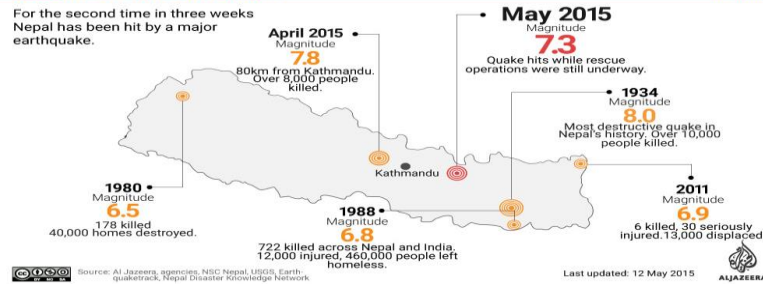


For the second time in three weeks Nepal has been hit by a major earthquake.



# Indigenous Communities in Disaster resilience

*Towards inclusive 'building back better'*

Never Stand Still

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

School of Social Sciences



10 July 2019

**Ayusha Bajracharya**  
**A/Professor Krishna K Shrestha**  
**Professor Anthony Zwi**  
**Professor Eileen Baldry**

# What I will try to cover ...

Nepal Earthquakes

Nepal's disaster recovery process & issues

Issues of indigenous communities

Research framework

Some reflections

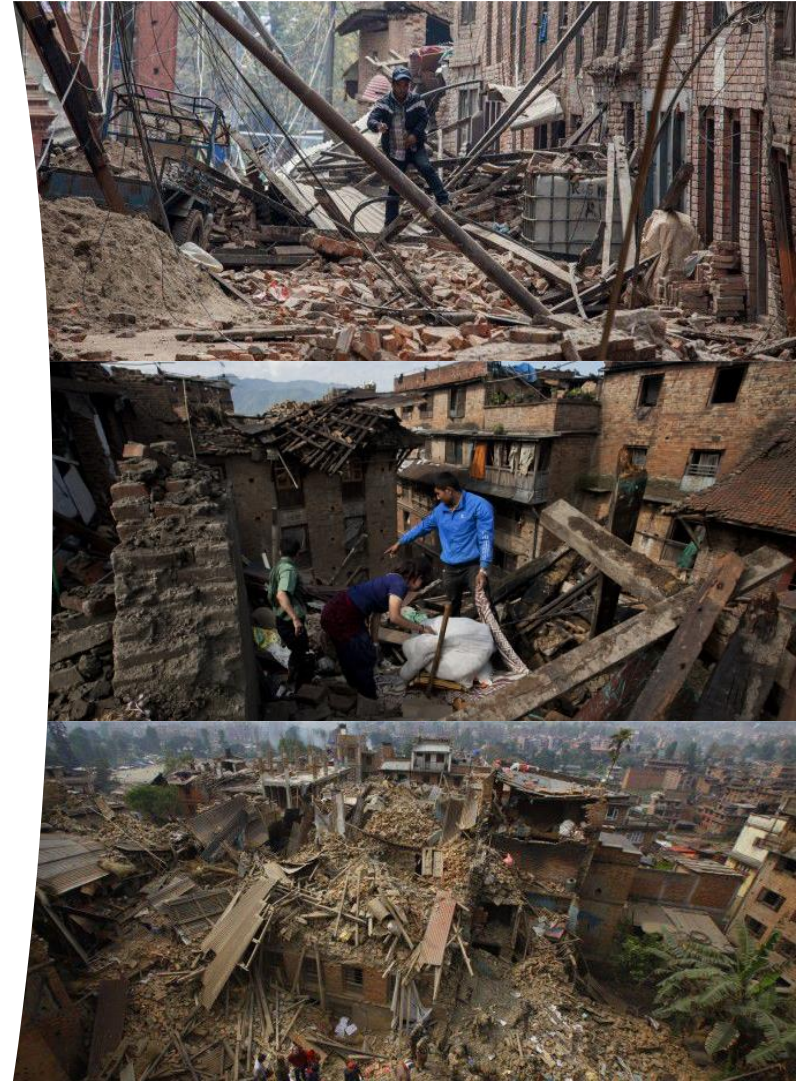


# Nepal Earthquakes 2015

- 7.8 rector and 7.3 rector
- 8857 people died
- 22000 injured
- 600,000 homes destroyed
- 288,000 homes damaged
- Over 10 billion of damages

