



Urban Poverty Reduction in Afghanistan

A two-day workshop hosted by the
Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU)

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WORKSHOP REPORT

Theme

Institutional and programmatic barriers to reducing, in a sustainable way, urban poverty in Afghanistan

Objectives

- To understand the dimensions of the urban poverty problem in Afghanistan and its underlying causes
- To learn from successful experiences, as well as challenges in ongoing urban programming
- To engage in constructive dialogue focusing on forward-looking strategies to reduce urban poverty

Sponsor: The European Commission (EC)

Key participants

Government of Afghanistan: Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Municipalities of Kabul, Kandahar, Herat and Jalalabad, Members of Parliament

Researchers: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, HRRAC

Civil society: AKTC, CARE, Medair, Oxfam GB, AABRAR, IRC, BRAC, Afghanaid, Ockenden International

Donors/UN agencies: European Commission, JICA, USAID, ILO, UN Habitat, UNIFEM, UNHCR

OPENING SESSION

Wednesday, 9 August 2006

Opening Remarks

▪ *Minister Pashtun, Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD)*
Establishing a strategic plan for urban development in Afghan cities

Urban poverty is not only a problem in Afghanistan but also in other regions of the world such as Asia, Latin America and particularly in South Asian countries. In the rural areas, there are no job opportunities for poor people, so people migrate to the urban centres. People think that in the urban areas there are a lot of public facilities available, compared to the rural areas.

Unfortunately because of 25 years of war in our beloved country, the main cities have been destroyed, particularly Kabul. Improving infrastructure and rebuilding the cities are therefore the foremost goals of the Government. However, there are challenges and inequities. Citizens, who enjoy good economic conditions, build beautiful houses to live in – like the houses in the Sherpur area, opposite Wazir Akbar Khan. On the other hand, people with poor socio-economic conditions face several problems and the Government cannot provide them adequate facilities because it also faces economic constraints.

Poverty is the main issue that our cities are facing; there is a lot of population pressure on the cities, as people from the rural areas come to the cities everyday, increasing the challenges to urban development. The Ministry of Urban Development has a strategic plan for urban development in various sectors, including housing, safe water, sanitation and waste management.

AREU's recently completed study on urban poverty informed us that our citizens are deprived of the most fundamental needs in life. I appreciate this research study and AREU's work, which continues to inform the Government, as well as the international NGOs.

The Ministry of Urban Development has plans to recruit skilled and unskilled labourers because there are possibilities of job opportunities within the government sectors, such as municipalities and ministries. Such jobs are intended to provide a source of income for people's basic needs. The private sector also has plans to build industrial parks, factories, which again, will create job opportunities for citizens in the cities.

Both the Ministry of Urban Development and Municipalities have plans to implement their various development projects. The main objectives of the Ministry of Urban Development focus on the:

- Growth of the cities and urban development
- Employment opportunities
- Poverty reduction and housing schemes

The government administration and municipalities should take advantage of the research of AREU since such a study will be useful for strategic planning and in assessing our experiences over the past four years.

▪ *Mr Masataka Nakahara, Resident Representative, JICA*
Looking at urban development from the poverty reduction approach

Honorable Eng. Pashtun, Minister of Urban Development, Mr. Fishstein, Director of AREU, Representatives of Kabul, Herat, Jalalabad and Kandahar municipalities, excellencies; ladies and gentlemen. I am delighted to join this auspicious workshop and gathering on urban poverty reduction in Afghanistan and also to thank the Ministry of Urban Development and

Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit for giving me the opportunity to deliver this keynote address.

This workshop on urban poverty reduction in Afghanistan provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to draw valuable lessons in our collective efforts to reduce urban poverty in Afghanistan. This is essential to successfully advance urban poverty reduction interventions. Poverty is a human condition characterised by low income, lack of voice, sustained deprivation of capabilities, choices and power that are necessary for the enjoyment of fundamental human rights. Low income level can be the starting point for a chain reaction of serious problems. For example, insufficient income can translate into insufficient food. This may result in poor nutrition, thereby leading to increased probabilities of illness and mortality. The word “poverty” is generally used in an economic sense, but other problems can also be linked to poverty, as seen in Afghan cities:

- Limited access to education
- Limited access to basic health services
- Limited access to sanitation and water
- Limited opportunities for participation in politics and society
- Political repression and discrimination, among others.

According to the estimation made by UN-HABITAT, as of 2005, more than 3.1 billion people are living in urban area in the world. Out of those, approximately 1 billion are accounted for as inhabitants in slum areas. More importantly, this number is growing by 2.2 percent annually, which is higher than the global population growth. For this reason, urban poverty reduction is included among the targets and main challenges for JICA's assistance to Afghanistan. In addition, to strengthen the capacity of people in Afghanistan and to escape from poverty, JICA is also working to improve the social environments that make urban poverty worse. Comprehensive assistance, in collaboration with the public sector, donor community, NGOs and community-based organizations, is needed to raise the political, socio-economic, cultural, and human capabilities of poor people. For example, in Kanpon project in Indonesia, community-based organizations were responsible for improving basic infrastructure with financial and technical assistance from the donor community. In Thailand, a micro-finance scheme was utilized effectively in cooperation with the public sector and NGOs.

At the same time, it is important to be aware of the social environment in which poverty exists. Social factors that work against the poor, such as vested interests and discrimination, are partly responsible for the creation of poverty and may impede efforts to escape from poverty. Poverty reduction thus requires a multifaceted approach that combines comprehensive initiatives targeting the poor themselves with measures designed to change the social conditions of poverty.

JICA's assistance to Afghanistan since 2002

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has actively participated in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan and conducted urgent rehabilitation support programme (URSP) since April 2002. The first URSP commenced under the chaotic situation in Kabul immediately after the collapse of the Taliban regime. The URSP quickly responded to the changing needs in the post-conflict situation in Kabul city including urgent rehabilitation for roads, schools buildings and media facilities and so on. Following the commencement of URSP in Kabul, the urgent rehabilitation support programme was formulated to cover Kandahar and Mazar-i-Sharif mainly for road and school rehabilitation.

Overall goals:

- Development of regional economic activities
- Improving citizens' living environment
- Increasing the rate of school enrollment

Quality of education for students throughout primary and secondary education suffers due to lack of school facilities, few educational opportunities and lower enrollment of girls to schools. Therefore, JICA has given more priority and attention to the rehabilitation of girls' high schools with additional facilities, such as clean toilets with water supply and sewage system. It is notable that a close relationship with donors, the NGO community and local entities was highly essential to have effective cooperation and coordination for obtaining information about local situations which affect project implementation, minimizing the negative impact of constraints and increasing efficiency of project implementation.

Through the implementation of urgent rehabilitation projects, JICA learned many lessons. Urgent rehabilitation projects in three major cities could make drastic improvements and impacts such as increased school enrollment, especially for girls, and accessibility to markets through paved roads. One distinct outcome is employment generation. In the case of the road project in Mazar-i-Sharif, more than 100,000 employment opportunities were created. Although this figure seems to be substantial, it has to be clarified that the jobs generated by the project have been mostly casual labour and therefore not sustainable. It must be noted that poverty reduction will be achieved by generating economic activities as well as through long-term investment in human resource development programmes, including education.

Developing Kabul metropolitan area

After decades of war, Kabul has been totally destroyed; it lacks proper sanitation, clean water supply and many other problems. Returning refugees are crowding into Kabul and without the availability of proper accommodation, are building makeshift dwellings and overburdening the municipal system. For this reason a new initiative has been proposed by the Government of Afghanistan: to develop the new city in Paymunar-Dehsabz, located 30 km northeast from the Kabul city centre. The basic idea is to utilize the state land there to encourage the private sector to investment in developing the new city and reviving the surrounding urban areas.

As part of our efforts to deal with the urban problems in Kabul, and regarding the development of the new city, the Government of Afghanistan has requested the Government of Japan for technical cooperation to prepare a conceptual framework plan for the new city. In response, JICA has conducted preliminary studies to examine the strategy and directions for urban development in Kabul and also to address the issues involved in the new city development. Developing the Kabul metropolitan area would provide additional and affordable housing to the increasing urban population and other necessary municipal infrastructures. It would include clean water supply systems, urban waste management, electric power supply, roads, schools, market centres, hospitals and other administrative buildings. This is not a feasibility study for a new city, but a consensus building process for stakeholders living in Kabul. It is expected that the vision will be shared and serve as a starting point of discussions among the government, community, and private sector. At a workshop that took place at the end of July, the JICA study team presented the strategy and sequence as follows:

1. Participatory community development
2. Formalisation of informal settlements
3. Improvement of core infrastructure in city centre
4. New residential developments in outer districts
5. New city development in Dih Sabz, Kabul metropolitan area

Conclusion

Although about 80 percent of the Afghan population lives in rural areas, urban population growth is a serious issue to be considered. At the moment, Kabul houses about 3 million inhabitants in an environment without adequate potable water and sanitation systems and is experiencing an energy crisis, with increasing traffic jams and so on. JICA's recent study implies the population in Kabul is going to be more than 6 million, double its current size, by

2020. The extent of urban livelihood security issues in Kabul is projected to escalate year by year.

In confronting this challenge, we have to address many complicated aspects, including the need for a legal framework for land tenure, effective and efficient institutional settings by all stakeholders and financial backing matching the scale and complexity of the problem. The government's strong initiatives and long-term perspectives in urban development must be essential, particularly in case of large scale development; the role of communities must never be neglected. Moreover, the success or failure of urban development significantly depends on the coordination between the Government and the communities, working closely together and preventing any form of hostility from getting in the way of their work and relations. In this context, JICA and other international partners play an important role as catalyst between these two main actors. JICA's experience calls for more emphasis on physical improvement and development, along with the active participation of all stakeholders. In concluding my address, I would like to assure all of today's participants that JICA, in the future, will put more emphasis on urban development from the poverty reduction approach.

