

**United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)**

**United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)**

**Virtual Expert Group Meeting:**

**Implementing Beijing+25 Commitments in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Tuesday 15 September 2020 from 09:30 –12:30 hours (Thailand Standard Time)  
Wednesday 16 September 2020 from 09:00 –12:30 hours (Thailand Standard Time)**

**Concept Note and Programme**

**1. Introduction**

The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remains the most comprehensive and progressive blueprint for achieving gender equality to date. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reinforces its ambitions, through advancing Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review was convened by ESCAP and UN Women in late 2019 to review progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. More than 600 participants from 54 countries and 166 civil society organizations attended the Conference which culminated in the adoption of the Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment - a comprehensive set of commitments and actions on region-specific issues that can move forward the gender equality agenda over the next 5 years.

With its adoption, countries in Asia and the Pacific committed, *inter alia*, to ensuring women's economic empowerment and the integration of women into the formal economy. Governments agreed to take appropriate measures and extend legal and social protections to ensure that all women and girls have equal opportunities for education, decent work, and financial inclusion. Countries further committed to work with key stakeholders to transform negative gender norms, discriminatory social attitudes and to eliminate structurally unequal power relations that persist between women and men. They additionally highlighted the need to strengthen gender-responsive national statistical systems and data collection for an enhanced understanding of gender gaps in the region.

The implementation of these commitments has been negatively impacted by the emergence and stronghold of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within this context, women are often caregivers for both children and older persons and may therefore suffer from both financial and health-related impacts as they struggle to balance productive and reproductive roles during the on-going crisis. In a region where most women are engaged in vulnerable or informal employment and/or businesses, many working mothers have little recourse to social protection to support public health measures such as school closures. Evidence is also emerging to suggest that violence against women and girls has increased, while the

availability of relevant services and support to address these issues, including essential social and other health services including sexual and reproductive health services, is decreasing.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of the virtual Expert Group Meeting (EGM) are two-fold: to (a) facilitate the exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learnt with respect to the progressive implementation of Beijing Platform for Action, including in the context of COVID-19 pandemic; and to (b) develop key recommendations for priority actions to advance the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review<sup>1</sup>, which was adopted by the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review in November 2019.

The virtual EGM will facilitate the exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learnt by stakeholders in the progressive implementation of Beijing+25 commitments within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will discuss all three dimensions of inclusive and sustainable social development, namely the socio-economic, political and environmental dimensions.

The recommendations for priority actions will be directed towards (a) ESCAP member states, cf. their commitments to the 2019 Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review; (b) civil society organizations; (c) private sector actors and (d) UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, cf. their respective mandates to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The virtual EGM will also provide an opportunity to explore potential partnerships as well as identity synergies to be harnessed, between efforts by stakeholders to advance the empowerment of all women and girls across the Asia-Pacific region.

## 3. Outcomes

The outcome of the virtual EGM will inform the work of ESCAP and UN Women in supporting Asia-Pacific countries in implementing the Asia-Pacific Beijing+25 review outcome - Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review.

The key recommendations are expected to identify, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, both opportunities and challenges to achieving the ambitions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and key gender-related SDGs, starting with SDG 5.

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<sup>1</sup> The [2019 Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review](#) committed governments in the region to, *inter alia*, "recognize the need to accelerate efforts to reduce and redistribute the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work shouldered by women of all ages". It also "strongly condemned all forms of violence against all women and girls" and further stressed the "urgent need to address intersectional barriers and the underlying gender inequalities prevailing in many countries as well as gender-based violence and discrimination against all women and girls". The Declaration specifically called for action including through enacting and enforcing laws and regulatory frameworks in this regard. Finally, the Declaration committed governments in the region to, *inter alia*, "scale up efforts to accelerate the transition of women from informal employment to formal employment, including access to decent work, education and training, improved wages, social protection and quality childcare" and to "take measures to facilitate the financial inclusion and financial literacy of women and their equal access to formal financial services, in particular for women entrepreneurs, to start, run and expand their businesses throughout the supply chain".

#### 4. Participants

The virtual EGM will bring together about 30 experts and professionals working towards the realization of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and other gender-related SDGs, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Participants will include government representatives and policy makers; representatives of civil society organizations and private sector, and representatives of relevant UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes; and other stakeholders across Asia and the Pacific.

#### 5. Modality/structure of event

The EGM will be convened virtually on the Zoom platform. It will adopt an interactive format in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learnt. Participants will share their own observations/experiences on the respective substantive thematic focus areas and contribute to the development of key recommendations.

