



Women's engagement in local governance to promote sustainable solutions in NIGER

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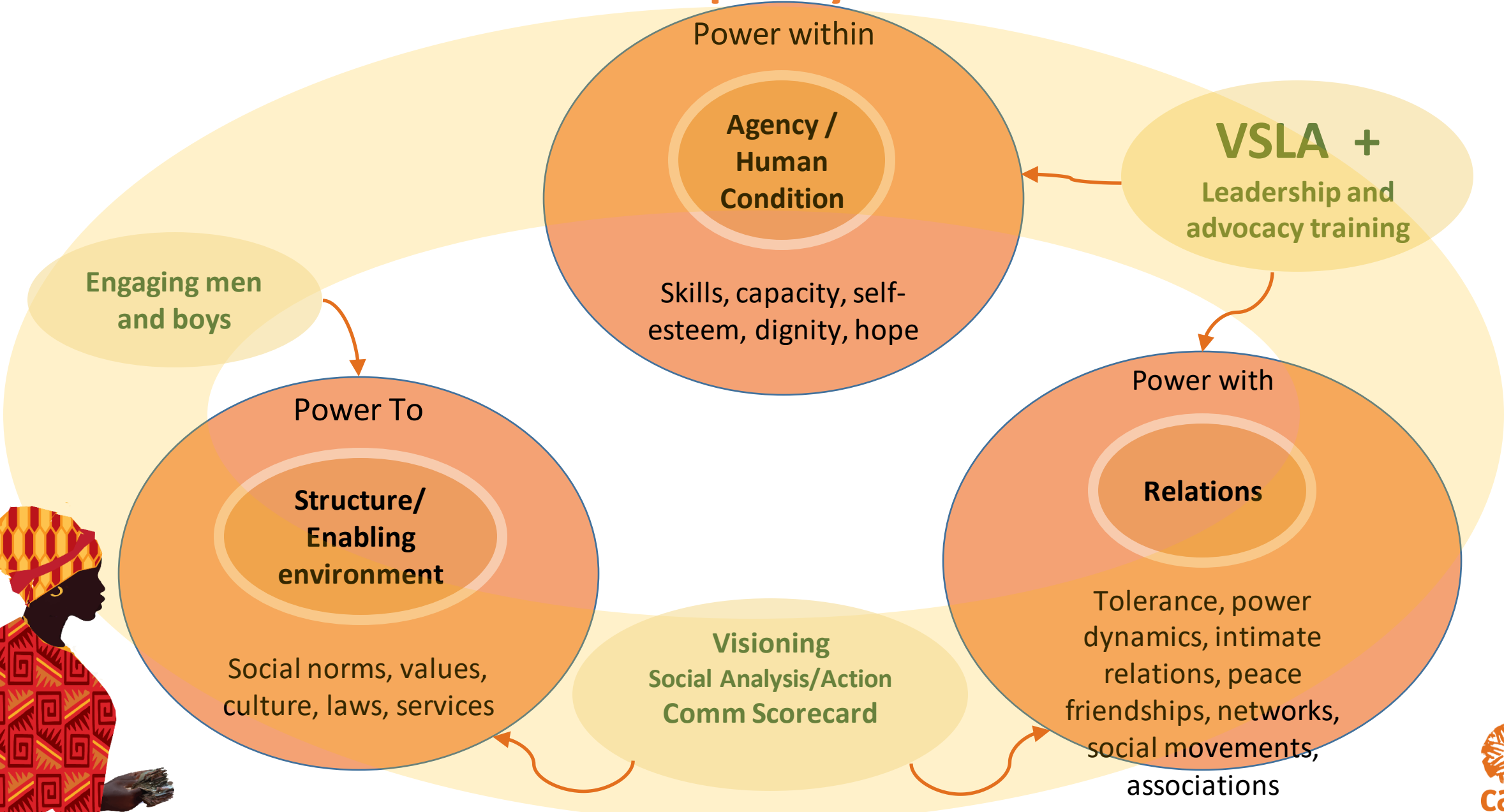


