



Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives
**CAPI-UNDP Advanced Training Program on
Gender-Responsive Policymaking**

5 -11 October 2025



CAPI–UNDP Advanced Training Program on Gender-Responsive Policymaking

5-10 October 2025 | Victoria, BC, Canada

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The **CAPI-UNDP Advanced Training Program** took place in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada from 5-10 October 2025. Organized by the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (CAPI) at the University of Victoria (UVic), in collaboration with UNDP, the program brought together a delegation from Viet Nam, including representatives from the National Assembly, Ho Chi Minh National Academy, and the Viet Nam Fatherland Front. Three interlocking themes, namely gender mainstreaming, digital transformation, and just energy transition, served as connective tissue across all modules (see Appendix I CAPI-UNDP Training Program). Rather than treating these as isolated topics, the design wove them into a single analytic fabric, allowing participants to trace how gender lenses amplify digital inclusion and shape just energy transition practices.

SESSION SUMMARIES

Session I: Contextualizing the Training

The training opened with introductions and a discussion of key priorities: gender equality, digitalization, and just energy transition. The delegation shared challenges such as uneven capacity across agencies, limited gender-disaggregated data, and low awareness of gender-sensitive budgeting. They highlighted capacity gaps in gender policy implementation, budgeting, and local practices, and shared their concern that gender was often seen as a social issue rather than a governance concern. The exchange highlighted differences in consultation culture and the need for stronger local participation and gender mainstreaming mechanisms in Viet Nam’s policy processes. In the following session, Prof. Victor V. Ramraj introduced the Canadian context by highlighting Canada’s Indo-Pacific Strategy and Canada’s efforts to strengthen ties with Asia. By underscoring the country’s history, the importance of recognizing Indigenous nations, and its evolving social policies—alongside UVic’s initiatives in justice and climate change—the session provided a broad overview and set the foundation for the training.

Session II: Introduction to the Legislative Process in British Columbia

Renée Mulligan detailed BC’s legislative cycle—policy development, GBA+ intersectional analysis, consultations via intermediaries, and digital drafting—highlighting gender integration challenges like trust deficits and technical jargon. The session introduced how gender and Indigenous perspectives are integrated



Training Session II in the Drawing Room at the Pendray Inn and Tea House

through Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) and mandatory consultations. Follow-up discussions compared Canada’s participatory practices with Viet Nam’s more formal consultation approach.

After the morning session, the delegation had the unique opportunity to visit the BC Provincial Legislative Assembly, where they were warmly welcomed by Ms. Anne Kang, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, and Mr. Rick Glumac, Minister of State for AI and New Technologies. They also observed the first day of a House-in-Session, witnessing live parliamentary proceedings.

Sebastian Abbey, Learning and Development Lead, Legislative Assembly of BC, illustrated inclusive capacity-building through structured learning pathways and mentorship. Viet Nameese delegates reflected on the importance of continuous learning, gender awareness, and workplace inclusivity for public officials.



The delegation was welcomed by Ms. Anne Kang, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

Session III (A): Exploring Canadian and International Best Practices: Gender-Based Analysis Plus

Led by Renée Mulligan, this session examined Canada’s Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) policy analysis tool as well as barriers to women’s leadership at societal, institutional, and individual levels. Delegates discussed gaps in data collection, mentorship, and gender equality in leadership roles. Through group exercises, they identified traits of effective leaders—empathy, vision, and empowerment—and explored lifelong learning and delegation as leadership strategies. Later, participants learned about multi-access learning in British Columbia, emphasizing digital inclusion and accessibility. The discussion underscored the value of diverse learning modalities and digital literacy to promote inclusive education and governance. In a follow-up session, participants deepened their understanding of GBA+ and its application in developing gender-responsive leadership policies. They mapped a strategic plan for Viet Nam that included assessing current programs, identifying barriers, integrating GBA+ training, and establishing accountability mechanisms.

Session III (B): Sharing Canadian Multi-Access Learning Practices for Professional Development: Designs for Modality, Pedagogy, and Access

The session was led by Education Professor Valerie Irvine, who showcased UVic’s innovative multi-access teaching and learning model. She highlighted how this approach allows students to participate from any location—online, in-person, or through a blended format—offering greater flexibility and inclusivity, especially

for women and people with disabilities. The session demonstrated how multi-access pedagogy can ensure accessibility and equity in professional development.

