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Gender Differences in water security and capabilities in Far-West Nepal.

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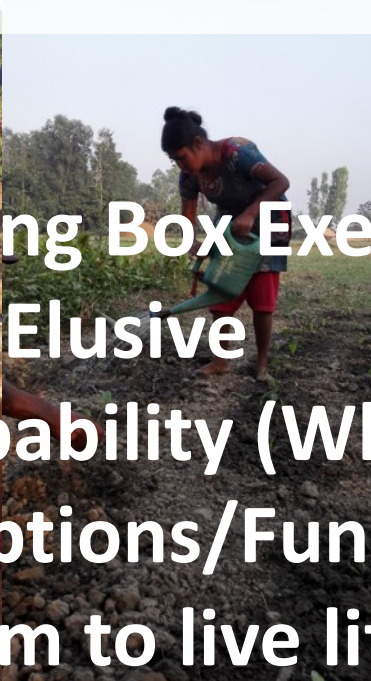
Context : Water Discourses

- Gender in International Development Discourses on water security
- The mainstream Approach to water management (IWRM) – focus on physical/economic process; ignores socio-political process
- Water management – technical – engineering solutions
- Tokenistic water policies



Nepal: The advocacy – 33%

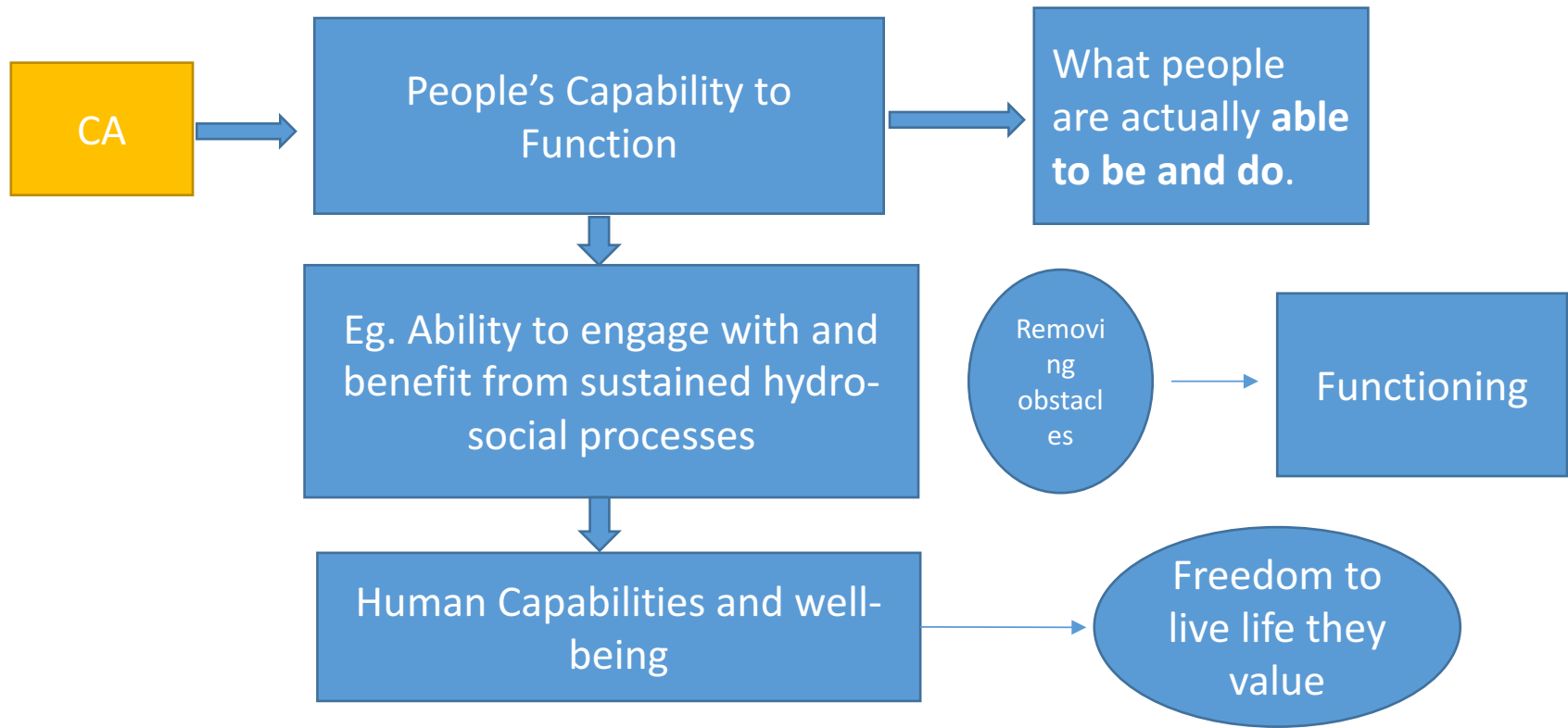
- Gender: Ticking Box Exercise
- Quota WUG: Elusive
- Women's Capability (What they are able to do) options/Functioning (being to be) freedom to live life they value.



