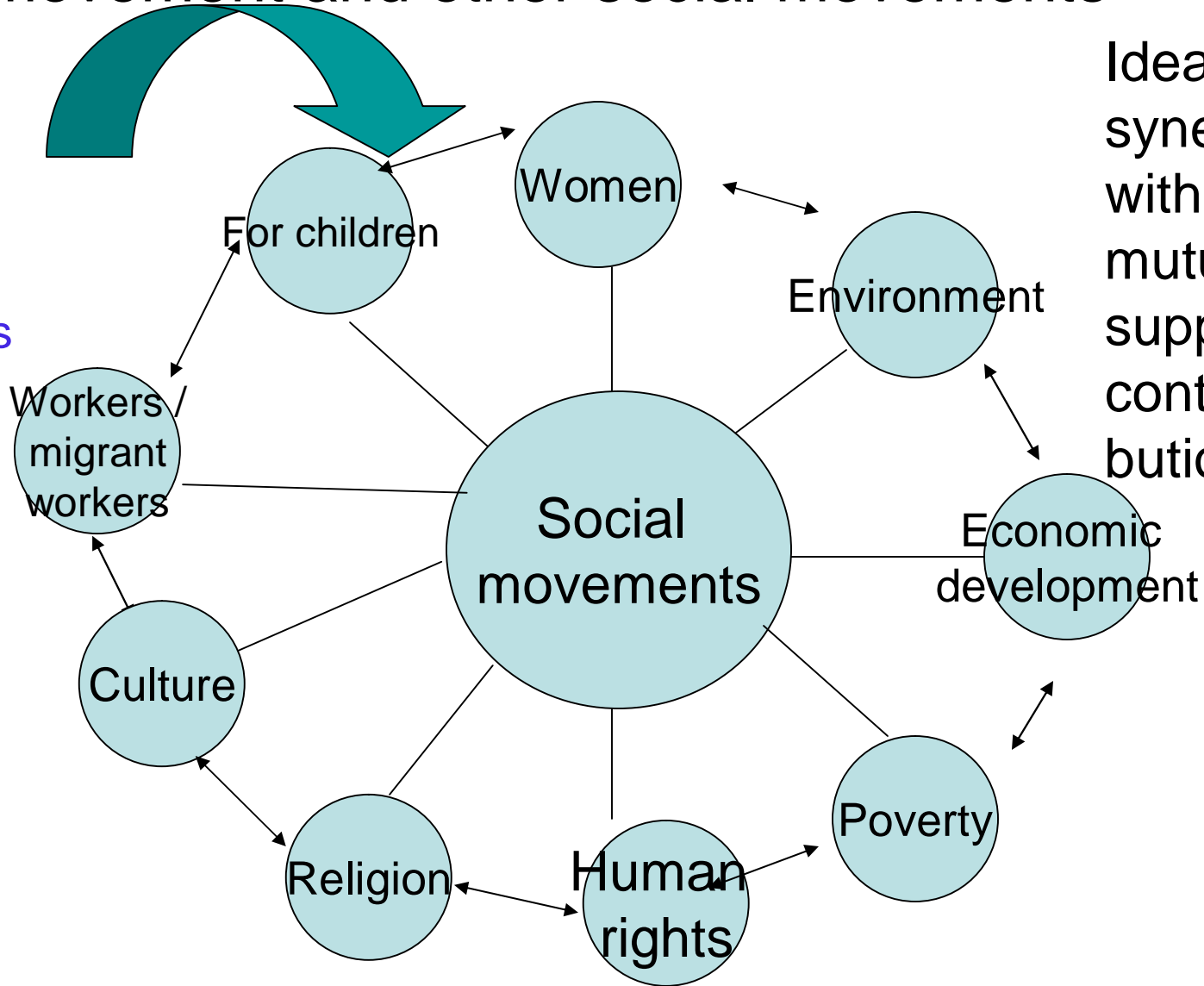


Challenges that feminists face in
alliance-building
in post-Suharto Indonesia

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Ideal view of relations between the feminist movement and other social movements

