



YOUNG SCHOLARS INITIATIVE

**South Asia  
Working Group**



## **INET-YSI South Asia Regional Conference on Social Change**

**Understanding and Addressing Emerging Inequalities in the 21st Century in  
South Asia**

**24 February - 26 February 2025**

**Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru**

*View the document in Print Layout for clarity*

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Emerging inequalities in the 21st century pose a significant challenge to achieving equitable and sustainable development. These disparities whether well-being, technological, informational, ecological, or governance-related are deeply interconnected, requiring coordinated, multi-sectoral responses. By understanding and addressing these inequalities, we can work toward a more inclusive and just society where access to resources, opportunities, and well-being is equitable for all. Therefore, this conference aims to identify the drivers of emerging inequalities and to analyse the interconnected nature of these inequalities and their broader social, economic, and political implications. Further, it emphasizes vulnerable groups that are disproportionately affected by these emerging inequalities, such as women, rural populations, and low-income communities. As an outcome, it also expects policy interventions and inclusive growth strategies that can mitigate these disparities and promote equity across all dimensions.

# Programme Schedule

## Monday, 24 February (Day 1)

**Before 13:00** Check-in: Young scholars | **Location:** ISEC Campus, Bengaluru

**All Day** Check-in: Senior scholars | **Location:** ISEC Campus, Bengaluru

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**13:00-14:00** Lunch | **Location:** ISEC Cafeteria

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**Pre-conference workshop** | **Location:** Seminar Hall

**14:00-14:45** *Session I*

**Title:** Humanity Divided: Emerging Inequality in the 21st Century

**Expert:** S. Madheswaran  
RBI Chair Professor and Head, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

**14:45-15:30** *Session II*

**Title:** Data & Methods: Qualitative Approach to Inequality Research

**Expert:** Prajwal Nagesh  
Senior Research Associate, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru

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**15:30-15.45** Tea Break | **Location:** Foyer

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**15:45-16:30** *Session III*

**Title:** Data & Methods: Quantitative Approach to Inequality Research

**Expert:** Sanjay G. Reddy  
Professor, The New School for Social Research, New York

**Moderator:** V. Karthick  
Assistant Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Arun Balachandran**  
Post-doctoral Research Scientist, Columbia University, New York

**16:30-17:15** *Session IV*

**Title:** Field Skills And Methods: Problems without Solutions

**Expert:** Barbara Harriss-White  
Professor Emeritus of Development Studies, Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College, University of Oxford

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**17:30-18:45** Pre-Conference Workshop Keynote: | *Location:* Auditorium

**Speaker:** Ashok Dalwai  
Chairperson, Board of Governors, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Chair:** D. Rajasekhar  
Director, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru

**Title:** Cut and Raise: Inequalities in Agriculture in the 21st Century

**Vote of**

**Thanks:** Bikram Barman  
Coordinator, INET-YSI South Asia Working Group;  
Organizer, INET-YSI SAR Conference; Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**18:45-19:30** Registration | *Location:* Foyer

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**19:00-21:30** ISEC Director's Dinner | *Location:* ISEC Cafeteria

*Hosted by:* D. Rajasekhar  
Director, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru

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## Tuesday 25 February (Day 2)

**07:30-9:00** Breakfast | *Location: ISEC Cafeteria*

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**09:00-09:30** Registration | *Location: Foyer*

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**09:30-11:00** Inaugural Event | *Location: Auditorium*

**Welcome**

**Address:** **D. Rajasekhar**  
Director, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru

**Introductory**

**Remarks:** **Sunanda Nair-Bidkar**  
Director, South Asia, Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET), New York

**S. Madheswaran**  
RBI Chair Professor and Head, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Keynote Address:**

**Introduction:** **Christina Kujur**  
Organizer, INET-YSI SAR Conference;  
Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Speaker:** **Sanjay G. Reddy**  
Professor, The New School for Social Research, New York

**Chair:** **D. Rajasekhar**  
Director, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru

**Vote of Thanks:** **V. Karthick**  
Organizer, INET-YSI SAR Conference  
Assistant Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**11:00-11:15** Tea Break | *Location: ISEC Cafeteria*

