

# Formulation of Approach Paper, Land Use Policy and Act of Waling Municipality (Phase 1)

Urban Resilience initiative in Waling municipality, Nepal

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Waling Municipality, located in Syangja district of Gandaki Province, is one of the growing secondary cities of Nepal. Spread over an area of 128.41 sq.km., the municipality has total population of 50,932 and population density of 4 persons per hectare (ppha). Its improved connectivity with two major cities of the country (Pokhara and Lumbini) enhances its strategic linkages with the surrounding hinterlands and other municipalities.

Waling Municipality is prone to multi-hazards and has been affected by cascading effects of such hazards. Over the past decade, many households in Waling have been directly affected by natural hazards such as land erosion, landslides, flood, drought, earthquakes and lightning/storm. These disasters have further been aggravated by anthropogenic factors mainly encroachment of ecologically sensitive areas and climate change impacts. This has put many vulnerable settlements and building stock at risk and disproportionately affected marginalized groups of people.

To address these issues and enhance preparedness and resilience, Waling Municipality has formulated Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Policies and Strategic Action Plan and has also prepared Urban Resilience Roadmap with technical assistance from UNDP. The municipality has also prepared City Comprehensive Plan. These planning documents have necessitated formulation of risk sensitive land use plan which is instrumental for risk informed planning to guide development and urbanization based on scientific risk analysis from multi-hazard lens. UNDP has therefore **provided support to prepare municipal Land Use Policy and Act of Waling Municipality** under its Urban Risk Management and Resilience Strategy. This project has been outlined as first phase that will guide **formulation of an integrated Risk Sensitive Land Use Plan (RSLUP) of Waling in second phase.**

## Activities conducted

Phase 1 has been completed with collaboration from and engagement with the Waling Municipality Office. The work **methodology employed assessment of existing data, consultation with relevant agencies of federal government and field observations to validate the secondary information.** Similarly, **extensive consultations** were undertaken with different sections of Waling Municipality Office to orient them on the need and objectives of risk sensitive land use plan. Workshops were also conducted at the municipal level which included municipal and ward chairs and staff, members of municipal thematic committees and representatives from local line agencies.



Figure 1: Workshops conducted at Waling Municipality

Phase 1 included three main activities:

### i) Preparation of Approach Paper

Approach Paper is a guiding document which includes existing condition of land, population growth, housing requirement, economic development, infrastructure development, among others. It presents land use context of urban and rural areas of the municipality. It also analyses multi-hazard risk in Waling based on secondary data on

municipal level resource, opportunities and risk assessments. It therefore acts as policy brief for formulation of risk sensitive land use plan in Phase 2.

#### ii) Preparation of Land Use Policy and Act

The Land Use Policy includes a vision of 'Optimum use of land and its resources for risk-informed and resilient physical, social, economic and environmental development and to ensure sustainable prosperity'. It has a goal of sustainable management of land through land use mechanism guided by land use plan. It has outlined five objectives which include categorizing municipal land into different land use zones, formulating land use plan, ensuring optimum use of land and its resources based on land use plan, reducing risks imposed by natural and man-made hazards and disasters, and preparing land records specific to land plots and ascertaining land value and taxes based on the designated land use. Based on stakeholders' consultations, **Land Use Policy outlines a total of 16 policies and strategic actions under these five objectives to realize the envisaged vision and goal.**

The Land Use Act provides legal basis to implement Land Use Policy and Land Use Plan in order to regulate land management in the municipality. The **Act has classified land into different zones for both urban and rural contexts which include housing zone, commercial zone, forest zone, industrial zone, rivers, ponds and wetlands zone, and others.** The Land Use Act has underscored use of land including development of infrastructures as per the land use zones designated for urban and rural contexts. It has also prioritized conservation of agricultural land allowing use of land under other categories for agriculture in cases where the land is not used for the designated purpose.

#### iii) Conducting training programs

Formulation of Land Use Policy and Plan is relatively new work scope for local governments for which their technical capacity is yet not adequate. This project supported capacity building of different sections of municipality office, elected ward bodies, representatives from line agencies through a training program. The training program incorporated different components including benefits of land use plan and its implementation tools, land classification and its value based on land use.

## Outputs achieved

This work has achieved following specific outputs:

- Approach Paper for developing risk sensitive land use plan (RSLUP) has been prepared as outlined by federal Land Use Act. This Paper includes information on municipal level resources, opportunities and risk assessments which will guide formulation of RSLUP.
- Local government authorities, other agencies and stakeholders have been sensitized and oriented on risk sensitive land use plan through municipal level consultations and workshops.
- Local Land Use Council and Implementation Committee have been formed which will play a key role in formulation and implementation of risk sensitive land use plan.
- Land Use Policy and Act has been prepared which provide legal basis to regulate land management in the municipality.
- Technical capacity of the existing staff within the municipality and ward offices has been strengthened which will provide an impetus to form Land Use Planning Section.

This work provides much required framework for **Phase 2 which includes preparing Risk Sensitive Land Use Plan (RSLUP) as emphasized by the City Comprehensive Plan and Urban Resilience Roadmap of Waling Municipality.** With Land Use Policy and Act now in place, the municipality can gear towards formulating RSLUP alongside planning regulations and building bye-laws which act as tools for implementing RSLUP.