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UNIVERSITY
Shree Guru Gobind Singh Tricentenary University



RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE *on* LEAD POISONING

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SPEAKERS

Siddika Sultana

Environment and Social Development Organization(ESDO), Bangladesh
Executive Director

Siddika Sultana is the Executive Director of the Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) and a leading figure in the development sector, specializing in environmental toxicology and health issues across Asia and the Pacific Region. As an NGO activist for over 20 years, her ideas and contributions have marked a milestone in making changes in environmental health, pollution, toxicity, education, environmental protection, and nature conservation. She has played a significant role in promoting global environmental justice, particularly in addressing chemical pollutants and gender issues through her involvement with international organizations and UN conventions. Since 2008, she has been a dedicated advocate for lead poisoning awareness and prevention, leading to the implementation of a 90 ppm standard for lead in industrial paint in Bangladesh. Siddika's commitment to protecting vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, has driven her policy advocacy at both national and international levels, solidifying her role as a core member of initiatives like "No Lead" and the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) in Bangladesh.



Dr. Suneel Pandey

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India
Director, Circular Economy, and Waste Management

Dr. Suneel Pandey is Senior Fellow and Director, Circular Economy & Waste Management Division, TERI. In addition, he is also working as Adjunct Faculty at TERI School of Advanced Studies (TERI SAS). He has more than 30 years of consultancy/ research experience in the areas of municipal, industrial and hospital waste management, their linkage with climate change aspects and circular economy and resource efficiency, waste-to-energy issues, impact assessment, air, water and soil quality monitoring, site assessments, performance evaluation of ETP and institutional strengthening and capacity building. He has obtained his Ph. D. degree in hazardous waste characterization from Nagpur University while working as Project Fellow at NEERI, Nagpur. Prior to joining TERI, Suneel has worked for ERM India and at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology on development of landfill liner for containment of land disposed hazardous waste and deriving material balances and associated environmental pollution for Hong Kong region as part of Post Doctoral Research.



Ram Charitra Sah

Centre for Public Health, and Environmental Development (CEPHED), Nepal
Executive Director

Ram Charitra Sah is the Executive Director at the Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED) in Nepal. He is an Environment Scientist, he was awarded the Government of India's Silver Jubilee Scholarship for Nepalese nationals. With over 20 years of experience in environmental conservation, public health, and natural resource management, Mr. Sah has worked with various governmental and non-governmental organizations on issues such as forestry, biodiversity conservation, and watershed management. Since 2006, he has led CEPHED in protecting public health and the environment through research, policy dialogue, and capacity building. He has made significant contributions to chemical safety in Nepal, particularly in lead paint elimination and mercury-free dentistry. His efforts have resulted in the establishment of a lead paint standard of 90 ppm and the banning of all mercury-based equipment in the health sector. He has also served as the Asia Network for the Rights of Occupational and Environmental Victims (ANROEV) Coordinator and as a visiting faculty member in Environmental Toxicology. His research and advocacy have influenced several important policies in Nepal, ensuring better protection for vulnerable populations, including children and workers.



Dr. Mahfuzar Rahman

Pure Earth, Bangladesh
Country Director

Dr. Mahfuzar Rahman is a physician/epidemiologist by training. He has been with Pure Earth since 2020. Before joining Pure Earth, he has worked with ICDDR, Columbia University, The University of Chicago and BRAC. Dr Rahman's main research interest over the past 20 years has been occupational, environmental and molecular epidemiology, focused in studying various pollutants on health and the interactions between host factors (genetic and acquired susceptibility), and environmental exposures in producing acute and chronic diseases. He used to work in the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), Lyon, France. While most of his work has related to low income settings, Dr Rahman has also been involved in research with the GBD in Seattle and Imperial College, London for many years.





Jeiel Guarino

International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), Philippines
Licensed chemist and Global Lead Paint Elimination Campaigner

Jeiel Guarino is a licensed chemist with over 13 years of experience in health, environment, and chemicals-related issues within international non-governmental organizations. Since 2015, he has served as IPEN's Global Lead Paint Elimination Campaigner, collaborating with NGOs worldwide to raise awareness, conduct lead paint sampling, and provide technical expertise. He oversees IPEN's Lead Safe Paint® Certification Program and advocates for listing lead chromates under the Rotterdam Convention. Before joining IPEN, he was a Policy and Communications Officer at EcoWaste Coalition, contributing to the successful implementation of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Chemical Control Order for Lead and Lead Compounds. He began his career as a Laboratory Chemist with the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) under the DENR.

