

Digital Diaries for Climate and Health: An Engagement Project to Explore Community Understandings and Perception

Summita Udas¹, Ashata Dahal¹, Sonia Lewycka^{2,3}, Hang Tran Thi², Ragil Dien⁴, Eva Simarmata⁴, Ruly Darmawan⁴

Climate Change and Health

- Increment in spread and prevalence of infectious diseases.
- Transmission seasons and geographical ranges are extended.
- Impacts on food and water security - malnutrition and undernutrition, highly affecting vulnerable populations.
- Threatens social determinants of health, i.e. livelihoods, equality, and access to healthcare.

Multi-country Study

- **Where:** Nepal, Indonesia and Vietnam
- **What:** Explore relationships between climate and infectious diseases.
- **Why:** To inform strategies for building resilience and mitigating the health risks associated with climate change in LMICs.
- **How:** Uncover public perceptions of climate change, impact on health and livelihoods, and explore community actions.
- **When:** Since June 23, 2023.

Methodology

Qualitative- Community based Participatory Research

Data Collection

- Digital Diaries- Photo with climate and health themes developed through collective interpretation
- In-depth interviews.

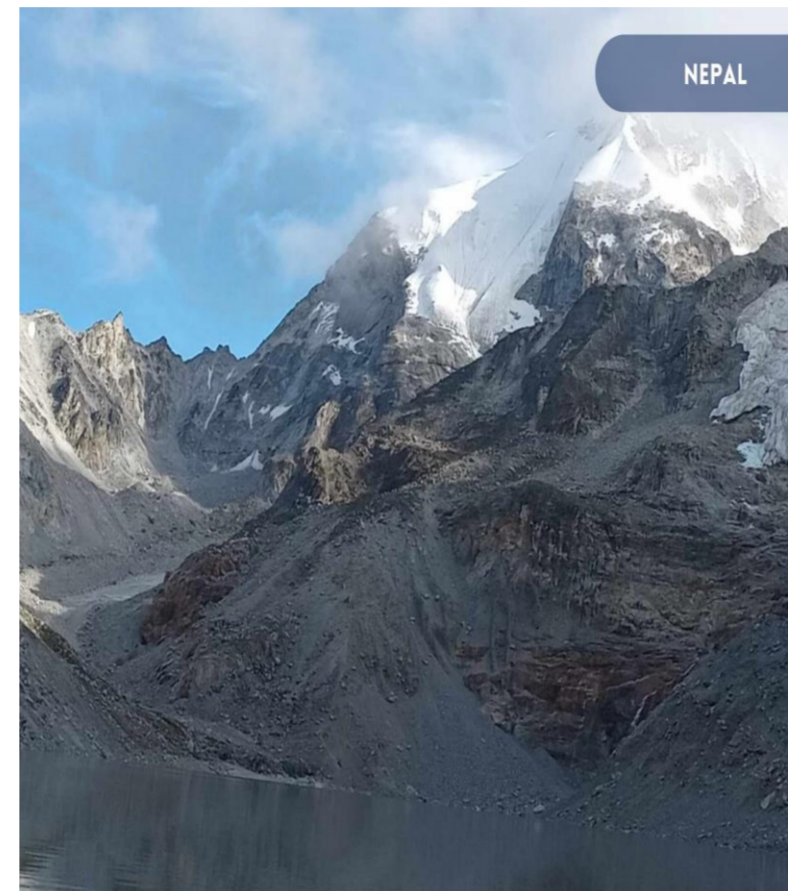
Sample- 10 Key Informant & 10 Photovoice/ Country

Analysis- Content analysis

Focus of Study

- Challenges and initiatives arising from the interplay between climate change and health.
- Exploring solutions and policies for a more resilient and sustainable future.

INITIAL FINDINGS



NEPAL

FOG HARVESTING: A TEMPORARY SOLUTION FOR WATER SCARCITY

In Taling of Jan, in the Kathmandu region, snowfall has decreased compared to before. Previously, there used to be glaciers on the slopes where heavy snowfall occurred. Now, all the trees species in this area have died up. There is a decrease in the spring area for heretic, which is a source of water and the Pagan Road has many landslides. For tourists coming for Himalayan trekking, unexpected snowfall and the impact of ice melting are affecting the trekking routes, and there are many incidents on the trekking trails. The waterfalls, which used to attract tourists, are now affected due to reduced water levels. As the snow and ice in the Himalayas decrease, the surface is getting drier, leading to a dramatic change in the heat balance, causing them to warm up faster than the surrounding areas. The glaciers in this region are crucial for water supply. However, due to climate change, the number of glaciers in this region is decreasing. Local communities must resort to 'fog harvesting' to gather water. The Himalayas are in crisis, and if not addressed, it will impact all living beings in this region.



Siddi Prasad, Anand, Bhan, Nepal



INDONESIA

CORAL REEF DESTRUCTION IMPACTS GLOBAL WARMING

Market of ornamental fish market is increasing and so with coral reefs. There are several small shops at the market in Bandung, Indonesia that sell coral reefs both alive and dead. In contrast to fish which can be cultured quickly, coral reefs can take 5,000-10,000 years to grow, with some types of coral growing at just 0.2-2 cm per year. The slow growth rate has a serious impact on the survival of marine life. Coral reef ecosystems contribute to the reduction of marine ecosystems that have been formed for many years. Coral reefs contribute to absorbing the carbon from the sea. That is why coral reefs is a crucial factor in reversing global warming. If we let coral reefs with thousands of years of growth be taken away without any guarantee that they will be replaced, something how will we be responsible to our children and grandchildren for the destruction of marine ecosystems in the future?



