

THE SILENT REVOLUTION OF PUBLIC SPACES IN AFGHANISTAN

The Silent Revolution of Public Spaces in Afghanistan

Clean and Green Cities (CGC) Programme

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يک او زرغون ښار
شهر پاک و سبز
CLEAN & GREEN CITY



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FOREWORDS



Maimunah Mohd Sharif

Under-Secretary-General and UN-Habitat Executive Director

This book is a visual record of UN-Habitat's partnership with the Afghan people in cities, towns and villages. A magnificent photographic portrayal, it captures the many facets of and direct impact of UN-Habitat work with the institutions and Government of Afghanistan. It is an exceptional publication that shows us the immense benefits of sustainable urban interventions in Afghan cities and the commitment of the Government in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

This unique publication shows a series of human stories and results of our joint interventions through wonderful and rare photographs. It portrays a sense of hope and positiveness arising from the challenging and complex political situation marked by the longstanding conflict.

UN-Habitat's country programme in Afghanistan is globally significant. Headquartered in Kabul, and present in twelve Afghan cities, it is a major human settlements programme in a conflict zone. It is also UN-Habitat's biggest global mission. With more than 1,500 staff, our work covers the development and humanitarian nexus with an important interconnection with peace and stability. Afghan cities have become hubs of peace and prosperity, representing more than 50 per cent of the national GDP.

I wish to express my gratitude and recognition to the UN-Habitat staff, national and international, serving in a difficult duty station. This book captures the on-going commitment and recognition of their work with the institutions and people of Afghanistan. I would like to thank the Ministry of Urban Development and Land (MUDL), the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities (DMM) and the Mayors of the cities in Afghanistan for their strategic partnership with UN-Habitat. We have been working together for more than two decades on a journey towards a better urban future and peace. I also wish to thank the European Union and USAID for funding the Clean and Green Cities Programme (CGC). Enjoy the book!

Abdul Baqi Popal

Deputy Minister of Municipalities (DMM)

Afghanistan's future is urban. With a rapid growing urban population, our cities play a key role in job creation, provision of services and peace. The rapid urbanization offers huge opportunities for the current and future generations. Our main objective is to provide our urban residents with a chance to live with prosperity, peace, basic services as well as promoting job creation.

The Clean and Green Cities (CGC) Programme has been a very successful initiative in achieving our vision, improving basic urban services and providing jobs for our citizens. But above all, it has helped us to work with our people, especially the most vulnerable ones, building confidence between them and the municipalities.

Present in twelve Afghan cities, the Clean and Green Cities (CGC) has been successful in strengthening our institutional capacity and good governance, through the institutionalization of Community Development Councils (CDCs), better infrastructure, services and public spaces. In total, 49 parks have been developed or upgraded throughout of Afghanistan, among other key achievements.

This programme has become an integral part of our citizens' lives and our journey towards inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable Afghan cities, as enshrined in Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda. Clean and Green City Programme was developed in response to the National Unity Government's (NUG) 'Jobs for Peace' initiative. It has contributed to our national vision as established in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) and the Urban National Priority Programme.

I wish to congratulate the Afghan women and men who made our cities cleaner and greener thanks to their determination and actions. They honored us with their strong commitment and hard work. I would also like to thank UN-Habitat, a strategic partner of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, for the technical support and expertise in the implementation of this programme and for the publication of this enriching photobook.

We are looking forward to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the UN roadmap to achieve sustainable development. Clean and Green Cities is one of the systematic steps towards its efficient implementation despite the complex security situation. Enjoy your reading and discover our beautiful cities!



Ahmad Zaki Sarferaz

Mayor of Kabul



I am delighted to witness the publication of this photobook about one of the most impactful programmes in the capital city of Afghanistan. Clean and Green Cities (CGC) has been indeed more than a development project. It is an initiative that has enhanced the culture of citizenship among our citizens. It is a programme that has contributed to improve our social cohesion through urban development and job creation.

My Municipality, and especially the Directorate of Sanitation, achieved important milestones in Kabul thanks to the strategic interventions of this programme. Since its launch, we have created and upgraded a total of 21 parks in the city which are today very popular among our citizens. We have beautified our hills, streets and avenues with peaceful and environmentally friendly paintings and mural arts. We have created more than 7,000 jobs for our vulnerable people, especially women. We have improved their livelihoods as well as their culture of citizenship.

Our citizens today are very aware of the importance of solid waste management for their health and for the environment. Kabul Municipality has launched a series of communications campaigns in the framework of this programme that helped us to work with our people to understand our vision for a clean and green city. As a result, more than 3,000 citizens joined us to collect garbage from all corners of the city on Nowruz, the new Afghan year.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the workers, engineers, technical experts and UN-Habitat staff for their commitment to achieve one of our major objectives enshrined in the Kabul Urban Development Framework (KUDF). Your work has proved to be very valuable in improving our city infrastructure and people's day to day lives.

Acknowledgements

This book is a result of the personal and professional commitment of UN-Habitat staff working with and for the Afghan people. We cordially thank them for their time, advice and encouragement in a difficult duty station.

We would like to congratulate the lead role played by Koussay Boulaich, Head of Communications of UN-Habitat Afghanistan, for writing this book and for his commitment and passion serving UN-Habitat and the Afghan people. He travelled across Afghanistan visiting projects, meeting with government officials and communities in a challenging security environment.

We are grateful for the creativity and dedication of Suhail Mayel and Ahsan Saadat, from the Communications Unit, for capturing these beautiful pictures and the design of this book. They have played a key role in the design of municipal campaigns in streets, mural arts and schools engaging with people and authorities.

We appreciate the work of the Clean and Green Cities Programme Managers: Parul Agarwala, Rajakumar Gollamandala, Haji Mohammad Hamidi and Hamid Samim. They have made a remarkable job in the implementation of the programme. We also want to thank the work of the national provincial managers, team leaders, social organizers and engineering teams for their coordination work with government partners and quality implementation. We thank Antony Lamba and Jack Finegan for reviewing the text.

Thanks to Srinivasa Popuri, Tim Mc Nair, Fernando Da Cruz for leading the Afghanistan Office and for their contributions in the successful implementation of Clean and Green Cities (CGC).

Special thanks to the people and institutions of Afghanistan. This initiative was launched thanks to His Excellency President Ashraf Ghani's Jobs for Peace Initiative. We thank the Ministry of Urban Development and Land (MUDL), the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities (DMM), Kabul Municipality and the municipalities of Herat, Kandahar, Mazar-e-Sharif, Jalalabad, Bamyan, Charikar, Gardez, Lashkar Gah, Farah, Kunduz and Meherlam. Thank you to all Mayors and staff for implementing this project. We were fortunate for the special commitment of Ahmed Behzad Ghyasi, Director of the Sanitation Department of Kabul Municipality and Scott Guggenheim, former advisor to the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

This project was made possible thanks to the financial support of the European Union and USAID.

The Silent Revolution of Public Spaces in Afghanistan is dedicated to the UN-Habitat Afghanistan staff members who lost their lives over the past 20 years in the performance of their professional duties, and who never lived to see peace return to their native land.

Introduction

The Silent Revolution of Public Spaces in Afghanistan is the untold story of hope and peace in urban areas. The provision of public spaces in cities across Afghanistan is shaping the lives of the citizens, especially women and the poor, and the relationship with their cities. It is a social and cultural revolution that has empowered women, created jobs for the poor and improved the living standards of the citizens. It is a silent and peaceful revolution that has transformed the people and the city, building trust and confidence in public institutions.

This photobook serves to portray the Afghan government's response to the immediate urban challenges through impactful photos and stories. The book presents a series of human stories narrating the impact of public spaces in the lives of ordinary citizens, internally displaced persons by the conflict, women, government officials, workers, community members and kids. It captures an unknown sense of positiveness and transformation of public spaces in remote urban areas difficult to reach.

