

Spiraling up and down: Mapping rural women's empowerment in Ethiopia

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Presentation outline

- Introduction
- Theoretical framework
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions

Introduction

- Women's empowerment an integral component of national policies and development processes
- There is still need to understand how agricultural interventions are engaging women, and the transformation occurring in society because of such interventions.
- There is a limited understanding of how empowerment happens and the preconditions necessary for women to be empowered

Introduction...

- Examined how women engaged in the United Nations Joint Program on *“Accelerating progress towards Rural Women’s Economic Empowerment”* become empowered (UNJP-RWEE)
- Assess women’s empowerment as a process and outcome using the Community Capitals Framework (CCF)
- Process – changes happening in women’s lives
- Outcome – ability to control and influence their lives and future

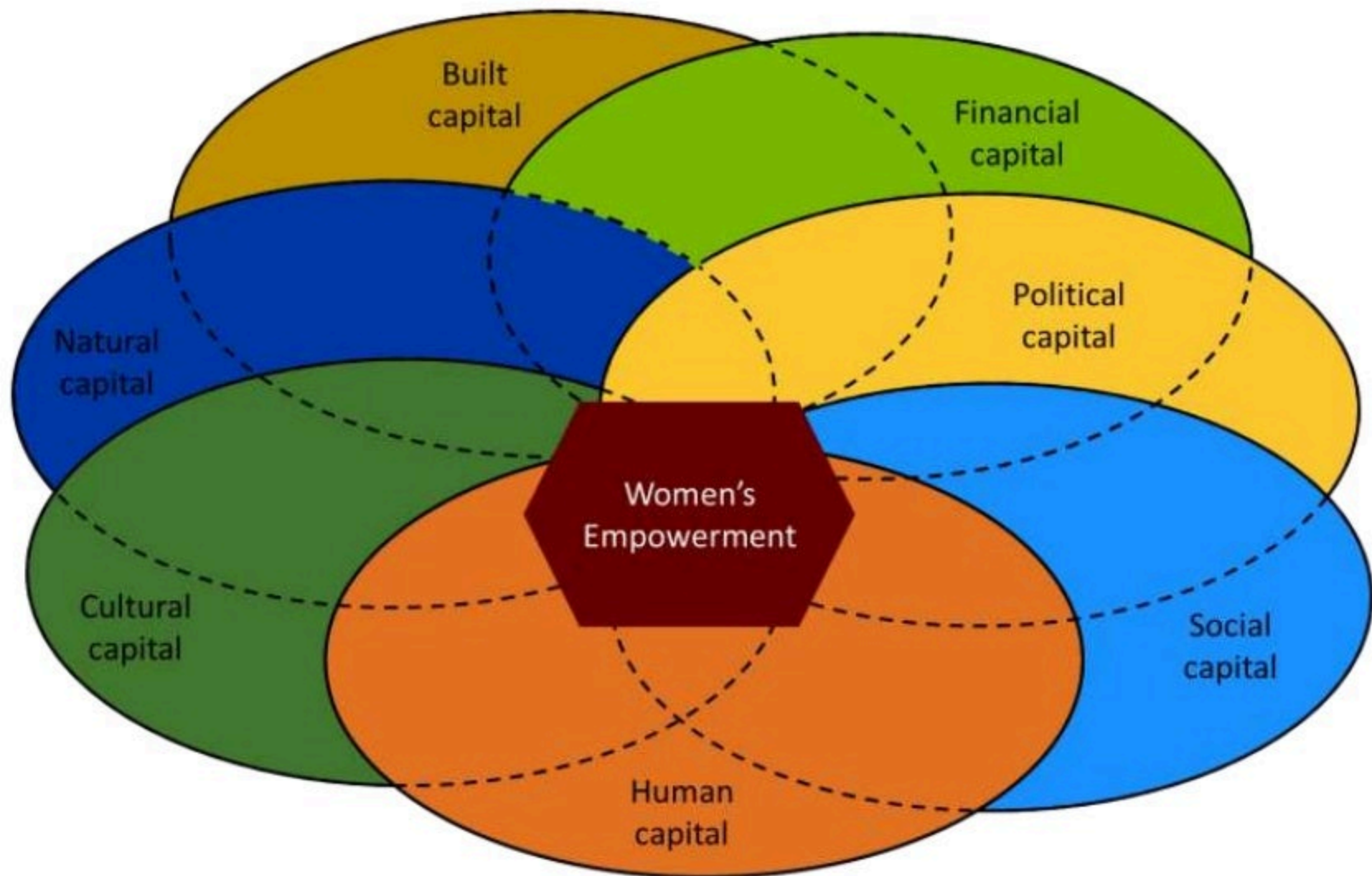
The empowerment concept

- Entails transformation of power relations, gaining control of the sources of power (Batliwala 1994)
- Process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability (Kabeer 1999)
- Empowerment tackles systematic constraints on women and girls' choice and voice
- We analyze women's control over resources, participation in decision making, independence, self worth and confidence and the enabling environment