▪ *Ms Paula Kantor, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU)*
Achieving livelihood security in urban Afghanistan

What brings us together here today is, at one level, the study conducted by AREU on the livelihoods of the urban poor in Kabul, Herat and Jalalabad.

AREU study's aims and methods:

- To document and analyse the factors causing livelihood insecurity in urban Afghanistan
- To inform creative thinking about strategies to address urban poverty in Afghanistan through the lens of livelihoods and vulnerability;
- 12 months of data collection among 40 HHs each in Kabul, Herat and Jalalabad
- Short term case studies in Pul-i-Khumri and Mazar-i-Sharif

However, what truly brings us together, and should be the motivation behind this workshop, are the urban poor themselves and a search for solutions to assist them in their day-to-day struggles to achieve a secure livelihood in Afghanistan's cities. Based on this motivation, we have a series of important responsibilities to fulfill, as researchers, ministers, deputy ministers, mayors, donors and activists.

Our responsibilities:

- To not ignore the complexity and scale of the problem of urban poverty
 - Integrated approaches and coordination are required
 - Must move beyond pilots, ad hoc sectoral approaches
- To apply creativity and technical expertise to solutions
 - Inclusive, collaborative planning
 - Planning for people, particularly the poor
- To address the power relations, vested interests and the resulting misgovernance causing and sustaining urban poverty
- To not allow lack of funds, capacity, and political will, or an institutional environment of blame and recrimination, to hinder progress on reducing urban poverty in Afghanistan

In response to these responsibilities, the aims of the workshop include:

- To understand the dimensions of the urban poverty problem and its underlying causes
- To learn through assessing successes and challenges of ongoing urban programming
- To engage in constructive dialogue focusing on forward-looking strategies
 - Not promoting individual projects
 - Not weighed down by blame and excuses

In closing...

- Poor urban residents are not passively awaiting aid
- They are resourceful, but resourcefulness is limited
- Expectations for progress exist, but are not being met as the events of May 29 in Kabul illustrated
- We need to act to create cities that serve the needs and interests of the poor – in all their diversity
- If not, national goals of equitable development and pro-poor growth will not be met – they will remain only words on paper

Panel Discussion**Urban Poverty from the Perspective of the Municipalities****▪ *Chair: Eng Abbas Noyan, Member of Parliament for Kabul***

Reduction of poverty in the urban sector as the key focus of the conference is quite useful to inform the international community and government about the present urban situation of the big cities such as Kabul, Herat, Jalalabad and Kandahar.

Those NGOs and government agencies working on urban poverty reduction have a major role to develop and provide job opportunities to the people. The main problems related to poverty are shortage of resources and in our country the destruction of infrastructure due to two decades of war. Right now, our country is in the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction of its infrastructure. We are here to see what can be the main positive role of the urban development commission in the reduction of poverty in urban communities.

Government agencies should establish vocational training centres, tailoring, technical and professional courses to reduce the dependency on neighbouring countries. In this regard, NGOs, municipalities, government agencies, and ministries have a positive role to reduce urban poverty and create job opportunities for the people and develop the skills of workers.

Parliament is the main body to discuss the issues of political and socio-economic development programmes in the country. The big cities are under the pressures of poverty, and we need to consider how to create opportunities so that citizens can prosper and gain the skills to take part in the progress of the country. Municipalities should take advantage of the development projects to hire poor people as labourers, to support their households. Labourers from different provinces come to city squares across the country looking for jobs. A lot of people came from neighbouring countries like Pakistan and Iran. Such people have skills and experiences, while unfortunately, our countrymen have little skill and experience so this is a burden on the urban centres.

Those municipalities where AREU conducted its study on poverty reduction should share with each other their approach and experiences. Especially those Mayors and Deputy Mayors who have a positive role in their respective provinces should share their experiences and play a major role with international NGOs and Government agencies to overcome poverty in the urban sector.

The focus of this workshop is on the roles played by the different municipalities. It asks what they are doing and can do, in cooperation with NGOs, to reduce poverty and provide basic

needs to our citizens, including potable water, health, education, electricity, shelter, sanitation and food security.

▪ ***Eng M. Faqir Bahram, Deputy Mayor, Kabul Municipality***

The master plan of Kabul has changed over time, across space and in respect to expected population. In 1357, we had put up a master plan for 2 million people but at the moment there are around 4 million people living in Kabul. We developed our master plan with the support of the United Nations. We increased our districts from 17 to 22. It is very difficult to make a master plan when in the past, 700 factories were active but now only 17 are working.

First we need to divide the poor families in categories in Kabul, the person who doesn't have access to health facilities, doesn't have access to potable water, doesn't have access to other things that they need for life and then we should make a plan and use the strategy to understand how we can reduce urban poverty. First, we should find jobs for people because we have a lot of people that don't have any. There are some NGOs which have devised a strategic approach to poverty reduction for the city but if they work closely with the municipality of Kabul, it would likely be more productive because the municipalities are the ones with more direct relations with the people.

▪ ***Aminullah Amin, Deputy Mayor, Herat Municipality***

After 27 years of war, we undoubtedly have a lot of problems to tackle. In Herat Province, we have a cement factory. If we rebuild the factory, not only would we provide many people opportunities to find jobs but also our country could benefit from the business of cement. Unfortunately, no one cares about this. We had the DDR programme in Herat, yet more than 2,000 people don't have job opportunities. Meanwhile, the refugees have come back from neighbouring countries but they don't have any job in Afghanistan and it is very difficult to find employment in the circumstances they are in.

We should have more projects in rural areas than urban areas, and we should create job opportunities in rural areas for people. If they have work there in rural areas, they wouldn't need not come to urban areas to find jobs. We should train our people; for example, tailoring, carpet weaving, handicrafts are all very good jobs for women and men. We should have markets of handicraft materials and carpets. If our people don't have any job experience, it will be hard for them to gain sustainable employment.

There are some 500 plots allotted to disabled people but they don't have money to build housing on the land. Meanwhile, another 4,000 plots have been allotted for refugees who came back from neighbouring countries; they also can't manage to build houses for themselves.

▪ ***Eng Mohammad Karim, Deputy Mayor, Kandahar Municipality***

Poverty is a big issue not only for the world, but especially for Afghanistan. Our country is still suffering from two decades of devastation, despite the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme implemented five years ago. For such purposes, we should struggle for development and adopt planning strategies to reduce poverty in the urban areas.

Kandahar Municipality had adopted various projects over the last four years which deal directly or indirectly with the poverty reduction in Kandahar city. The majority of these projects have been completed successfully.

1. According to the master plan of the municipality 70km of roads, out of a planned 90 to 242 km, was constructed inside Kandahar.

2. A housing project was inaugurated with the capacity to provide shelter for 35,000 families.
3. Six parks were constructed in Kandahar city.
4. During the past 15 years, residents constructed housing illegally on government property. This issue has been addressed through reconciliation. Sanitation, drainage system, potable water, and roads were provided, which offered a lot of labour opportunities for the people.
5. A scheme was implemented to provide 1,000 plots to 1,000 households. However, there is no budget to provide services.
6. For the construction of an industrial park, plots were distributed by the Municipality. Some 70 factories right now are working so there are more work opportunities for the people.
7. For the cleaning of the city, Kandahar Municipality hired about 400 staff.

The Government should look into the kind of factories, which can generate job opportunities for communities. This way, it is possible to reduce poverty and increase security because if people have jobs, they would have less interest in participating in illegal activities that are harmful and detrimental to the community's security and progress.

▪ **Eng. Rouhaullah, Construction Engineer - Jalalabad Municipality**

Poverty is the main issue facing every city of the country. Nangarhar Province is the main entry to the sub-continent. During the war, people migrated to Pakistan through Nangarhar. Right now, those refugees who belong to other Provinces live in Jalalabad and the city is facing the burden of a big population. It has a plan for a population of 40,000 families and these households need the daily life requirements such as sanitation, health, shelter, drainage system and potable water.

There are three main shelter projects in Qasim Abad, Malang Jan Meena and Shahid Abdul Haq, allotting plots to Jalalabad citizens. In Malang Jan Meena, 1,350 plots have been allotted to martyr and disabled people.

Compared to other provinces of Afghanistan, Jalalabad is a little bit better in terms of the socio-economic conditions of the people. In Jalalabad, people need only the irrigation canal and electricity in the province. The land of Nangarhar province is very fertile and people's major occupations are agriculture and gardening. In addition, this province is near to Pakistan and people have easy access to business opportunities.

In Nangarhar province the rehabilitation process is very fast. The government has various housing projects allotting plots to poor families which do not own property. Electricity is the backbone for economic development. To increase development, the government must give its attention toward electricity and irrigation canals. Agriculture and electricity are the main factors that could reduce the poverty ratio in the urban sector. People's main demands from the Government are about electricity.