The Silent Revolution of Public Spaces in Afghanistan is an empirical demonstration of the strategic relevance of urbanization as an endogenous source of prosperity, peace and job creation. It is an example of the important interconnection between urbanization, development, peace and stability in the context of war and conflict.

The New Urban Agenda, the UN roadmap for sustainable urbanization adopted at the Habitat III conference in 2016, consolidated the strategic relevance of public spaces for social interaction, inclusion, human health and well-being and peace. The Clean and Green Cities programme, technically assisted by UN-Habitat in twelve Afghan cities, serves as an example of the effective implementation of these principles.

Clean and Green Cities' Locations.



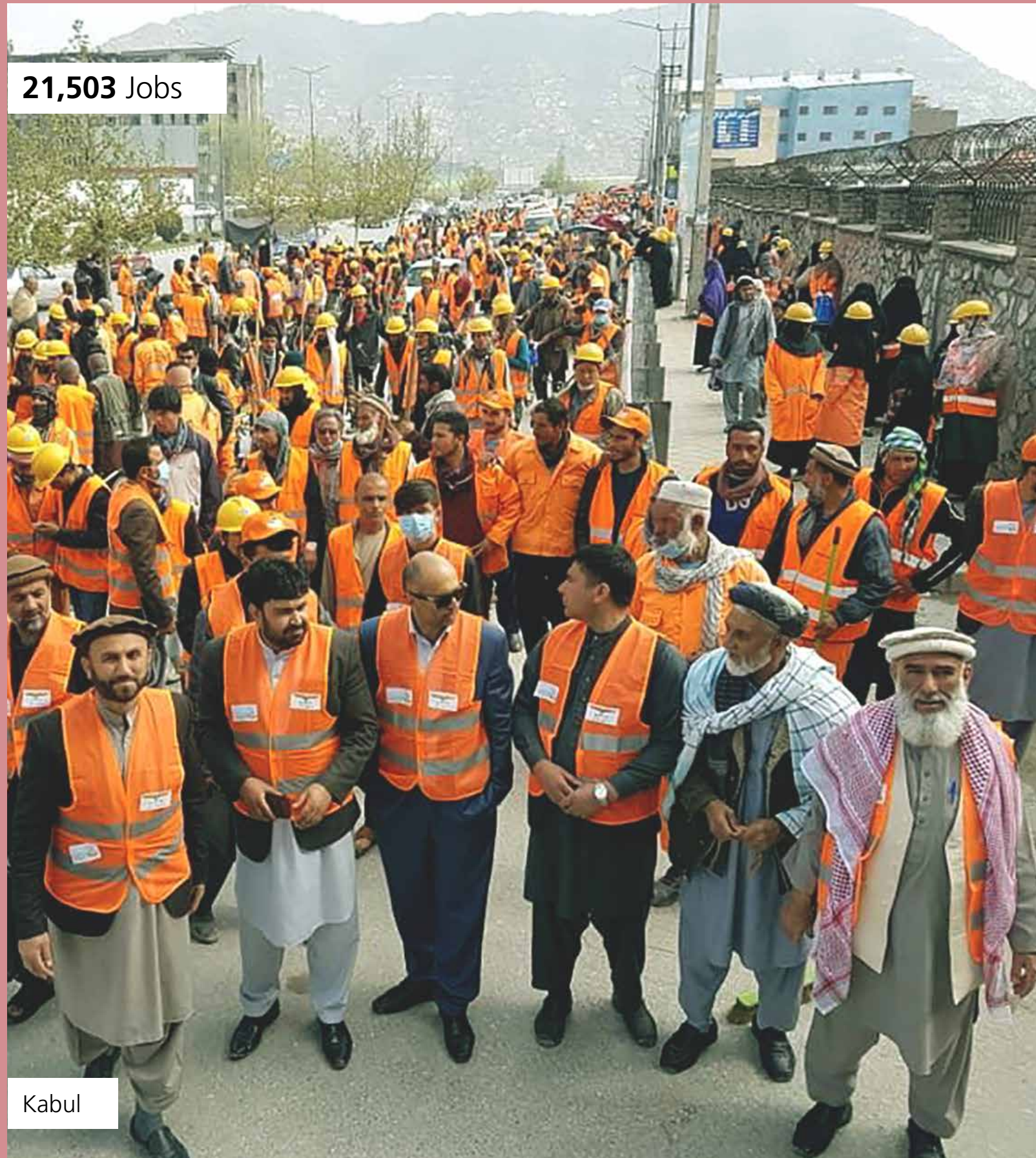
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Chapter 1

JOB **FOR** **PEACE**

21,503 Jobs



Kabul

Jobs for Peace

Afghanistan's urbanization presents an immense opportunity for socio-economic growth, improved stability and decent living standards for its population. Its urban areas are already contributing to 50 per cent of the national GDP, despite only one quarter of its population residing in urban areas. However, living conditions in urban areas are difficult as the majority of urban Afghans live in informal housing with poor access to basic services. 80 per cent of the urban population have no formal land documents and live under the constant threat of eviction. Residents of urban informal settlements are reluctant to improve their homes or start a business due to their precarious living situation. The longstanding conflict has exacerbated the informal nature of Afghan cities, as displaced citizens escape from conflict and try to find peace, shelter and economic opportunities in urban areas.

The Clean and Green Cities Programme (CGC) was developed to improve the lives of the urban poor – with a special focus on women – by providing job opportunities and stability through paid work to improve public spaces. The programme has created livelihood opportunities for more than 20,000 workers employed over the past two years, creating 2.6 million job days and benefiting millions of families. Beneficiaries of the project's livelihood component have contributed towards making cities cleaner and greener, from solid waste collection, construction of parks, cleaning of canals and roadside ditches, to tree planting and improvement of public spaces. Above all, the programme has empowered Afghan women. This programme has created opportunities for more than 2,500 women most of whom had never worked outside their homes.

The Silent Revolution, through interventions in public spaces, has brought Afghan people closer to their cities and institutions while creating jobs for peace

2,793 Female Jobs Created



Kabul, District 9



Bar Bibi, 45 years old. City Cleaner.
Jalalabad

“This is the first time that I work outside my home. I am very grateful to UN-Habitat for providing me with this job opportunity”

Mrs. Said Bar Bibi is one of 100 women supported by CGC in Jalalabad in the east of Afghanistan, where women are not expected to work outside their homes. This is her first paid job ever. Poverty, war and conflict have deprived her of basic education, job and security. Today she feels very proud of her work which contributes to her socio-economic livelihood and to the beautification of her city.

Gul Makai, 25 years old. Awareness Mobilizer.
Mazar-e-Sharif

“I am a widow. My husband died in a suicide attack. I was jobless and without any source of income. This programme helped me to feed my 7 years old daughter, my mother and brother”

Mrs. Gul Makai is one of the many female civilian victims of the longstanding conflict in Afghanistan. Her husband was killed by a suicide attack in the central market of Mazar-e-Sharif four years ago. He was the only casualty in that attack. After the tragic event, she moved to her parents' house with her daughter, where her father became her main source of support until his death. Gul Makai was left with a daughter, mother and little brother to take care of. She joined the Clean and Cities Programme (CGC) as an awareness mobilizer and worked for one year, educating citizens on how they can take better care of the city. She explains with pride how this programme made it possible to take care of her entire family, and how it has helped to empower her as a woman.