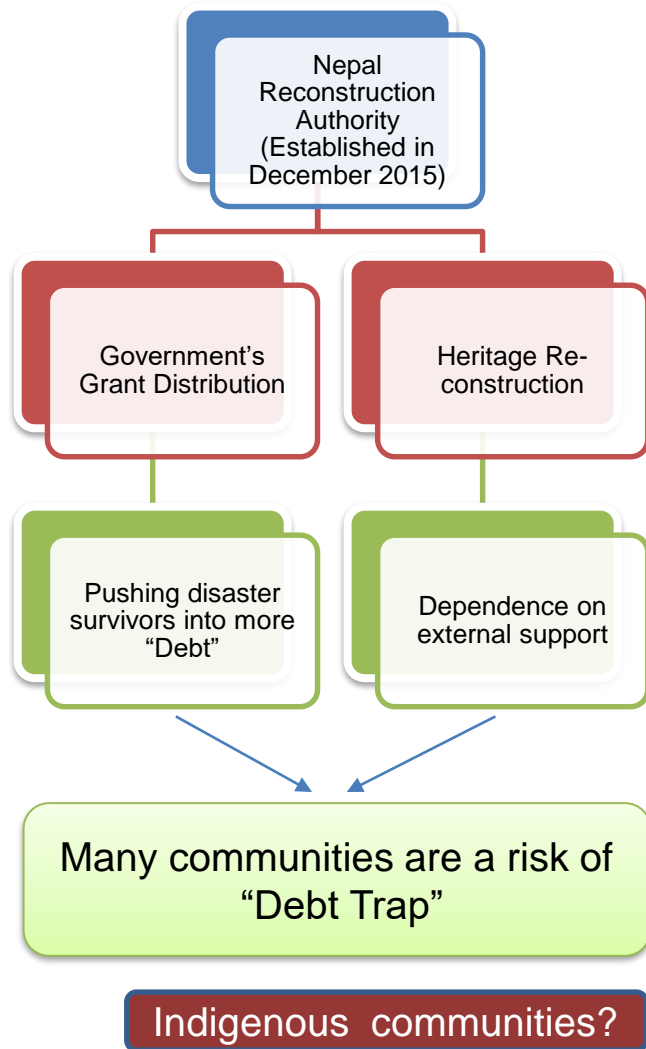
*Not everyone was equally impacted;*

Indigenous people were badly hit, also they were seen to be more resilient – then what can we learn from this experience?





# Nepal's disaster recovery struggle



Agam Chhen temple is being rebuilt with funds from the Japanese government. (Photo by Deepak Adhikari)



Pic: Suyog Prajapati



The Chinese government is paying for the reconstruction of a nine-story former palace in Kathmandu's Durbar

# Marginalisation of indigenous communities in disaster recovery?



Difficulty in  
accessing  
reconstruction  
support



Indigenous  
communities  
marginalised in  
decision making  
process



Ignorance of indigenous knowledge  
and skills in disaster recovery

# Key issues of marginalisation of indigenous communities



Indigenous  
knowledge



Indigenous  
institution



Indigenous  
participation



(Blaikie et. al 2002; Shrestha 1997; Allen 1994; Bista 1976)