The Community Capitals Framework (CCF)

- The CCF consists of 7 capitals: social, physical, human, financial, natural, cultural and physical capitals
- Provides a systematic and holistic way to analyze development in a systems perspective by
 - identifying the assets in each capital (stock)
 - the type of capital invested (flow) and
 - the interaction between the capitals and the resulting impact across capitals

Interaction between the seven capitals



The seven community capitals

Capitals	Description of assets within the capitals
Natural	The natural resources that exist in a location - land, crops, livestock, lakes, rivers, forests, wildlife, and local landscape.
Cultural	The way people “view the world” and how they act within it, as well as their traditional way of doing things and being, and language.
Social	Networks, norms of reciprocity, and mutual trust that exist among and within groups and communities - build a sense of collective identity
Human	The skills and abilities of people in the community to develop and enhance their resources
Political	Ability of people to find their own voice and engage in actions that contribute to the wellbeing of their community.
Financial	The monetary resources available for investment (income, credit, savings, wealth) and depends on how it is invested and decision maker
Physical or built	Infrastructure that supports other capitals such as processing equipment, roads, health centers, water systems, and electronic communication, houses, schools, business, clinics, electrical grid, transportation system etc.

Operationalizing the CCF

- The use of assets in one capital positively or negatively affects other capitals
- Spiraling up: Assets gained increase the likelihood that other assets will be gained
- Spiraling down: Inadequacy in assets negatively affects accumulation of other assets
- Both affect the process and degree of empowerment

Methods

The United Nations Joint Program on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (UNJP-RWEE)

- UNJP-RWEE is a global initiative of the three Rome-based UN Agencies - FAO, WFP, IFAD, and UN Women
- Program countries: Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.
- In Ethiopia, the UN agencies, in partnership with government and other national stakeholders designed the program
- Operates in two regions: Oromia (agrarian) and Afar (pastoral)

UNJP-RWEE approach

- The program focuses on an integrated strategic approach to women's empowerment
- Enhances rural women's livelihoods, food and nutrition security, decision making capabilities by:
 - Fostering women's participation in producers' groups and leadership
 - Enabling women's access to financial resources through SACCOs
 - Capacity development on various aspects
 - Transformation unequal power relations
 - Providing improved and labor saving technologies
 - Supporting development of gender policies

The study sites (Oromia region)

Woredas (districts)	Treatment villages (kebeles)	Control villages (kebeles)	Remarks
Yaya Gulele woreda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Iluna Dire• Nono Chemerie	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedete Tege	Sites are remote
Adami Tulu Woreda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adune Germama• Aneno Shisho	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gulanta Boke	Sites are more integrated and closer to the urban trading centers

Research design and data collection

- Qualitative study, July-August 2017
- Group discussions with female beneficiaries, male-indirect beneficiaries and non project participants (control)
- Proportional piling/scoring
- A plenary session held with both women and men to validate the emerging findings



Data collection...

- In-depth interviews with empowered and disempowered women and men to capture life histories
- Key informant interviews with:
 - Project implementers (at woreda level)
 - kebele leaders
- A total of 189 women and 196 men participated in group discussions and interviews

Qualitative data collection tools (adapted pro-WEAI qualitative protocol)

- Understanding of empowerment
- Livelihood matrix
- Access to and control over resources
- Seasonal calendar, gender division of labor, decision-making
- Life histories
- The community profile
- Project operations checklist

Results and discussion

Social capital – networks, norms and reciprocity

- Acting collectively in economic group
 - Build trust through joint savings
 - Access external services
 - Receive moral support
- Building good relationships for negotiation and decision making
- The strong and weak ties



Human capital – knowledge, skills and capabilities

- Knowledge acquisition and utilization
- Adult integrated literacy program
- Invest in improved technologies
- Participation in decisions making and leadership
- Increased self esteem and dignity



Financial capital – income, savings, credit

- Diversification of livelihoods
- Secure and control own savings
- Access to RWEE credit
 - Low interest rate
 - Does not require collateral
 - Short pay back period, small size of loan and misalignment with agricultural calendar



Cultural capital – action, belief and language

- Shift in gendered division of labor
 - Increased workload
- Increased mobility and women working outside
 - Not appreciated in remote communities
 - Threatened masculinity and social deviance
- Appreciation of women as farmers - a contested terrain

Political capital - women's influence in the community

- Participation of women on community leadership committees e.g. village cabinet and in meetings
- Women helping others to change