Qassem: Construction Worker.
Jalalabad

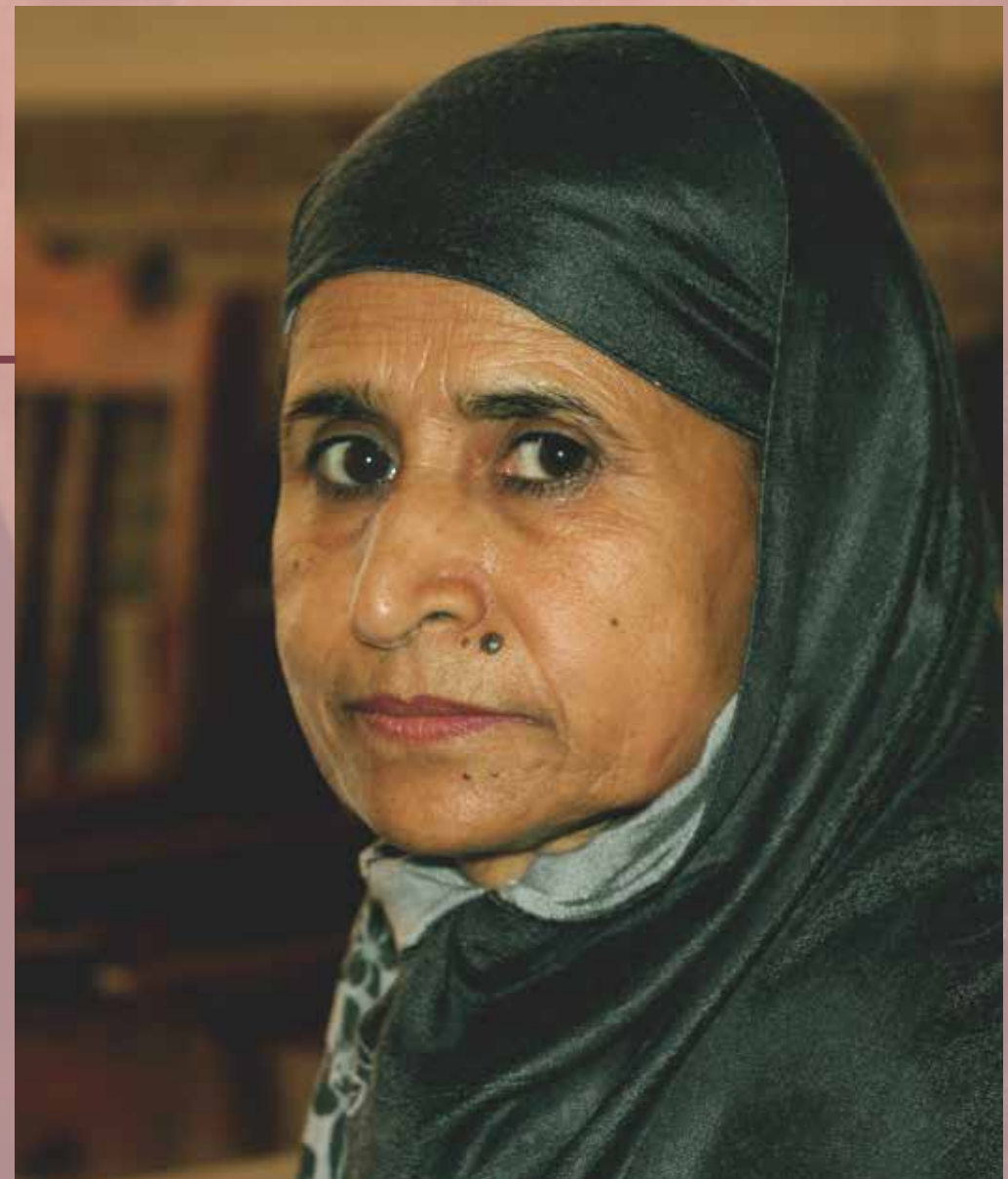
“I left my village due to the presence of a terrorist group. I arrived in the city with no job. Now I have a halal job and I can support my family”

Mr. Qassem has been forced from his village of Kot due to the presence and threats of ISIS, and now lives in Jalalabad where he has not been able to find work. In Kot, Mr Kassem worked in poppy production as a farmer. He joined the Clean and Green Cities (CGC) Programme and worked in the construction of the first female park in Jalalabad. His new “halal” job has helped him to develop his construction skills and to support his family.

Kamela Samimi, Retired Airforce Radio Operator. Awareness Mobilizer.
Mazar-e-Sharif

“I enjoyed a lot working as an awareness mobilizer. It helped me to develop my communications skills, to meet with people and influence them about the important of paying their city taxes”

Mrs. Kamela is a retired female Captain of the Afghanistan Airforce. She left the capital city of Kabul and moved to Mazar-e-Sharif more than twenty years ago due to the Taliban-Mujahedeen war in the 1990s. She retired from the Airforce six years ago. She joined the Clean and Green City (CGC) Programme and worked as an awareness mobilizer.





Golazar, Girl.
Herat

"I am internally displaced girl who lives in a tent with my family close to this municipal park. I regularly visit the park with other displaced girls looking for tree barks for cooking and heating but also to spend time playing and walking around"

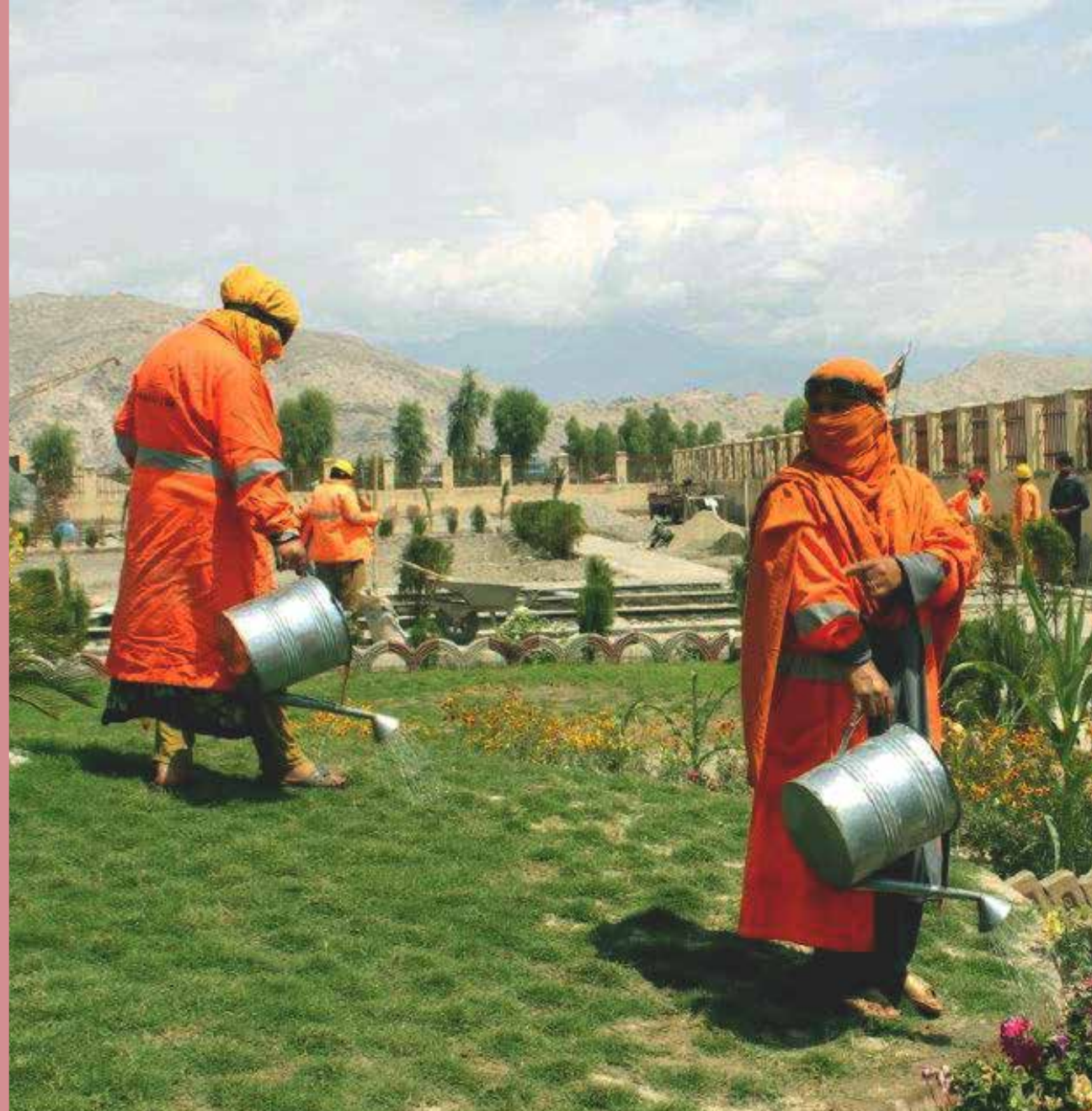
Afghanistan faces a huge humanitarian challenge due to war and drought related displacements. Thousands of families have abandoned their homes. The situation is critical for refugee returnees and displaced persons, many of whom are living in open spaces and in urban informal settlements facing eviction and violence. In Herat city, thousands of internally displaced have pitched their tents close to the newly inaugurated park.