Foreign or national investors are willing to invest in Nangarhar province because of fertile lands and its border with Pakistan, which facilitates free trade. The security situation in Jalalabad is very good; everyone is happy and busy with their business to earn their daily income. There are good opportunities for national or foreign investors to work in Jalalabad. For poor people, there are more job opportunities. In this aspect, the socio-economic conditions of the citizens have improved.

Access to Land, Housing, Services and Social Infrastructure

▪ **Chair: Eng Shah Wali, Head of Municipalities, Ministry of Interior**

The main topics of the conference are about poverty reduction, land, shelter and job opportunities in the urban areas. Because of two decades of devastation, our country is under

the pressures of poverty, misery and drought. Afghanistan is an agricultural country. Our main economy is agriculture, and because of drought and lack of irrigation canals negative effects appeared in our agriculture sectors, making us always dependent on the production of neighbouring countries.

We should create factories to provide more employment opportunities for the people to reduce poverty and improve the economy of the country. Before the war, several big factories which had a lot of employees served the development interests of the country. However, right now our industrial sector is destroyed due to the conflicts.

Right now we should be providing job opportunities for poor people in various development projects to reduce poverty and provide better facilities to citizens. This way we reduce the roots of social conflicts, misery and poverty in the urban life. Those refugees which come from Pakistan or Iran, they are looking toward the cities because they think that here every facility is available. This is a big issue because the burden of large populations settling in urban areas can increase poverty, in part due to the cities' limited resources to serve them.

Rehabilitation and reconstruction projects need to create job opportunities for people and provide other facilities like electricity, potable water, shelter for returnees and health services. Shelter is the main issue for those who come back from Pakistan or Iran; unfortunately the government cannot serve the needs of every returnee. People will become self-sufficient and reduce dependency on foreign labour, which right now is quite prevalent in Kabul and other big cities. This next overall discussion is about the land, and housing for urban residents and their role in eradicating poverty in the major cities of Afghanistan.

Presentation

▪ *Stefan Schütte, AREU* *Coping with lack of access to services*

I will now present evidence from our year-long household study in three cities to illustrate how people actually cope with lack of access to basic services and social infrastructure. It is common knowledge that access to services is highly restricted all over urban Afghanistan but what does this fact actually mean for the affected families? How do people deal with their exclusion, and what consequences does this have for their livelihoods?

The issues

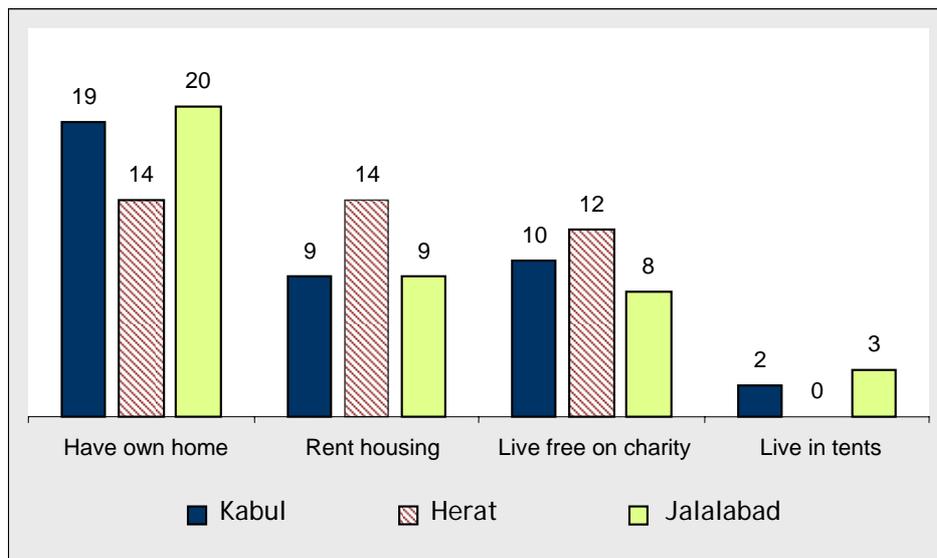
I will focus here on three issues and provide evidence drawn from the household sample to answer the following questions:

- How do people access land and housing?
- How do people ensure their water provision and what risks do lack of proper sanitation pose to them?
- How do they access healthcare and education, and
- What hinders them to do so?



Land and housing

Access to housing in the study population (N=120 households)



As the graph shows, less than half of study households (40 per site) have their own home, but even among those who do, this does not always provide adequate shelter. It is often makeshift and is improved gradually.

Those who rent housing in the study sample are in a very difficult position, because with the incomes that can be realised in their jobs in the informal economy monthly rental payments come as huge burdens. These are the households who very often need to



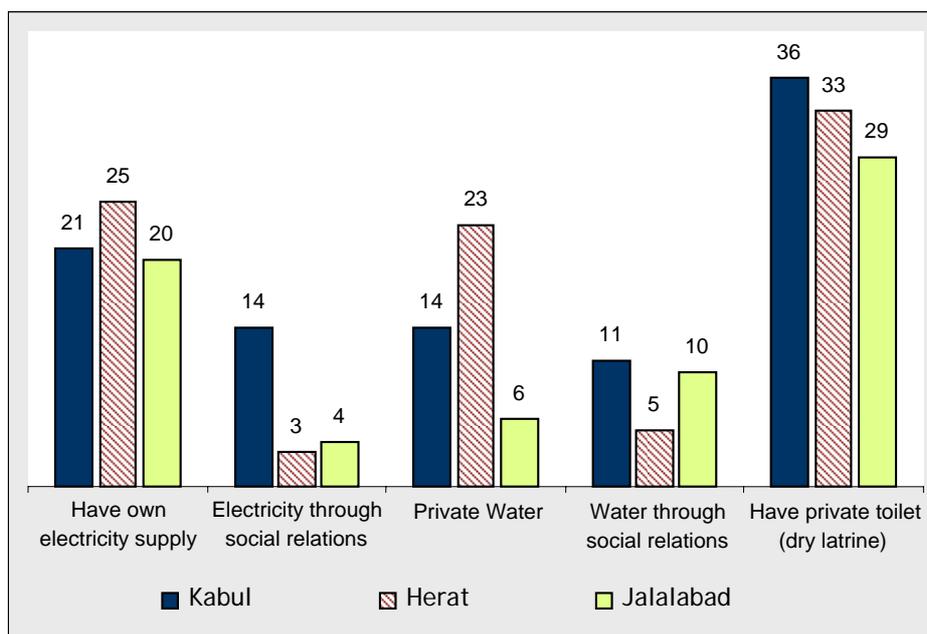
move residence, because they cannot afford to pay rent regularly. This poses not only problems in terms of finding new accommodation, but also endangers neighbourhood support networks which in many cases are a very important source of assistance for poor urban households, especially in accessing small credits, providing childcare and food support. However, it is important to note that a large number of households lives free on charity basis – which again points to the importance of social relations for urban livelihood security.

The majority of poor urban dwellers live in informal settlements and enclosing informal land is often the only way the urban poor can access land and build their own housing. In fact some use physical asset building as strategy to secure tenure and many show residents show a willingness to invest time and money and to sacrifice for security of tenure.

Among the study households, a few have customary deeds for their housing, but no one has official land title apart from a few households in Jalalabad. Many face constant threat of eviction and therefore construct only makeshift houses but do not invest for fear of having to leave; however, some do invest to secure their tenure.

Water, sanitation and electricity

Access to basic services in the longitudinal study sites
(N=40 households in each city)



- A slight majority of study households has electricity although supply tends to be erratic at best.
- Access to electricity requires investments not affordable to many – and those who have invested often needed to take on debts to be able to do so.
- Private water – if it exists at all – is a luxury for most. It is usually in the form of a well. Only very few households have access to a private water tap.
- Social relations in many cases allow access to water, as well as electricity, i.e. neighbours allow tapping their line, or sharing water from their private well.
- The majority has a private toilet – all of which are dry latrines in which human remains are collected on the spot, or drain directly to the street causing grave threats to health.

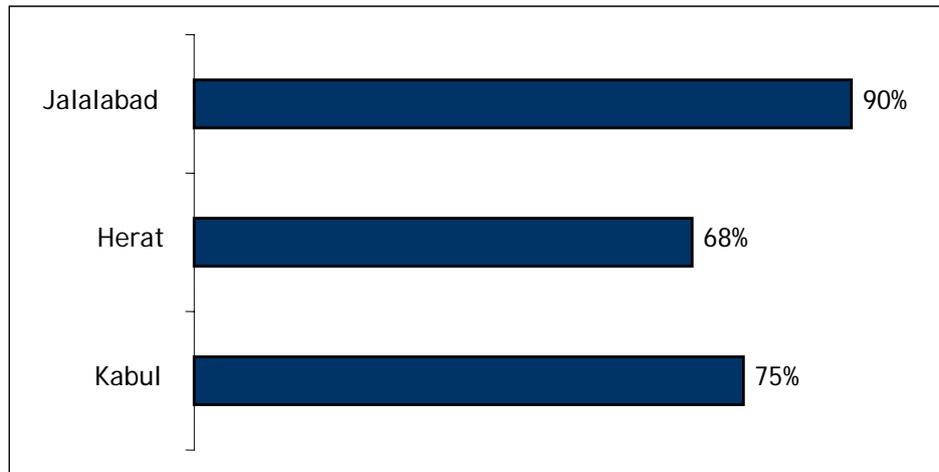
What are the main issues regarding water/sanitation?