Session III(C): Governing in Times of Complexity

Led by Law Professor Victor V. Ramraj, the session explored how governance extends beyond the state in addressing complex global challenges. He distinguished between international, national, and transnational law, the latter involving non-state regulations such as global standards and the Equator Principles, developed by major banks to ensure environmental and social safeguards. Participants examined the difference between complicated and complex problems, such as ecological systems, which require adaptive, interconnected solutions. Prof. Ramraj emphasized the role of both state and non-state actors in addressing challenges such as COVID-19, where religious and community leaders played key roles. Introducing systems thinking and system mapping, he encouraged participants to view governance holistically, analyzing relationships, feedback loops, and interdependencies among actors, beliefs, and behaviors to better understand and address gender and policy challenges.



Visit to the BC Provincial Legislative Assembly

Session III(D): Inclusive Approaches to Public and Digital Engagement

In this session, Software Engineering Professor Daniela Damian emphasized that effective digital development depends not only on technology itself but also on how people communicate and collaborate. She highlighted the importance of empathy in technological design, urging technologists to create inclusive systems that ensure psychological safety and allow diverse users—especially women—to participate freely.



Training Session III (D) in the Multi-Access Classroom (AV), University of Victoria

Through design thinking (understand → explore → prototype → evaluate), participants learned strategies for inclusive innovation, including trust building, co-designing with end users, and empowering them as agents of change. Viet Namese delegates discussed challenges in digitalization, such as language barriers and limited human resources. The session concluded with feedback suggesting differentiated training agendas for high-level officials and technical staff to maximize learning impact.

Session III(E): Managing a Just Transition: A Comparative Overview of Just Transitions Policies and Practices

The session, led by Prof. Tamara Krawchenko, explored how countries can shift toward low-carbon economies through gender-responsive and socially equitable approaches. The session traced the origins of “just transition” from the 1970s U.S. labor movement and examined recognition, procedural, and distributional justice as key dimensions. Comparative cases from Canada, Spain, Turkey, and the EU illustrated how transitions can address workforce retraining, economic diversification, social protection, and inclusive governance. Viet Nam’s Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), valued at USD 15.5 billion, was discussed as a model integrating gender-sensitive indicators, women-led green initiatives, and equal participation in policymaking. Prof. Krawchenko highlighted challenges such as male-dominated industries, weak coordination, and gaps in social security. The session concluded that successful transitions require fairness, community engagement, and gender mainstreaming to ensure no one is left behind in the move toward sustainable growth.

Session III (F): Just Transitions: Indigenous Authority and Climate Change

The session, led by Law and Environmental Studies Professor Deborah Curran, focused on just transitions, Indigenous authority, and climate change, emphasizing that climate action must go beyond reducing emissions to protecting ecosystems and supporting community resilience. In Viet Nam, the most immediate climate impacts are sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, and natural disasters, with ethnic minorities’ access to land governed by legal and policy frameworks. Canada provides a comparative example, implementing UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) and FPIC (Free, Prior, and Informed Consent principles) through legal pluralism, harmonizing national law with Indigenous rights, and engaging communities in governance. Examples include BC First Nations’ Climate Strategy, covering coastal protection, energy governance, emergency management, and project finance for permanence, where communities benefit from long-term funds and enforce environmental laws locally. Viet Nam’s context differs, with ethnic minorities integrated with majority populations, but lessons on regional approaches, long-term financing, and community engagement—similar to Bhutan’s carbon-negative model and Chiang Mai’s air pollution labs—offer adaptable strategies for inclusive climate transitions.

Session IV: Team Presentations and Final Reflection

In the reflection session, participants shared their lessons learned from the training. The training offered a comprehensive learning journey that seamlessly integrated theoretical frameworks with practical applications, particularly in gender-responsive governance and just transitions. It encouraged participants to engage in self-reflection, recognizing unconscious biases, limitations in thinking, and mentoring approaches, while fostering open dialogue and strong interactions throughout the program. The Canadian context provided a rich example of how Indigenous knowledge, culture, and legal rights are acknowledged and integrated into academic, policy, and governance systems. Participants observed how gender, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in technological platforms, infrastructure, learning design, and public service practices, emphasizing empathy and respect as lived values. The program also highlighted innovative approaches to onboarding new MLAs and Canada’s leadership in gender equity and accessibility for people with disabilities, offering actionable insights for adapting inclusive, community-centered, and equity-focused strategies in Viet Nam.



