

City level water forums: Exploring innovations to address 'too much and too little water' in Dharan, fast urbanising city of Nepal

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Introduction

- Dharan is rapidly urbanizing town in eastern Nepal with sharp increase in population attributed to immigrants and annexation of surrounding villages.
- Acute shortage of drinking water fulfilling just half of the total demand (30 MLD)
- Extreme event of torrential rainfall leading to life threatening flash floods specially for residents in floodplain shows how town is facing the problem of too much and too little water.
- City level water forum was devised as an innovative measure aimed at exploring solutions to water related issues through dialogue and deliberation of key stakeholders supported by evidences of environmentally sustainable and more resilient policies and practices.



Source: Robit Rai/ Republica

Findings

- Identification of Adaptation Strategies:** Water forum helped to understand need of the stakeholders and identify the prioritized adaptation options based on local experience and scientific evidences to make a water secure city.

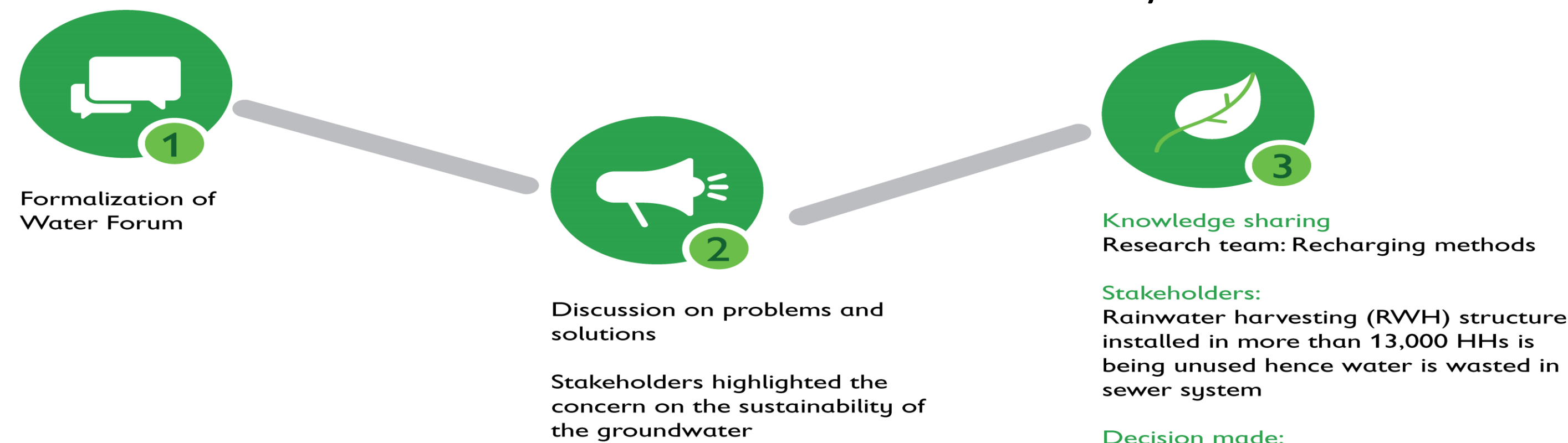


Fig: Process of internalization of the problem, up taking of research and outcome of engagement in the water forums (1,2,&3)

- Engagement promotes Leadership & Ownership:** Process of engagement with stakeholders is continuous, localized, reflective, boost co-learning and co-create knowledge hence provide better decision with full ownership.

- Creates space for the municipality** to work beyond daily administrative activities and provide opportunity to communicate current issues of water to wider people and listen to peoples' voice.



Significance of work on Policy

- Endorsement of Ground Water Recharge Policy:** Dharan Municipal council endorsed during planning meeting in 2017 July.

The gazette says "The practice of ground water recharge through waste water will be encouraged. This practice will be implemented in the construction activities operated by the Municipality." During third Water Forum had made commitment to implement ground water in the municipal policy.