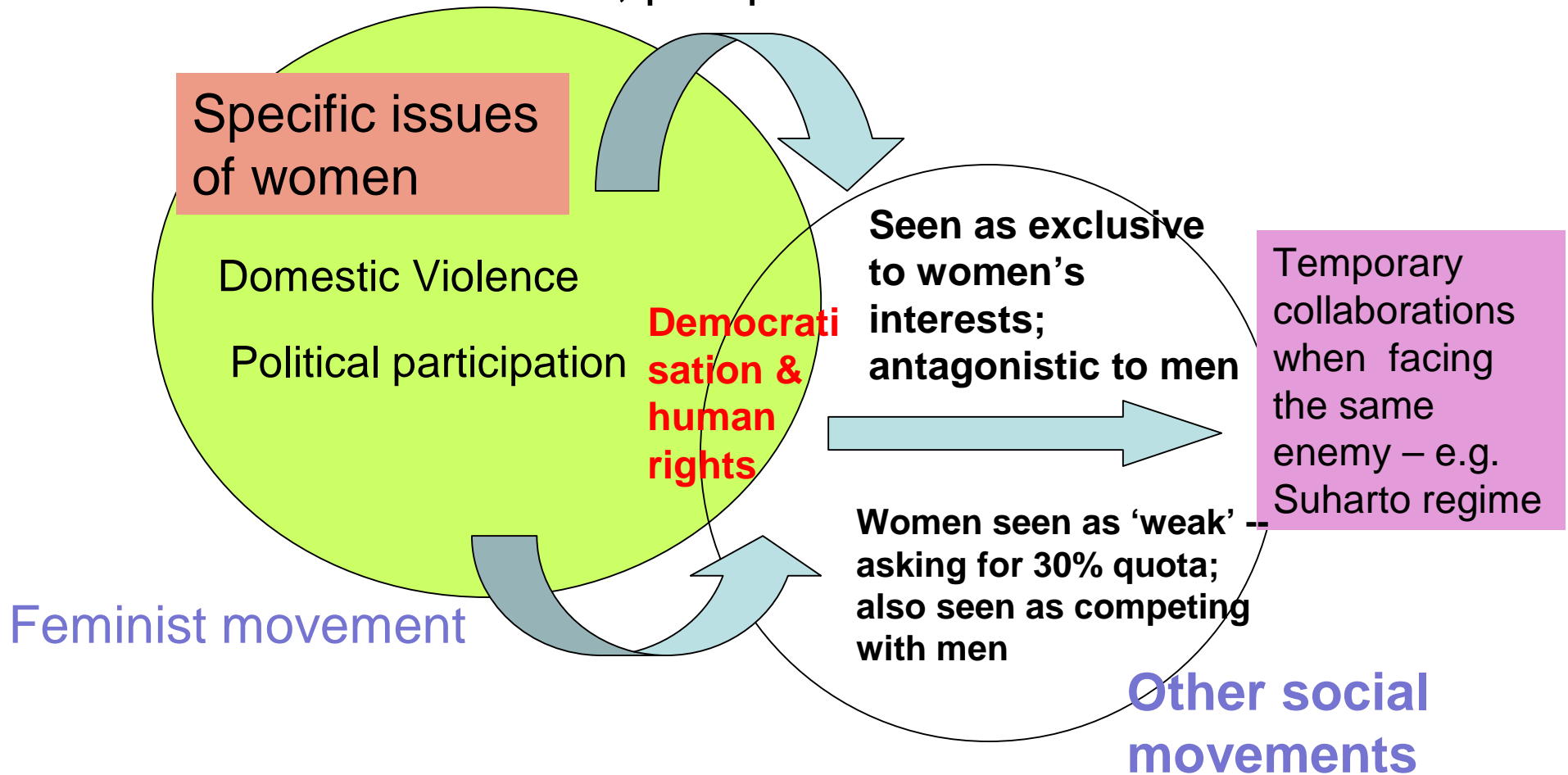
Feminist
ideal:
values
Issues
approaches
part of all
social movts



Ideally:
synergy
with
mutual
support &
contri-
butions

Collaborations of the feminist movement with other social movements

The feminist movement acts on its own and is almost disconnected from other social movements on feminist values, perspectives and issues



Why no longer-term collaborations?

