Sakshi Ghai (University of Cambridge) - Is science updating the definition of human diversity?

Great strides have been made to increase awareness about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in science. However, progress in this space is slow and the conversation on achieving DEI in science has largely privileged a Western perspective. For example, the critical issue of racial discrimination is relatively more salient in the diversity discourse within many high-income countries, which remain a global minority. Yet, in many emerging and low-income countries, a global majority, other marginalized identities are often overlooked yet significantly more prominent than race. For example, in the context of India, many groups are stigmatized and dehumanized based on religion or caste. In this talk, I will first introduce the complexity of capturing diversity in science. Second, I will present tangible ways to rethink diversity and measure both between-country and within-country diversity. Finally, I will propose a global survey to generate a hyper-local understanding of culturally salient diverse identities across the Global South – Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Data from such a survey could surprise us with more similarities rather than differences across marginalized social identities between the Global North and Global South. Equally, we will integrate multiple dimensions of diversity (e.g., religious, tribal, political identities, etc.) that will expand the repertoire of DEI, making science applicable to most of the world's population.