Presentation outline

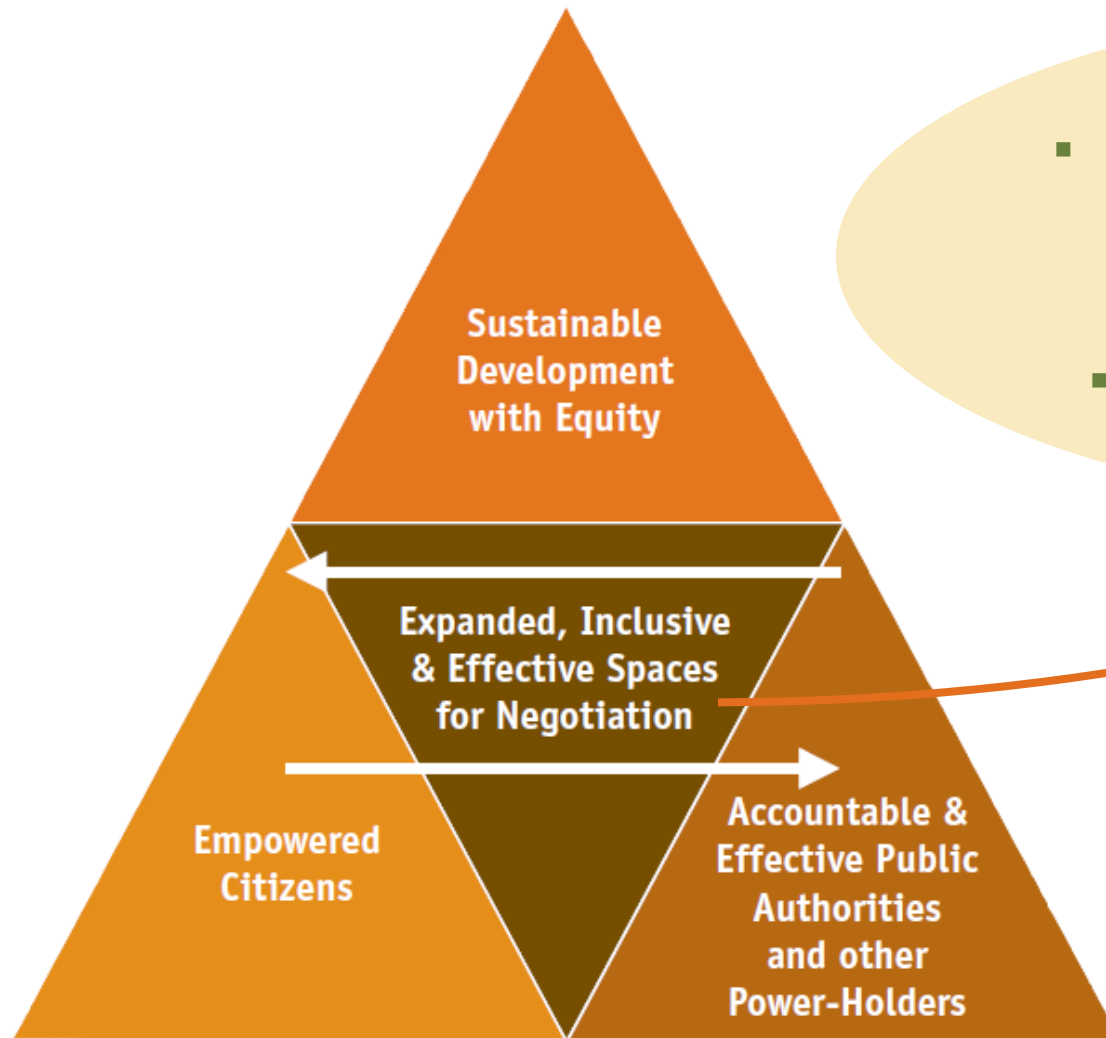
- CARE's Gender Equality Framework- focus on VSLA
- CARE's Inclusive Governance Framework- focus on multi-stakeholder platforms
- How VSLA improve local governance- 2 examples
- Indications of sustainability
- Key take-aways
- Pictures
- References