The virtual EGM will consist of five sessions. The first session will introduce the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Beijing+25 Review through presentations on the “Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review” and will place the subsequent discussions within the context of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

The following sessions will address key gender issues, including women’s economic empowerment, violence against women as well as women and environmental sustainability. These sessions will integrate perspectives on the overall socio-economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on women, including the ways in which the pandemic has exacerbated the disproportionate amount of unpaid care and domestic work carried out by women and girls; translated into lost livelihoods and incomes, and increased incidences of violence against women and girls, among others.

The objective of the final session is to articulate key recommendations for priority actions to implement the Beijing+25 outcomes, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. These recommendations will be directed towards (a) ESCAP member states, cf. their commitments to the 2019 Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review; (b) civil society organizations; (c) private sector actors and (d) UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, cf. their respective mandates to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

## 6. Links to key documents

[2019 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review, background paper](#) and the [Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review](#)

UN Secretary-General UN [Comprehensive Response to COVID-19](#) and his [Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women](#)

UN Women: [The shadow pandemic - violence against women and girls and COVID-19](#) and [UN Women: COVID-19 and gender: What do we know; what do we need to know?](#)

ESCAP [coronavirus response](#) and [socio-economic response framework](#)

## 7. Contact

Ms. Channe Lindstrøm Oğuzhan, Social Affairs Officer, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP [lindstromoguzhan@un.org](mailto:lindstromoguzhan@un.org)

Ms. Hulda Ouma, Strategic Planning and Coordination Specialist, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UN Women [hulda.ouma@unwomen.org](mailto:hulda.ouma@unwomen.org)

*The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) provides an inclusive intergovernmental platform for governments and other stakeholders in the region to accelerate the implementation of global gender equality commitments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the outcomes of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.*

*ESCAP works to ensure that gender equality is addressed holistically in order to develop forward-looking strategies and contribute to efforts towards gender equality, poverty reduction and economic growth in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.*

*The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and benefit women and girls worldwide.*

*UN Women's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific located in Bangkok, covers a total of 42 countries and exercises its triple mandate and functions at a regional level and in support of UN Women's offices and UN Country Teams in 24 countries across the region.*

## 8. Programme

**Tuesday 15 September 2020 from 09:30 –12:30 hours (Thailand Standard Time)**

09:10-09:30	<p>Online log-in (Zoom)  <a href="https://unwomen.zoom.us/j/95627395184?pwd=WGJZL2tWYXFRSHFRU2pMQ3BrWIBHUT09">https://unwomen.zoom.us/j/95627395184?pwd=WGJZL2tWYXFRSHFRU2pMQ3BrWIBHUT09</a></p>
09:30-09:50	<p><b>Welcome Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Srinivas Tata, Director, Social Development Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)</li> <li>• Ms. Sarah Knibbs, Deputy Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of the EGM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Channe Lindstrøm Oğuzhan, Social Affairs Officer, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP</li> </ul>
09:50-11:00	<p><b>Session 1: Beijing+25 framework</b></p> <p>This session will introduce the framework of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through presentations on the “2019 Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review” and will place the subsequent discussions within the context of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms. Cai Cai, Chief, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP</p> <p><b>Presentations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2019 Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review</b>  <i>Ms. Emily Veiqati, Divisional Women’s Interest Officer, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji</i></li> <li>• <b>Reflections on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the context of advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment in the Philippines</b>  <i>Ms. Kristine Rosary Yuzon-Chaves, Executive Director, Philippine Commission on Women, Manila, Philippines</i></li> <li>• <b>The impact of COVID-19 on gender-related Sustainable Development Goals</b>  <i>Ms. Sara Duerto Valero, Regional Advisor on Gender Statistics, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Drivers to accelerate gender equality in the UN Decade of Action</b> <i>Ms. Gita Sen, Distinguished Professor, Public Health Foundation of India</i></li> <li>• <b>CSO perspectives on key priorities in the context of the 2019 Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment</b> <i>Ms. Nalini Singh, Executive Director, Fiji Women’s Rights Movement</i></li> </ul> <p>Interactive discussions (30 minutes)</p>
11:00-12:30	<p><b>Session 2: Women’s economic empowerment</b></p> <p>This session will offer perspectives on challenges and opportunities to enhance women’s economic empowerment, including in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms. Joni Simpson, Senior Specialist, Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination for East and South East Asia and the Pacific, International Labour Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Overview presentation</b></li> </ul> <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Initiatives to advance women’s economic empowerment in Nepal</b> <i>Ms. Yam Kumari Khatiwada, Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Singha Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal</i></li> <li>• <b>The care economy and women’s economic participation</b> <i>Ms. Deepta Chopra, Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies</i> <i>Ms. Meenakshi Krishnan, Organization Development Consultant &amp; Doctoral Researcher, Institute of Development Studies</i></li> <li>• <b>Fostering enabling environment for women entrepreneurs in Asia and the Pacific</b> <i>Ms. Sudha Gooty, Programme Manager-Catalyzing Women’s Entrepreneurship, ESCAP</i></li> <li>• <b>Holistic Approaches to Private Sector Engagement to boost Women’s Economic Empowerment</b> <i>Ms. Katja Freiwald, Regional Programme Lead ‘WeEmpower Asia’, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</i></li> </ul> <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Nadira Mohd Yusoff</b>, Entrepreneur &amp; Founder (CEO) of Kiddocare and Head of AWEN Malaysia</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Cai Yiping</b>, Executive Committee member, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)</li> </ul> <p>Interactive discussions (40 minutes)</p>