Rajaram Pote

World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office for Nepal
National Professional Officer

Raja Ram Pote Shrestha is a National Professional Officer at the World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office for Nepal. His extensive training includes Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment, Climate Change, Environmental Management Systems, and Pollution Prevention, conducted by both national and international organizations. At WHO, Mr. Pote Shrestha is responsible for environmental health related areas which mainly includes climate change, air quality and chemical safety. He has been instrumental in various health programs aimed at improving community health and reducing exposure to environmental hazards. In his role at WHO, he has been focusing on advocacy programs and capacity building at national and sub-national levels, development of legal instruments and support for effective implementation of standards with their compliance monitoring among others. His expertise in public health policy and environmental management is crucial for addressing health challenges in vulnerable populations across Nepal.





Abishek Thuppil Venkatesh

Foundation for Quality India (FQI)

Chief Operating Officer

Abishek Thuppil Venkatesh is a seasoned entrepreneur and Chief Operating Officer at the Foundation for Quality India (FQI). He has over a decade of experience in the field of lead toxicity awareness and environmental health. In 2010, he founded Spark Services, which specializes in the importation and distribution of lead care products. Under his leadership, Spark Services has played a pivotal role in raising awareness about lead toxicity across various countries, collaborating closely with the National Referral Centre for Lead Projects in India (NRCLPI). For the past 15 years, he has been actively involved in lead toxicity awareness programs, contributing to numerous initiatives that include environmental sampling of air, soil, food, water, and blood. His commitment to public health and environmental safety continues to drive his professional endeavors.

Agenda for Research Roundtable on Lead Poisoning

Date and time	Friday, 6 September, 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM (Indian Standard Time)
Objective	The Advanced Study Institute of Asia, is organising a roundtable on lead poisoning with experts from South and Southeast Asia to address a pressing public health issue that significantly affects vulnerable populations, particularly children. The event aims to facilitate open dialogue and collaboration among experts in public health, environmental science, and policy-making, providing a platform for sharing insights on the current landscape of lead poisoning in their respective countries, discussing the effectiveness of existing initiatives, identifying best practices, and generating actionable strategies aimed at mitigating lead exposure, which is crucial for protecting public health.
Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Siddika Sultana, Executive Director, Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO), Bangladesh 2. Dr. Suneel Pandey, Director, Circular Economy, and Waste Management, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India 3. Ram Charitra Sah, Executive Director, Centre for Public Health, and Environmental Development (CEPHED), Nepal 4. Dr. Mahfuzar Rahman, Country Director, Pure Earth, Bangladesh 5. Jeiel Guarino, Licensed chemist and Global Lead Paint Elimination Campaigner, International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), Philippines 6. Raja Ram Pote Shrestha, National Professional Officer, WHO, Nepal 7. Abhishek Venkatesh, Chief Operating Officer, Foundation quality of India
Link to Join	https://streamyard.com/x2n2pwvm42

Session flow

10:30 AM – 10:40 AM		Opening Remarks (Ms. Neeti Goutam, Senior Manager: Research Communications, ASIA)
	5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming remarks to Speakers and Introduction
	5 minutes	(Moderator) Ms. Shipra Agarwal, Senior Analyst: Health Disparities and Meta Evidence, ASIA
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief overview of the roundtable's purpose and objectives. <i>For all speakers- Setting a tone for the roundtable</i>
35 minutes		First Round of questions and answers
	10:40 AM – 11:15 AM	<i>General question for all</i>
	5 minutes per speaker to answer	In your opinion, what is the current status of lead poisoning in your country, and what are the primary challenges hindering progress in addressing this issue? Based on your experience, could you share some initiatives that have been implemented by your organization to combat lead poisoning?

