

## Community based adaptive learning in management of conflicts and natural resources in Bangladesh and Nepal (CALCNR)

# Lessons Learned & Recommendations

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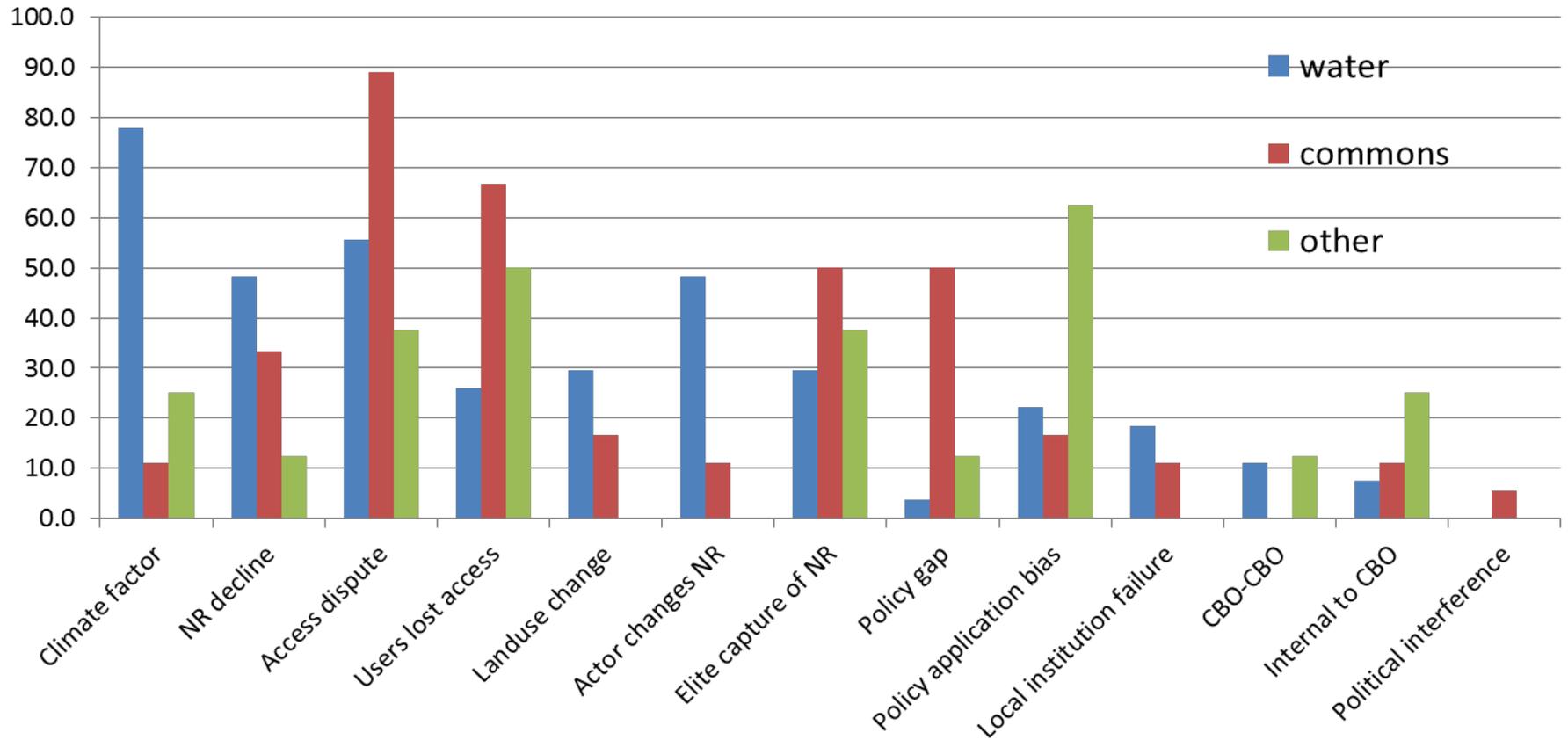
# CALCNR research question

- How can collective action be enabled to reduce natural resource conflicts associated with climate change stresses and related responses?
- **Based on action research in >70 sites and linkages between components, we identify 8 main factors enabling collective action that reduces NR conflict associated with climate change.**

# Conflict sources – climate factors

- Conflicts tend to have multiple underlying factors – typically about 4 factors per case in the 53 cases studied.
- Climate trends and stresses are not the only or often main cause of conflict.
- Climate change triggers, intensifies or multiplies conflict including undermining existing cooperation around NR in three-quarters of the cases.
- For example, rising salinity in river water, increasing waterlogging, more erratic rainfall and drier dry seasons have aggravated local conflicts in Bangladesh.

# Factors (underlying and triggers) behind NR conflicts in PAR sites in Bangladesh (% cases) considering main issue



## **Conflict sources - elite capture, inequity**

- Declining natural resources are a source of competition and conflict, particularly over increasingly scarce surface water for dry season irrigation.
- Physical changes associated with climate change tend to provide opportunities for elite capture which undermines cooperation.
- Biases in the interpretation and application of policies, usually in favour of the more powerful, are a source of perceived injustices and conflict.

# Findings: Collaboration

- Community based organisations cooperating with one another and with other agencies can reduce conflict and improve water management.
- Members of policy learning forums taking findings and approaches they are exposed to back to projects they have influence over.

# Collaboration

- Coordination amongst stakeholders and agencies is critical at all stages of development. This includes the need for participatory planning involving all stakeholders, which can mitigate conflict.
- Linking with other projects and agencies to share findings is a challenge – other projects and agencies have their own approaches and agendas.