We ask:

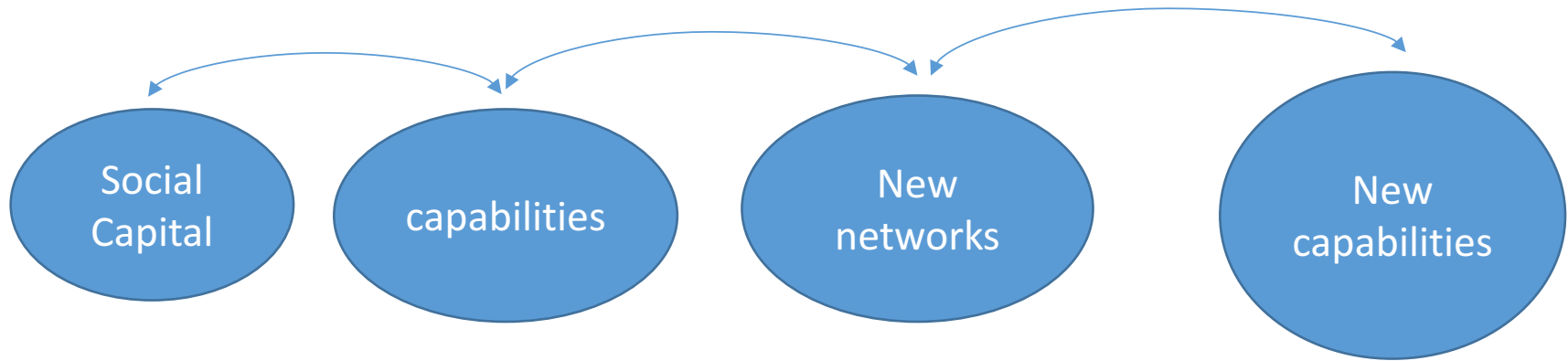
- Is social capital gendered? How social capital differs for men and women?
- How it shape capabilities of men and women to benefit from water resources?

Conceptual framework: Capability approach (Sen, 1990)

