

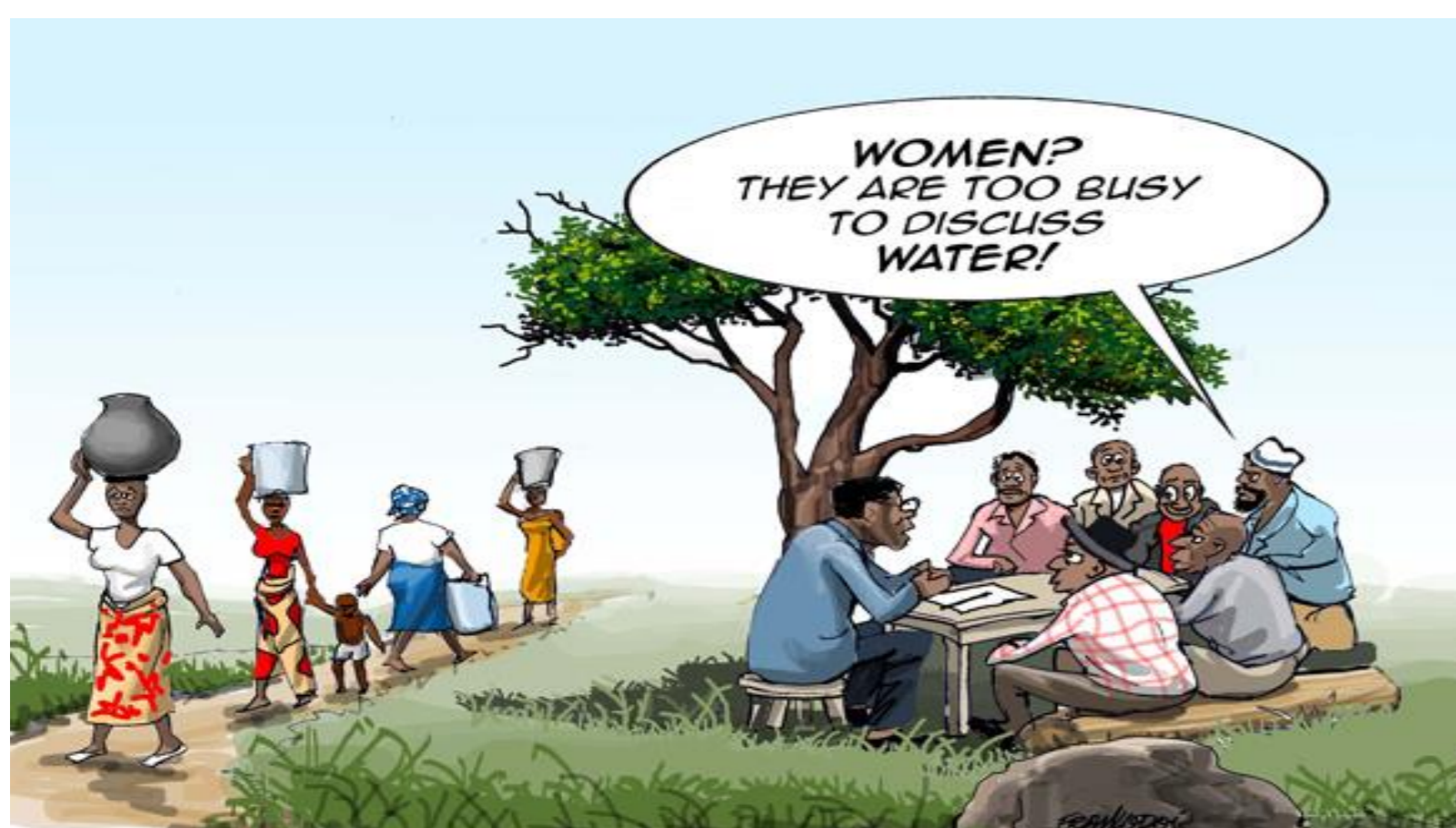


Governing Water Justly

Evaluating the Justice of Participatory Approaches to Urban Water Governance Among Marginalised Populations in India

The Problem

- Urban water governance (UWG) has undergone a shift towards decentralised decision-making across the world, part of which includes an almost ubiquitous emphasis on participation with the aim of ensuring the equitable distribution of water resources and decision-making power.
- Participation is considered an essential element in involving marginalised voices such as those of women and young people, and in designing water policies and interventions that reflect their needs.
- Equity, however, is only one aspect of justice; other elements of justice include the development and nurturing of participants' capabilities for flourishing, fair process, and the accurate recognition of structural barriers to participation.
- There is a pressing need for methods of participation in urban water governance among marginalised populations that seek to realise all these elements of justice to ensure that water development policy and action benefits the most marginalised. However, currently the emphasis in urban water development in places such as Mumbai and Delhi focuses primarily on equity.



My Research

RQ: How can participatory urban water governance arrangements best enable transitions to just, water sensitive cities?

The aim of my research is to inform the development of just participatory UWG policy, structures and processes that are representative of, relevant to, and that empower marginalised populations.

My Approach

My research aim will be achieved by meeting three objectives:

1. Create a conceptual framework for evaluating the justice of participatory structures and processes of UWG in areas of inequality.
2. Reveal the shortcomings and strengths of participatory structures and processes of UWG in relation to ensuring just outcomes through rigorous empirical case studies of such processes in Mumbai and Delhi, India.
3. Derive policy and practical guidelines to ensure that participatory UWG meaningfully involves, empowers, is accountable to, and reflects the lived experience and needs of marginalised populations.

Multiple conceptions of justice: while traditional models of participation in UWG focus on equity, justice also includes consideration of a) recognition of structural barriers and their impacts; b) fair processes and; c) development and nurturing of individual and group capabilities for flourishing.

