

From Participation to Co-Design: Engaging Workers and Communities in Ethical Climate–Health Priority-Setting in Nepal

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Background

- Nepal's rapid urbanization exposes vulnerable groups to air pollution, rising temperatures, and flooding.
- Informal manual laborers and marginalized urban communities are one of the risks facing groups but are often excluded from policy-making.
- Current interventions often ignore "lived experiences" and the trade-offs between health and daily survival.



Objective

- To engage climate-affected urban communities in Kathmandu through participatory co-design to inform relevant climate-health planning.

Methods

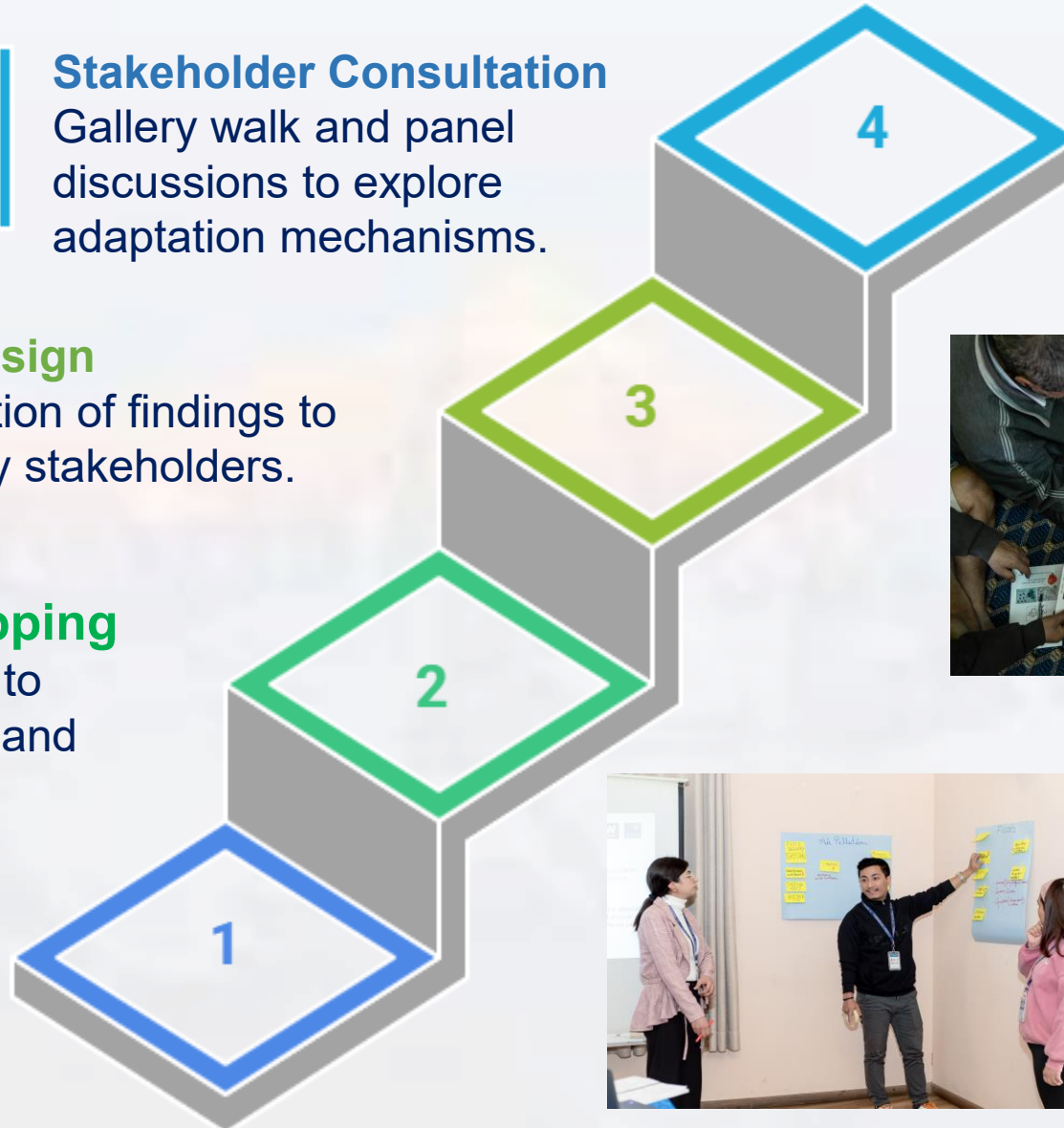


Stakeholder Consultation
Gallery walk and panel discussions to explore adaptation mechanisms.