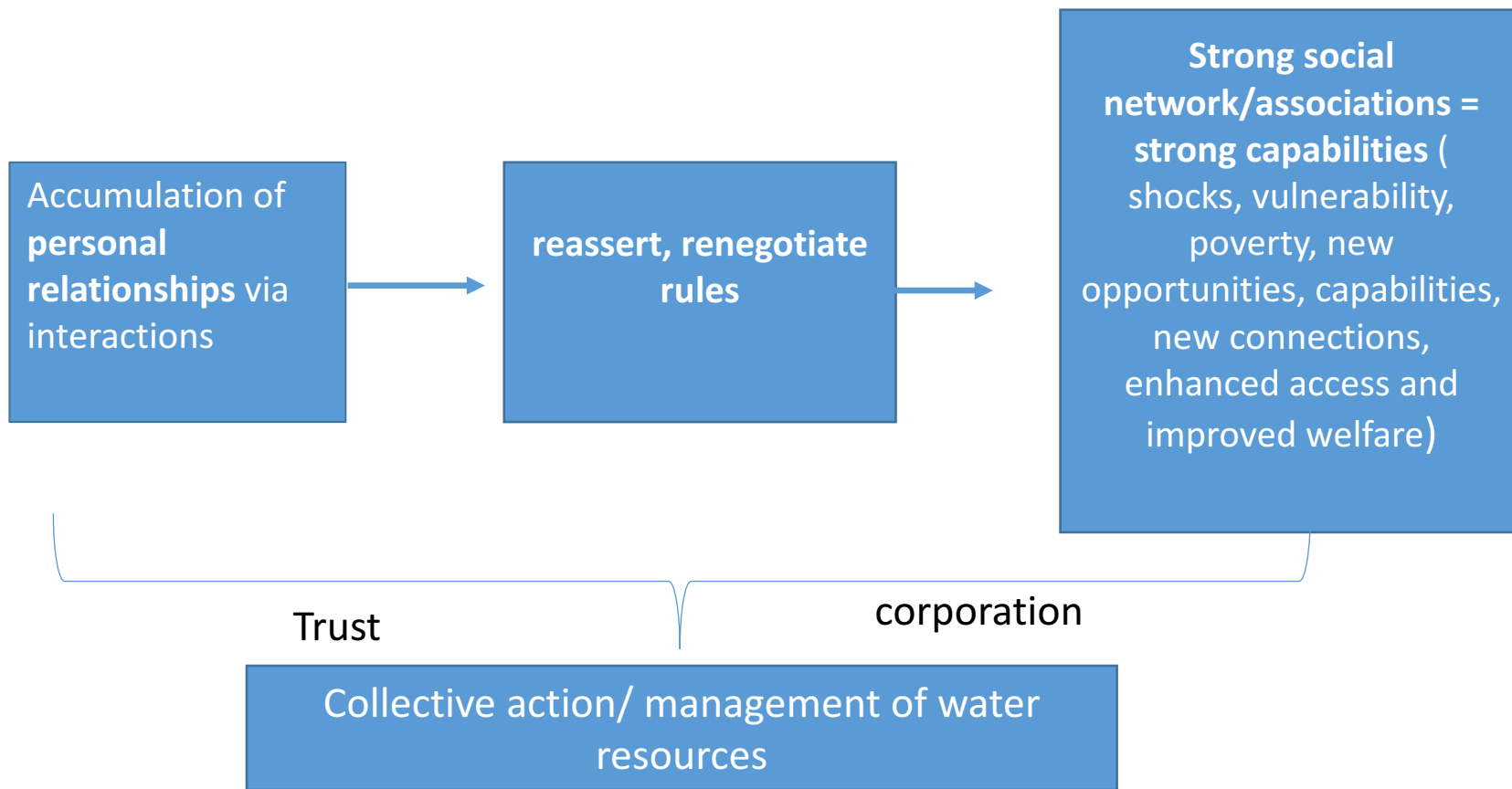


Capabilities and Social Capital

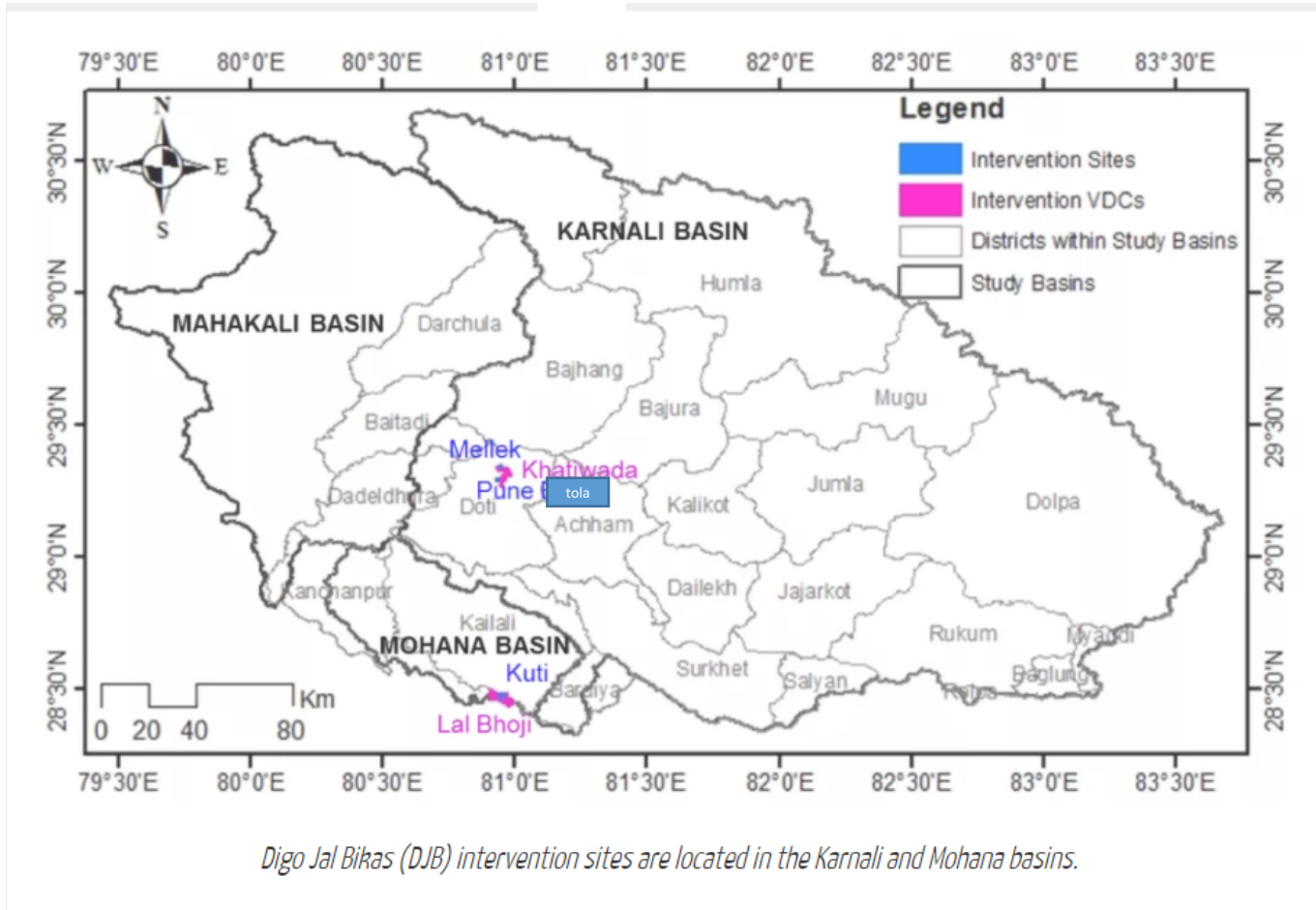
- Limited Attempts
- **Migheli (2011) -**



Social Capital (Bebbington, 1999, Moser 1996, Migheli, 2011)



Study Area



Method

- Qualitative
- Well-being ranking, , transect walk, village mapping, in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, institutional Venn diagram and participant observation.
- Altogether 30 respondents (10 Males, 20 Females) in Kailali and 24 respondents in (12 Males, 12 Females) Doti were sampled purposively from different caste, class, gender, age, education and social positions.