- Heavy reliance on polluted surface water: wells do not provide potable water (too salty); groundwater is steadily regressing, getting more polluted.
- Time investments: bringing in supplies requires time and effort – a task often carried out by children.
- External provision of water through tankers is the reality for entire neighbourhoods, especially in Kabul.
- Overall, the lack of access to safe water is posing serious and constant health risks, which affect children (diarrhoea) but also adults, as illustrated in the following graph.



Being poor is hazardous to health

Incidences of ill health in the study sample



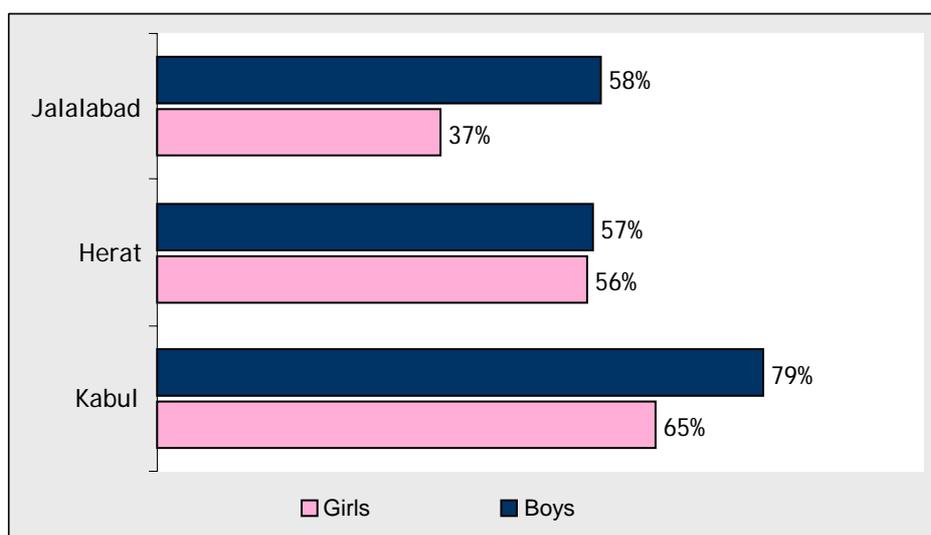
This graph shows the incidences of ill health as encountered during our year-long study. For instance, in the 40 households studied in Jalalabad, families very often had to deal with a health issue affecting one or several household members over the study year. The figures are a bit smaller in the other cities, nevertheless, this trend indicates a high frequency of ill health among poor urban households and it is indeed true to say that being poor, and being excluded from services is hazardous to health.

Exclusion from health services is a reality for many for a range of reasons

- Those who live remotely have to travel long distances to access care.
- Free government clinics reportedly have a chronic shortage of medicine.
- Better quality private healthcare is too expensive for the poor.
- All these lead to a lack of preventive healthcare and tends to discourage people from seeking treatment; seeking medical treatment becomes more of a reaction to serious health problems. Usually, due to shortage of money, seeking treatment is delayed.
- As a consequence, many families lose their children at a very young age due to preventable and curable illnesses.

Education

School enrolment rates among study households



Enrolment rates show some variety across sites as illustrated above. Only a third of households send all kids to school. Instead it is more common that some go, usually younger children, and some don't.

- Many are excluded because they need to work for income or in household work. Every second, school-aged boy works for income, and girls frequently work in the house, though in Herat, more than a third of all girls work for income as well.
- Poor quality education means parents become less willing to send children.
- Distance has been cited as one major reason why children do not go to school.
- Those boys enrolled in most cases negotiate between both work and school.
- Cultural factors often lead to early exclusion for girls. Even if girls go to school, they tend to be removed after their engagement or when they reach puberty.

Conclusion

There are two general conclusions that can be drawn from this presentation.

Exclusion from access to services:

1. Negatively influences the ability to earn an income (health risks, time investments needed); and
2. Hinders the urban poor to acquire decent human assets, i.e. good levels of health and education.

The implications are that all efforts need to be undertaken to gradually achieve universal coverage with basic services across urban Afghanistan. Possible means to do this might include:

Improved communication and coordination between government agencies, and between government and non-government agencies, involved in service provision, to share learning and distribute responsibilities;

Community consultation, involving both women and men, to devise appropriate service standards and allocate operation and maintenance responsibility;

Technical creativity in devising ways to deliver services to some harder to reach areas and that ensures that the work of disparate agencies links up at the city-level; and

Recognition of the employment creation potential of service delivery and involvement of poor urban residents (women and men) as small scale entrepreneurs.

▪ *Mirho Gol, Kabul resident*

A household's experience with tenure insecurity

I am living in Waisalabat; my young son died three months after birth and my husband also passed away. I have two daughters and two sons still living. I was in Jalalabad and after that I migrated to Iran. There was an earthquake there in Bam city where I lost my grand child. Then we came to Afghanistan, where one of my sons sells yeast and another one is a cart puller. I have a house on the hillside and I don't have access to electricity and it is very difficult to access water. I buy a gallon (Bushka) of water for 20 Afs because my other children are too young to get water from the pump. We just managed to build two rooms and because we didn't have enough money to hire labour, my son and I built these rooms. My daughter is at home; she cooked for us at that time when we built the house. I



have many problems with my life; I go to work from 5 am until 5 pm. I am working on lands. I thank Stefan that he invited me to speak and say something here for you so that you can hear about the life of a poor woman, about the problems of my daily life.



▪ *Dad Mohammad, CARE*
CARE's Urban service provision: Successes and strategies for the future

Current projects

1. WAT/SAN + KESH

- Health education
- Water service provider since 1995 in Kabul Areas.
- Roads, drainage construction, waste collection and water

Successes:

- Poverty alleviation evidence through improved access to water and sanitation services
- Employment generation through labour intensive programmes in targeted areas

Challenges:

- Lack of coordination from Kabul Municipality in provision water and sanitation services to targeted population

2. Urban Governance and Community Empowerment

Successes:

- Linking communities with authorities and other stakeholders
- Trust building between authorities and communities in those areas we have projects

Challenges:

- Short-term projects
- Lack of continuous financial sources

3. KASP (Kabul Area Shelter Project)

- Started in May 2006
- Provides safe and habitable shelters (construction and/or rehabilitation) for vulnerable households in seven districts of Kabul (starting in May 2006)
- Selects beneficiaries based on vulnerable criteria by the Beneficiary Selection Committee composed of representatives from the Municipality, district offices, community councils and CARE
- Sets up community councils
- Provides shallow wells with hand pumps and community wells
- Constructs latrines
- Builds ditches and drainage canals
- Road graveling
- Promotes health and sanitation education
- Hazard mitigation and preparedness awareness

CARE experiences and obstacles to urban development

- Lack of community awareness to trust service providers and pay the fees for the sustainability and continuation of services at the end of the project
- Limited community participation in decision making process, particularly among women
- Communities are dependent on NGO activities

- Lack of maintenance of facilities provided and resulting in activities continuation
- Communities have limited capacity to advocate for their own needs
- Limited responsiveness from the Municipality
- Lack of coordination among stakeholders
- Limited funds restrict expansion of services
- Short-term project funding

Recommendations

- Increase community participation to include women and other marginalised groups in identifying community needs, in decision-making, and in monitoring community projects
- Increase the Municipality's capacity and commitment to assist communities, in a participatory manner, through training and other incentives
- Increase accountability, transparency and responsibility of the communities and other stakeholders

▪ *M. Naiem Stanazai, Jalalabad Mayor* **Regularisation of urban land in Jalalabad**

In Nangarhar province the rehabilitation and construction process is quick. The government has various housing projects allotting plots for the poor families who do not have shelter and property. The regularisation of lands has been started in Jalalabad city and we are discussing about the survey plan and allotment of plots.

In 1948, Germany had surveyed and designed a plan for Jalalabad city with the capacity of 40,000 people. This was 40 years ago but at the moment the population of Jalalabad city has reached to 500,000 people, which is a lot for the past plan to accommodate.

There are two classes of people living in Jalalabad. Among them are those who have no shelter but they build shelters for themselves near to the hillside. The other group occupies Governmental lands illegally and constructs their houses. In order to provide more services to the public, the municipality has to formalize informal settlements according to the plan and give people secure ownership.

Shaheed Abdul Haq project is situated on about one hundred and 40,000 square meters of land in the southern side of Jalalabad. This land has been distributed in 329 plots and has been allotted to the people. Since the project's plots are near to the canal, the municipality planned that the people should build their houses 25 meters away from the canal. The canal directorate of the Municipality and provincial officials surveyed the area to check the formalization of the houses.

Housing directorate also surveyed the area to see what kinds of facilities the scheme requires. Some families built illegal houses in the area and they didn't want to leave the area so a commission (Jalalabad Municipality and Provincial Councils) was established for the issue to resolve the problems through reconciliation. In this way, these issues of illegal housing were solved with the families. At first very few families were living there but now they have grown into large numbers.

