

# Promoting Water Integrity in Nepal

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## Background:

Although water coverage in Nepal is approx. 84%, only 25% of the existing water schemes are fully functional. That's why, the majority of Nepal's population relies on unsafe water sources.

Different reports show that the main cause of non-functionality of water schemes is due to the poor consideration of water integrity elements.



Fig 1: Water situation in rural areas

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), with the support of Swiss Red Cross (SRC) is implementing WASH projects that aim of increasing sustainable access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation and hygiene.

While constructing water schemes, key elements of water integrity (transparency, accountability and participation) are inbuilt throughout the entire project cycle, i.e. from planning to implementation, to monitoring and evaluation.

Since 2011, this project has been promoting private tap with water meter connection to meet the water demand of communities.

## Advantages:

- Participatory planning, management and power relations shared to community have made whole approach transparent .
- Effective partnership supported for shared contribution as well as clearly defined roles and responsibilities made the process transparent, accountable and participatory.
- WUSC members have been capacitated to manage the water scheme independently.
- Trust between the users and WUSC and ownership of the users on water scheme has been increased.
- All users are happily paying for water which has supported for operation and maintenance of WS.
- WI elements integrated water schemes are fully functional.
- Government's water related provisions i.e. water source registration, private tap connection, WI elements have been implemented & advocated.

## Interventions: Building Capacity, Ensuring Participation, Maintaining Transparency and Accountability

<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local WASH plan development with priority ranking for water scheme construction with the participation of the government, CBOs and community</li> <li>• Water Users and Sanitation Committee (WUSC) formation in a democratic way through community mass gatherings</li> <li>• WUSC and water source registration as per government policy.</li> <li>• Legal status and written agreements with clear roles and responsibilities as well as contributions of stakeholders</li> <li>• Action plan preparation by WUSC to manage water projects</li> </ul>	<p>Fig 2: Gathering for WUSC formation</p>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparent sharing of project information incl. roles and responsibilities with the help of posters and billboards</li> <li>• Out of the total budget 1% is used for the Operation &amp; Maintenance (O&amp;M) fund, 1% for non-local materials and about 20% labour contribution from users</li> <li>• Training of WUSC on water scheme management as well as procurement and fund management which is thereafter led by the WUSC</li> <li>• Participatory selection process of maintenance workers by WUSC</li> <li>• On-job-training for maintenance workers on O&amp;M</li> <li>• Water safety plan and business plan development by WUSC</li> </ul>	
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular monitoring of the water scheme by monitoring sub-committee</li> <li>• Joint monitoring in the presence of WUSC with relevant stakeholders and journalists</li> <li>• Joint final commissioning of the water scheme</li> <li>• Conducting public hearings and public audits</li> <li>• Organizing WUSC annual assembly and dissemination of the status of water schemes to all users and relevant stakeholders</li> </ul>	
<b>Follow up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint monitoring of the scheme by stakeholders</li> <li>• Participatory review of the WUSC annual action plan with relevant stakeholders</li> <li>• Jointly review of the water safety plan and business plan on the participation of users and supporting agency</li> </ul>	

