



**Meenakshi Gopinath** is the Founder and Director of WISCOMP, an initiative of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Formerly, she served for over 26 years as Principal, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi. Dr. Gopinath was the first woman to serve as Member of the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) of India. She has been a member of the Advisory Board on the Planning Commission of India and the University Grants Commission (UGC). At the UGC, she was Co-Chair of the Committee on Measures for Safety of Women and Programs for Gender Sensitization on Campuses. The seminal report of the Committee titled SAKSHAM has informed the government's guidelines on prevention and redressal of sexual harassment on university campuses.

Dr. Gopinath has written and lectured across the world on issues of Conflict Transformation, Peacebuilding, Women's Leadership, Education for Peace, International Relations and Diplomacy. She serves on the governing boards of prominent research institutes, NGOs and educational institutions and has developed programs and curricula on educating for peace in universities, colleges and schools. Dr. Gopinath has piloted and fostered confidence-building measures through conflict transformation workshops and collaborative projects among intellectuals of the SAARC region, especially between young Pakistani and Indians. An innovative program in Kashmir developed by her, which networks and trains women and youth in peacebuilding, is acknowledged as an adaptable model for sustained dialogue in areas of conflict.

In recognition of her contribution to the field of women's education and empowerment, Dr. Gopinath has received several awards including the Padma Shri Award from the President of India; Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi Award; Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence in Education; Mahila Shiromani Award; Delhi Citizen Forum Award; Qimpro Platinum Standard Award for Education and Celebrating Womanhood; South Asian Recognition Award for Social Harmony and International Lifetime Achievement Award (2009) for outstanding work in the field of Justice, Equity, Peace and Progress and the L.M. Singhvi Fellowship Award. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree for significant contribution to the education of women and

commitment to fostering global peace through Conflict Resolution by La Trobe University, Australia; the Distinguished Alumna Award by Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi, for meritorious contribution in the field of Education; and the Nirbhaya Puraskar 2017 by OYSS Women (Odisha Yuva Sanskritik Sansad) for exemplary courage and accomplishment in the field of Education.

**Seema Kakranis** Deputy Director, WISCOMP. She has been involved in Project Management for over a decade. She co-lead *Partners in Wellbeing: Youth Countering Violence against Women in India* program, which was supported by a Public Affairs Grant. As part of the program, she has overseen the publication and dissemination of the resource material generated by the program. She was a Key Researcher for the *Making Women Count for Peace* Program of Peace Research Institute Oslo.

Ms. Kakran holds experience in Monitoring and Evaluation of peacebuilding and educational initiatives and mentoring of young scholars in the areas of conflict resolution, international law, peace education and non-traditional security concerns. A specialist in public policy analysis, political theory and evaluation methodologies, she holds a Graduate Certificate in Public Policy Analysis from University of Nebraska–Lincoln. She has also attended courses in Evaluation Methodology at INCORE, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland and Gender Evaluation Methodology and Participatory Evaluation Training organized by Community of Evaluators (A South Asia Network). Ms. Kakran has previously taught Political Science at the University of Delhi and at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, USA. She has completed pre-doctoral work at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and holds M.Phil and MA degrees from Jawaharlal Nehru University and University of Delhi. Her research focuses on gender equality and socio-political conflicts in India.

**Diksha Poddar** is a Consultant at WISCOMP and has been associated with the organization for over three years. She holds an M.Phil from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and her dissertation was titled 'Interlinkages between Development and Conflict: A Case Study of South Asia, 1991-2015'. Ms. Poddar holds a Masters' degree in Development Studies from Ambedkar University Delhi and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Conflict Transformation and Peace Building from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, New Delhi. A graduate in Political Science and Economics from Lady Shri Ram College, she has partaken in several youth leadership initiatives, including the 'The Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Initiative' (TMSEI) between youth from Kashmir and other parts of India. Her research interests include youth and peacebuilding, gender, conflict and development.

**Shilpi Shabdita** is Program Associate at WISCOMP. She holds a Masters' degree in International Peace Studies from University of Notre Dame, USA, along with a Post-Graduate Diploma in Conflict Transformation and Peace building and a Bachelors' degree in Mathematics and Economics from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi. Previously, she worked at Heartland Alliance, USA, providing specialized case management services to unaccompanied minors from South Asia, West Africa, and South America who were fleeing situations of poverty, violence and persecution, and were apprehended by the US Department of Homeland Security.

Ms. Shabdita also worked in Uganda on a USAID-SAFE project at Justice and Reconciliation Project, a grassroots organization engaged in transitional justice efforts to empower survivors of armed conflict. As part of the Community Mobilization Department, she authored a USAID Research-Policy Report 'Mapping Regional Reconciliation in Northern Uganda' analyzing 800+ community interviews and making policy recommendations for post-war reconciliation and development interventions to be aligned with community's social, political and economic needs. She also collated a 'Memory Book' documenting war memories & justice needs of 283 LRA-war victims and former combatants in northern Uganda. Ms. Shabdita has also worked closely with Afghan's for Progressive Thinking, an Afghanistan based NGO that works on capacity building and dialogue initiatives with university students, aiding with project design and grant writing. Previously, she served as a Consultant at WISCOMP working on the Education for Peace initiative with youth leaders and educators from New Delhi and Kashmir, which focused on inter-regional dialogue, conflict transformation skill building, and collaborative peace projects.