There are other two projects called Malang Jan Meena and Qasim Abad in Behsood district but unfortunately the governmental lands have been taken by people before Jalalabad Municipality could distribute them. These people are from four provinces; Laghman, Kunar, Nuristan and Nangarhar and they have made land seizure into a business. They seize a piece of land illegally and then sell it to other people and again and again this cycle goes on, posing external and internal challenges to the government.

- Shahid Abdul Haq project has a school, a clinic and a cultural centre for the people.

- Some 1,350 square meters of land have been distributed to disabled people in Malang Jan Meena project.

We have allotted 2,000-3,000 plots for the people in Shaikh Mesree town, and people from Laghman, Kunar and Nuristan are living there.

The Informal Economy and Urban Labour Markets

▪ *Chair: Deputy Minister Dr. Eng. Q. Djallalzada, Ministry of Urban Development*

In developing countries around the world, particularly in Asia, a large number of people are living in cities; this is a big burden and affects the development of urban areas in that people are deprived from the basic needs of daily life. In the case of Afghanistan, because of 25 years of war, infrastructure has been destroyed and rehabilitation processes continue with the support of the international community.

Three main sectors are assisted in the development of the economy such as agriculture, industry and services. Germany had an insurance industry which developed the country; right now it has a strong economy. Tunis is one of the developing countries of western Africa; it has good income from the Tourism industry, which plays a major role in the country's economy.

In Afghanistan the informal economy is the key factor for the development of the country.

People are involved in various types of businesses, companies, small business enterprises, and light industries. Our country is dependent on foreign goods and we haven't got any heavy machinery factories like in other developing countries. Agriculture production is consumed in urban areas; a lot of people are involved in various types of business. A cart puller, who sells vegetables, tries to find markets and distributes his produce in several places to earn money.

Apart from agriculture production, services and transportation have a positive role to play in the development of the country's economy. The economy of Kabul also involves the informal economy, where there is a high density of population living in informal settlements. Government supports the privatization process through various schemes, to hand over some role to private companies to develop the industrial economy of the country.

The Afghanistan Government believes in free market economy and wants to continue the process of privatization in the country where every private company and corporation freely operate, generating employment and training for skilled labour to provide their best services. Privatization should not be only for Kabul but this should be extended to all the provinces of Afghanistan.

Force or heavy police enforcement is not the way of solving our problems, where every time cart pullers or mobile sellers are seen roaming around the squares to sell their goods and services, they are pushed to areas that do not have markets for poor people.

The informal and formal economies are highly interdependent and both will contribute significantly to the growth of the country.

Presentation

▪ **Stefan Schütte, AREU**
Informal employment: A major obstacle to urban livelihood security

This session focuses on informal employment. This is an overly important subject, in that the informal economy provides the most important sources of income in the urban environment. Again, I will focus during this presentation on the general findings of our household survey, and Ezmarai will give an account of his experience as one out of hundreds of thousands of informal workers in Kabul and other Afghan cities.



So, why is informal employment considered a barrier to urban livelihood security?

Generally, this presentation is about

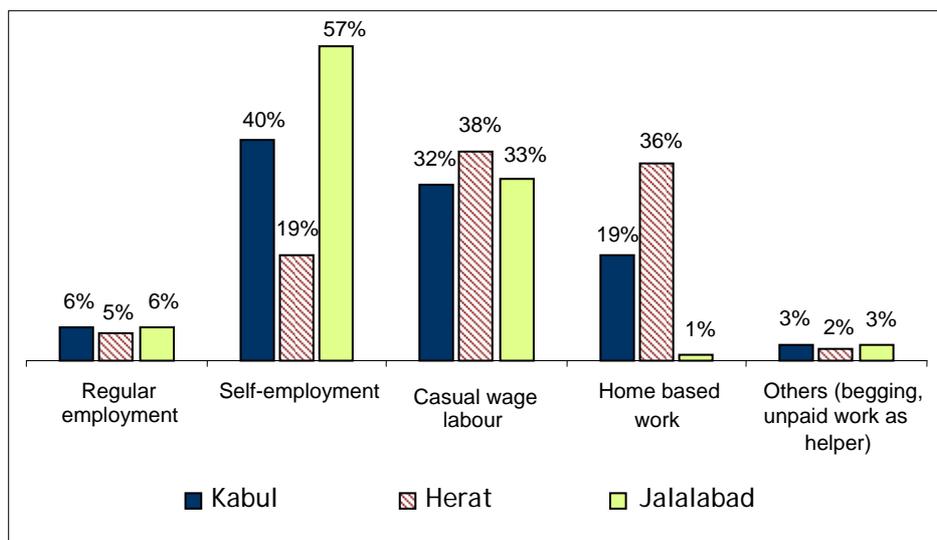
- The types of work the urban poor in Afghanistan are able to access
- The problems associated with these types of work
- How poor households mobilise labour, and at what costs
- Some recommendations regarding how we might move forward

Characteristics of urban informal labour markets in Afghanistan

- High seasonality: cold season is often managed through credit; less work opportunities exist and families have higher expenses (fuel, food, medicine).
- Incomes are not sufficient to manage sustainable livelihoods in cities; the cost of living is comparatively high in Afghanistan, expenses usually exceed realisable incomes. In addition, incomes are highly erratic, and unpredictable.
- The informal economy is too small in size for a growing population; there is high competition in all sectors leading to high un- and underemployment rates.
- Workers have poor access to regular numbers of workdays. About 75 percent find work for less than 200 days per year. This figure is seen as a minimum for survival in lower cost rural areas, and thus is likely to lower the base for urban areas. Median days of work obtained are very low: Kabul 131 days a year, Herat only 96, and Jalalabad 120.
- The high insecurity of employment requires high flexibility; frequent job changes are very common and mobilisation of as many workers as possible, including women and children, is necessary to reduce poverty. This may increase vulnerability in the longer term.

Sources of livelihood

Economic activities of working individuals across the study year
(share of reported incidences of work falling into each occupation category)



What are the main sources of livelihood for the majority of the urban population? The graph of activities of study households provides some clues:

- Overall there is a very low significance of regular employment. This illustrates chronic underemployment and the highly limited access to secure work that is independent of seasonality and change. It also is a matter of lack of skills among most of the urban poor.
- The most important work areas are self-employment (cart pulling, mobile vending, petty trade) and casual wage labour (construction, well digging), as well as home based work, all of which are affected by seasonality and frequent change (almost no casual wage work is available in winter, self-employment becomes much harder, with lower incomes).
- It is eye opening to dwell a bit on home-based work, which is largely the domain of women. It comprises activities such as carpet weaving, processing dry fruits, washing clothes, spinning wool and embroidery work. Many of these activities are extremely low paid and hardly justify the effort: i.e. by peeling pistachio in Herat, daily income can be somewhere between five to 10 Afs. Still, this meagre contribution is needed.
- There are huge regional differences in the prevalence of home-based work. High prevalence for Herat reflects better labour opportunities and high integration of women in the household labour force. This is in stark contrast to Jalalabad, where women hardly work, and only do so as a response to shocks and adverse conditions.

Women's and children's contributions to household labour profiles

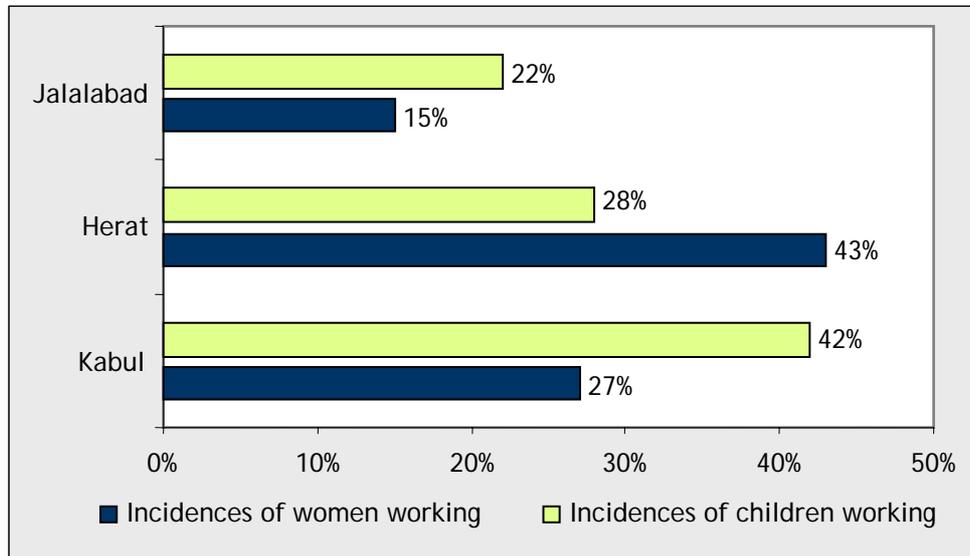
The importance of women's and/or children's work is exemplified in the graph below.

- In Herat, 43 percent of all work incidences encountered in our study were carried out by women. Only in two households were women not working. However, many of women's work activities were poorly paid.
- Kabul has the highest share of working children, exemplifying the huge difficulty of managing an income in the Afghan capital and the need to mobilise additional labour. Often however, children work for very low incomes as well (apprentices, shop helpers etc).
- Jalalabad has the highest barriers to women working, even when there are no others in the household available to work. This may be a characteristic of its Pashtun culture

(most of incidences of women working in Jalalabad are from Tajik households).