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**11:15-12:30** Plenary Session I | *Location: Seminar Hall*

**Theme:** **Environment and Ecological Inequalities**

*Considering vulnerable sections being exposed most to both environmental and ecological impacts, this plenary session focuses on addressing the question of how these issues are connected with the inequality they produce.*

**Panelist:**

1. **A.K. Enamul Haque**  
Professor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, UCSI University Bangladesh Branch
2. **M K Ramesh**  
Professor (Former), National Law School of India University, Bengaluru,
3. **Pijush Kumar Dutta**  
Associate Professor, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru

**Chair:** **S. Madheswaran**  
RBI Chair Professor and Head, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**12:30-13:30 Young Scholars Session I | Location: Seminar Hall**

**Theme:** **Inequalities in Demography**

**Chair:** **T S Syamala**  
Professor, Population Research Centre, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Discussant:** **Aabha Chaudhary**  
Founder & Chairperson, Anugraha

**Presenters:**

1. **Anindita Namhata**, Presidency University, Kolkata  
*How do Elevated Temperatures Impact Child Malnutrition Rates in India? A Spatial Study*
  2. **Aparna Roy**, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai  
*Accounting for Unpaid Care Work in India: National Time Transfer Accounts Analysis*
  3. **Vijay Kumar**, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad  
*Intersectionality and Spatial Disparities in Pregnancy Care: Evidence from India*
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**13:30-14:15 Lunch | Location: ISEC Cafeteria**

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**14:15-15:15 Young Scholars Session II | Location: Seminar Hall**

**Theme:** **Inequalities in Quality of Life**

**Chair:** **CM Lakshmana**  
Professor, Population Research Centre, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Discussant:** **Arun Balachandran**  
Post-doctoral Research Scientist, Columbia University, New York

**Presenters:**

1. **Rukmi Pradeep**, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai  
*Can Inter-Caste Marriages Reduce Economic Inequalities in Child Nutrition in India? Evidence from Triangulation of Cross-sectional and Panel Data Analyses*
2. **Sujoy Pal**, Jawaharlal Nehru University  
*Examining the pattern of healthcare utilization among the older adults suffering from Chronic disease and choice of healthcare in India: Evidence from 71st (2014) and 75th (2017 18) round of NSS*
3. **Vinayak Krishnatri**, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur  
*Does Alcohol Prohibition Impact Macronutrient Intake from Healthy and Unhealthy Food? Evidence from India*

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**15:15-15:30** Tea Break | **Location:** Foyer

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**15:30-16:15** Young Scholars Session III | **Location:** Seminar Hall

**Theme:** Inequalities in Agriculture and Environment

**Chair:** Krishna Raj  
Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy (CESP), ISEC

**Discussant:** A V Manjunatha  
Assistant Professor, Centre for Ecological Economics and Natural Resources, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Presenters:**

1. **Md Ahinur Islam**, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong  
*Plight of Riverbank Erosion Related Internally Displaced Persons in Assam: A Study of South Salmara Mankachar District*
2. **Sangeetha K**, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru  
*Integrating Circular Economy in Urban Waste Management: A Case Study of Solid Waste Initiatives in Bengaluru City, India*

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**16:15-17:15** Young Scholars Session IV | **Location:** Seminar Hall

**Theme:** Inequalities across Gender

**Chair:** Barbara Harriss-White  
Professor Emeritus of Development Studies, Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College, University of Oxford

**Discussant:** Marchang Reimeingam  
Assistant Professor, Centre for Study of Social Change and Development, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Presenters:**

1. **Amrin Fakh**, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru  
*Gender Inequality in the Social Sectors of the Indian Startup Ecosystem: A Comparative Analysis of Founders and Performance Metrics*
2. **Gargi Sridharan**, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai  
*Inequality Begins at Home: Gender Ideology, Women's Employment and the Division of Labour in Tamil Nadu*
3. **Prakashani Singh**, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur  
*From budget to benefits: Effects of gender budgeting on school infrastructure and gender outcomes in India*