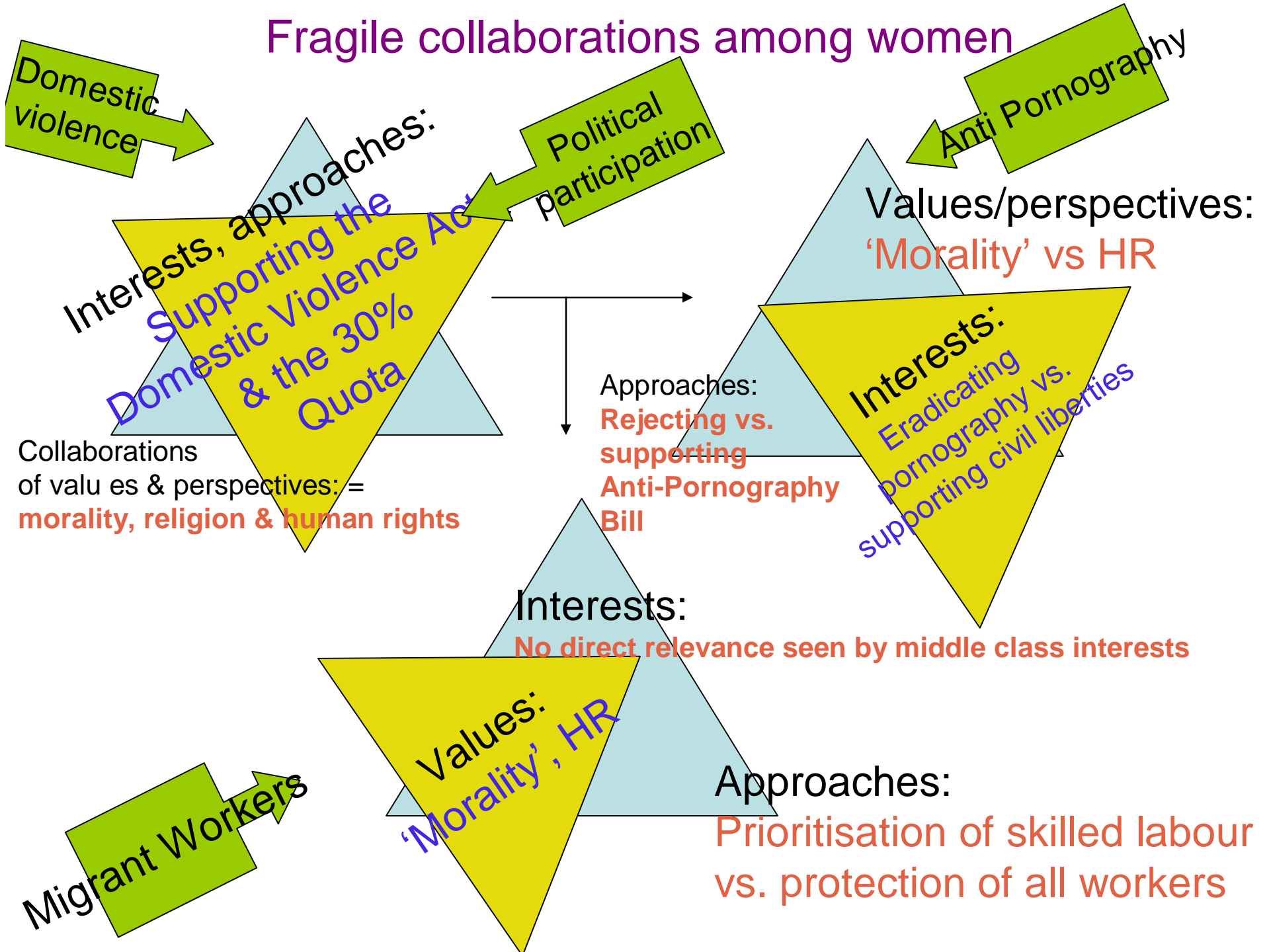
- **History:** social movements in Indonesia (including women's movements) focused on challenging authoritarian regime of the state. When the enemy was overthrown, no other common enemy has emerged. Patriarchy: not seen as common enemy.
- **Assumptions in Indonesian human rights discourse:** human rights in the public arena are more important than rights in the domestic arena. Women's issues are seen as belonging to the domestic arena – hence micro issues, not important. Gender bias in human rights discourse – e.g. rejection of the gender quota in political participation. No understanding of affirmative action. Inconsistency, because affirmative actions are accepted in subsidies for the poor (electricity, gas, education)
- **Feminist movement viewed as too radical:** seen as challenging men from the domestic arena to the public arena

- Although lacking collaborations with other social movements, the feminist movement successfully brought about changes:
 - E.g. issues of domestic violence and political participation (30% quota)
 - Changes in public opinion
 - Changes at the state level: national and local – policies, institutions, budgets, and programmes
- Success due to at least 3 factors:
 - The feminist movement mobilised all women's groups at all levels, classes, religious and social statuses, to support actions
 - Issues became the issues of all women, not just feminists
 - Support from international movements

Challenges faced by the feminist movement

1. Other social movements use women or women's issues, but without prioritising or promoting women's rights and justice. Such groups see women's strength as a tool to be used to support their interests, ignoring women's interests.
2. The strength of the feminist movement is seen as threatening to the status quo so that ways and means are used to re-assert control over women, re-domesticating them in various ways – e.g. through local by-laws claiming to be moral and religious and the new Anti-Pornography Law (passed on 30 Oct 2008).
3. Increasing fragmentation of women's groups based on different alignments with 'morality' and religion
4. Different women's interests based on class, social status and influence from politicised Islam.

Fragile collaborations among women



Recommendations to feminists

- Strengthen feminist analyses of all issues to ensure that women's rights are not seen as peripheral to other social issues
- Strengthen women's dialogues with different interests and other social groups – among women themselves and with other groups
- Deepen analysis of new common enemy of all pro-HR movements: politicised Islam
- Working simultaneously at local and national levels, especially in the context of regional autonomy, with increased bargaining power