50 minutes	Second Round of questions and answers
11:15 AM – 12:05 AM (7 min per speaker)	Tackling Lead Exposure: Various Approaches
<p>Advocacy Strategies for Stricter Lead Regulations: ESDO's Approach and Successes"</p> <p>Focus on waste management, providing an opportunity for him to share insights on practical solutions to a pressing public health issue.</p> <p>Challenges of implementing environmental regulations.</p> <p>Addressing Lead Pollution Challenges: Pure Earth's Collaborative Strategies in Bangladesh"</p> <p>IPEN's Advocacy for Eliminating Lead Chromates: Actions and Challenges</p> <p>Enhancing International Collaboration to Combat Lead Poisoning in Nepal.</p> <p>Discuss your strategies for awareness and the evaluation of their effectiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Siddika Sultana, Executive Director, Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO), Bangladesh</u> <p>What specific strategies has ESDO employed to effectively engage government agencies and stakeholders in advocating for stricter regulations on lead in paints, toys, and food containers? Can you share some examples of successful policy changes that ESDO has influenced to reduce lead pollution and safeguard public health in Bangladesh?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Dr. Suneel Pandey, Director, Circular Economy, and Waste Management, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India</u> <p>What key strategies does TERI employ to influence policy changes regarding lead poisoning, and how do you prioritize actions to ensure effective waste management and public health outcomes in India?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ram Charitra Sah, Executive Director, Centre for Public Health, and Environmental Development (CEPHED), Nepal</u> <p>What strategies has CEPHED implemented to ensure compliance with lead paint standards in Nepal, and what specific challenges have you encountered in holding paint companies accountable? Additionally, how do you plan to address these challenges to better protect public health, particularly for vulnerable groups like children?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Dr. Mahfuzar Rahman, Country Director, Pure Earth, Bangladesh</u> <p>What are the most significant challenges you face in addressing lead pollution in Bangladesh, particularly in informal sectors like battery recycling, and how does Pure Earth plan to tackle these challenges through collaboration with local communities and government agencies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Jeiel Guarino, Licensed chemist and Global Lead Paint Elimination Campaigner, International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), Philippines</u> <p>What specific actions is IPEN taking to advocate for the elimination of lead chromates in paint, and what key challenges does IPEN face in promoting the transition to lead-free paints?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Raja Ram Pote Shrestha, National Professional Officer, WHO, Nepal</u> <p>As a National Professional Officer at WHO, how do you envision the role of international collaboration in addressing lead poisoning in Nepal, and what initiatives is WHO currently supporting to enhance community awareness and prevention efforts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Abhishek Venkatesh, Chief Operating Officer, Foundation quality of India</u> <p>What innovative strategies has the Foundation for Quality India implemented to effectively raise awareness about lead toxicity, and how do you evaluate the success of these initiatives in improving public health outcomes?</p>
12: 05 PM – 12:15 PM (10 minutes)	<u>BREAK</u>

35 minutes		Third round of forming a Working Group
	12: 15 PM – 12:50 PM (5 minutes per speaker)	<i>Strategic Actions for Eliminating Lead Poisoning: Organizational Commitments for the next 2-5 Years</i>
	The moderator asks each speaker to make one last 2-minute intervention to close the round with a recommendation or priority area.	<p><u>Dr. Mahfuzar Rahman, Country Director, Pure Earth, Bangladesh</u></p> <p>What future research and interventions do you believe are needed to effectively address this issue going forward?</p> <p><u>Ram Charitra Sah, Executive Director, Centre for Public Health, and Environmental Development (CEPHED), Nepal</u></p> <p>What policy changes do you recommend to reduce lead exposure and improve public health responses?</p> <p><u>Raja Ram Pote Shrestha, National Professional Officer, WHO, Nepal</u></p> <p>Given your expertise in environmental health and chemical safety, what specific strategies do you believe are most effective in reducing lead exposure among vulnerable populations in Nepal, specifically children and people in occupational settings?"</p> <p><u>Jeiel Guarino, Licensed chemist and Global Lead Paint Elimination Campaigner, International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), Philippines</u></p> <p>In your experience, what are the most effective methods for raising public awareness about the dangers of lead chromates in paint, and how can communities be empowered to take action?</p> <p><u>Dr. Suneel Pandey, Director, Circular Economy, and Waste Management, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India</u></p> <p>What strategies would you recommend for effectively reducing lead contamination in urban environments, particularly in areas with high exposure risks?</p> <p><u>Abhishek Venkatesh, Chief Operating Officer, Foundation quality of India</u></p> <p>What steps can we take to ensure that consumer products in India are safe by enhancing quality control, enforcing regulations on lead content, and increasing community awareness about the dangers of lead poisoning?</p>
	5 minutes	Questions from the participants
		<i>The moderator takes two questions from the audience and allows for two different speakers to respond one each.</i>
	12: 50 PM – 1:00 PM (10 minutes)	Conclusion and Closing remarks



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