The gender dimensions of group membership and social networks(relationships)

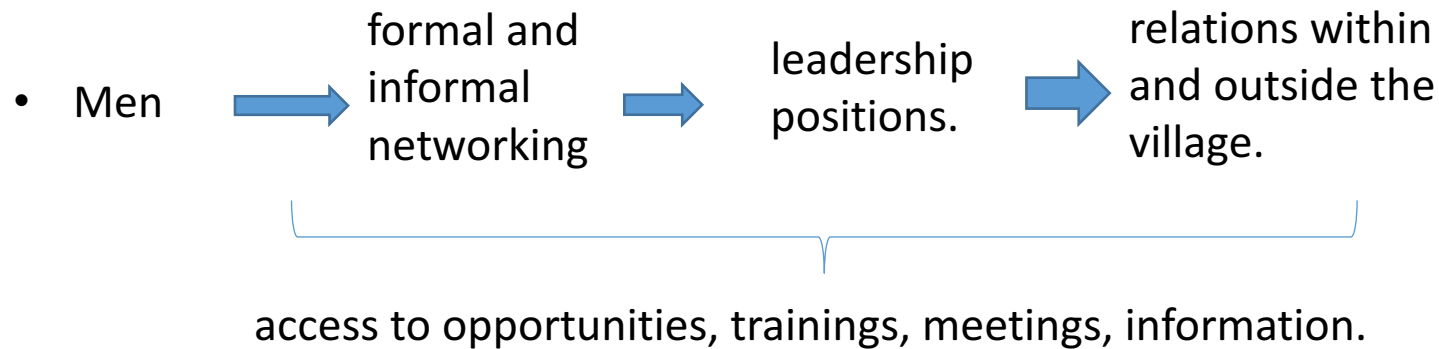


Men's saving group, cultural/tent group, ward office, municipality office, ground water office, TAL office, Jal short office, electricity office, different markets, village puja, village gathering, community work



Women's saving group, fishing, farm work, irrigation, health, wage labour, Bhajani market, community work

The gender dimensions of group membership and social networks(relationships)



Example: budget under different activities including groundwater shallow tube well irrigation project in Kuti.