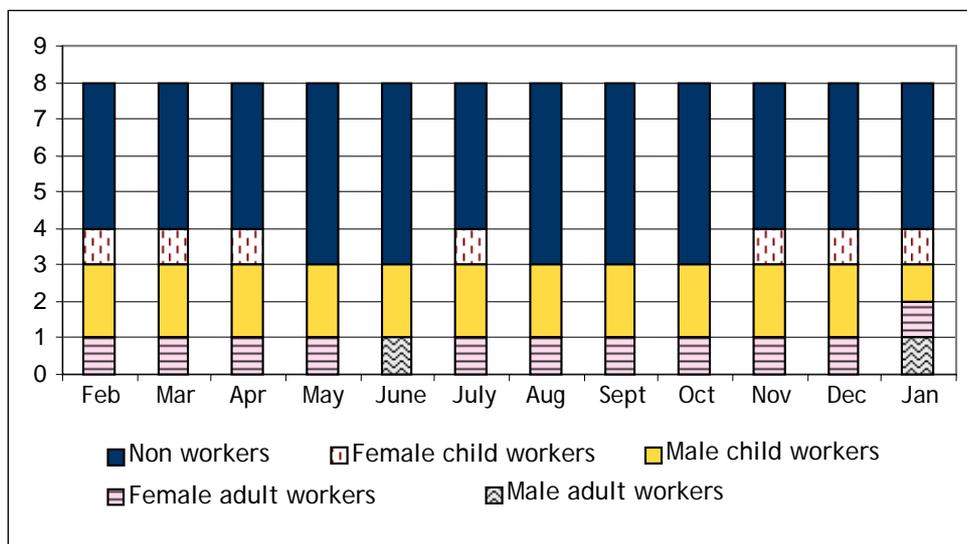
Labour Mobilisation

Share of women and children among all workers



It is also important to note how labour mobilisation inside urban households changes over the year, as a response to need, seasonality and opportunity. This is apparent from the following graph of one study household's experience in Herat.

Labour mobilisation pattern of one study household in Herat



- The eight-person household employed different members at different times and frequently changed the number of mobilised workers.
- It managed to keep at least three people working regularly: washing clothes, working as an apprentice in a mechanic shop, or as a tricycle driver.
- However, it was largely dependent on female and child labour, with only occasional contributions from the male head who is suffering from a chronic illness.
- While the household maintained a more stable labour profile, this was achieved at the

cost of the children's education, compromising the next generation's opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

- Monthly per capita incomes were highly variable, totalling 462 Afs in February and 1,040 Afs in November. While fluctuating widely, incomes did generally cover basic consumption. However many members had to contribute to achieve this relative security.
- Still, house rent is not included in their expenditures as they did not pay it through most of the study period. Only in the last study month did they pay it, using 10,000 Afs of borrowed funds.

Incomes in the informal economy

Per capita income in	Without male labour	With male labour	Female head	Male head	Have disabled member	Do not have disabled member
Kabul	111 Afs	494 Afs	435 Afs	403 Afs	260 Afs	446 Afs
Herat	327 Afs	678 Afs	749Afs	610 Afs	481 Afs	678 Afs
Jalalabad	294 Afs	580 Afs	438 Afs	551 Afs	500 Afs	570 Afs

As apparent in the table above, a household's structure and composition are decisive factors for urban livelihood security. Our data show that:

- Per capita incomes are overall very low.
- Households that are not able to mobilise male labour generate far less income than those who can.
- It is this ability to access male labour rather than the sex of the household head that is decisive for livelihoods. As shown above, female-headed households even generate more income in Kabul and Herat than male headed households, because many actually do have access to male labour and are smaller in size so income has to stretch across fewer people.
- Those who have members with a disability generate less income.

Informal employment is a barrier to livelihood security because

- It offers too much change and too few opportunities.
- It involves too many working children in order to realise sufficient incomes
- This reduces levels of education among the next generation and perpetuates poverty conditions
- It lacks protection and security, particularly for vendors who have little protection from the harassment of officials.

There is a clear need for employment generation (e.g. in form of infrastructure provisions) and employment security programmes. Currently, lack of security and low and highly fluctuating incomes are the main hindrances to sustainable improvements to livelihood conditions for the urban poor.

Recommendations

- Commitment to increased service delivery would be an important step not only to improve living conditions, but also to create more employment.

- Both quality and quantity of jobs need improvement; attempts to do so must include market analysis, as well as labour and skills development through training and formal education.
- Street vendors, petty traders and cart pullers need to be recognised as important contributors to the urban economy and they must be planned for, and not marginalised.

▪ *Ezmarai, Kabul resident*

Making a living: A day in the life of a cart puller

Right now, I am living in a rental house in Cemet Khana, Kabul, where the owner of the house has asked me to live in his house without paying the rent. This house we live in does not have potable water and electricity. My family has to wait until I get home from work to have drinking water and supply for home use because I pick them up from a far place on the way home. It is always hard for us, particularly in the winter season.

In the period of conflict, I and my family have survived nine years in the hot weathers of Peshawar in Pakistan as refugees, living in tents in the refugee camps. One of my sons died in Pakistan due to a light illness but at that time since my economic condition was too bad, I couldn't buy some medicines for my sick child to save him.

Life in Pakistan was as difficult as it is here. Sometimes I was pulling a cart in the crowded area and I was beaten by the police. Some days I had an income and some days I did not.

When the Taliban Government was dissolved and transitional Government was established, I came back to Kabul. I know the economic condition of the Government is not good, but the money which I received in the amount of 300 Afs per month from the Ministry of Martyr and Disable is also not enough for a family and this small amount of money is not sufficient for my household, which has eight members.

Some 18 years ago in Haji Nazar garden in Kandahar Province, I lost one of my legs when a landmine exploded nearby. Now I am disabled which makes it too difficult to earn money for the family. Everyday, I take the 150 kg of weight of iron in the cart, sometimes I am carrying 30 chairs on my shoulder to earn the money. Daily income is sometimes around 200 Afs and sometimes there is no work available in the market.

The distance between my house and my work, which is in Jadeh Maiwand, is about one hour of walk. Everyday, I walk pulling my cart. I am working during the harsh weather to earn the money, and in the winter, the daily income sometimes is 80-90 Afs.

I have three brothers, but none of them have assisted me and my family during my bad times. But even facing all these difficulties, I have not stopped my children from going to school. I am telling my children that they should study and go to school and I am earning for them to learn and be educated.



Since I am disabled, my prosthetic leg has been broken two times when I had to pull the cart. One day one of my neighbours saw me pulling the cart and on that day I had a very heavy load in the cart, so I was unable to pull. My neighbour asked his son to assist me because my disability prevents me from being able to lift and push very heavy things even with my cart. I still try to lift but when I do, I tend to get many cuts in my hands, especially when I pick up metals and chairs.

I am happy to be given a chance to speak in front of this assembly of people because none of the poor was ever approached in such occasions. I thank the hosts of this conference, especially those who asked me to come here and who have provided me the opportunity to share with you my life difficulties. I hope that this conference will have a positive step toward solving the difficulties of the poor community in Afghanistan.

▪ *Eng Sharifi, Medair*

Vocational training: Successes, challenges and recommendations for future programming

Medair Afghanistan works basically in two areas, as shown below:

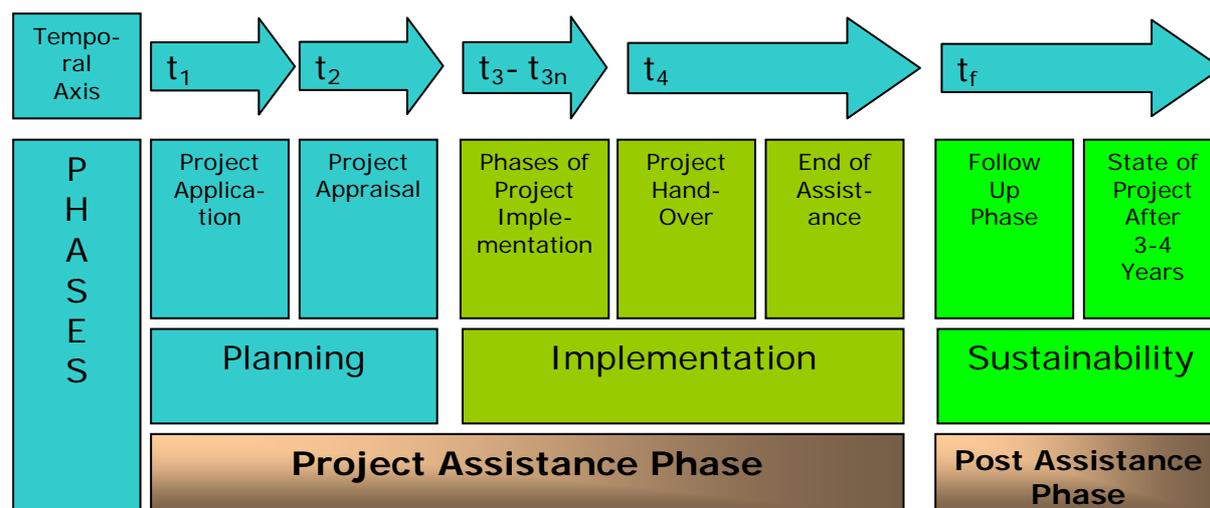
- Medical
 - Clinics
 - TB controlling programme
- Relief-Rehabilitation
 - Rural relief (shelter construction, drought relief projects, school building/construction, clinic construction, water/sanitation, road and bridge construction)
 - Urban relief