Supriyanti, Anand, Bhan, Nepal



VIETNAM

BLAZING HOT TEMPERATURES AFFECT FARMERS' HEALTH

On the way home from Cao Thoi to An Giang, I saw many farmers but touching images of farmers working in heat and soil fields. However, it was a bright light in people had to work under the scorching sun. Currently, climate change has increased global temperatures. Working outdoors in blazing hot temperatures considerably affects the health of farmers, in particular, they might get skin cancer, heat stroke, etc. These illnesses are serious.



An Nguyen, Hang Thi, Cao Thoi, Vietnam

NEPAL

- **Major Concern:** Weather changes, river pollution, health.
- Youth concerned with health risk and farmers with impact on agriculture.
- **Solution:** Collective action.

INDONESIA

- **Major Concern:** Weather shifts, COVID-19 mask waste, coral reef trade, emissions from abandoned buildings.
- **Solution:** Sustainable practices and community engagement.

VIETNAM

- **Major Concern:** Vulnerable groups has growing concerns about climate-induced health risks.
- **Solution:** Timely implementation of improved mitigation and adaptation strategies.



NEPAL

RIVERS IN CRISIS: CLIMATE CHANGE AND POLLUTION ENDANGER WATER QUALITY, HEALTH, AND ECOSYSTEMS, URGING ACTION NOW

"The image illustrates how rivers have become depleted and polluted as a result of climate change and human activities. Droughts and pollution from industrial and waste sources are consequences of climate change, which also adversely affects the flow and quality of rivers, which concerns me from washing vegetables in polluted water. The shortage of water due to climate change has profound impacts on agriculture, biodiversity, and human health. To address this issue, it is imperative to control urbanization, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and raise public awareness."



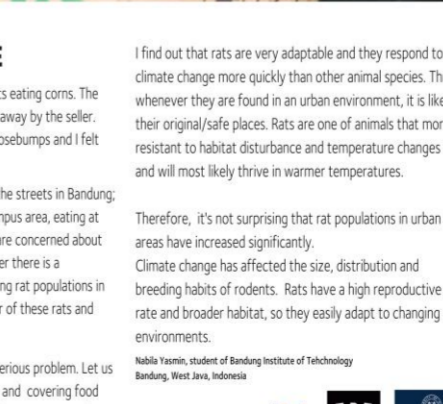
Siddi Prasad, Anand, Bhan, Nepal



INDONESIA

RATS LOVE CLIMATE CHANGE

I find out that rats are very adaptable and they respond to climate change more quickly than other animal species. That's why they are found in an urban environment, it is like their original (wild) places. Rats are one of animals that more resistant to habitat disturbance and temperature changes and will most likely thrive in warmer temperatures. In the past three months, I have often caught rats on the streets in Bandung. Started when I walk on the sidewalk, in front of the carousels, sitting at street vendors and along the house surroundings. I'm concerned about the increasing of rats population and wondering whether there is a connection between ecosystem imbalance and increasing rat population in urban areas to climate change affecting the behavior of these rats and making them more frequently seen in urban areas. The rat populations in urban areas has become a very serious problem. Let us always do simple action such as maintaining cleanliness and covering food (spills) using rat traps if necessary, and always keep the environment clean. This is crucial for our health as well as for environment."



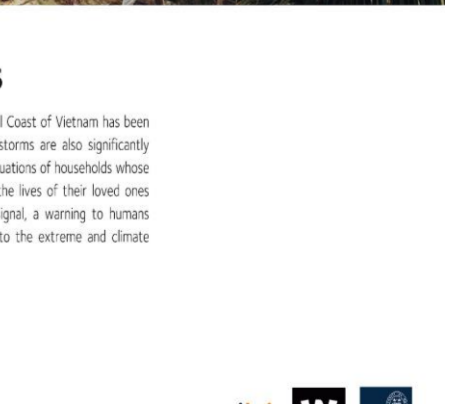
Maha Nurma, Anand, Bhan, Nepal



VIETNAM

A WARNING SENT TO HUMANS

In recent years, the number of storms hitting the Central Coast of Vietnam has been increasing. The intensity and consequences caused by storms are also significantly greater. We heard about and witnessed many pathetic situations of households whose property was swept away by storms and floods, even the lives of their loved ones were affected. Are these natural disasters sending a signal, a warning to humans toward the fact that our nature has been devastated by the extreme and climate change happening rapidly?"



Trang Thi, Anand, Bhan, Nepal

Geneva Health Forum conference, May 27-29, 2024, Geneva, Switzerland.
Presenter: Summita Udas, Oxford Clinical Research Unit, Nepal

¹Oxford University Clinical Research Unit, Nepal
²Oxford University Clinical Research Unit, Vietnam
³Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global Health, University of Oxford
⁴Oxford University Clinical Research Unit, Indonesia