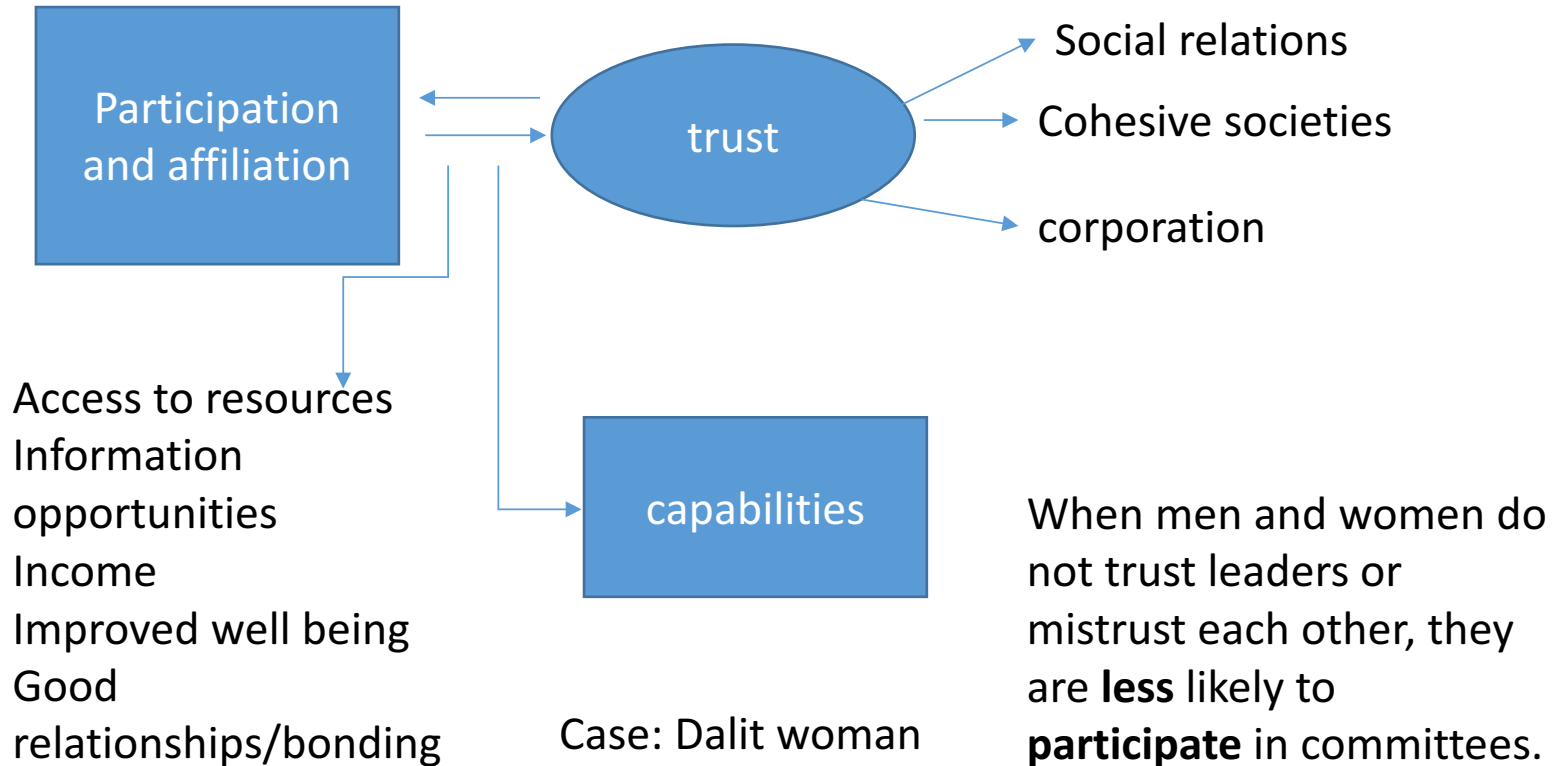
The gender dimensions of group membership and social networks(relationships)