Qandi Gul, 50 years old. City Cleaner.
Kabul

“I spent this monthly salary on books, notebooks and pens for my children. Five of them are in school and I want them to be educated and have a better life than me”.

Mrs. Qandi Gul, is a 50 year old widow and mother of six children. Her husband died in the civil war. Prior to this job, she worked for a short time in carpet weaving projects and cleaning vegetables for shopkeepers. She registered for CGC after hearing about it from the Wakeel-i Gozar (community leader). This job is convenient for her as it is close to her house, and she can easily get home to take care of her children. Like many of the other women and men supported by Clean and Green Cities (CGC), she was engaged in cleaning, sweeping, and collecting garbage across the city.



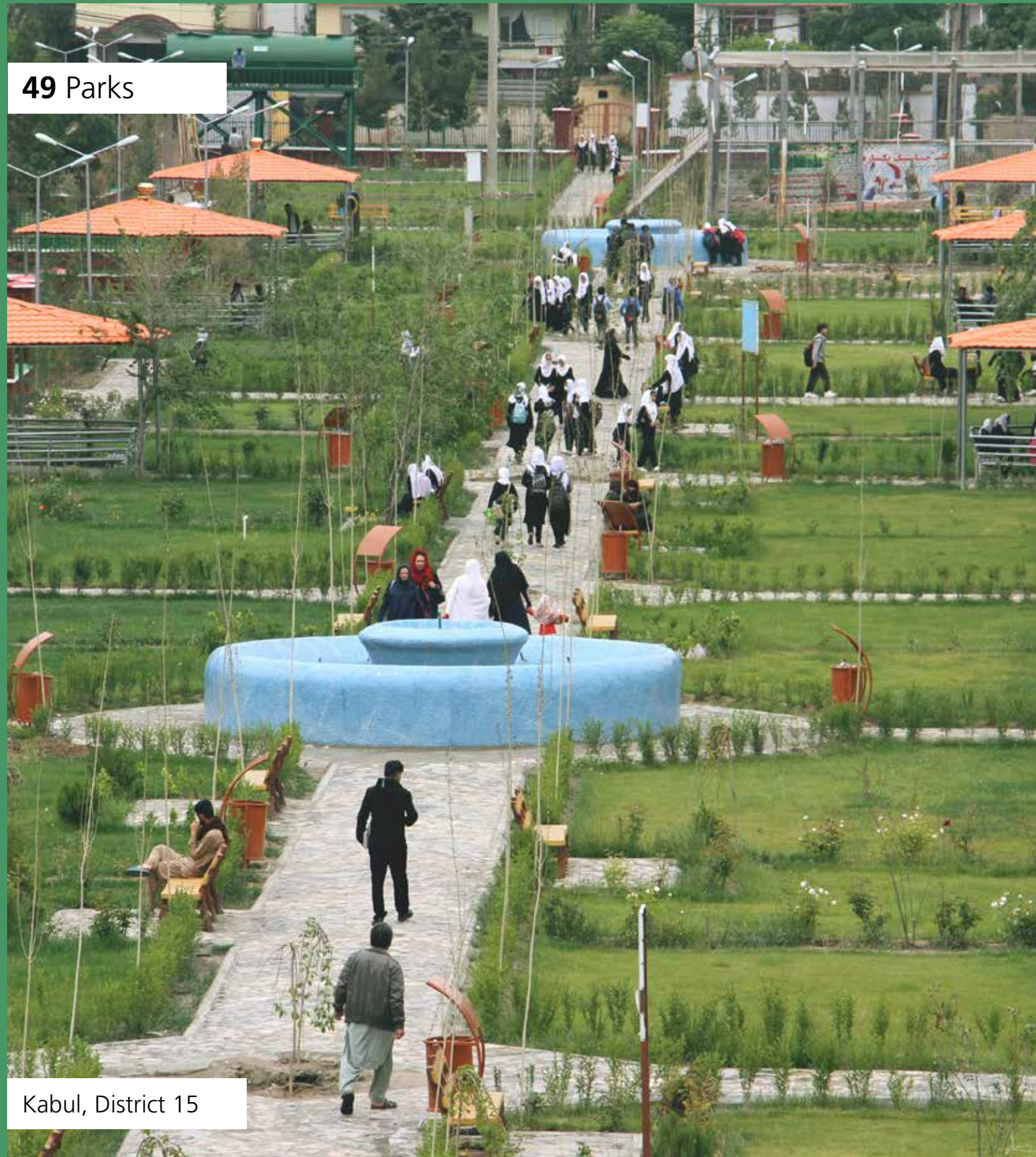


CGC Female workers

Chapter 2

PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACE

49 Parks



Kabul, District 15

Parks and Public Space

The provision of high-quality public spaces is essential for well-planned urbanization. UN-Habitat has worked very closely with twelve municipalities to construct new parks and improve existing ones. Under the Clean and Green City (CGC) programme, 49 parks and green areas were developed or upgraded.

The creation of these new public spaces is changing the lives of citizens and their relationship with their city. Public spaces are drivers for inclusion, social cohesion and gender equality. They shape the identity of an area and foster a sense of belonging and pride. They are places for all: women, men, kids, families, neighbors, elders, students, businessmen.

For many women and children, these parks offer new possibilities and opportunities. In cities where there were previously almost no green spaces, they now have access to public areas that allow them to participate in public life. The provision of high-quality public spaces is an important piece of the ongoing social and cultural revolution in Afghan cities. This chapter narrates first hand experiences of the beneficiaries of these interventions.

Women's Park

Kabul, District 12





Armaghan, 7 years old. City resident
Bamyan

“I come to play at the park every day after school”

The city of Bamyan has recently inaugurated two green public and recreational areas for its residents as part of the CGC Programme. The provision of these new public green spaces is changing the nature of Afghanistan’s rapid and unplanned urbanization. The two new parks, Welayat Park and Children’s Park have added a new, inclusive dimension to the city’s life and are usually very busy in the evenings. Both recreational areas are equipped with a playground for children. In the words of the Acting Mayor of Bamyan, Mr. Hadi Akbari, the strategic partnership with UN-Habitat *“improved basic services and increased trust between the Municipality and citizens”*. Thanks to these interventions, *“citizens are now keen to pay their property fee, safayi, increasing the contribution tenfold, reaching 3 million Afs per year”* Mr Akbari said.