Group photo with specialists Dr. Tamara Krawchenko and Professor Deborah Curran at the Diana M. Priestly Law Library

At the end of the session, participants shared their “blueprint” for future trainings: A Five-Year Program for Deputies or MPs aimed at enhancing their comprehensive capacities, integrating gender perspectives into policymaking and implementation, and strengthening professionalism and cohesion. The program would focus on developing foundational knowledge and skills, as well as specialized competencies through international exchange programs, parliamentary fellowships, targeted research, and mentoring initiatives. The training would be built around six key pillars: modern parliamentary skills, policy analysis and planning, public governance and oversight, parliamentary diplomacy, gender mainstreaming and social inclusion, and digital transformation and innovation in parliamentary work.

A Gender responsive Leadership Training is expected to empower women leaders across elected bodies, appointed positions, and the private sector. It would focus on building knowledge and skills on gender equality, disability, and social inclusion to enhance policy decision-making and leadership, enabling participants to drive change through applied projects. The program will emphasize the development of leadership and strategic thinking skills while fostering community-building capabilities. Additionally, it would be built to provide opportunities for networking and mentoring, supporting professional growth, peer learning, and long-term leadership development.

“I’m pleased to welcome Viet Nameese delegation accompanied by UVic Professor Victor Ramraj, headed by Madame Le Thu Ha, who is a Member of Parliament in Viet Nam, the vice-chairwoman of the National Assembly Office and the general secretary of the Viet Nam Parliamentary Friendship Organization, along with 15 others, here for a workshop with our Legislative Office on gender equity, digitization and governance. If I can ask the whole House to please make them feel very welcome.”

Paul Choi, Member of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia introducing the delegation at the afternoon session of Parliament at the BC Legislature, 6 October 2025

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TRAINING

The Gender Lens: A Recurring Compass

A defining feature of the training was the consistent application of a gender lens across all sessions, positioning gender mainstreaming as a central guiding principle rather than a supplementary topic. From exploring Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) and women's leadership barriers to integrating gender-sensitive indicators in just transition strategies, each session emphasized the importance of embedding gender perspectives in policy, governance, and public service practices. Participants examined how gender equality intersects with decision-making, digital innovation, and community engagement, highlighting both structural and cultural barriers. The program encouraged self-reflection on unconscious biases and mentorship practices, reinforcing the need for inclusive approaches at institutional and individual levels. By repeatedly revisiting gender considerations across different topics—from legislative processes and digital engagement to just energy transition- the training reinforced that gender responsiveness is essential for effective leadership, equitable policymaking, and sustainable societal transformation.

Cross-Cultural Exchanges and Networking

The training provided a dynamic platform for cross-cultural learning and exchange, creating opportunities for participants, facilitators, and experts to engage deeply with the Viet Nameese context. Canadian specialists, including legislators, professors, and policy advisors, not only shared international best practices but also learned from Viet Nameese experiences and challenges, such as local consultation cultures, gender-disaggregated data gaps, and policy implementation constraints. Through interactive discussions, group exercises, and reflections, participants developed professional networks, strengthened peer-to-peer learning, and gained exposure to diverse leadership and governance models. The dialogue encouraged mutual understanding, allowing specialists to adapt global frameworks to local realities while enabling Viet Nameese delegates to contextualize international approaches for their institutions. This cross-cultural exchange fostered collaboration, knowledge transfer, and mentorship, laying the foundation for long-term partnerships and a more effective, locally relevant, and gender-responsive training ecosystem.

Experiencing Indigenous Knowledge and Inclusive Governance

Throughout the training, many sessions incorporated examples of collaboration with Indigenous communities, giving participants a comprehensive view of inclusive governance in practice. A particularly memorable moment was witnessing the opening of the Indigenous Law Wing at the Faculty of Law, UVic, which provided timely insights into how Canadian institutions work alongside Indigenous groups. Sessions on digital governance and just energy transitions showcased concrete projects where Indigenous knowledge, legal frameworks, and community consultation were central to decision-making. Participants learned how Indigenous perspectives inform environmental protection, energy governance, and social inclusion policies, highlighting Canada's commitment to equity and participatory governance. By integrating these examples across multiple sessions, the training offered Viet Nameese officials a practical understanding of how inclusive approaches can be systematically embedded into policy, legislation, and governance processes, providing valuable lessons for Viet Nam's context.