CARE's Gender Equality Framework



CARE's Inclusive Governance Framework



Multi-stakeholder platforms

- Citizen and collective agency, mobilization
 - Fees/incentives for services and sustainability
- Horizontal and vertical linkages, scale
- Partnerships with authorities, services, private sector actors

Community pasture management

Drivers or levers for adoption

- **Limited space for livestock** due to high population densities
- **Rainfed cropping alone a risky livelihood** due to drought and climate variability
- **Livestock provides synergies with cropping**, increases climate resilience
- **Women's VSLA expressed interest** in pasture management for their small livestock and the community
- **Sedentary and transhumant livestock both benefit**

How VSLA improve governance in pasture management

- **Active user**, purchasing power to pay fees for pasture mgt
- **Vision**- social enterprise business plan
- **Leadership**- pasture mgt committee, bylaws (with local authorities)
- **Management skills**- restoration works, incentives
- **Accountability**- financial mgt

Multi-stakeholder platforms

Drivers or levers for adoption

- **Limited resources** for gov't extension services
- **Significant local technical capacity** in a diversity of thematic areas.
- **Demand exists for peer-to-peer training** and learning was expressed by women's VSLAs.
- VSLAs operate with a **fee-based peer training** model.
- **VSLA are linked** through networks and federations for engagement, advocacy, and economies of scale.

How VSLA improve governance in Platforms (community and communal levels)

- **Active user** with purchasing power to pay for platform services
- **Leadership and technical skills**- thematic groups for IGA, small livestock, gardening, etc.
- **Management skills**- Gaya, equipment rental services, loan facilities for inputs
- **Linkages**- VSLA networks, federations
- **Accountability**- financial mgt, reporting, elections
- **Advocacy**- platform, communal authorities

Indications of sustainability

Community pasture management

- **Pasture management on-going seven years after** external support ended at initial site.
- **Receipts** from fodder sales **cover labor costs and generate surplus** for community.
- The social enterprise model for **pasture management is expanding** in the commune.
- **Local gov't received about 2,000 USD for reinvestment** from receipts for 10 pasture mgt sites.
- **Local gov't wants to form a pasture management network** for collective planning and investment in pasture management.

Multi-stakeholder platforms

- **Platforms maintain fee-based enterprises and services 3+ years after** external support ended in initial communes.
- **Collective activities are implemented at low cost** using a traditional community self-help approach (*Gayya*).
- **Platforms have expanded to 40 communes** (with new funding): experienced people in existing platforms set up and train the new ones.
- **Platform membership expansion** within each commune.
- At least **40% of members are women**, mostly from VSLA.

Key take-aways

- Women's VSLA are **not** just for 'women's empowerment'.
- Networks and federations of VSLA further expand members' **leadership, advocacy and management** skills.
- Skilled women from VSLA possess **unique talents to sustainably manage** community resources and services as social enterprises, **for community benefit**.
- Active participation of skilled women from VSLA is an **essential element for responsive, accountable and sustainable** local organizations and governance structures.
- **Linking local organizations and governance structures** (including their women's and men's talents) through platforms can **drive local development, achieve economies of scale** for reach and sustainability, and **provide a unique platform for women** to make significant contributions to local planning, policy and governance.
- **Recommendation:** Include women's VSLA and their members in all actions to manage community assets and resources.

Women in pasture management



Women harvest palm leaves for sale on a pasture management area



A model illustrating integration of pasture management and other climate resilient practices

References and information sources

- [FAO CARE Good Practices for CSA \(2019\)](#)
 - Pasture management : Page 43
 - Multi-stakeholder Platforms: Page 35
- Why we need multi-actor platforms: [Essential mindset shifts for collective impact](#)