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**17:15-18:30 Plenary Session II | Location: Seminar Hall**

**Theme: Digital and Welfare Inequality**

*The significant innovation in the 21st century is digitization, yet the complexities it introduces to society remain challenging to grasp fully. This session explores the integration of technology and digital solutions in social and welfare services and the emerging inequalities they may reinforce.*

**Panelist:**

1. **Anita Gurumurthy**  
Executive Director, IT for Change
2. **Sony Pellissery**  
Professor & Co-Director, Centre for the Study of Social Inclusion, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru
3. **L. Janardhan Rajan**  
Group Practice Head - Advanced Analytics, Tech Mahindra

**Chair: Satish Deshpande**  
M N Srinivas Chair Professor, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**19:30-21:30 INET-YSI Conference Dinner | By invite only**

*Hosted by: Sunanda Nair-Bidkar*  
Director, South Asia Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET), New York

## Wednesday 26 February (Day 3)

**07:30-9:00** Breakfast | *Location: ISEC Cafeteria*

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**09:00-10:00** Plenary Session III | *Location: Seminar Hall*

**Theme:** Spatial and governance inequalities

*History has witnessed that governance produces inequality across countries. In this context, this session's central point of discussion is to expose governance and spatial inequalities across gender, socioeconomic groups, and other aspects.*

**Panelist:**

**1. Amitabh Kundu**

Professor Emeritus, LJ University; Visiting Professor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University; Professor (Retired), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

**2. Kripa Ananthpur**

Professor (Retired) & Consultant, TNHPS Project, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai

**Chair:** Chandan Gowda

R K Hedge Chair Professor, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**10:00-11:00** Young Scholars Session V | *Location: Seminar Hall*

**Theme:** Inequalities in Governance - Session I

**Chair:** Parmod Kumar

Professor, Agriculture Development and Rural Transformation Centre, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Discussant:** Kripa Ananthpur

Professor (Retired) & Consultant, TNHPS Project, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai

**Presenters:**

**1. Megha Jacob**, Teri School of Advanced Studies, New Delhi

*Does Effectiveness of Local Government Institutions Improve Vital Health Indicators in Kerala?*

**2. Vikhil S**, Madras School of Economics, Chennai

*Impact of Cash Transfer Program on Agricultural Input Spending: Evidence from Telangana*

**3. Surendra Kumar Naik**, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru

*Human Capital Inequality across Socio-economic Groups in India*

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**11:00-11:15** Tea Break | *Location: ISEC Cafeteria*

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**11:15-12:15** Young Scholars Session VI | *Location: Seminar Hall*

**Theme:** Inequalities in Wellbeing

**Chair:** Mala Kapur Shankardass  
Independent Consultant

**Discussant:** B P Vani  
Associate Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Presenters:**

1. **Forum Shah**, Presidency University, Kolkata  
*Mental Health and Education Income and Gender-based Disparities in India*
  2. **Amrit John**, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai  
*When Do We Bury Our Close Kins? Understanding The Kinloss Over Life Course in India*
  3. **Amresh Senapati**, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram  
*The Relationship between Women's Empowerment and Son Preference in India*
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**12:15-13:15** Young Scholars Session VII | *Location: Seminar Hall*

**Theme:** Inequalities in Digital Technology

**Chair:** Amitabh Kundu  
Professor Emeritus, LJ University; Visiting Professor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University; Professor (Retired), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

**Discussant:** Khalil Shaha  
Assistant Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Presenters:**

1. **Sanjeev Vasudevan**, Madras School of Economics, Chennai  
*Digital Trade and Wealth Inequality: Evidence from Asia Pacific Region*
  2. **Susmit Isfaq**, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong  
*Democratising Access to Knowledge: Role of Shadow Libraries and Fair Use Doctrine*
  3. **Anjali Sharma**, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai  
*Examining the Role of Unequal Access to Technology in Child Nutrition in India*
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**13:15-14:00** Lunch | *Location: ISEC Cafeteria*

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**14:00-15:15 Plenary Session IV | Location: Seminar Hall**