A FRAMEWORK TO CARRY FORWARD

Gender-Responsive Training for Vietnamese Government Officials

Despite legislative frameworks supporting gender equality, gaps remain in knowledge, practical skills, and leadership capacity, particularly among women leaders. By providing targeted training, applied learning, and mentoring, the proposed training program would address these gaps, empowering deputies and other government officials to mainstream gender effectively, enhance policy outcomes, and foster a parliamentary culture that values equity, diversity, and inclusive governance.

The proposed future training program aims to strengthen gender-responsive leadership among Vietnamese deputies through a two-pronged approach. First, a *Gender-Mainstreaming Training Program for Deputies* would equip deputies from the National Assembly (and other government officials) with the knowledge, tools, and skills to integrate gender perspectives across policymaking, governance, and oversight. Participants would engage in foundational modules on gender equality and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), complemented by applied exercises. Second, a *Women's Leadership Program* would focus on enhancing the strategic, decision-making, and negotiation skills of women deputies, while integrating a gender perspective across sessions and fostering community-building and networking opportunities. Participants would engage in cross-cultural exchanges with Canadian parliaments to learn best practices in gender-responsive governance. This training envisions a sustainable program that develops capable, inclusive, and forward-looking parliamentary leaders, advancing both gender equity and effective governance in Viet Nam.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Looking back at the training program, we were grateful for the opportunity to meet and work together with such a distinguished group of officials from Viet Nam. We found our conversations with the participants enriching and learned much about Viet Nam's priorities on gender-inclusive training, but also about its governance strengths and priorities in the years to come. We look forward to more opportunities to collaborate with the UNDP and government officials and other participants in advance training and other collaborative programs in the years to come.

20 November 2025



Dr. Zhe Li (Jessica)
Project Manager
Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives



Dr. Victor V. Ramraj
Director
Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives

APPENDIX 1 - PROGRAM

Course Participants

Madam Le Thu Ha, Vice Chairwoman of the Office of the National Assembly, National Assembly

Mr. Dang Ngoc Huy, Vice Chairman of the Committee for Deputies' Affairs, National Assembly

Ms. Nguyen Thanh Cam, Member of the National Assembly, Deputy of the Committee for Culture and Social Affairs, National Assembly

Mr. Trinh Van Chien, Senior Officer, Department of Deputies' Affairs, Committee for Deputies' Affairs, National Assembly

Ms. Dang Thi Van Lam, Senior Officer, Department of International Relations, Office of the National Assembly, National Assembly

Associate Professor Tuong Duy Kien, Director General, Institute for Human Rights, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

Dr. Luong Thu Hien, Deputy Director General of the Institute for Human Rights, Director of the Center for Gender and Women's Right Studies, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

MA. Chau My Linh, Lecturer, Institute for Human Rights, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

MA. Phan Thi Hong, Lecturer, Center for Gender and Women's Right Studies, Institute for Human Rights, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

Ms. Le Hong Nhung, Deputy Head of the People's External Relations Department, Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, Viet Nam Fatherland Front

Ms. Pham Thi Kieu Loan, Human Rights and Inclusive Governance Analyst, UNDP

Ms. Marina Carvalho Marcelli Ruzzi, Human Rights and Rule of Law Specialist, UNDP

Advanced Training Program on Gender-Responsive Policymaking

Program Schedule

5-11 October 2025 | Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives | University of Victoria, BC, Canada

