

SUSTAINABLE, JUST AND PRODUCTIVE WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN NEPAL UNDER CURRENT AND FUTURE CONDITIONS (Digo Jal Bikas, DJB)

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Unravelling gendered practices in Water Public Organizations



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How gendered discourses, institutions and professional culture contribute to policy gaps?

- *The organisations and institutions that design and implement water policies and programs are themselves gendered.* (M. Z. Zwarteveen, 2008).
- 12-boxes framework, developed by Oxfam Novib (2010)
 - Components of the 9-boxes framework used in this study

	Mission and mandates	Organisation structure	Human resource management
Technical	1. Policies and actions	4. Procedures, systems and responsibilities	7. Staff capacity and expertise
Political	2. Influence on policies and actions	5. Decision-making	5. Room for manoeuvre
Cultural	3. Professional culture	6. Co-operation and learning	6. Attitudes



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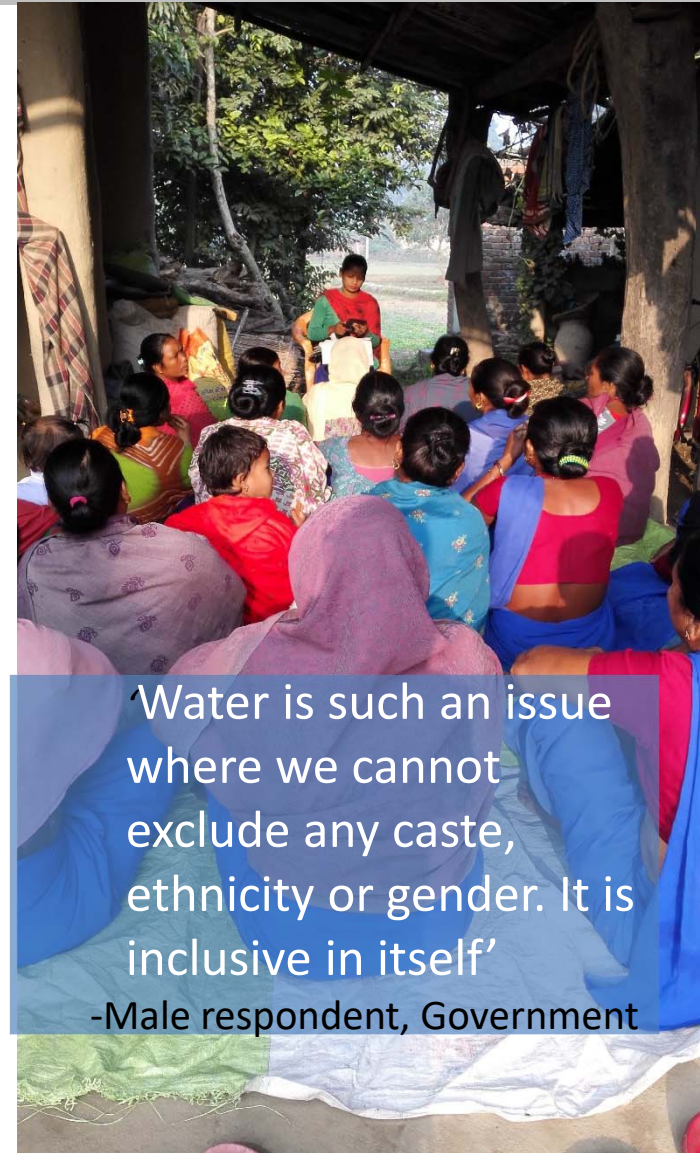
Method: Qualitative

- Semi-structured interviews (February-March 2017) with water professionals from several public water agencies.
- Regular interactions and engagement on gender with water professionals in Kathmandu and in the districts between 2013 and 2017.
- A review of all relevant policies in the water sector.



Dominant policy narratives and assumptions on gender and water

1. Water management is a **technical** task, **natural**, not a social, object, which **benefits everyone**, men and women, **equally**.
2. Water collection **women's responsibility**, developing local water supply infrastructure is sufficient condition to improve women's livelihoods.
3. Women's participation in **WUAs** is a **sufficient and necessary condition** for greater gender equity.