Abdul Shukor, Watchman of the Park
Shayi Dayi Park, Herat

“We are very proud of this park. It was inaugurated by the Municipality a few months ago. More than 12,000 internally displaced people are now living across the park. They use the park and their kids enjoy it, but they also cut tree barks for their heating”

Shayi Dayi Park is one of the new public green spaces in the historical city of Herat, in the Western part of Afghanistan. The upgrading of this park created jobs for more than 2,000 residents (1,453 male and 485 female), who worked for ten months. The project was completed in April 2018 and handed over to the Municipality. In the second half of 2018, some regions of Afghanistan suffered a severe drought which caused displacement for thousands. Many of the displaced moved to from Baghdis Herat and pitched tents near the new park. Mr. Shukor explained how displaced citizens visited the park regularly and enjoy the facilities but also take away tree barks for heating due to low temperatures during winter.





Before



After

From a Dumping Site to a Green Public Space. Timor Shahi Park, Kandahar

The Municipality of Kandahar has recently inaugurated an environmentally friendly public space in an informal neighborhood in District IV: Timor Shahi Park. Located in a previous dumping site area, the new park has become a favourite recreational space for Kandaharis. Children, families and women visit the park regularly, especially at night time during the hot Kandahari summer which reaches over 40 degrees Celsius.

This park is an example for other parks in the country due to its solar lighting and watering system. The irrigation and lighting are powered by a modern solar panel system, demonstrating the use of renewable energy systems consistent with the recommendations of the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda.



Sayed Jamal Afghan Park, Community Elder.
Mazar-e-Sharif

“We have witnessed how this park has changed the lives of our people and neighborhood, from a dumping site to a green area. We stop by this park on our way to the mosque for our prayers several times a day”.

Community leaders of District 9 of Mazar-e-Sharif explain with pride how the transformation of this dumping site into a park has changed their lives. An important aspect is that these public spaces are built by members of the community, especially the poor and vulnerable. This factor confers an important sense of ownership, belonging and trust with the municipal institutions. The Sayed Jamal Afghan Park has a surface area of 3,580 m², a playground, garbage bins, seating facilities, a coffeeshop and a bathroom.

First Jalalabad Female Park.



Female regular visitor

“We are very happy to have a dedicated space for us where we can spend time and enjoy ourselves freely”

The city of Jalalabad, in the Eastern part of Afghanistan, has recently inaugurated the first Women's Park in town. The design of a park exclusively for women and girls has been enthusiastically received by Jalalabad's residents. The park covers an area of 8,753 m² including a community centre, green areas, a water fountain and recreational areas for children. High quality public spaces are key drivers for inclusion, social cohesion and gender empowerment.



Children's Park

Bamyan, District 1

**Sabera,
Bamyan**

"I bring my cousins to the park and they enjoy it very much. Now they have a place to play and meet with other kids"



Kabul, District 12



Shayi Dayi Park

Herat



Hese Sewom Khair Khana Park

Kabul, District 15

Chapter 3

MURAL ARTS



Kabul

Mural Arts

Kabul Municipality is beautifying its city through mural art paintings on the ever-present T-Walls. These ugly concrete walls are erected to protect public and private buildings from explosions and blasts. By painting the T-Walls, Clean and Green Cities (CGC) is partnering with the Municipality in their efforts to convert the grey concrete walls into colorful mural arts highlighting the identity and values of the community.

The beautification activities create job opportunities for thirty-eight recently-graduated art students (26 male/12 female) from different universities who will give a new vibrant and colorful image to the city over more than 5,600 m².

The Mural Arts is a vibrant expression of the silent revolution of Afghanistan.

Darulaman Palace

Kabul, District 6





Suhail Mayel, 36 years old.

Creative Specialist, UN-Habitat Afghanistan
Responsible for the design of the Mural Arts.

“Our designs are very graphic and visual. We want every single Afghan, educated or uneducated, understand their responsibility in cleaning and greening their city. I am honored to contribute my illustrations to my people and my country”.

Basira Shahnava, 23 years old. Urban Artist.
Kabul

“If I did not have this, I would be jobless, because it is not easy to find a job in Kabul related to your field of study”.

Mrs. Basira is one of the female artists from Kabul who is contributing to the beautification of her city. She is a student of art at Kabul Polytechnic. This project has offered her an opportunity for her personal and professional growth in the field of art while beautifying Kabul streets.





Zuhal, Urban Artist.
Kabul

“I am so optimistic about our future. These kinds of projects were previously implemented by the private sector, but now are implemented by government institutions and this is a sign of hope for our country”

Afghanistan has one of the youngest populations in the world. 79% of the total population is less than 30 years old. Youth play an essential role in the silent revolution as most of them live or would like to live in cities. Zuhal envisages hope for the future of Afghanistan through her art.



Kabir Ramz, Urban Artist





Mural Art, Shreno School

Kabul, District 2

Ahmed Behzad Ghyasi, Director of Sanitation of Kabul Municipality

“We are on a mission to transform Kabul city into a beautiful city by painting historical sites on the ugly concrete walls, transforming T-Walls into P-Walls (Peace Walls)”

Mr. Ahmed Behzad Ghyasi is the responsible person in Kabul Municipality for the implementation of the Clean and Green Cities Programme. He is convinced about the symbolism of these new murals and public spaces' interventions. For him, creating a culture of citizenship involving people in their city is a top priority. In this picture, Ahmed Ghyasi visits the painted T-Walls surrounding Dar-ul-Aman, the Abode of Amanullah Khan, the Palace of the former King of Afghanistan.





Shah-e-doshamshira

Kabul, District 2

Chapter 4

HOUSE PAINTING



Kabul, District 3

House Painting

The majority of urban Afghans live in informal areas, with very poor access to basic services. The Municipality of Kabul, in partnership with the residents of these informal areas and with the technical support of UN-Habitat, launched a campaign to paint the informal houses in the hilly areas of the city. House painting is a small intervention with great impact for the citizens and the city, giving a colorful touch to the capital and a sense of pride to residents.

Residents of these areas were hired to paint their houses with a double effect of improving the local economy while beautifying the city through art. So far, 825,969m² of houses have benefited from this initiative. The newly painted houses have given a new vibrant and colorful image of these informal areas.

The house painting campaign is an iconic and visible symbol of the Silent Revolution in public areas.