Visit contact - Dr. Jessica Li, Program Coordinator, Centre for Asia Pacific Initiatives (CAPI)

email: leezhe@uvic.ca | cell: 250 857 8382

Saturday 04 Oct	Arrival in Victoria, Huntingdon Hotel & Suites, 330 Quebec St, Victoria
Sunday 05 Oct	Location: (all sessions): The Windsor Room, Huntingdon Hotel & Suites
09:30-10:00	Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Remarks - Dr. Victor V. Ramraj, CAPI Director & Law Chair, Professor of Law Opening Address by Nick Etheridge, former Canadian diplomat, (Hanoi and Saigon) and later as Canada's representative to Cambodia and as High Commissioner to Bangladesh Renée Mulligan, CAPI Associate & British Columbia Lawyer
10:00-10:15	Introductions – Viet Nameese participants, CAPI team
10:15-10:30	Housekeeping and logistics - Dr. Zhe Li (Jessica)
10:30-10:45	Tea Break
10:45-12:00	Session I (A)—Contextualizing the Training: Questions and Priorities for Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of Training Program - Dr. Zhe Li (Jessica) Dialogue on Challenges and Priorities by Viet Nameese participants, facilitated by CAPI team
12:00-13:30	Lunch - Finest at Sea, 27 Erie St, Victoria
13:30-14:15	Session I (B)—Contextualizing the Training: Viet Nam and Canada - Dr. Victor V. Ramraj & Dr. Zhe Li (Jessica)
14:15-14:30	Recap of Training Priorities - Dr. Zhe Li (Jessica)
18:00	Welcome Dinner - 10 Acres Bistro, 611 Courtney St, Victoria
Monday 06 Oct	Location: Morning session- The Drawing Room, Huntingdon Hotel & Suites Afternoon session - Committee Room (Cedar Room), The Parliament Building
09:30-11:30	Session II (A)—Introduction to the Legislative Process in British Columbia - Renée Mulligan, CAPI Associate & British Columbia Lawyer
11:30-12:30	Lunch - the Real Thai Restaurant, 211 Menzies St, Victoria
13:00-14:30	Tour of Legislature/House-in-Session Observation
14:30-16:00	Session II (B)—Reflections from BC: Building Better Onboarding - Sebastian Abbey, Learning and Development Lead, Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

Schedule (continued)

Tuesday 07 Oct	Location (all sessions): CAPI, Room FRA A168a, Fraser Building, University of Victoria
09:30-12:00	<p>Session III (A)—Exploring Canadian and International Best Practices: Gender-Based Plus Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renée Mulligan, CAPI Associate & British Columbia Lawyer - Dr. Azra Fanoos, Visiting Professor, UVic
12:00-13:30	Lunch - The University Club with Dr. A.R. (Elango) Elangovan, Associate Vice-President, Global Engagement, UVic
13:30-16:00	<p>Session III (B)—Sharing Canadian Multi-Access Learning Practices for Professional Development: Designs for Modality, Pedagogy, and Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Valerie Irvine, Associate Professor of Educational Technology, UVic Director, Technology Integration and Evaluation Research Lab; President, Open/Technology in Education, Society, and Scholarship Association (OTESA)
Wednesday 08 Oct	Location (all sessions): Fraser Building, Room FRA A168, University of Victoria
09:30-12:00	<p>Session III (C)—Governing in Times of Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Victor V. Ramraj, Professor of Law, Director of Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (CAPI) and Chair in Asia-Pacific Legal Relations, UVic
12:00-13:30	Lunch (served on site)
13:30-16:00	<p>Session III (D)—Inclusive Approaches to Public and Digital Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Daniela Damian, CAPI Chair and Professor of Software Engineering, UVic
Thursday 09 Oct	Location (morning): Fraser Building, Room FRA A168, University of Victoria
09:30-10:30	<p>Session III (E)—Managing a just transition: A comparative overview of just transitions policies and practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Tamara Krawchenko, Associate Professor of Public Administration, UVic
10:45-12:00	<p>Session III (F)— Just Transitions: Indigenous Authority and Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prof. Deborah Curran, Professor of Law and Environmental Studies, Executive Director of the Environmental Law Centre, UVic
12:00-13:30	Lunch (served on site) & transit
13:30-16:00	Visit to Butchart Gardens

Schedule (continued)

Friday 10 Oct	Location (morning): Fraser Building, Room FRA A168, University of Victoria
09:30-10:30	Session IV—Team Presentations, Final Reflection
10:30-10:45	Tea Break
10:45-11:00	Preview of Future Programs - Dr. Zhe Li (Jessica)
11:00-11:30	Conclusion, and Closing Ceremony - Dr. Victor V. Ramraj, Professor of Law, Director of Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (CAPI) and Chair in Asia-Pacific Legal Relations, UVic
12:30-13:30	Lunch at Thai Lemongrass, 3838 Cadboro Bay Road, Victoria & transit back to hotel