**Wednesday 16 September 2020 from 09:00 –12:30 hours (Thailand Standard Time)**

08:30-08:55	<p>Online log-in (Zoom)  <a href="https://unwomen.zoom.us/j/95627395184?pwd=WGJZL2tWYXFRRSHFRU2pMQ3BrWIBHUT09">https://unwomen.zoom.us/j/95627395184?pwd=WGJZL2tWYXFRRSHFRU2pMQ3BrWIBHUT09</a></p>
09:00-10:30	<p><b>Session 3: Addressing violence against women</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms. Melissa Alvarado, Ending Violence against Women Regional Programme Manager, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Overview presentation</b></li> </ul> <p>Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls</b>  <i>Ms. Bandana Rana, Vice Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee</i></li> </ul> <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Jan Logie</b>, Under-Secretary for Domestic and Sexual Violence, New Zealand Government</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Chisato Kitanaka</b>, Executive Director, All Japan Women’s Shelter Network</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Avni Amin</b>, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO</li> </ul> <p>Interactive discussions (40 minutes)</p>
10:30-12:00	<p><b>Session 4: Women and environmental sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms. Inkar Kadyrzhanova, UN Women Regional Adviser on Gender and Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Overview presentation</b>  <i>Ms. Angie Daze, International Institute on Sustainable Development</i></li> </ul> <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Keya Khan</b>, Joint Secretary, Gender Focal Point, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bangladesh</li> <li>• <b>Mrs. Ruth Manorama</b>, Asia Dalit Rights Forum and Global Call for Action against poverty, India</li> <li>• <b>Mrs. Noelene Nabulivou</b>, Co-founder, Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) For Equality, Fiji</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Mozaharul Alam</b>, Regional Coordinator, Climate Change Programme, Asia and the Pacific Office, United Nations Environment Programme</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Fleur Newman</b>, Action Empowerment Unit Lead   ACE, Gender and Youth, UNFCCC Gender Focal Point and Focal Point for Women, UN Climate Change Secretariat</li> </ul> <p>Interactive discussions (40 minutes)</p>
12:00-12:30	<p><b>Session 5: Looking ahead</b></p>



The objective of this final moderated discussion is to articulate key recommendations for priority actions to implement the Beijing+25 outcomes, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. These recommendations will be directed towards (a) ESCAP member states, cf. their commitments to the 2019 Asia-Pacific Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Beijing+25 Review; (b) civil society organizations; (c) private sector actors and (d) UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, cf. their respective mandates to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

*Co-facilitators:*

- Ms. Cai Cai, Chief, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP
- Ms. Sarah Knibbs, Deputy Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific



## 9. Speaker and moderator profiles (in order of appearance)

- **Dr. Srinivas Tata, Director, Social Development Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)**



Dr. Srinivas Tata is the Director of the Social Development Division of ESCAP. He has 15 years of experience of working with the United Nations. He is a physician by qualification with experience in finance, social policy, public health and programme management.

He has served in wide range of positions. He has previously served as the Chief of the Capacity Development and Partnerships Section of the Strategy and Programme Management Division, and provided support to all ESCAP Divisions and Offices for the formulation and implementation of technical cooperation projects and managed partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders. He also served as the Chief of Social Policy and Population Section in the Social Development Division from 2012 to 2016, focusing on population ageing, demographic change, migration and health. He was also posted as the Deputy Chief of the Regional Commissions New York Office from 2010 to 2012.

