

Inauguration Ceremony of the IRDR International Centre of Excellence on Interdisciplinary Research on Himalayan Risk and Resilience (IRDR ICoE-IHRR)

CONCEPT NOTE

Date: 9 August 2026	Time: 3:00–5:00 PM Nepal Time	Organizer and Host Institution/ Venue: Institute of Himalayan Risk Reduction, Lalitpur, Nepal
Proposed duration of formal ceremony: Approximately 60–75 minutes		

BACKGROUND

The Integrated Research on Disaster Risk programme is co-sponsored by the International Science Council and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. IRDR International Centres of Excellence are established to make direct contributions to the programme's missions, particularly through research, capacity development and international collaboration.

On 29 July 2026, IRDR officially announced the designation of six new International Centres of Excellence following its 2026 call for expressions of interest and a three-stage evaluation process undertaken by the IRDR International Programme Office and Scientific Committee. The new centres expand the geographic and thematic reach of the IRDR network and strengthen its capacity to mobilize science for disaster risk reduction, resilience and sustainable development.

Among the newly designated centres is the IRDR International Centre of Excellence on Interdisciplinary Research on Himalayan Risk and Resilience, IRDR ICoE-IHRR, hosted by the Institute of Himalayan Risk Reduction in Nepal. The official IRDR announcement particularly recognizes IHRR's experience in citizen science, community-based disaster risk reduction, and operational early warning systems addressing hazards such as drought and heat–cold waves. It also highlights IHRR's commitment to collaborating with the existing IRDR ICoE hosted by the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) to create complementarity.

The IRDR ICoE community webpage now formally lists both IRDR ICoE-IHRR and IRDR ICoE-NSET as current International Centres of Excellence in Nepal. (IRDR International)

The vision of IRDR ICoE-IHRR is to develop a regional and global hub that advances interdisciplinary science, innovation and action for disaster risk reduction in the Himalayan region. It will connect natural sciences, engineering, technology, social sciences, public health and policy research to address multi-hazard, cascading, compound and transboundary risks. The Centre will also promote open science, citizen science, anticipatory action, frontier technologies, capacity development and stronger connections between science, policy and practice.

To formally mark this important institutional milestone, IHRR is organizing an inauguration ceremony at its office in Lalitpur. The event will bring together representatives of government institutions, national DRR platforms, the IRDR community, IRDR Young Scientists, academic institutions, practitioners, partner organizations and the existing IRDR ICoE.

PURPOSE OF THE EVENT

The inauguration ceremony will formally launch the IRDR ICoE-IHRR and introduce its vision, thematic priorities, governance approach and proposed programme of work to national and international stakeholders.

The event will also provide an opportunity to recognize Nepal's growing contribution to the global disaster risk research community and to initiate dialogue on how the two IRDR International Centres of Excellence in Nepal can work together to strengthen research, innovation, capacity development and science-informed decision-making.

OBJECTIVES

The ceremony will aim to:

- 1 Formally inaugurate and publicly introduce the IRDR ICoE-IHRR.
- 2 Present the IRDR programme, its global ICoE network and the role expected of International Centres of Excellence.
- 3 Communicate the vision, research priorities, institutional structure and initial programme of the IRDR ICoE-IHRR.
- 4 Provide a platform for IRDR Young Scientists from Nepal to share their experiences, research journeys and expectations from the Centre.
- 5 Strengthen collaboration between IRDR ICoE-IHRR and IRDR ICoE-NSET through complementary research, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing activities.
- 6 Engage NDRRMA, NPDRR, DPNep, universities, research institutions and development partners in the Centre's future activities.
- 7 Promote interdisciplinary, youth-led and policy-relevant disaster risk research in Nepal and the wider Himalayan region.

PROPOSED PARTICIPANTS

Approximately 30–50 participants may be invited, including:

- Representatives of the IRDR International Programme Office and Scientific Committee, subject to availability
- IRDR Young Scientists from Nepal
- Representatives of IRDR ICoE-NSET
- Chief Executive of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority
- Member Secretary of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
- President and Advisors of Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal
- Representatives of relevant government ministries and departments
- Universities, research institutions and professional associations
- United Nations agencies, international and national development organizations
- IHRR board members, advisors, researchers, staff, fellows and partners
- Media and science-communication representatives

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

The ceremony will include:

- Welcome and opening
- Introduction to the IRDR programme and global ICoE network
- Formal inauguration of IRDR ICoE-IHRR
- Experience sharing by IRDR Young Scientists from Nepal
- Reflections and presentation from IRDR ICoE-NSET
- Presentation of the IRDR ICoE-IHRR vision and programme
- Remarks from invited dignitaries
- Closing and vote of thanks
- Group photograph, networking and refreshments

INDICATIVE PROGRAMME FLOW

Time	Programme
3:00–3:20 PM	Registration, arrival and informal interaction
3:20–3:25 PM	Welcome and opening
3:25–3:32 PM	Overview of the IRDR programme and ICoE network
3:32–3:37 PM	Formal inauguration of IRDR ICoE-IHRR
3:37–3:47 PM	Experience sharing by IRDR Young Scientists from Nepal
3:47–3:55 PM	IRDR ICoE-NSET: reflections, experiences and collaborative opportunities
3:55–4:05 PM	Presentation of the IRDR ICoE-IHRR vision and programme
4:05–4:25 PM	Remarks from invited dignitaries
4:25–4:30 PM	Closing remarks and vote of thanks
4:30–5:00 PM	Group photograph, media interaction, networking and refreshments

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The event is expected to result in:

- Formal public launch of IRDR ICoE-IHRR
- Increased understanding of the Centre’s purpose, research priorities and planned activities
- Initial institutional commitments for collaboration and technical engagement
- Stronger coordination with IRDR ICoEs
- Engagement of IRDR Young Scientists in the Centre’s research and capacity-development activities
- Documentation of stakeholder recommendations for the Centre’s initial annual work plan
- Event photographs, media coverage and a short inauguration news article
- Development of an initial contact and partnership database for the Centre

EXPECTED LONGER-TERM CONTRIBUTION

Following the inauguration, IRDR ICoE-IHRR will work toward becoming a visible Himalayan platform for:

- Interdisciplinary disaster risk research
- Multi-hazard, cascading and transboundary risk assessment
- Citizen science and community-based monitoring
- Early warning systems and anticipatory action
- Frontier technologies and open-data applications
- Planetary health and climate resilience
- Fellowships, field schools and visiting scholar programmes
- Policy briefs and science–policy dialogues
- Regional research partnerships and international knowledge exchange

Through these activities, the Centre will seek to translate scientific evidence into practical tools, policies and community-level actions while strengthening the next generation of disaster risk researchers and practitioners.

PARTICIPATION

Participation is by invitation only. The event will bring together selected representatives from government agencies, the IRDR community, IRDR Young Scientists, research and academic institutions, national DRR platforms, development partners, civil society organizations, and the media.

The program will be hosted at the IHRR Office, Mahabir Marga S, Kupondole (Plus Code: M8P6+XW Lalitpur) (Google Map: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/CMNJgwrnCWMa8m7BA>)

CONTACT FOCAL PERSON

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