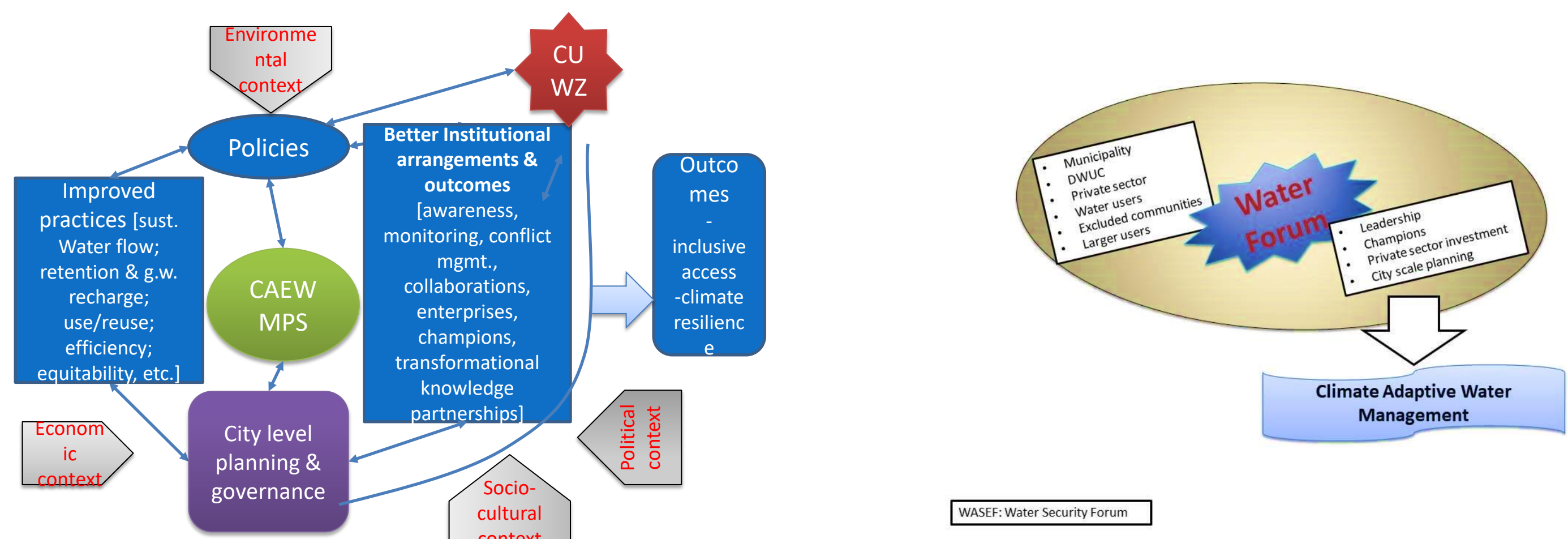
- Implementation of Policy:** Dharan Municipality organized Water Forum inviting designers, Municipality engineers and construction workers to orient about construction and regular monitoring of recharge pit along with demonstration.



Objectives

The objective of water forum:

- Collaboration and Co learning:** to engage water related stakeholders through collaborative and deliberative approaches with objective to blend empirical science and local knowledge and experiences of local stakeholders
- Prioritizing and visioning:** to arrive the consensus through discussion on water related issues and build common vision for the future adaptation strategies.
- Ownership and Sustainability:** To build ownership, expanding and improving the pilots while maintaining sustainability.
- Building change agents:** to develop local water champions



Methodology

Structure of Forum: informal and open; Dharan Water Forum locally called as "Dharan Pani Chautari"

Participants: Multi-stakeholder- Municipal officials, local citizen representatives and local academic institutions, government officials, journalists

Modality of Meeting :

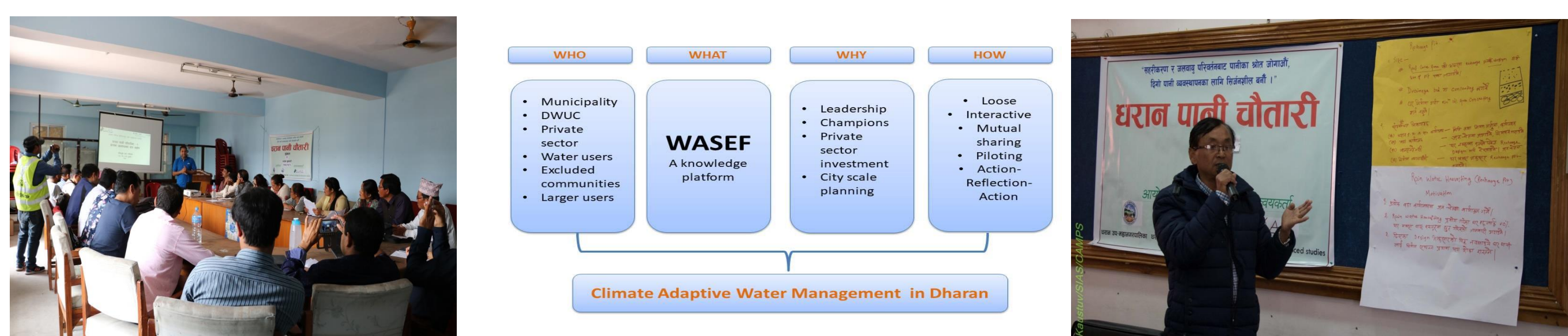
- Knowledge and practice sharing by experts and locals
- Facilitated discussion among participants
- Consensus building

Duration and Frequency

- organizes in regular basis
- Each forum last for 2 hours discussion

Agenda Setting

Each water forum suggests agenda for upcoming forum



Partners



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