Prior to joining the UN, he was posted as Director (Public Health) in the Ministry of Health in the Government of India, dealing with financing and implementation of large health programmes, and WTO negotiations on affordable access to medicines. He also worked as an Under Secretary in the Central Ministry of Finance dealing with indirect taxation policy and tariffs on a range of commodities.

- **Ms. Sarah Knibbs, Deputy Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**



Ms. Knibbs has been working in the Asia Pacific region for the last 25 years, with a range of organisations including UN Women, UNFPA, DFID China, Save the Children Fund, VSO and the Khmer HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance (KHANA). Her work has focused on gender, violence against women, HIV, youth issues, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Sarah joined UN Women in 2014.

She was initially based at Cambodia Country Office and moved to the UN Women Regional Office for Asia Pacific in June 2020 where she is the Deputy Regional Director.

Sarah is from the UK and studied History at Oxford for her first degree, later taking an MSc in Development Management specialising in Population and Reproductive Health at the University of Wales Swansea.

- ***Ms. Channe Lindstrøm Oğuzhan, Social Affairs Officer, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP***



Currently working with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on gender equality and social inclusion, Ms. Channe Lindstrøm Oğuzhan has worked for the United Nations since 2003: On the human rights-based approach to sustainable development for UN-Habitat in Nairobi; on the coordination of humanitarian affairs for OCHA's Central Emergency Response Fund in New York and its Liaison Office to the EU and NATO in Brussels; and with refugee protection and assistance in West Africa for UNHCR. Prior to joining the UN, she worked for the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights and conducted research on refugees and asylum-seekers for the American University in Cairo, research which later earned her the Marquis Who is Who lifetime achievement award. She is a published author on issues related to forced migration and holds a Master's degree in Forced Migration from the University of Oxford Refugee Studies Centre and a Bachelors degree in Sociology from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

- ***Ms. Cai Cai Chief, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section, Social Development Division United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)***



ESCAP is the largest and most comprehensive United Nations entity in the Asian and Pacific region with a membership of 62 governments. Ms. Cai Cai leads ESCAP's regional programmes on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment as well as disability-inclusive development in Asia-Pacific.

She has over 20 years of rich experience with the United Nations at the country, subregional and regional levels, covering a wide range of socioeconomic issues in the larger context of sustainable development. In addition to gender and disability, she had worked in the areas of youth, ageing, as well as health and development issues. Prior to joining ESCAP, she worked with UNICEF and UNDP, focusing on policy development and advocacy that aimed to empower women and young people as a key strategy for pro-poor growth and sustainable development. Ms. Cai Cai holds a Master's degree in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA.



- **Ms. Emily Veiqati, Divisional Women’s Interest Officer, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Fiji**



Ms. Emily Kamoe Veiqati is a civil servant involved in Women’s Development and Gender Equality programmes. She has gained experience in community-based and hospital-based social work as a social worker with a non-governmental organization and enjoy working closely with women at the community level. She is a graduate of the University of the South Pacific with a Bachelor of Science.

- **Ms. Kristine Rosary Yuzon-Chaves, Executive Director, Philippine Commission on Women, Manila, Philippines**



Ms. Kristine Rosary E. Yuzon-Chaves is a mother, a lawyer, a business professional, and a women’s rights advocate. ED Krey, as she is called by many, hails from Cagayan de Oro City where she finished her law studies and started her path in the legal profession. Her passion to advance women’s rights is intertwined with her work as a lawyer.

From her time as an Associate Attorney and a partner at the Torre Franca-Yuzon Law, she handled pro bono cases on Violence Against Women and Children. She also advocated for the gender-sensitive policies, women entrepreneurship, and protection of women against sexual harassment in the workplace, and many others. When she is not drafting pleadings or giving legal advice, she is busy running or managing different businesses, her own and her family’s, including Cenyu Whole Foods in Cagayan de Oro City.

- **Ms. Sara Duerto Valero, Regional Advisor on Gender Statistics, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**



Ms. Sara Duerto Valero is the Regional Advisor on Gender Statistics in UN Women’s Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, where she manages the Flagship Programme Initiative “Making Every Woman and Girl Count”. Besides planning and implementing interventions to support the quality, availability and use of gender statistics across Asia and the Pacific, she provides technical advice and prepares analytical materials on gender statistics. Before joining the regional office, she worked as a statistics specialist in UN Women’s Headquarters. Previously, Sara was a statistician at the Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat (UNSD), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP-SD), and UNESCO’s Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. She holds a Master’s Degree in Development Studies from the Universite Libre de Bruxelles and a graduate degree on Business from the Universidad de Zaragoza. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, arts and the ocean.