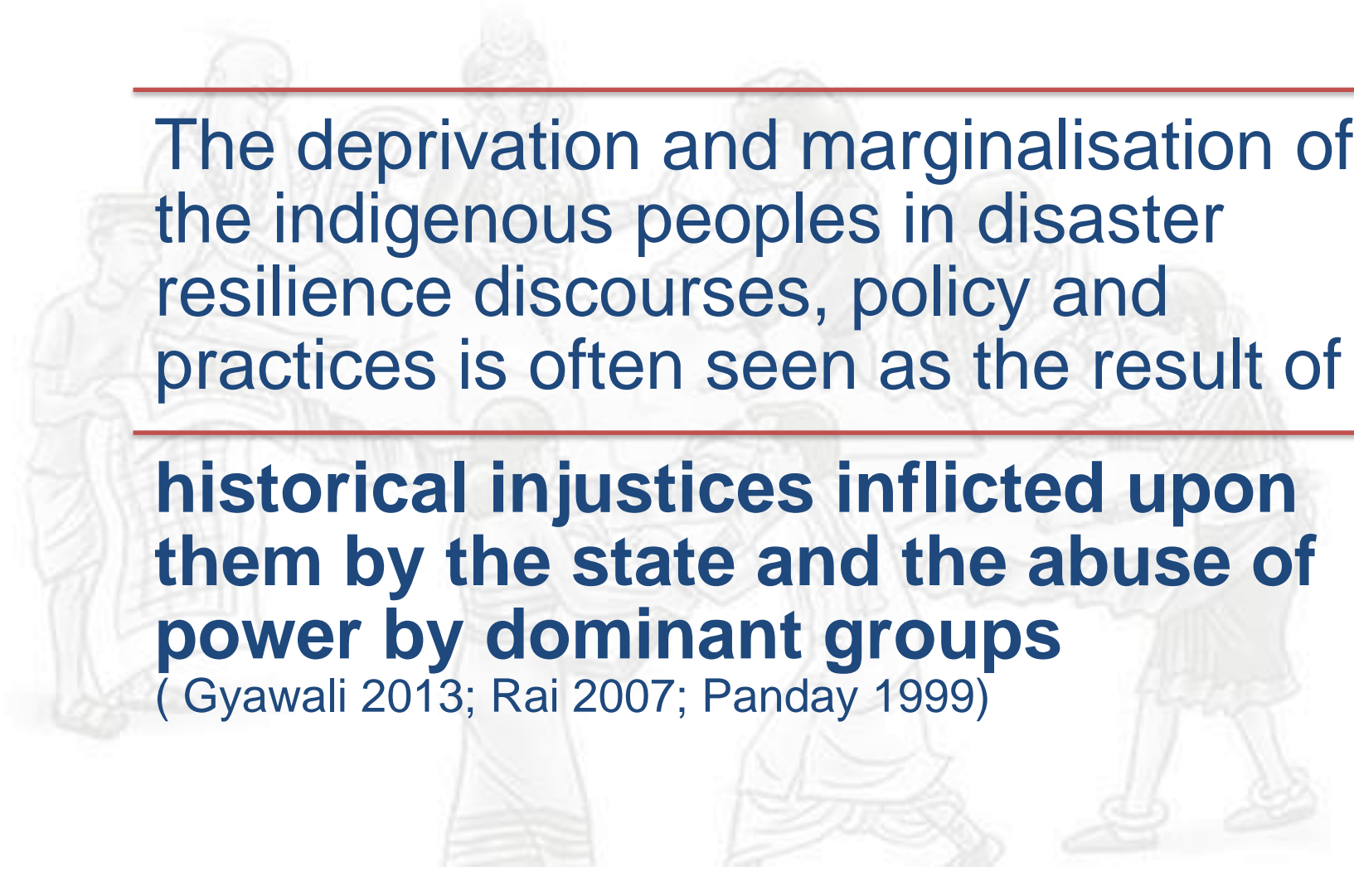


**THEN THE QUESTION IS ...**

**WHY & HOW ARE  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE  
MARGINALISED IN DISASTER  
RECOVERY IN NEPAL?**







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The deprivation and marginalisation of the indigenous peoples in disaster resilience discourses, policy and practices is often seen as the result of

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**historical injustices inflicted upon them by the state and the abuse of power by dominant groups**

( Gyawali 2013; Rai 2007; Panday 1999)



# History matters: *marginalisation of indigenous people in Nepal* (Gurung 2009; Panday 1999; Allen 1994; Bista 1976)

1768-1846

- **Gorkha Kingdom**; indigenous independent states functioning de facto

1846-1951

- **Rana Dynasty**: indigenous struggle and responses largely not attended by state

1962-1990

- **Panchayat System**: Indigenous communities being regulated, knowledge neglected