'Water is such an issue where we cannot exclude any caste, ethnicity or gender. It is inclusive in itself'

-Male respondent, Government

Organisational Structure

- GESI – concern of sociologist, their **role limited to the creation and capacity building of formal WUAs**, allocated **less resources** and **lack authority** to implement GESI guidelines
- **Limited** number of **non-technical staff** (NT category). Number of sociologist stable between 2007-2017.
- Civil engineers dominate the organisation, lack **commitment** to GESI.
- GESI unit act in **isolation**, not effective
- GESI not included in performance evaluation, achievement measured in terms of **financial and physical progress** [budget spent/infrastructure built], no **incentives** for GESI



Professional Culture

■ Masculine

- Large scale infrastructure
- Engineering [hard core science]
- The ability to give preference to work over family
- Promotion ladder
- Superior



• Feminine

- Equity and Justice
- Sociology [soft knowledge]
- Reproductive responsibilities
- third class gazetted officers without further **chance of promotion.**
- GESI – anyone can do

With such Professional Culture

- Women's ability repeatedly questioned – **women a hassle**
- Need of women not adequately addressed [women friendly infrastructure, resource allocation, field level facilities].
- Masculine attitudes reproduce unequal gender relationships women develop an inferiority attitude – inferior nicknames, disregard, disrespect towards women.
 - Consequences on women's health, family life and career progress.
 - Effects on the motivation and performance of individuals

'You never know what kind of health issues they [female staff] are facing – pregnancy, menstruation etc. It is difficult for them to travel on motorbikes. This has led to many cases of miscarriage and immature babies'



Influence on implementation of gender equality policy

- Impact how water resource development and management issues are framed in policies and program design.
- How programmes are designed and ultimately affects the capacity of public organisations to adequately understand and address gender and social equity issues on the ground.



Key findings

- GESI is a fringe issue in government agenda
 - Restricted only to policy level
 - Bio-physical institutional focus
 - Limited capacity and commitment for transformative change
 - Professional culture favours technocratic fixes



Gender Solutions

- Revamp of **institutional culture** to encourage and **incorporate social dimensions** within **technocratic** sectors to ensure **equality across scales**.



	Mission and mandates	Organisation structure	Human resource management
<u>Technical</u>	<p>Policies and actions</p> <p>Develop a sector-specific or organisational sexual harassment act and inform staff of its specifics. Allocate sufficient financial means and human resources at the senior management to designing and implementing a GESI action plan and strategy in the water sector.</p>	<p>Tasks and responsibilities</p> <p>Tasks and responsibilities</p> <p>Value skills and attitudes that are generally perceived as ‘feminine’ (sociology, social mobilisation, empathy, etc.) and include them in performance appraisal.</p>	<p>Staff capacity and expertise</p> <p>Staff capacity and expertise</p> <p>Encourage long term or permanent appointments of GESI staff. Ensure that gender-related responsibilities are defined in TOR..</p>
<u>Political</u>	<p>Policy influence</p> <p>Develop explicit institutional mechanisms for ensuring the inclusion of women and marginalised groups in project development and the evaluation and monitoring of project activities</p>	<p>Decision-making</p> <p>Increase the legitimacy and authority of women staff in the water sector to influence decisions on water delivery and management by providing them with necessary exposure and leadership trainings.</p>	<p>Room for manoeuver</p> <p>Create incentives for staff to consider GESI while planning, implementing and monitoring..</p>
<u>Cultural</u>	<p>Professional culture</p> <p>Ensure gender-equitable and friendly workplaces, infrastructure and facilities, especially in field offices. This can include purchasing a scooter in field offices for women staff, building separate male and female toilets, and providing a private space for breastfeeding mothers.</p>	<p>Co-operation and learning</p> <p>Promote women role models and support women’s networks inside and outside the organisation.</p> <p>Build the capacity and skills of staff across all levels to address GESI issues.</p>	<p>Attitudes</p> <p>Support courses on gender and water resource management in engineering and technical degrees.</p> <p>Make provisions to recruit or promote gender-conscious staff (technical and non-technical)</p>

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- *‘If we make economic the only value of our life then world will become very **male**. There will be no room for feminine to find **expression**. There must be a world where women can be 100% feminine and still be absolutely successful. Money [physical/ **money muscle**] should not be the ruling factor’.*
 - Engineer to guru and Environmentalist.





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THANK YOU!



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