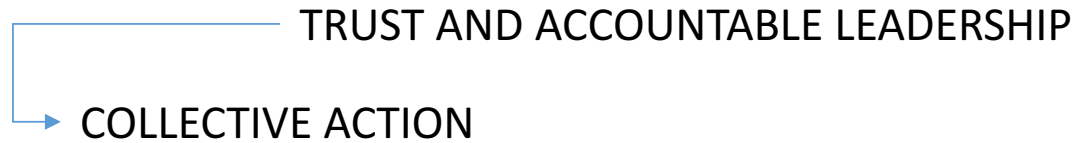
- Water management – Men’s job – no women staffs in the field – impact women’s social network
 - men usually contact men and not women
 - contact with men bring tag of immoral image to women
 - The chain of benefits: Influential men – development actors (men)
 - Gender INTERSECT with Caste
- In mixed groups: Extent of participation is different- Substantial vs. nominal/Passive – eg. irrigation user group.

Impact on women's capabilities/participation

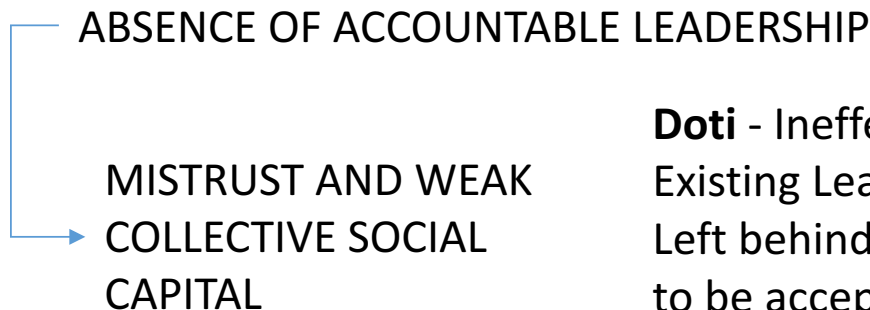
- If gender inequality is the base of social capital, women become more disadvantaged, as women remain excluded from the more powerful networks of trust and reciprocity that exist among men. (Silvey and Elmhirst 2003).
- Women, in particular of households with no men or women with migrant husband lack social networks because of less frequency of contacts with the outsiders.
- In such context, **women's capabilities to access to water is often conditioned by their relations with male relatives.**

Trust





Lobasta in **kuti**, example of well managed water governance [common ethnicity, strong kinship ties, leaders with strong social networks, rules of distribution based on ethnicity)



Doti - Ineffective water resource management.
Existing Leadership : individualistic and corrupt
Left behind women: lack capacity and social status to be accepted as leaders , Less participation, less trust.

Impact: less incentives to the members to contribute to the maintenance of water collectives.

INSTITUTIONS/THE RULES OF A GAME

NGOS/USER
GROUP

who could keep records, carry good hold in Nepali language, is mobile and can spend time for meetings and discussions.

no time and budget devoted by the projects to build women's capabilities

Passive participation → Privatisation of water sources and infrastructure

Created unintentional unequal ownership and access to water resources.

Increased Vulnerability

Key conclusion

- Social capital (social networks, trust and institutions) is influential in shaping capabilities in relation to water resource management.
- Social capital is influenced by gender and other social identities such as caste/ethnicity, class, age and disability.
- Social capital is gendered (eg. men and women share gendered spaces, linkages and resources to build social capital),
- Gendered social capital weakens women's capabilities to participate effectively in local water resource governance, limits their access to water, impacts their well-being negatively and reinforce/reproduce gender and social inequalities within communities.

Key conclusion

- Migration of men from the most marginalised groups not necessarily empower voiceless women in the local water decision making.
- Women's access to water is not only determined by caste, ethnicity and class but the access largely depends on women's relation with men relatives, which in turn determines women's capabilities to access water resources.

Argument

For effective and just management of water resources, women's social capital and capabilities must increase, a process which also builds individual capacity and enables collective action in the community.

More exploration →

Capabilities

‘I wish I could work like you. We have a different life. We have to work in the fields, in the forest and in the filth. I wish I was educated like you’. Interview_Doti,2017

Thank you!



Women in groups, walk to the forest. They walk far chatting about their lives, help each other with making bundles, and relax with a puff of smoke in the bush!

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