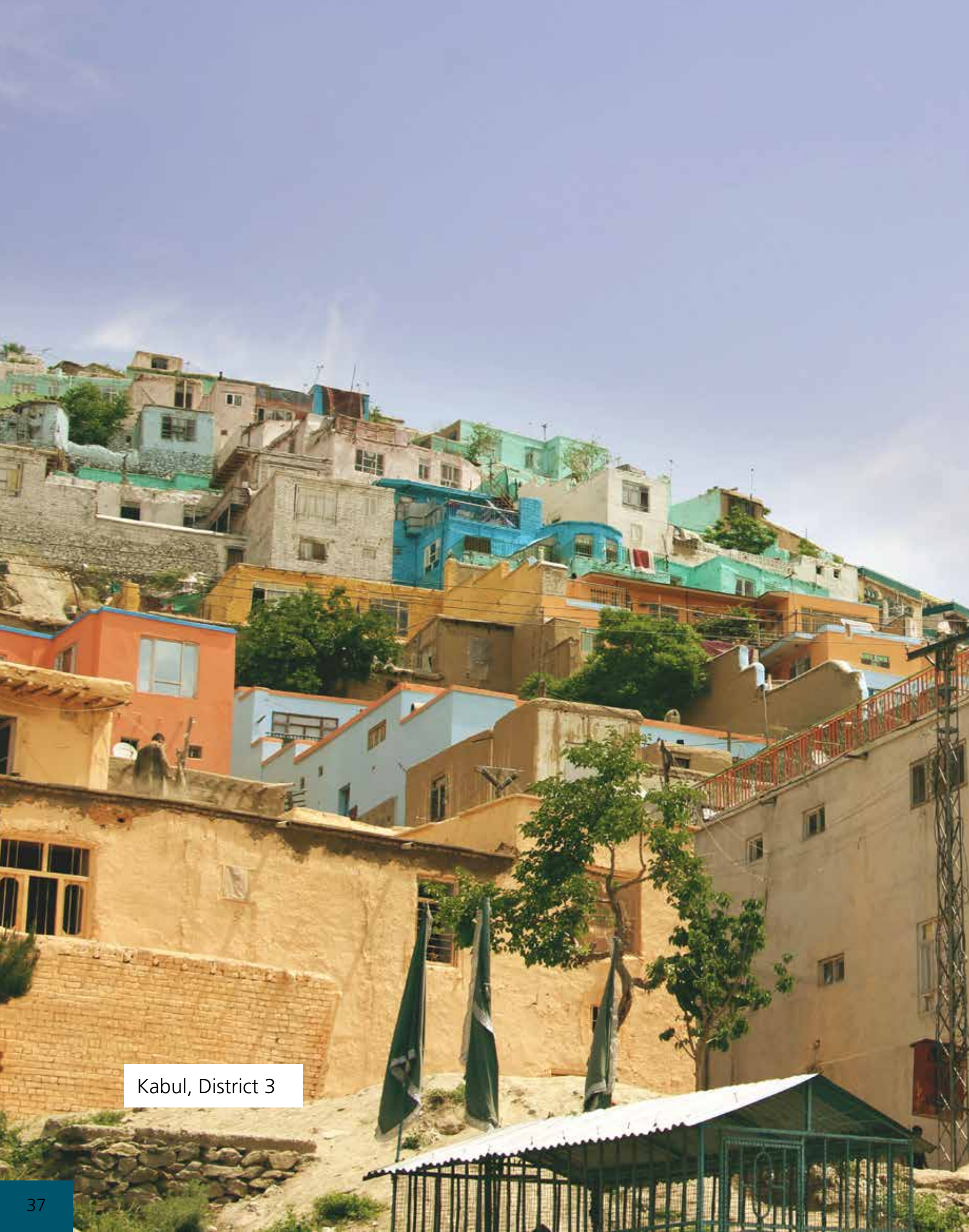


Kabul, District 3

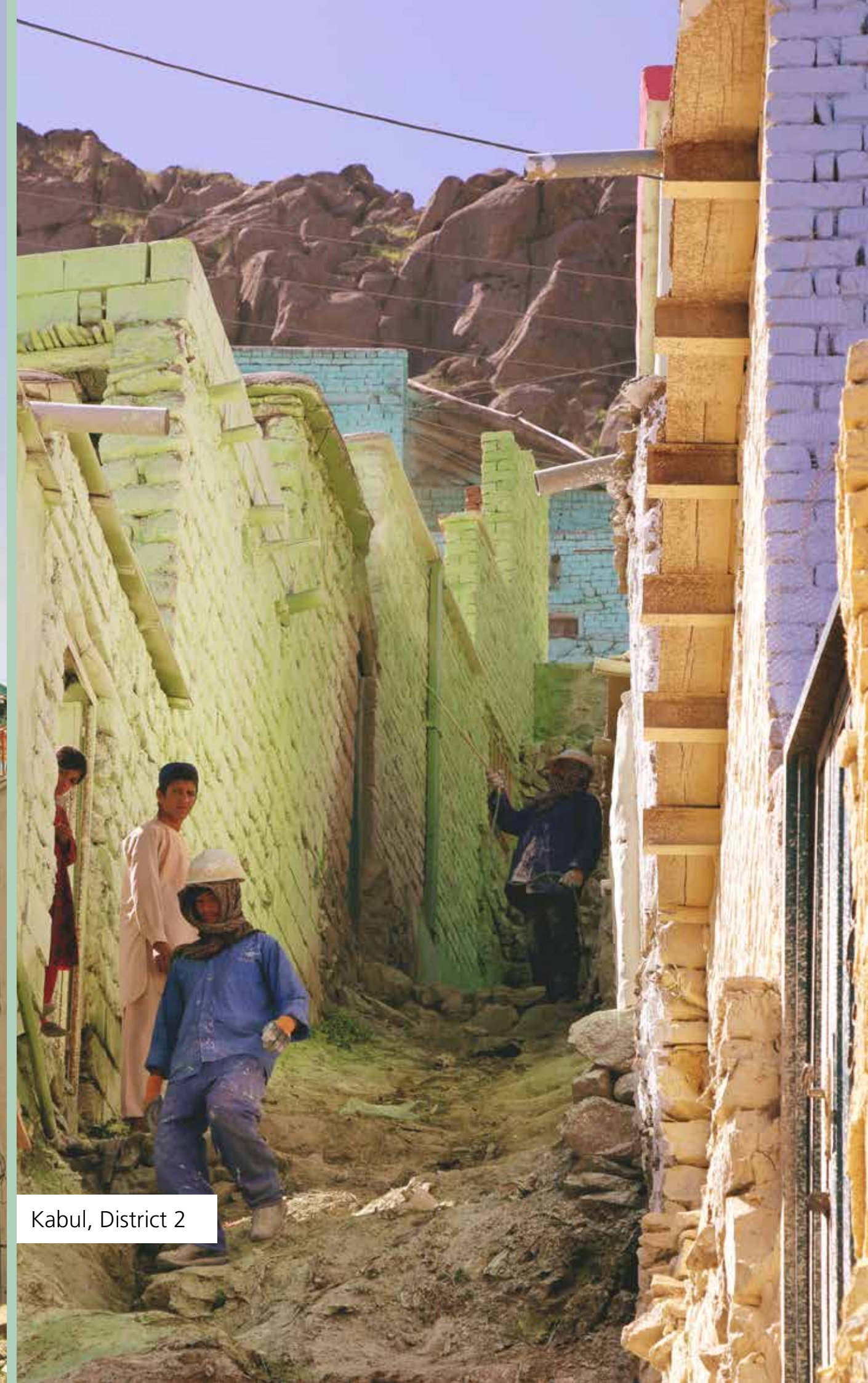
House Painter, Kabul District 2
"Residents of this area are very happy with us for transforming their houses"



Kabul, District 3



Kabul, District 3



Kabul, District 2



Kabul, District 1



Kabul, District 1



Kabul, District 3

Chapter 5

SOLID WASTE



Kabul Waste Transfer Station

Solid Waste

Managing solid waste is one of the biggest challenges of Afghan municipalities. The Clean and Green Cities (CGC) Programme assisted municipalities in providing cleaning services across twelve Afghan cities. Thousands of workers were hired to contribute to a cleaner and healthier environment, including women. The activities included solid waste collection and disposal, street sweeping, and storm drain clearing.

A series of citizen's cleaning campaigns were launched across all Afghan cities bringing together citizens from formal and informal areas, men and women, kids and elder. The "orange army" (the cleaners official vest) is one of the most visible and impactful initiatives that contributed to the success of the Silent Revolution.



829,759,721 m² Street Sweeping

Kabul, District 4

Ahmad Zaki Sarferaz,
Mayor of Kabul

“My Kabul, your Kabul, our Clean and Green Kabul”

“A survey conducted by the Clean and Green Cities (CGC) programme in both formal and informal areas of Kabul revealed that 83% of the residents are willing to pay a new cleaning fee to fill the huge revenue gap of the city in terms of solid waste management”

The capital city of Afghanistan, Kabul, launched a cleaning and greening campaign with the aim of raising public awareness on the importance of waste management among citizens. The Mayor of the city, accompanied by municipality staff, wakili gozars (community leaders) and members of the community, took to the streets of Kabul and cleaned 16 districts of the capital city. The campaign, under the theme *“My Kabul, your Kabul, our Clean and Green Kabul”* gathered more 3,000 participants who collected garbage from all corners of the city.

Clean and Green Cities (CGC) worked with Kabul Municipality to assess the status of solid waste management in the city. The assessment revealed that despite significant measures taken by the Department of Sanitation over the last two years, a series of strategic actions were urgently needed to improve the current situation. These included actions on policy reforms, an inventory, and improvement of collection efficiency, community awareness and potential technological interventions for recycling and recovery. This work culminated in the preparation of the new Municipal Solid Waste Management Strategic Plan for Kabul and a conference on solid waste management.