**Theme:** Wellbeing and Aging inequalities

*Changing demographic structures and climate change have challenged the well-being of the population due to disaster-induced displacement, loneliness, rising of NCDs and mental health crises. The session will explore how well-being and inequalities intersect in the 21st Century and can a just society be achieved.*

**Panelist:**

- 1. Aabha Chaudhary**  
Founder & Chairperson, Anugraha
- 2. Mala Kapur Shankardass**  
Independent Consultant
- 3. Rajani Parthasarathy**  
Psychiatrist & Deputy Director, Department of Health and Family Welfare,  
Government of Karnataka

**Chair:** Lekha Subaiya  
Professor, Population Research Centre, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**15:15-15:30 Tea Break | Location: Foyer**

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**15:30-16:15 Young Scholars Session VIII | Location: Seminar Hall**

**Theme:** Inequalities in Governance - Session II

**Chair:** Ramappa K B  
Professor, Agriculture Development and Rural Transformation Centre, ISEC,  
Bengaluru

**Discussant:** Indrajit Bairagya  
Assistant Professor, Centre for Human Resource Development, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Presenters:**

- 1. Rhwithwik M S**, Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, Thiruvananthapuram  
*Inequality and Indirect Taxes in India: An Inverted U Curve Relationship Between Consumption Expenditure and Goods and Services Tax*
- 2. Harikrishnan K S**, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur  
*Fiscal Asymmetry and Sub-national Social Spending: Decoding India's Federal Experience*

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**16:15-16:30 Tea Break | Location: ISEC Cafeteria**

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**16:30-17:45** Valedictory Session | *Location:* Auditorium

**Valedictory**

**Address:** Inequality and Unviable Micro-Property? Land, Assets, Work and Petty Production in Indian Agriculture

**Speaker:** **Barbara Harriss-White**  
Professor Emeritus of Development Studies, Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College, University of Oxford

**Chair:** **V Anil Kumar**  
Professor, Centre for Political Institutions, Governance and Development, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**17:45-18:30** Closing Session | *Location:* Auditorium

**Closing**

**Remarks:** **Arun Balachandran**  
Organizer, INET-YSI SAR Conference;  
Post Doctoral Researcher, Columbia University, New York

**Way**

**Forward:** **D. Rajasekhar**  
Director, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru

**Sunanda Nair-Bidkar**  
Director, South Asia Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET), New York

**Vote of**

**Thanks:** **V. Karthick**  
Organizer, INET-YSI SAR Conference;  
Assistant Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

**YSI Feedback**

**& Interaction:** **Christina Kujur**  
Organizer, INET-YSI SAR Conference;  
Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Bikram Barman**  
Coordinator, INET-YSI South Asia Working Group;  
Organizer, INET-YSI SAR Conference; Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**19:30-21:30** Dinner & Network | *Location:* ISEC Cafeteria

**Thursday 27 February (Day 4)**

**07:30-9:30** Breakfast | *Location:* ISEC Cafeteria

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**All Day** Check-out

### ***Organizing Committee:***

**Karthick V.**, Assistant Professor, Centre for Economic Studies, and Policy, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Arun Balachandran**, Organizer, INET-YSI | Postdoctoral Researcher, Columbia University, New York

**Christina Kujur**, Organizer, INET-YSI | Doctoral Scholar, ISEC Bengaluru

**Bikram Barman**, Coordinator, INET-YSI | Doctoral Scholar, ISEC & Utrecht University

### ***Advisory Committee:***

**D Rajasekhar**, Director, ISEC, Bengaluru

**S Madheswaran**, Head and RBI Chair Professor, CESP, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Sunanda Nair-Bidkar**, Director, South Asia, INET

### ***Co-organizer:***

**Roshan Thomas**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Mehul Kumar**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Dipanwita Jena**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Namrarta Singh**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Vaghela Riteshkumar G.**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Harshitha T.**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Goutham K.**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

**Alex Shaju**, Doctoral Scholar, ISEC, Bengaluru

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**Organized by**  
**Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru**  
**Institute for New Economic Thinking, New York - Young Scholars Initiative**