- **Ms. Gita Sen, Distinguished Professor, Public Health Foundation of India**



Ms. Gita Sen has worked for 35 years nationally and internationally on population policies, reproductive and sexual health, gender equality and women’s human rights, as well as issues of poverty, human development and labour markets. Her work has helped to shape the global paradigm shift on population and development. A citizen of India, Sen holds a PhD in economics from Stanford University. She is Distinguished Professor & Director, Ramalingaswami Centre on Equity & Social Determinants of Health, Public Health Foundation of India, and adjunct professor of global health and population at Harvard University. She is also the General Coordinator of DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era). She currently serves as Co-Chair of the Gender and Rights Advisory Panel of WHO’s Department of Reproductive Health Research. She is a member of the Independent Accountability Panel for the UN Secretary General’s strategy Every Woman, Every Child, Every Adolescent.

- **Ms. Nalini Singh, Executive Director, Fiji Women’s Rights Movement (FWRM)**



Ms. Nalini Singh, from Fiji, is a feminist and a social development specialist with over 20 years’ experience in design, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of women’s rights and development programmes in Asia Pacific. Her particular interests is in the issues of women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), decent work and organisational capacity strengthening. Prior to joining FWRM over four years ago, Nalini worked as the Programme Manager- Advocacy and Capacity Building for the Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for 7 years. Nalini is a graduate of the University of the South Pacific with a Bachelor of Arts.

- **Ms. Joni Simpson, Senior Specialist in Gender, Equality and Non-Discrimination for East and South East Asia and the Pacific, International Labour Organization**



In her current role, Ms. Simpson provides technical guidance and support on gender equality, non-discrimination and women’s economic empowerment approaches to ILO constituents and partners for policies and programmes relating to gender, inclusion and non-discrimination in the world of work. Joni has over 20 years promoting women’s leadership and women’s entrepreneurship – and was ILO’s Global Coordinator & Specialist in Women’s Entrepreneurship Development and Entrepreneurship Education in Geneva for seven years.

Over and above her work at the ILO, Joni has over ten years of experience in Community Economic Development and Community Credit micro finance, working on building accessible and gender-responsive programmes and policies in Entrepreneurship Development. Her past work experience includes work



in micro-finance, social economy and youth employability. She holds a Master's degree in Cultural anthropology and a Bachelor's in Education. She has served on the Expert Committee for the Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Scorecard and as Advisor to Value for Women and the Cherie Blair Foundation.

- ***Ms. Yam Kumari Khatiwada, Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Singha Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal***



Ms. Khatiwada is currently the Secretary at Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens for the Government of Nepal. She has been serving for more than 24 years in various capacities within the government. Prior to her current appointment, she was the Secretary at Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, dealing with the policy issues of the Industrial sector under various responsibilities such as project Chief of Special Economic Zone, National Program Director of Micro Enterprise Development Program, Chairperson of Cottage and Small Industrial Development Board, and Coordinator of Nepal Business Forum, among others. Ms. Khatiwada obtained her Master's degree in Public Policy and Management from KDI School of Public Policy and Management, South Korea. She has also completed MPA, MA and Bachelor's in Law from Tribhuvan University Nepal.

- ***Ms. Deepta Chopra, Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies***



Ms. Chopra is a feminist social scientist, leading IDS's work on women's empowerment and unpaid care. Her research interests primarily focus on the empowerment of women and girls, and its core links with their paid work and unpaid care work. She has developed and implemented several research projects on the politics of policy processes and gendered political economy analysis of women's economic empowerment programmes and policies. Deepta has worked extensively on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and the Food Rights Act in India. She works closely with state and non-state partners in South Asia, and has had high impact in the policy and practice of international development, especially in relation to her work on the care economy and MGNREGA. She is an expert on mixed methods research design and qualitative methodologies, and aligns herself closely with issues of power and participation, citizen engagement and governance. Deepta is an enthusiastic and popular teacher; she convenes the PhD programme at IDS in addition to convening and teaching on a range of relevant modules, specifically on the MA Gender and Development.