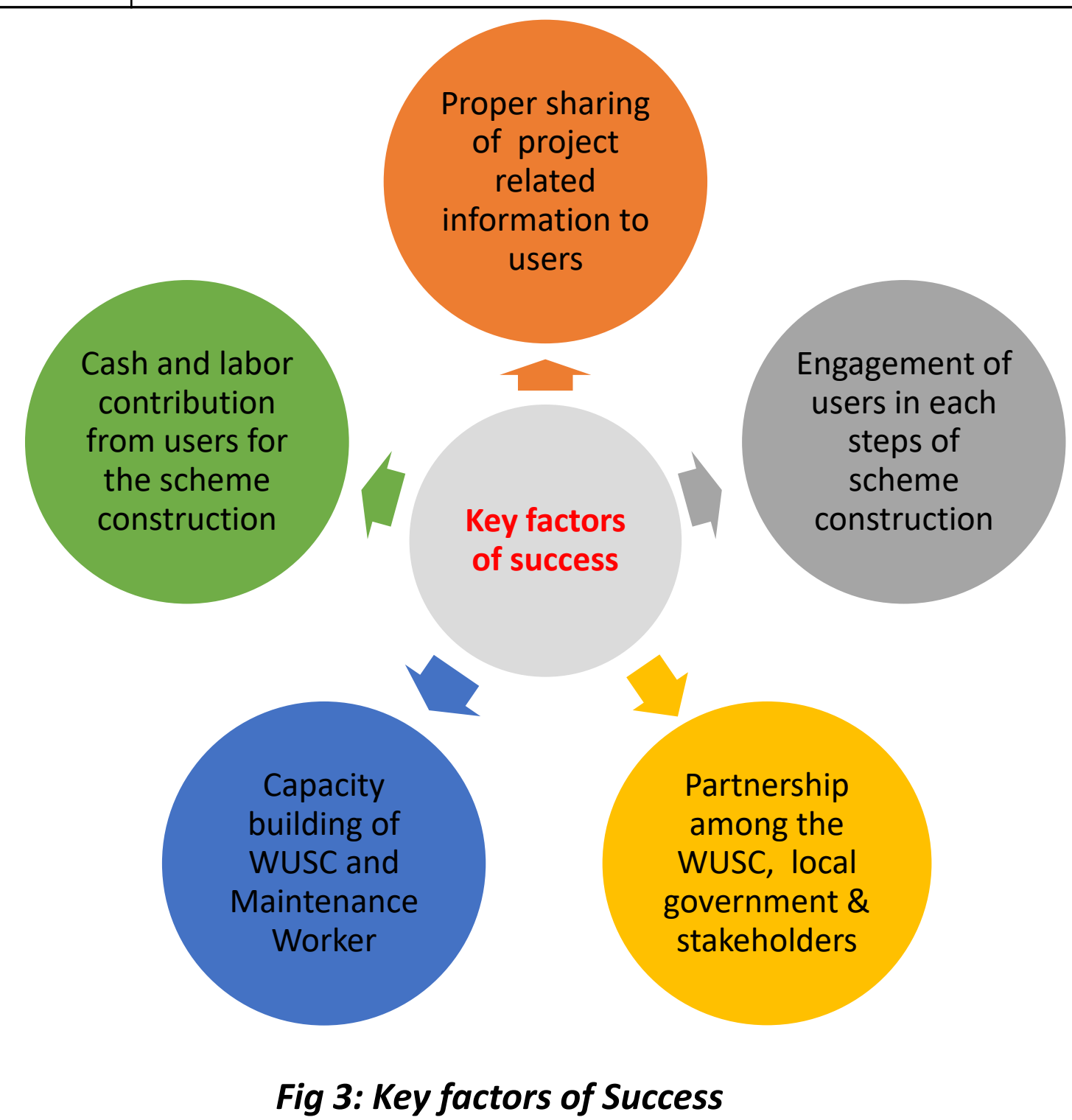


Fig 3: Key factors of Success

## Challenges:

- Cooperation with government agencies asks for extensive facilitation as authorities often have other priorities.
- Working with multiple stakeholders is a challenge due to different organizational culture.
- Users of urban and semi-urban settings are showing little interest in contributing resources and time to water schemes



Fig 4: Joint monitoring

## Recommendations:

- A multi-partnership (WUSC as lead implementing agency) approach to promote transparency and shared ownership.
- Regular motivation and appreciation to WUSC by local stakeholders to ensure their continuous engagement
- Strong input for capacity building of WUSC and maintenance workers in order to maintain the functionality of schemes
- Exchange visits to successful water projects to enhance the confidence of WUSC
- Continuous advocacy for the integration of Water Integrity Elements while constructing water schemes



Fig 5: Information board