Mohamad Wali. City Worker.
Mazar-e-Sharif

“People in the city respect our work a lot. I worked for one year with CGC collecting waste in streets and canals. The programme helped me to support my wife and three children”



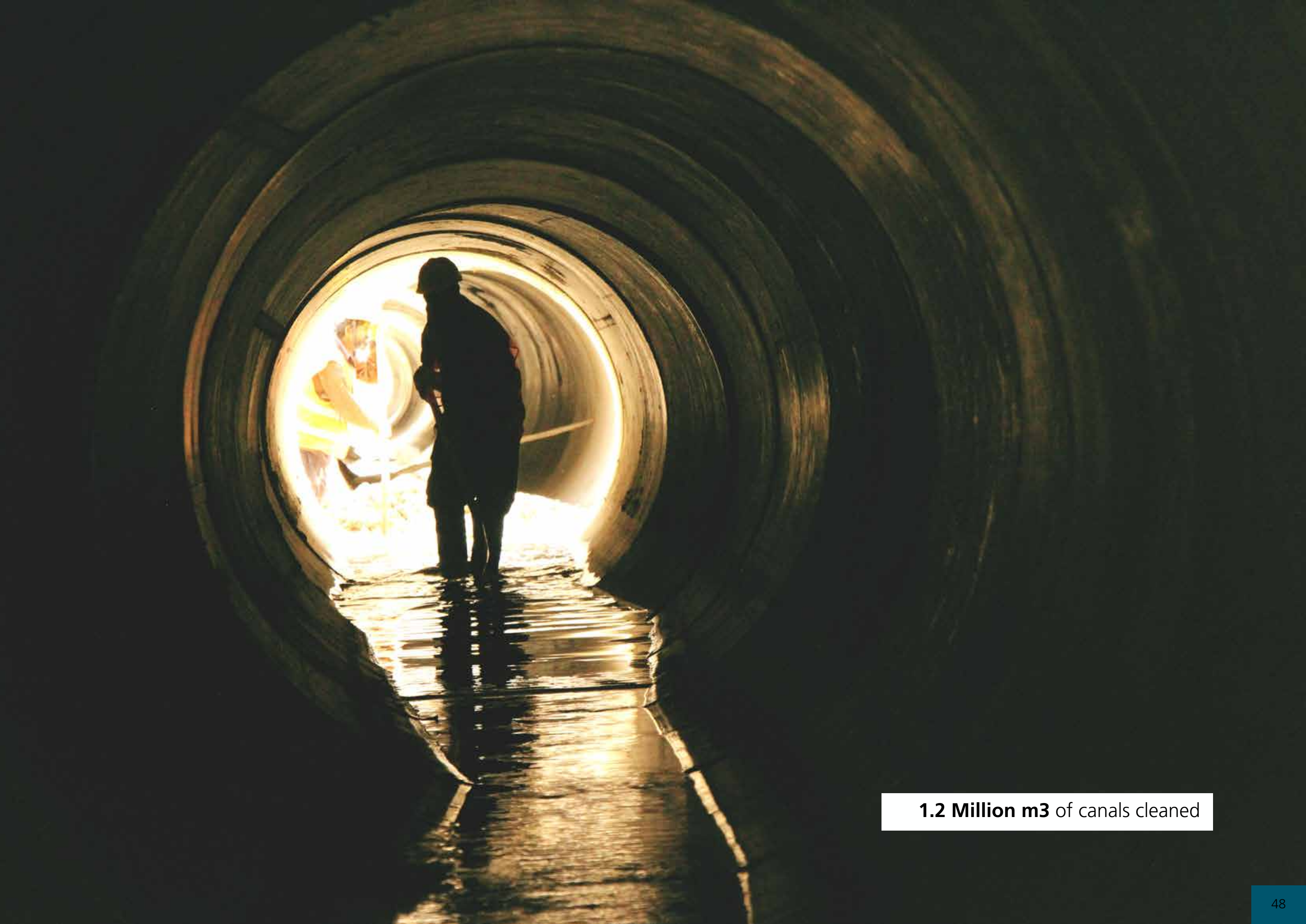


Nassim Khan, Community Leader.
Mazar-e-Sharif, District 3.

***“Our community members were hired to clean our water
and sewage canals that had remained blocked for more
than ten years”***



Kabul, District 11



1.2 Million m³ of canals cleaned



Kunduz, District 4



Kunduz, District 2



“My Kabul, Your Kabul, our Clean and Green Kabul”
Slogan of Cleaning Campaign





“A female Afghan entrepreneur presenting her pioneer company of toilet paper production made of recycled paper”

Chapter 6

INFRASTRUCTURE



Kunduz

Infrastructure

Afghanistan is a country prone to natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and droughts. Disaster risk reduction is at the heart of the municipalities' plans. A series of infrastructure projects were implemented in targeted cities aiming at protecting cities from natural and man-made hazards. The selection and implementation of these projects is part of a participatory planning process by which communities oversee the identification of the needs in cooperation with the Municipality. These projects included the construction of staircases footpaths in hilly and inaccessible parts of the city; roads; canals and perimeter walls.

In Kabul, the Municipality has recently finalized the construction of staircase footpaths in a hilly area of the city, inaccessible for older people, people with disabilities and kids. More than 2,259 m³ of staircase footpaths were constructed benefiting more than 50,000 families in Districts 1, 2 and 3.

This project is also improving livelihoods of residents as public works are undertaken by residents of these areas creating more than 37,000 job days. This chapter explores the infrastructure projects conducted across Afghanistan as part of the silent but impactful interventions in public spaces. As a result, residents of informal areas contributed financially to projects as a sign of trust and gratitude to their municipalities for upgrading their neighborhoods.

Haji Mohammad Hamidi, National Programme
Manager of Clean and Green Cities Programme

"Afghan people should play a key role in re-building their cities and maintain them clean and green. I have been very honored serving vulnerable and poor Afghan communities in their development over the last two decades. Investing in our people and our cities is the road to peace"



Haji Mohammad Hamidi supervising construction activities of the newly created "Aid Ga Park" in Kandahar.



Mohammad Talib,
Elder of Kabul District 3

“The path to our homes was unpaved and without staircases. It was frequently flooded in the rainy season making the situation untenable for children, elders and residents but now the problem is solved”



Kabul, District 3



Before



After

Kabul, District 2



Kabul, District 2

Before



After



Before



After

Kabul, District 5



Construction of Dawdi Village road
Bamyan



Chapter 7

GREENERY

694,254 Trees Planted.



Kabul, District 3

Greenery

The Cleaning and Greening Cities (CGC) program made a significant investment in greenery campaigns through tree planting and road median greenery activities across twelve Afghan cities. These public space interventions contributed remarkably to clean and healthier environment in the communities but also helped to stop the grabbing of public green areas. The Silent Revolution converted many informal waste collection points into clean and green areas.





Shoaib, 12 years old. School student.
Kabul

“Once upon a time this place was a dumping site and now it is a green area where I can play every day after school”

Najibullah Alkozai, Head of Greenery Department at Kabul Municipality

"Thanks to the commitment of our communities and to our colleagues of UN-Habitat we have been able to inaugurate several green areas in the city where kids can come and enjoy. We are committed to sustain and maintain these public spaces."