- **Ms. Meenakshi Krishnan, Organization Development Consultant & Doctoral Researcher, Institute of Development Studies**



Ms. Krishnan works in the areas of gendered political economy, women’s empowerment, and social protection. Her particular research interests are exploring the links between paid work and unpaid care work, gendered division of unpaid care, and impact of family friendly policies on gender relations. She has co-authored evidence briefs and working papers on family friendly policies and women’s interactions between childcare and economic engagement. Her PhD is a gendered political economy analysis of the Maternity Benefit Amendment Act in India from a Feminist Political Ethics of Care lens.

Meenakshi holds Masters degrees in Women’s & Gender Studies as well as Human Resource Management. She has over 18 years of experience, working in both private and not-for-profit spaces, in organizational consulting and leadership development. She has special expertise in designing and facilitating women’s leadership programs, building gender inclusive workplaces, articulating organizational vision and culture, devising strategic HR policies, and using psychometric assessments, feedback and coaching for personal transformation. She has independently designed and delivered workshops for audiences in Bahrain, Canada, India, Nigeria, Singapore and UAE.

- **Ms. Sudha Gooty, Programme Manager-Catalyzing Women’s Entrepreneurship, ESCAP**



Ms. Sudha Gooty is the Programme Manager for Catalyzing Women’s Entrepreneurship Programme at UN ESCAP. Prior to joining ESCAP, Ms. Gooty has been working for the past 15 years with various UN agencies such as UNDP and IOM in different countries of Asia. Her areas of focus have been Gender and Governance, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Poverty Reduction. ESCAP actively supports its member States in efforts to enhance women’s economic empowerment and entrepreneurship as a strategy for poverty reduction, social wellbeing and sustainable economic growth, in fulfilment of SDG 5 on Gender Equality and multiple related goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As part of its support, ESCAP is implementing a five year (2018-2023) regional project on “Catalyzing Women’s Entrepreneurship - Creating a Gender-Responsive Entrepreneurial Ecosystem” (CWE project) funded by the Government of Canada. The project operates in Nepal, Bangladesh, Samoa, Fiji, Cambodia and Viet Nam. The project aims to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems that foster women’s entrepreneurship, enhance women entrepreneurs’ access to capital through innovative financing mechanisms, and increase women entrepreneurs’ use of ICT through relevant training and tools.



- **Ms. Katja Freiwald, Regional Programme Lead 'WeEmpower Asia', UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**



Ms. Freiwald leads UN Women’s commitment under the women’s economic empowerment and migration focus in Asia and the Pacific. She oversees ‘WeEmpowerAsia’, a UN Women programme funded by and in partnership with the European Union that aims to increase the number of women who lead and participate in business China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. A key component of the programme is to mobilize private sector companies to become more gender-responsive by committing to and implementing the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs), as well as strengthen links Asian and European markets through gender-inclusive trade and supply chains. Having worked in the private sector for more than 15 years, Katja was Unilever’s Director of Global Partnerships and Advocacy for Women’s Economic Empowerment, Inclusive Business and Enhancing Livelihoods before she joined UN Women in 2019. Katja frequently serves as a speaker, panelist and member of several advisory boards, including Dharma Life, a social enterprise improving rural life in India through female entrepreneurship, and Amfori, a global business association for open and sustainable trade.

- **Ms. Nadira Mohd Yusoff, Founder & CEO of Kiddocare and Head of AWEN Malaysia**



Ms. Yusoff is the Founder and CEO of Kiddocare, Malaysia’s first mobile platform that connects parents with trained, reliable babysitters and child-minders. Inspired by ride-hailing service Grab, KiddoCare enables women to “grab” a babysitter from the comforts of their home. Kiddocare also provides a platform for women to pursue their career in childcare, or children’s education, economically empowering them with more flexible employment arrangements, and growth opportunities. She is now Deputy President at Malaysia’s National Council of Women’s Organizations and former President at the Women Entrepreneur Network Association Malaysia (WENA). She is also an avid advocate of women’s economic empowerment for the EU-funded WeEmpowerAsia programme of UN Women in Asia and the Pacific.