Advanced Training Program on Gender-Responsive Policymaking

Biographies of the Program Training Specialists

International Team Leader

Dr. Victor V. Ramraj (ramraj@uvic.ca) serves as the International Team Leader of the training program, and he will lead a training session to discuss governance in times of complexity. Dr. Ramraj holds the following degrees: BA (Hons.) McGill University (1989); MA University of Toronto (1990); LL.B. University of Toronto (1992); Ph.D. University of Toronto (1998); LL.M. Queen's University Belfast (2006). Since 1998, Dr. Ramraj has taught courses on public law, comparative law, transnational law and regulation, and law and complex global problems at the National University of Singapore, the Centre for Transnational Legal Studies in London (UK), the University of Victoria, and Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. In his courses, he often uses role-play simulations, including a simulated multi-party treaty negotiation in which students are assigned to groups to represent different organizations in a simulated negotiation, which takes place over five classes. He regularly uses interactive teaching methods in his courses including in-class group work and reporting and panel discussions and group presentations. Dr. Ramraj is Professor of Law, Chair in Asia-Pacific Legal Relations, and Director of the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives, where he specializes on law and policy issues in Southeast Asia. Before returning to Canada in 2014, he spent 16 years at the NUS Faculty of Law in Singapore (Visiting Fellow 1998-1999; Assistant Professor 1998-2004); Associate Professor (2004-2014). He is a regular visiting professor at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand, teaching in the LLM in Business Law. At the University of Victoria, he has taught courses on Law and Society in Southeast Asia and Law, Complexity, and Crisis in Asia, in which he uses role-playing simulations. His publications include peer reviewed law and policy articles and book chapters on Malaysia, Myanmar, Timor Leste, Thailand, and Singapore.

Dr. Zhe Li (Jessica) serves as the Program Manager for this event. Dr. Li holds a Ph.D. in Educational Studies (2023) from the University of Victoria and an MA in Health Social Science (2010) from Mahidol University, Thailand. Dr. Li brings deep expertise in public policy and Southeast Asian contexts, particularly in the area of higher education and environmental health. With over seven years of experience in teaching and training on public policy, Dr. Li has delivered innovative and experiential programs, including SEAMEO RIHED workshops on international student mobility and university credit transfer, and a guest lecture at UVic (2016) on the course of Global Educational Leadership. Dr. Li's expertise in Southeast Asian higher education policy is demonstrated through her roles as Senior Programme Officer (2014–2015) and consultant (2015–present) at SEAMEO RIHED, where she facilitated regional policy dialogues. Currently a Program Assistant at the University of Victoria's Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives, Dr. Li excels in organizing seminars and conferences, leveraging her extensive knowledge of Southeast Asian policy landscapes to foster impactful, inclusive training methodologies that drive regional educational policy development.

International Team Member- Gender Mainstreaming Specialists

Dr. Azra Fanoos will lead a training session on international experiences and practices in gender-responsive leadership. Dr. Fanoos holds a Doctor of Education (2019) in Educational Leadership from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Although her academic background is in education, Dr. Fanoos brings extensive expertise in gender equity and inclusive policy development relevant to the public sector. With over five years of experience in gender mainstreaming, Dr. Fanoos served as Director of the Women Development Center at the University of Lakki Marwat, Pakistan, where she empowered female students through leadership and mentorship initiatives. She also led efforts to revise curricula to incorporate gender equity and inclusive education, creating more equitable academic environments. Dr. Fanoos headed the Teacher and Staff Training Institute at the University of Lakki Marwat, Pakistan, enhancing professional development opportunities

for faculty and staff. As a visiting professor at the University of Victoria, she has facilitated workshops on collaborative learning, inclusive pedagogy, and diversity for faculty members both in Canada and Pakistan.