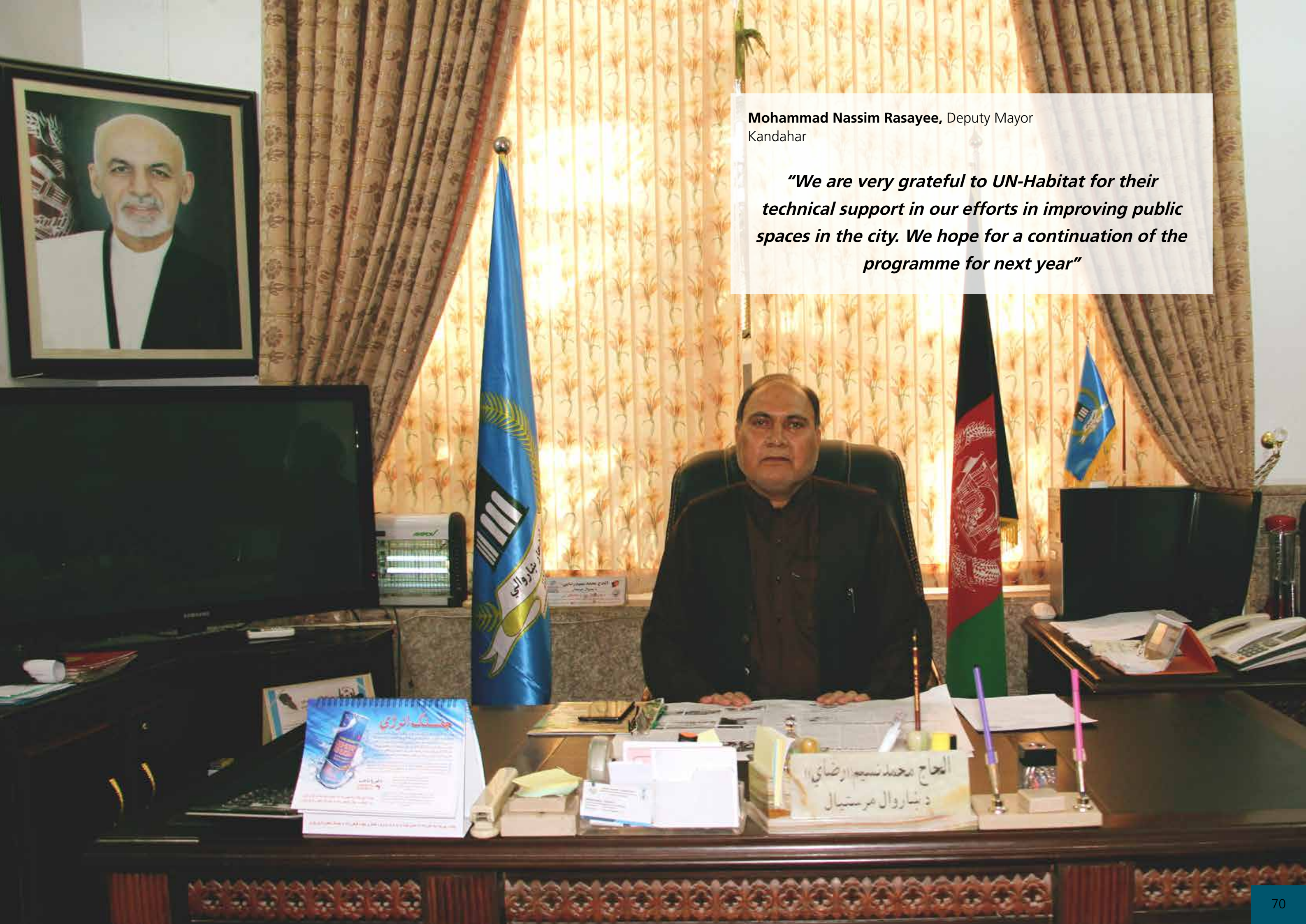


Pio Gol, City Gardener.
Kabul

"I work as a gardener in this road median and I take care of the trees and the flowers. This place used to be a dumping site and now is a clean and green area where students and residents come every night".



Kabul, District 6



Mohammad Nassim Rasayee, Deputy Mayor
Kandahar

"We are very grateful to UN-Habitat for their technical support in our efforts in improving public spaces in the city. We hope for a continuation of the programme for next year"



Kabul, District 15



Kabul, District 3

Chapter 8

SCHOOL CAMPAIGNS



School Campaigns

Kids are key agents for change. Regular school campaigns creating awareness about the collection and treatment of solid waste management took place. Representatives from Municipalities held workshops with students explaining the health and environmental benefits of a clean and green city. School students were also equipped with the basic tools and took to the streets for cleaning and greening their areas. The programme also supported the school solid waste system by providing dust bins for each class. Educating kids in their right to the city is a precondition for development.

"My Dream City"

School Drawing Contest



Kabul, District 2



"My Dream City"

School Drawing Contest

Parwan

Sunita Nasir, Engineer
CGC Deputy Programme Manager.

“Educate a girl, educate a nation. I want every girl to be educated and to be part of the city”.



Abdul Haq Khurami
Mayor of Mazar-e-Sharif

“Clean and Green Cities has brought a positive change to Mazar city by developing a clean and friendly environment, creating job opportunities, bringing hope to young generations and a smile to our kids’ faces”





Mazar-e-Sharif



"My Dream City"

School Drawing Contest





Chapter 9

PEOPLE'S PROCESS



Jalalabad

People's Process,

UN-Habitat has been working side-by-side with communities for more than two decades, placing people at the centre of decision-making processes. Involving ordinary Afghan men and women in decision making processes increases their dignity, sense of ownership as well as building confidence in public institutions. The Clean and Green Cities (CGC) Programme has placed the people's process at the heart of its activities. This practice has proved to be very successful as a tool for social cohesion in the post conflict context. Through the development of Community Development Councils (CDCs) and Community Action Planning (CAP) processes, communities, especially youth and women, were vigorously empowered to participate and be part of decision-making process to identify and prioritize the urban services needs in their communities. Members of these councils were trained in community mobilization, accountancy, record keeping and procurement process so that they can achieve the works undertaken with quality and in timely manner.

Clean and Green Cities introduced the access to formal banking systems to the poor and vulnerable households. All workers employed under the programme must open bank accounts to receive their monthly payments. It created a culture of transparency in payments, reduced malpractices of corruption and allowed the beneficiaries to utilize their resources efficiently.

The people's process is the Silent Revolution. The Silent Revolution is the people's process.

220 Community Development and
Nahia Development Councils created



Community Development Council Election



Community Development Council Meeting







مجلس بازرسی مالی و اجتماعی
د ناحیہ د پرمختیایی کمیٹی
Committee (NDC) Social Audit

پارک او زونون سار
شهر پاک و سبز
CLEAN & GREEN CITY

پارک علاء الدین

اعمار پیاده رو، بنای دیوار سنگی مرزی، نرده برای دیوار، سیستم آبیاری برای سرسبزی پارک، آب چاه، زمین های ورزشی، زمین بازی اطفال

مجلس بازرسی مالی و اجتماعی کمیته انکشافی ناحیه 6

د 6 ناحیہ د پرمختیایی کمیٹی مالی او تولد
National Development Committee Social Audit

ردیف	تاریخ	مبلغ	شرح
1	2018	10000	...
2	2018	20000	...
3	2018	30000	...
4	2018	40000	...
5	2018	50000	...
6	2018	60000	...
7	2018	70000	...
8	2018	80000	...
9	2018	90000	...
10	2018	100000	...
11	2018	110000	...
12	2018	120000	...
13	2018	130000	...
14	2018	140000	...
15	2018	150000	...
16	2018	160000	...
17	2018	170000	...
18	2018	180000	...
19	2018	190000	...
20	2018	200000	...
21	2018	210000	...
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95	2018	950000	...
96	2018	960000	...
97	2018	970000	...
98	2018	980000	...
99	2018	990000	...
100	2018	1000000	...

Her Excellency the First Lady meeting with CGC workers





UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

United Nations Human Settlements Programme
(UN-Habitat)
Kabul, Afghanistan
<http://www.unhabitat.org> - <http://www.unhabitat.af>