- ***Ms. Cai Yiping, Executive Committee member, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)***



Ms. Cai Yiping is a Chinese feminist researcher and activist. She co-leads DAWN’s Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) activities. She participated in creating several vibrant women’s NGOs in China after the 4th World Conference on Women, held in Beijing (1995). These included the Media Monitoring Network for Women (since 1996) and Network (Research Center) for Combating Domestic Violence (since 2000). Prior to joining DAWN in 2011, she served as Executive Director (2008-2011) at Isis International, a

southern feminist organization based in Manila Philippines working on empowering women through communication. She was Associate Researcher at the Women’s Studies Institute of China (2006 – 2008) and was a journalist for China Women’s News (1995 – 2005), writing extensively on the issue of women’s human rights. She serves as a member of UN Women’s Asia-Pacific Civil Society Advisory Group from 2013 to 2016, and is also an advisor of the Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism established in May 2014. Yiping has deep experience working with government, international agencies and non-profit organizations. Her areas of focus include media and communications, gender-based violence, SRHR and gender mainstreaming. Her current work focuses on the sustainable development agenda, the ICPD and Beijing review processes. She holds bachelor and master’s degree in history from Peking University.

- ***Ms. Melissa Alvarado, Regional Programme Manager on Ending Violence against Women (EVAW), , UN Women Regional office for Asia and the Pacific***



Ms. Alvarado is the Ending Violence against Women (EVAW) Regional Programme Manager at UN Women, Asia-Pacific Regional Office. Melissa has been working specifically on ending violence against women and children for 20 years, through programme management and design, policy and legislation development and implementation, developing interagency response systems, technical assistance, capacity building, advocacy and research. Melissa has experience in addressing child abuse, particularly multi-disciplinary approaches to prevention and investigation of child sexual abuse and fatalities. From the United

States, Melissa holds a master’s degree in Social Work and a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology. Her work is informed by years of experience advocating for and directly supporting survivors of violence against women and children in crisis.





- **Ms. Bandana Rana, Vice Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee**



Ms. Bandana Rana from Nepal is the Vice Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee. Her experience spans three decades of promoting women's rights, gender equality and peace and security in Nepal and globally. She has led numerous advocacy programs linking UN frameworks provided by CEDAW, BPFA and UNSCR 1325.

Rana is the recipient of the Woman of Distinction Award 2016 conferred by the NGOCSW Committee, for her contribution to gender equality globally. She was a member of the UN Secretary General's High Level Advisory Group for the Global Study on UNSCR1325 and a member of UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group from 2012 to 2015.

- **Ms. Jan Logie, Under-Secretary for Domestic and Sexual Violence, New Zealand Government**



**Ms. Logie** is a Green MP and Under-Secretary to the Minister of Justice, responsible for domestic and sexual violence issues. She has campaigned for women's rights throughout her life, including as the coordinator of Wellington Women's Refuge and executive director of YWCA Aotearoa New Zealand, and volunteering with Wellington Rape Crisis, Youthline and HELP Sexual Abuse Crisis Line. She championed the Domestic Violence Victims' Protection Act which provides paid leave and flexible working arrangements for people affected by domestic violence.

She is the lead Minister for a whole-of-government Joint Venture to eliminate family violence and sexual violence; oversees the implementation of new family violence legislation; and is working on justice system reforms to improve the experience of victims and survivors in sexual violence cases.

- **Ms. Chisato Kitanaka, Executive Director, All Japan Women's Shelter Network**



**Ms. Kitanaka**, Director, All Japan Women's Shelter Network; Associate Professor at Hiroshima University Harassment Consultation Office (Japan), President of the NGO "Sexual violence victim support Hiroshima", a rape crisis centre for Hiroshima. She works as a social worker on university campus dealing with harassment, bullying, discrimination, and violence. Her major research themes are sociological gender theory, violence against women, harassment on campus, academic harassment, and academic misconduct.

She has a Master's degree from Nagoya University, Graduate School of Letters (Sociology), and participates in the Doctoral Program at Nagoya University, Graduate School of Letters (Sociology).



- **Ms. Avni Amin, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO**



Ms. Amin works at the WHO's Department of Reproductive Health and Research on violence against women. Her primary focus is to support countries – Ministries of Health – in the translation and uptake of WHO's normative guidelines and tools to strengthen health systems response to violence against women. She has led the development of clinical guidelines for responding to child and adolescent sexual abuse and is a lead author of the WHO global plan of action on strengthening health systems response to addressing interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls and against children.

Avni is a passionate feminist scientist with a fierce commitment to gender equality and women's health. She has a PhD in International Health from the Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Hygiene and Public Health. She is originally from India and considers herself as a global citizen.