The community respects me because I do activities that most women cannot do. In meetings, even the women give me a chair and they say...please sit with the men. When I visit a home, I am given the man's chair. I am an influential woman in the community. I am a woman who does not sit behind a man. I sit beside a man. I also teach community members the advantage of saving (40-year old woman, Abune Germama)

Natural capital – land, livestock, crops

- Acquisition of livestock through purchase and its control
- Women have autonomy over smaller resources e.g. vegetables chicken or up to 20kg of grain
- Land certification with spouses' names and photo

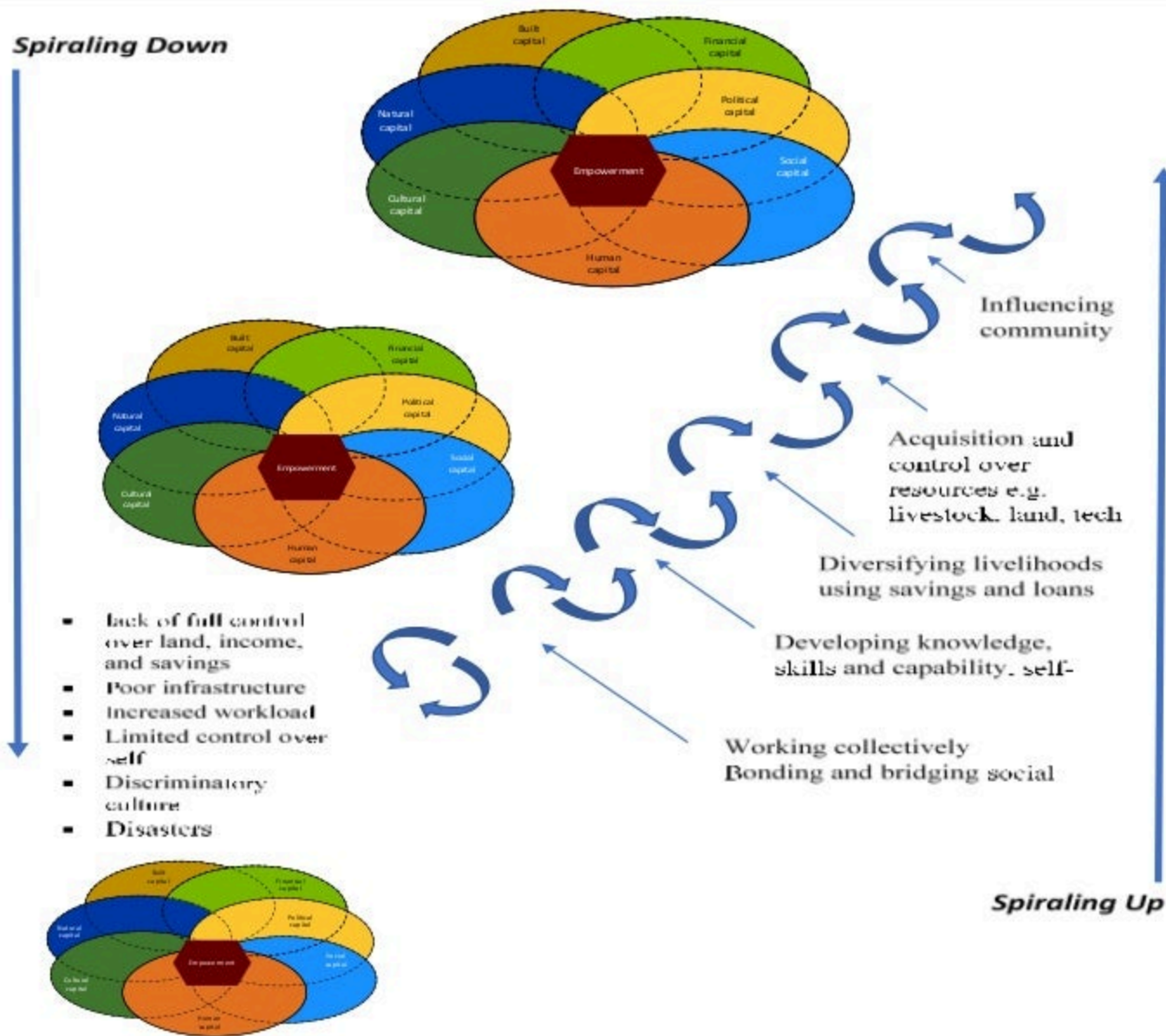


Physical capital -processing equipment, roads, health centers, water system, etc

- Access to labor saving technologies
- Water sources
- Electricity
- Communication
- Nature of roads



Spiraling up and down in empowerment



Conclusion

- Women's empowerment
 - follows a process of upward and downward spiral in the stock of capitals
 - can not be achieved simply by increasing stocks of assets within a specific capital
 - requires an increase in the flow of assets that build stock in other capitals
 - Requires a strategic and integrated approach

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