# Findings: Adapted water management

- Changing land use e.g. from crop agriculture or wetland to aquaculture is a widespread source of conflict.
- In half of cases locally powerful persons deliberately changed natural resource characteristics – not just land uses, but also for example blocking and occupying waterways for fishing, aquaculture or crops.
- Water management has focused on technical / structural measures, but is often compromised by local conflicts e.g. over sluice operation, encroachment of waterways.

# Lessons related to conditions that enable CBOs to overcome local water conflicts

- Dialogue and negotiation is necessary but not sufficient
- **Incentives** of different types play an important role, e.g.
  - restoring waterways to overcome water conflicts associated with worsening drought and enable irrigation in dry season



## Lessons continued

Other **incentives** include the benefits from crops - when once dry fields become green. This has encouraged continued cooperation in managing water, farmers paying for operation and maintenance, and coordinated growing of water efficient crops.



# Lessons continued

Other factors contributing to transformation of local conflicts.

## Innovations:

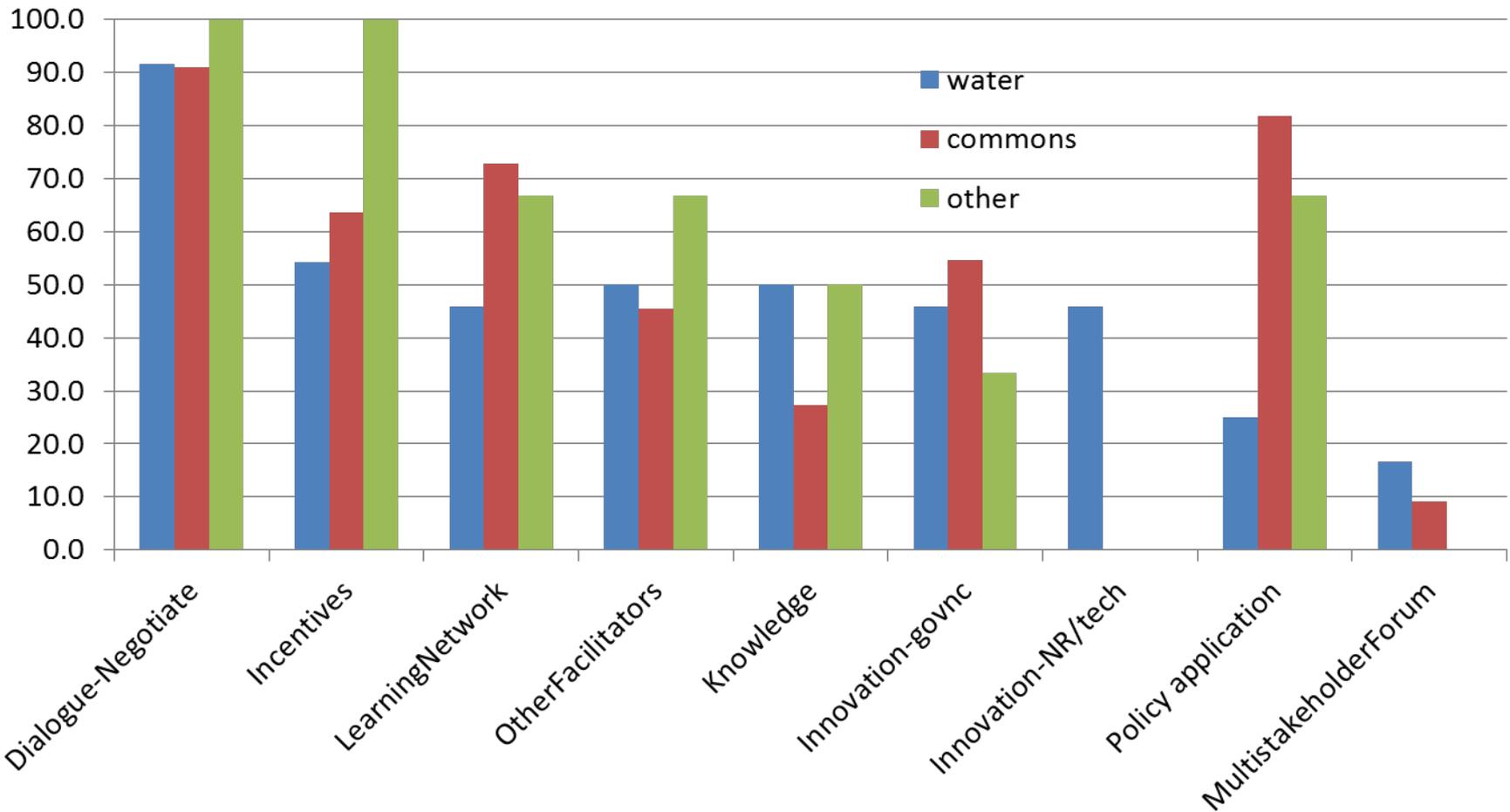
- *Technical*, e.g. renovating silted up springs in the northeast; and
- *Governance*, e.g. including disadvantaged communities in sluice operating decision making in Narail.

**Knowledge**, e.g. local elders knew where springs had been.

Factors **complement** one another, e.g. developing local institutional arrangements and incentives.



# Approaches used in 41 PAR cases where conflicts were resolved or part resolved in Bangladesh



# Adaptation and transformation in water management

- Understand local natural resource conflicts
- Build in flexibility to adopt enabling practices
- Respond to natural resource diversity, local needs and opportunities
- Encourage coordination, negotiation and joint actions between existing institutions and CBOs
- Recognise that not all adaptation responses are win-win.
- Ensure that losers (often disadvantaged poor in conflicts and/or climate change) are not disadvantaged by adaptation interventions.

# Thank you