- **Ms. Inkar Kadyrzhanova, Regional adviser on gender and climate change, UN Women Regional office for Asia and the Pacific**



Ms. Kadyrzhanova is leading the regional work on gender mainstreaming in climate change and disaster risk reduction at UN Women in Asia and the Pacific region. Prior to that, she worked at the UN Climate Change Secretariat in Bonn, Germany on mitigation, data and analysis issues and supported the negotiation process on climate action by state and non-state stakeholders. She has more than 15 years of work experience in the area of environment protection and climate change mitigation and adaptation and worked at different UN agencies. Besides working in Asia, Inkar has led the regional programmes of UNDP on environment and security in Central Asia and other sub-regions of Europe and CIS region.

- **Ms. Angie Dazé, Associate on resilience and climate change adaptation with the International Institute for Sustainable Development**



Ms. Dazé is a member of the National Adaptation Plan Global Network Secretariat. Her work focuses on policy and practice related to climate change adaptation and resilience building, particularly in relation to National Adaptation Plan processes. As the gender co-lead for the NAP Global Network, she provides technical support to governments and other stakeholders, develops tools and guidance and documents learning on gender-responsive adaptation planning and action. Previously, Angie worked for CARE International and the Canadian International Development Agency.



- **Ms. Keya Khan, Joint Secretary, Gender Focal Point, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh**



Ms. Khan was previously posted in different Ministries and the offices under field administration of Bangladesh, such as the District Administrations of Mymensingh District and Manikganj District, the Department of Trademarks Registration, the Ministry of Public Administration, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism and the Ministry of Industries. She has received her education in Bangladesh and Australia and attended various training programmes, seminar and workshops in Bangladesh and abroad.

- **Ms. Ruth Manorama, National Alliance of Women (NAWO), National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW), National Centre for Labour (NCL)**



Ms. Manorama, a Feminist Activist, involved in educating, organizing and mobilizing women, dalits, urban poor and unorganized sector over three decades from the grassroots to national levels in India and holds key positions in several women's groups like National Alliance of Women (NAWO), National Federation of Dalit Women(NFDW), National Centre for Labour (NCL) - a confederation of Unorganized sector unions and Human Rights organizations in the country and outside. She has built wider networks with Women's organizations, Trade Unions and various social movements in the country. She see the interconnectedness between these issues and the common cause of the marginalized people share the world over.

- **Ms. Noelene Nabulivou, Political adviser and co-founder, CSO "Diverse Voices & Action (DIVA) for Equality", Fiji**



Ms. Nabulivou is a feminist grassroots organiser and educator, researcher, policy analyst, activist, advocate and movement-builder in Fiji, the Pacific and globally for over 35 years. DIVA for Equality undertakes grassroots feminist work and co-convenes several networks and coalitions from local to global and back, including the "Women Defend Commons Network" and the Pacific Feminist SRHR Coalition. DIVA is CSO co-lead of the global "Action Coalition on Strategies for Climate Justice".

Noelene is a member of the UNDP Global Civil Society Advisory Committee; the Pacific Gender Technical Working Group to CSW; the Pacific Gender Coordinating Mechanism, and the Fiji SRHR Technical Working Group to Ministry for Youth and Sports. She has been a global adviser to a number of funds and foundation, and she is a recipient of the International Women's Health Coalition's Joan B. Dunlop award for advocacy.



- **Mr. Mozaharul Alam, Regional Coordinator, Climate Change Programme, Asia and the Pacific Office, United Nations Environment Programme**



Mr. Alam started his professional career as a young researcher with the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) in 1992. He has served the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of Bangladesh as a National Project Coordinator and has successfully undertaken inclusive process and formulated National Adaptation Programme of Action. In 2009, he has joined the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a Regional Coordinator, Climate Change for Asia and the Pacific Office, where he provides strategic and technical guidance to design and implementation climate change actions. He has attended climate change negotiations for more than two decades and has coordinated the adaptation group of G-77 and China during 2007 to 2009. He has worked as Lead Author for Working Group II for the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report. He received an international fellowship award by International Institute for Environment and Development under Climate Change Programme for three years in 2006.

- **Ms. Fleur Newman, Action Empowerment Unit Lead | ACE, Gender and Youth, UNFCCC Gender Focal Point and Focal Point for Women, UN Climate Change Secretariat**



Ms. Newman leads the intergovernmental work on gender and climate under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. She is also the Gender Focal Point and Focal Point for Women for the UN Climate Change secretariat. Fleur is a lawyer by training who, before joining the UN, spent 10 years practicing law in the private sector in areas including climate change, sustainability, energy and international law. Throughout her career, Fleur has been an advocate for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Fleur has a Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Development and Master of Laws in International Law.