1990

- **People's Movement I**: indigenous people marginalised through neoliberal state policies

1996-2006

- **Nepal Civil War**: Identity politics and resurgence of indigenous culture but no real progress

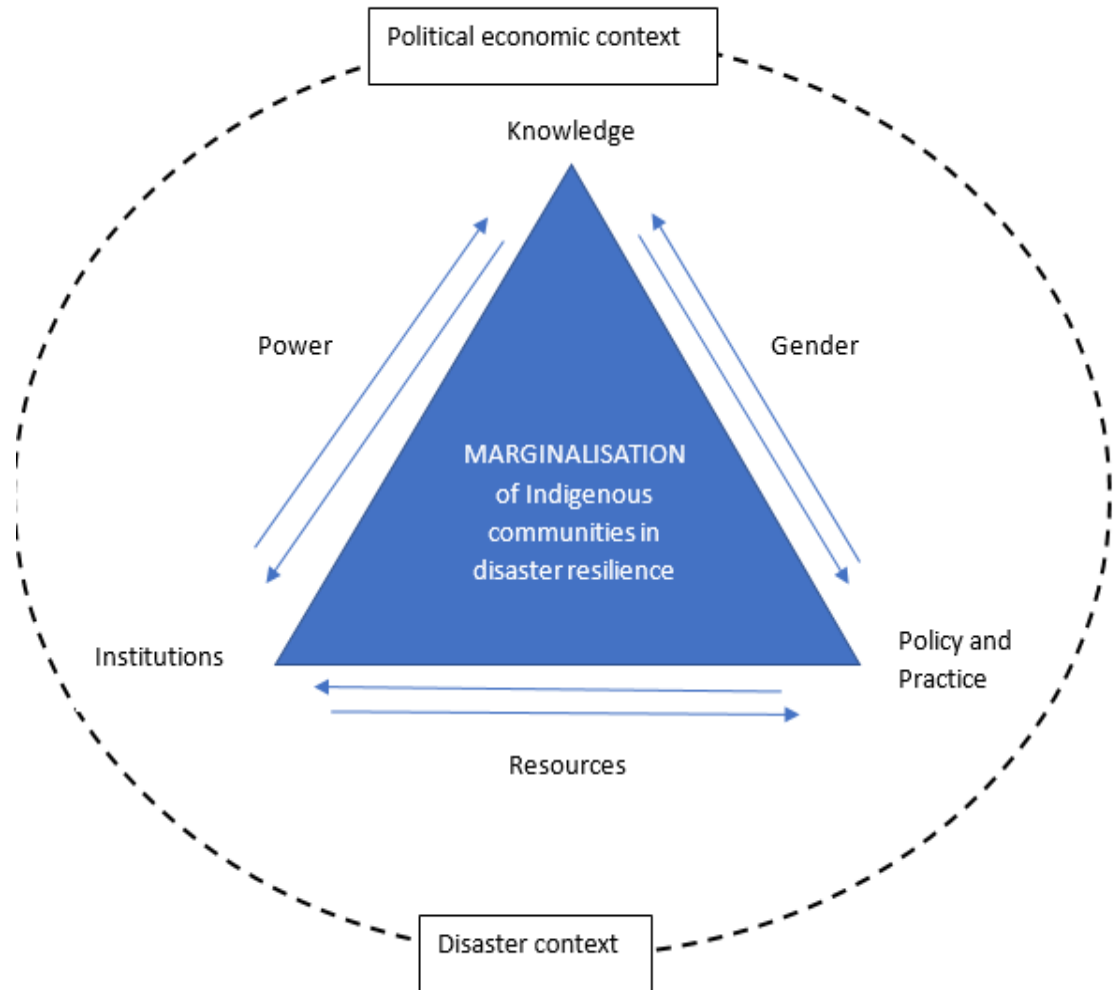
2006

- **Democratic Movement**: Politics of inclusion but indigenous struggle for recognition continues

2015

- **New Constitution of Nepal**: Some recognition in the constitution but practice shows indigenous marginalisation

