and interdependent societal stratification processes that result in multiple dimensions of marginalization". In addition to Kuran's conceptualization of vulnerability, in this presentation, the presenter stresses that intersectional analysis allows a more dynamic understanding of vulnerability, by not labelling individuals into social categories of either privileged or oppressed but highlighting that how people can experience power and oppression simultaneously.

**Rachana Upadhyaya** holds an Erasmus Mundus Double Master's Degree on Gender and Women's Studies from University of Hull, UK and University of Lodz, Poland. She has more than 10 years' experience of working on gender issues in Nepal, both in academia and practice. She has worked as a part of different project to understand how gender identities and roles interact with various social processes to create differential outcomes for the marginalized. Currently, she is pursuing a doctoral research degree in University of Bristol, UK, where her work is focused on understanding interaction of gender and other social identifiers with capacities of people to cope with the disasters.

**Organized by:**



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