Co-Design
Validation of findings to identify stakeholders.

Community Mapping
Group discussions to explore exposures and health impacts.

Initial Analysis
CAB meeting to prioritize climate incident and major affected groups.



Results (1)

Flooding

People living in informal settlements faced displacement, unsafe water, and waterborne diseases.

“We even had to pay 100-150 rupee per mineral water bottle as the water tap was very dirty.”

Air Pollution

Porters reported respiratory symptoms, eye irritation, and fatigue.

“We buy food because we have children who get hungry immediately. Water we somehow manage by boiling or settling it, even though it’s not very safe.”

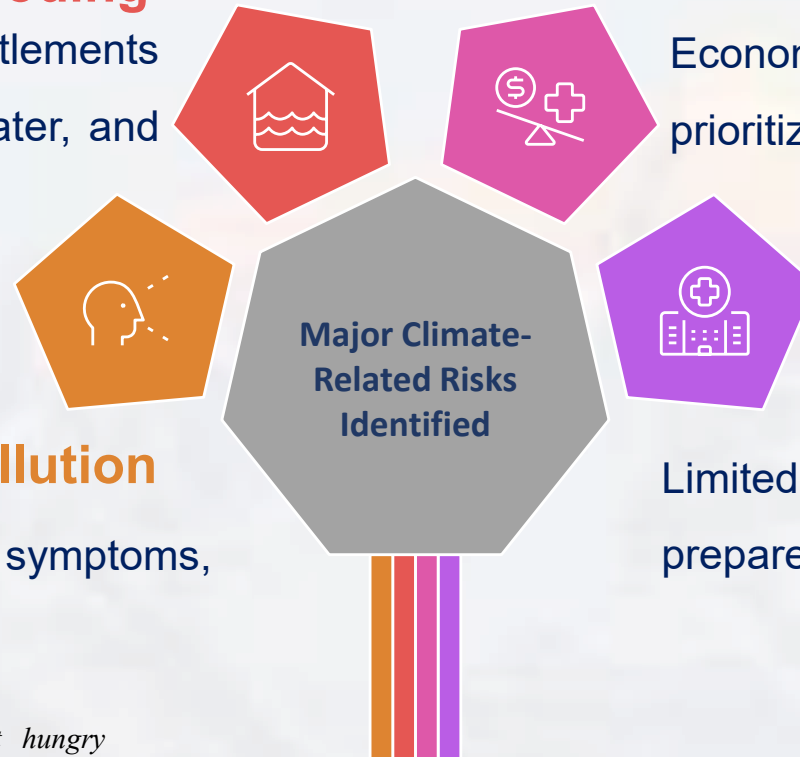
Trade-offs

Economic pressure forces informal workers to prioritize daily income over immediate health needs.

“If we keep listing illnesses, we’ll feel sicker. It’s better to keep working so that we forget the sickness.”

Systemic Gaps

Limited healthcare access and weak disaster preparedness increase vulnerability.



Results(2)

Health & Safety

Emphasizes protective gear and community clean-up initiatives.

Preparedness

Safer water storage and flood-specific disaster training.

Immediate Infrastructure

Focuses on essential services like waste management and better drainage systems.

Advocacy

Stresses the importance of coordination between communities and local authorities.



Community Resilience

Takeaway Messages

- Community engagement reveals context-specific risks that top-down research often misses.
- Participatory processes empower vulnerable groups to move from "subjects" to "co-designers" of health solutions.
- Integrating community perspectives is essential for equitable and effective urban climate adaptation.
- Local action requires strong coordination between marginalized workers and local government.

Presenter Profile



A Public Engagement Officer and public health researcher specializing in health governance, gender equality, and evidence-based policy development. Focuses on integrating community perspectives to promote inclusive, participatory health systems.