# Framework for analysing indigenous communities in disaster resilience



# Case study:

## *The Newar Guthi System*

Khokana Guthi

Maitripur  
Mahabihar  
Guthi



Local manifestations in the context of wider changes in Nepal and the Global South



## Research in Nepal's Disaster recovery



- **Critical & engaged research** with local indigenous communities
- **Mixed methods:**
  - Shared Learning Dialogues (SLDs)
  - Photo elucidation
  - Household survey
  - Key informant interview
  - Policy analysis

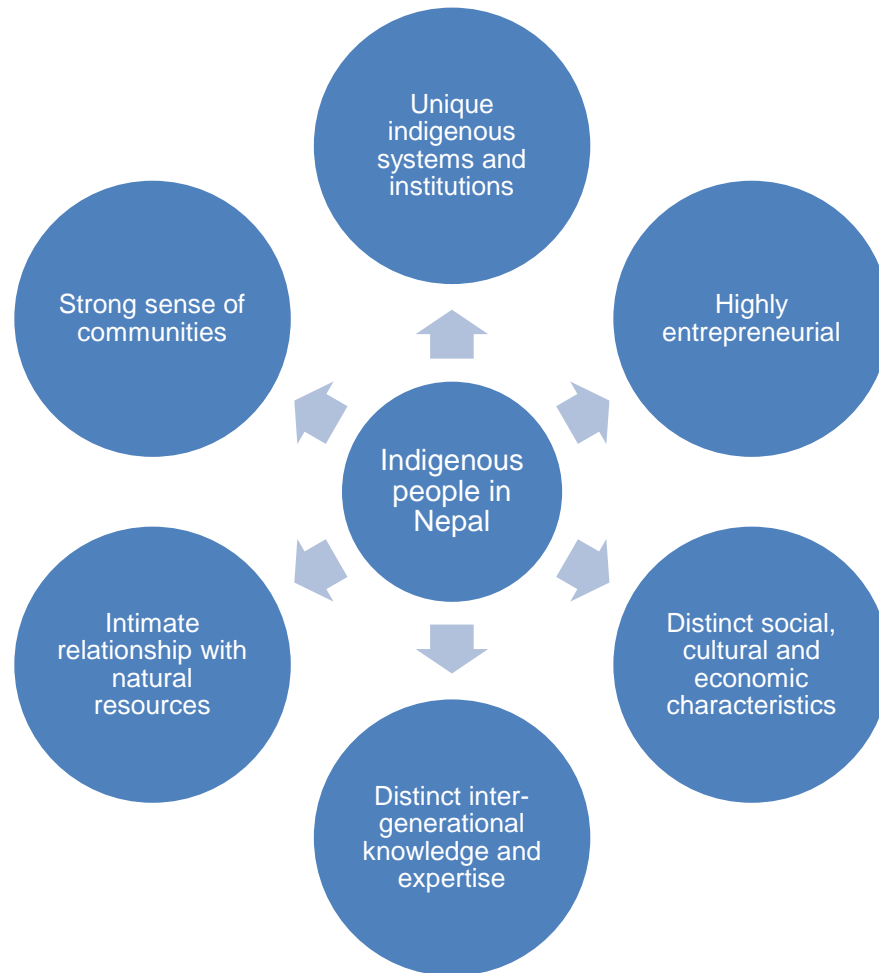
Experienced earthquakes

Two field visits

Discussions with NGOs/ govt officers

# Some reflections ...

## Indigenous communities in Nepal are resilient



# Indigenous women as an “agent of change”



- Indigenous women in Khokana running women co-operatives and supporting recovery
- Women have become more active and expressive
- Indigenous financing system effective in recovery of common Bihar
- Rise of women's leadership and grassroot women's organisation

These are consistent with what ILO (2012) says as “Custodian of traditional knowledge”, and disaster as “Window of opportunities” (Agrawal 1995)



# Some concluding remarks ...

Indigenous knowledge and skill while currently marginalised, need to be seen as one of the essential elements in disaster risk reduction (DRR)

Innovative and unique indigenous institutions can improve disaster resilience in Nepal

Indigenous women are “agents of change” not “victims of disaster”



Thank you