Renée Mulligan will lead training sessions on applying Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in policymaking and delivering case study-based training in digital governance. Holding a Bachelor of Laws (2002) and a BA (1996) from the University of British Columbia, Ms. Mulligan is a seasoned lawyer with the British Columbia Ministry of Attorney General, advising Cabinet Ministers on legal and policy matters. Since 2005, she has been committed to advancing gender equality in her role with the BC government, and since 2018, when BC mandated using Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) as an analytical tool to assess how diverse groups of people may experience programs, policies and services, she has integrated GBA+ into public policy and legal frameworks, driving inclusive outcomes in civil, human rights, and administrative law reform. Throughout her career, she has led numerous high-profile projects in civil, human rights, and administrative law reform, consistently applying GBA+ principles to promote inclusive and equitable policy outcomes. Beyond her legal expertise, Renée has mentored and supervised over 20 law students, along with numerous early-career lawyers and policy analysts. She is also an active Associate of the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives at the University of Victoria. Since 2009, Renée has been invited to deliver trainings, lectures, and presentations at various events, including training sessions and conferences across Southeast Asian countries.

International Team Member- Digitalization Specialists

Dr. Daniela Damian will lead a training session on inclusive approaches to public and digital engagement. Holding a Ph.D. (2001) and MA (1997) in Software Engineering from the University of Calgary, and a BA from Babes-Bolyai University (1995), Dr. Damian is a Professor of Software Engineering and the ECS-CAPI Chair in Inclusive Science, Technology, and Engineering at the University of Victoria. With over 20 years of experience, she has designed and implemented digital education programs emphasizing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). Her leadership fosters inclusive learning environments, integrating experiential learning, team-based approaches, and mentorship to empower women and underrepresented minorities in STEM. Dr. Damian has trained educators and students through workshops and programs, promoting inclusive teaching practices and EDI principles. Her innovative programs create supportive networks, enhancing student belonging and success in digital education.

Dr. Valerie Irvine will lead a training session on the use of technology in capacity-building and training. Holding a Ph.D. in Educational Technology (2005) from the University of Alberta, an MA (1997), and a BA (1995) from the University of British Columbia, Dr. Irvine is an Associate Professor of Educational Technology at the University of Victoria. Since 1998, she has pioneered digital education programs, focusing on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). As Director of the Technology Integration and Evaluation (TIE) Research Lab, she designs inclusive, technology-integrated learning environments, emphasizing multi-access learning, digital literacy, and open education. Dr. Irvine also served on the BC Government Digital Learning Advisory Council, where she contributed her expertise in educational technology and inclusive digital learning strategies to inform provincial policy and practice. Dr. Irvine has over 25 years of experience training educators through workshops, courses, and keynote speeches, fostering accessible and flexible educational practices. Her work shapes institutional and governmental policies, ensuring equitable access to technology-driven education for diverse learners

International Team Member- Just Energy Transition Specialists

Dr. Tamara Krawchenko will lead a session on comparative policies and practices in just transitions. She is an Associate Professor in Public Administration whose work spans comparative public policy, regional development, and sustainability transitions. Her research explores how governance and public institutions shape communities and regions, with expertise in sustainability transitions, Indigenous economic development, industrial policy, and land-use governance. She leads and contributes to major initiatives including the Accelerating Community Energy Transformation Initiative, the Local Governance Hub, and the Coastal Climate Solutions Leaders program. Dr. Krawchenko has directed international research in more than a dozen countries and regularly advises governments worldwide, including through the OECD and the World Bank.

Deborah Curran will lead a session on water law, environmental governance, and responsible land use. She is cross-appointed in the Faculties of Law and Social Sciences (School of Environmental Studies) at the University of Victoria. Her teaching focuses on water law, environmental law, municipal law, environmental solutions, and the environmental law clinic, exploring how relationships with land and water shape responsible decision-making. Her research examines all aspects of adapting water law and governance, land use policy, and the integration of Indigenous law into state law. As Executive Director of the Environmental Law Centre, she supervises students working with community and Indigenous organizations. For over 20 years, she has supported communities and Indigenous groups in creating sustainable communities, developing green bylaws, and advancing new models for watershed governance.

Specialist from the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

Sebastian Abbey is the Learning and Development Lead with Client Services at the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, where he has worked since 2021. A Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) designate, Sebastian holds a BBA in Human Resources and Leadership and brings extensive experience in HR, operations, and organizational development. Before joining the Assembly, he served as a Senior Human Resources Analyst with BC's Government Communications & Public Engagement Office and as an HR Executive with Marriott International, specializing in talent management and employee engagement. In his current role, Sebastian designs and delivers learning strategies and programs that empower MLAs, constituency staff, and Assembly employees to strengthen skills and foster growth. Outside of work, Sebastian is a proud father of two, a son and daughter, who keep him both inspired and grounded.



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