Urban relief projects

- Income generation and job creation
- School rehabilitation
- Skills training programme
 - Gabion cage weaving
 - Curtain and quilt making
 - Leather work
 - Tailoring
 - Hand embroidery
 - Machine embroidery
 - Basket weaving

From relief to sustainability

- Target group: urban poor and vulnerable
- What is vulnerability
 - Income failure
 - Food insecurity
 - Poor health (mental physical)
 - Social exclusion and disempowerment
- Free FI and NFI distributions (maximize dependency on foreign aid)
- Food for work projects (short term solution/negative impact on agriculture and farmers/indirect encouragement to poppy planting)
- Cash for work projects (short-term solution)
- Skills training (how to catch a fish rather than giving bunches of fish)

Life Course of Project**The most critical phase**

1. Post-assistance

- Provision of micro loans or at least assistance in receiving loans from another source
- Assistance in setting up of a real cooperative
- Help in finding market for their produce
- Information gathering/registration of group with:
 - Governmental institutions
 - Associations
 - Enterprises
 - NGOs

2. Lessons learned

- Training of trainers in business management
- Involvement of beneficiaries in the process of procurement of raw materials and selling of production output
- Observation visits
- Increasing confidence and marketing skills

3. Constraints/Challenges

- Short duration of the programme
- Finding/recruitment of educated trainers
- Not being able to have a post-assistance phase
- Free movement of women in conservative areas
- Coordination challenges with relevant institutions (Governmental and non-governmental organisations)

4. Recommendations

- More actors to be involved
- Permanent establishment of training centres
- Post-assistance phase
- Establishment of academic vocational centres
- Make vocational training available to more groups, rather than focusing only on vulnerable people.
- Strong coordination among relevant governmental and non-governmental organisations.
- Securing jobs for graduates

- Abdul Rahim, Programme Coordinator, NSDP

National Skills Development and Market Linkage Programme (NSDP)

NSDP, why?

- School dropouts + future high school graduates are seeking work
- Lack of consistency, quality and coordination within and among various training providers (TPs)
- Lack of TPs who can provide high quality labour market-driven courses using pedagogically-trained trainers and appropriate curricula and training equipment
- Lack of standardised curricula and qualifications
- No national Vocation Education and Training (VET) policy
- No mechanisms for management of supply of training
- No systematic collection of labour market information
- Wide divisions between MoLSA and MoE training departments
- Lack of staff at MoLSA and MoE with experience and knowledge of up-to-date skills development frameworks and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems.

Follow-up to NSDP establishment

- Strategy Paper (September 2004)
- PIU established (spring 2005)
 - Physical and human capacity very limited
 - No international assistance to PIU
- Involvement of ILO (November 2005)

Overall goal NSDP

Contribute to the socio-economic recovery of Afghanistan through the provision of a national vocational and training system that is responsive to labour market needs and that provides Afghan women and men with the knowledge and skills for decent work.

Three Immediate Objectives:

- Provision of training
- Capacity building
- Creation of a facilitating environment

Objective 1: Training

There are 150,000 unemployed Afghans, of which at least 35 percent are women. We have a goal to increase wage and self-employment opportunities through the provision of market-oriented skills training, business training and linkages to micro-credit and business development support services, by the end of 2010.

Delivery mechanisms:

- Government training providers (TPs)
- Private (national and international) TPs
- NGO (national and international) TPs

Competitive tender

Managed and supervised by NSDP/PIU

Objective 2: Capacity building

The capacity of the national VET system to manage and deliver market oriented skills training and linkages to micro-credit and business development support services has increased.

- NSDP/PIU
- National training providers
- Development of national curricula, quality learning materials, appropriate student assessment, course evaluation and certification strategies;
- Appropriately qualified teachers/trainers, using proven technologies and exploring new approaches such as computer-aided learning and flexible delivery systems.

Objective 3: Facilitating environment

Establishment of a National Vocational Education and Training Authority (NVETA) that will have overall responsibility for policy and planning in regard to the nature and quantum of VET and the standards of delivery and certification of that training throughout the country.

Short-term:

- Labour market survey
- Mapping capacity training providers
- Registering of training providers

Long-term:

- National qualifications framework
- Policy development
- National Vocational Education and Training Authority

What has been achieved?

- Objectives, outputs, activities defined
- New PIU established
- 1,384 training programmes on track (2,150 trainees, 12 provinces)
- 1,385 training programmes being prepared (7,000 trainees)
- Partnership with MoF Social Safety Programme
- Labour Market Information project being prepared

I-ANDS

NSDP as vehicle for achieving Afghanistan Compact benchmarks for skills development:

- Human resource study by 2006
- Training of 150,000 trainees in marketable skills by 2010

▪ Gregor Schulz, Chief Technical Advisor, ILO Experience with employment service centres

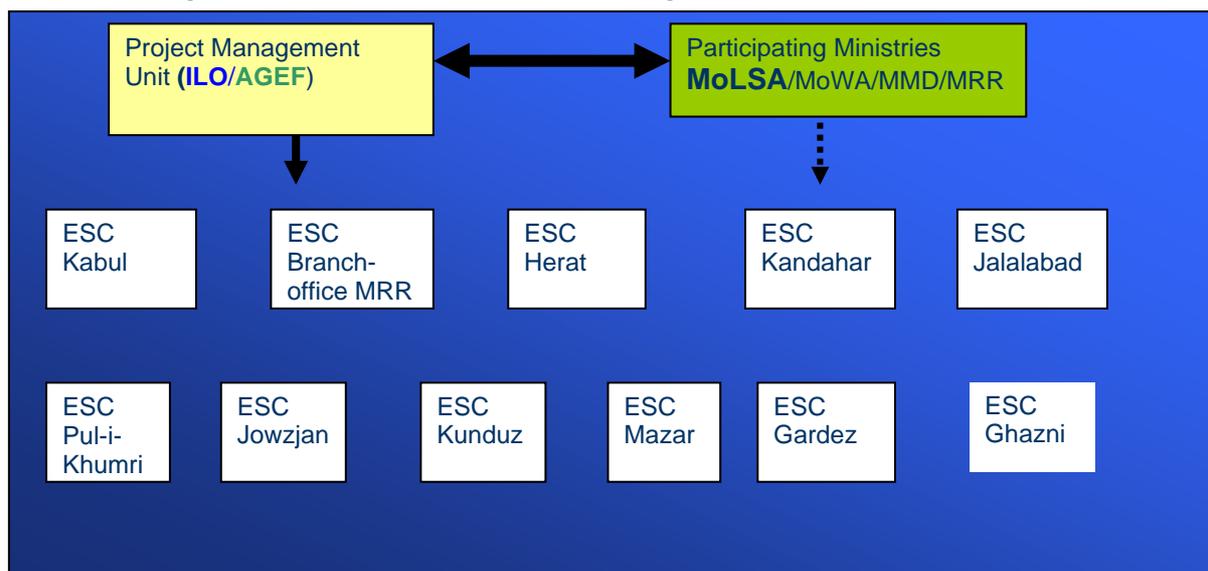
Expansion of employment services in Kabul and 9 provinces

- The purpose of the project is to contribute toward the reduction of poverty by providing access to labour market services (job placement, vocational and career guidance, labour market information).
- Starting date: May 2004
- Funding secured until January 2007

Strategy

- Project implementation through strong participation of Afghan Ministries
- Capacity building at Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and other participating Ministries (MoWA, MMD, MRR)
- Training of staff in all areas of labour market services
- Establishing necessary office infrastructure at Ministry locations

Partner organisations and ESC offices in the regions:



Statistics (for 15 months, until June 2006)

- Approximately 7,800 vacancies received
- Approx. 24,100 job seekers interviewed
- Approx. 10,700 job seekers referred to vacancies and training providers
- Approx. 3,300 job seekers placed in training or jobs

Success

- Only labour market service accessible for everyone free of charge, covering most urban areas
- Career and vocational counseling in connection with job placement and referral to vocational training is well accepted by job seekers, employers and training providers, merit-based system
- Full support from the government
- Improved livelihoods for thousands of clients

Challenges

- Huge skills gap/mismatch of labour demand and supply
- Quality and quantity of present vocational training available does not fit market requirements
- Private sector largely informal
- Quantitative capacity of ESC limited

CLOSING SESSION

Thursday, 10 August 2006

Participatory Planning

- *Chair: Eng. Shah Wali, Head of Municipalities, Ministry of Interior*

Presentation

- *Abdul Ahad Wahid, KURP
Community involvement in informal upgrading: the KURP approach
Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project (KURP Project launched: August 2005)*

Objectives

- To provide improved delivery of basic urban services in vulnerable communities in Kabul
- To enhance the managerial capacity of MOUD, KM and four other municipalities in major provinces of Herat, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif and Jalalabad
- To enhance the environment for the needy and poor communities for better living

Area requiring upgrade

Kabul, District # 7 - Aga Ali Shams



Areas being upgraded in Kabul

The Project involves working in 19 Gozars in Kabul

- In Districts: 1,2,3,5,8 and 13
- Total area of 968 hectares
- Upgradeable: 620 hectares
- Reaching 155,000 people
- And in poor, infrastructure deficient, planned and unplanned neighbourhoods
- It will follow a participatory process involving the respective community groups.
- For this project, we have secured funds of USD 21 million.

The Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project focuses on those areas which are highlighted with red color as seen in the map below:



The services are aimed at improving tertiary network infrastructure

- Water
- Sanitation
- Solid waste disposal system
- Access ways (including steps in sloping sites)
- Drains
- Street lighting

Achievements

In land tenure regularisation:

- PMU found that the excursive of a pilot study of land titling was carried out in districts 7 and 13 by the LTERA/USAID in the last 12-14 months. It was logical not to duplicate the work and save time and resources.
- The PMU, through MOUD, signed an agreement of cooperation and collaboration with LTERA/USAID to share our findings and help each other in developing a sound and practical framework for land tenure regularisation.

Structure plans

We will assist the MOUD and five municipalities (including Kabul) with the preparation of physical development plans and investment programmes, building capacity in planning in the MOUD and the municipalities, and helping with the institutionalisation of a planning process in the municipalities with a budget of USD 1.64m.

- EOIs have been issued for Kabul physical plan; and
- RFPs are drafted for Kabul plan.

- *Ghulam Dastageer Bezhan, Kabul Municipality, Department of Design and Implementation of Cities*

Participatory planning from the perspective of Kabul Municipality

The main topic of the conference is about poverty reduction in urban areas. In Afghanistan, two decades of war destroyed the infrastructure, brought misery and poverty, and people faced a lot of problems in various cities, particularly Kabul.

Kabul municipality has a strategic plan for urban development in various sectors such as; shelter, potable water, sanitation, drainage system, rebuilding of infrastructure and employment generation. In this regard we need the international community's support and assistance in building the urban sector.

Kabul citizens are suffering from the following problems

- Limited facilities and resources
- Unemployment
- No shelter for poor households (living in tents and makeshift houses)
- Lack of potable water
- Lack of basic health services
- No electricity poles and street lights
- Lack of sanitation and drainage system
- High inflation rates in the market
- No construction of roads and streets

Kabul Municipality has plans for the following shelter projects, in which people will have all the basic facilities of life

- Ahmad Shah Baba Project
- Arzan Kimat Project
- Childokhtaran project
- Dashte Barchi Project
- Daste Bodkhak project
- Qalai Zaman Khan Project
- Bagrami project

Meanwhile, Kabul Municipality is working on different projects for employment creation

- Vocational training for disabled people and orphans
- Establishment of daily market stalls
- Creation of job opportunities by starting shelter projects

Municipalities should invite the better off to help and support the poor households. Municipalities could bring people together and can close the gap between the public and the government. We want the international community along with the government agencies to have close cooperation in various projects with us to reduce poverty.

▪ *Dr Baseer Sarwari, UN Habitat*
City profiling in Kandahar: A new approach for participatory planning?

City profiling and municipal strategic action planning

Collaboration between:

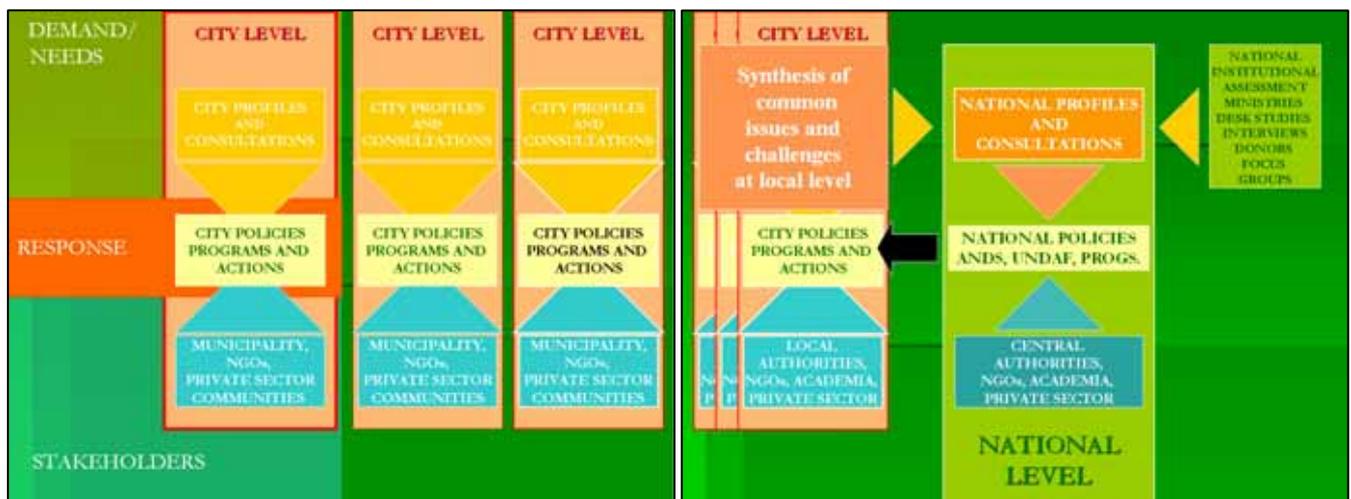
- Government of Afghanistan, represented by: MOUD, MOI, ANDS
- Participating municipalities of: Kandahar, Mazar, Jalalabad, Herat and Farah.
- Provincial authorities: Government departments and community groups
- European Commission as main funding agency
- UN-HABITAT as main facilitating partner.

What city profiling will achieve in post-conflict Afghanistan

- Raise the profile of the urban sector
- Strengthen linkages
- Strengthen municipal governments
- Donor coordination of investments
- Advance implementation of Afghanistan Compact, ANDS and MDGs.

The 5 profile evaluation themes to assess and develop urban programmes in Afghanistan

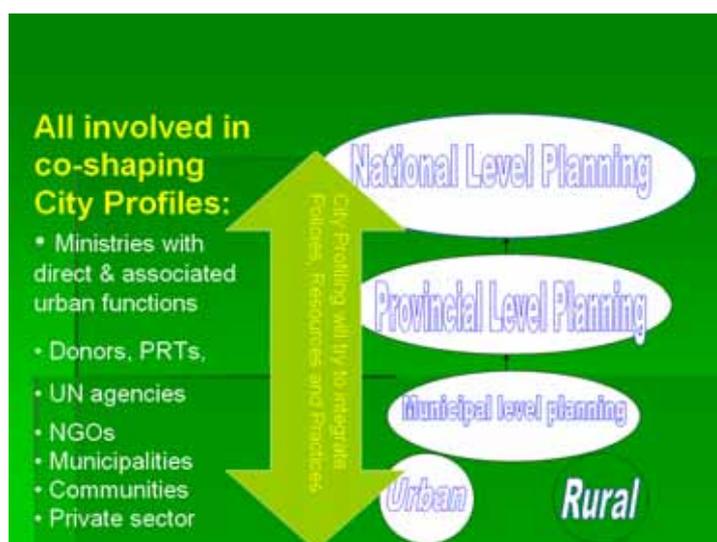
1. Governance
2. Infrastructure services and environment
3. Informal settlements and land management
4. Social inclusion
5. Local economic development



City profiling and municipal strategic action plans contribute to the national planning framework



City profiling and municipal strategic action plans and levels of engagement and integration in the National Planning Process



Kandahar Municipality: Afghanistan's first Pilot City

CP and MSAP processes being implemented:

Step 1: Central government ownership, coordination and involvement

- Establishment of Government oversight committee.
- Central authorities include: Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Interior, Kabul Municipality, Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS)
- More strategic partners will be on-board as programme matures.

Step 2: Broad-based involvement

- Interview questions prepared and peer reviewed by professional experts.
- Programme launch; presentations to: ISAF, EC, CG, MUD/MOI; workshop held before going to Kandahar.

Step 3: Local ownership by Municipality

- Recruited CP and MSAP Provincial Coordinator
- Established CP and MSAP Office embedded within Municipality

- Established Municipal Steering Team chaired by Mayor with participation of all department heads
- Emphasis on Municipal ownership and strengthening

Step 4: Understanding the city through City Profile discussions

- Five-weeks of Rapid Urban Sector Profiling with communities, and all representative stakeholders, undertaken with Municipality
- Constituents profiled: Government departments, municipal departments, communities, NGOs, UN agencies, PRTS, PDC, Governor, Provincial Council, university, and private sector
- All discussions held in local Pashtu language
- Draft SWOT Analysis prepared for each of five City Profiles

Step 5: Co-developing City Profiles prepared for the city by the city

- Municipal Steering Group assisted in preparations to arrange and lead a three-day workshop
- Pre-test workshop rehearsals and capacity building training for Municipality to lead in workshop facilitation
- Three-day City Profile workshop held, led and facilitated by Municipality; Working Groups have HABITAT Resource people embedded to assist but not facilitate process
- All discussions in Pashtu
- Participation of ALL representative stakeholders in the city to co-develop City Profiles together
- SWOT Analysis collectively prepared by all city stakeholders
- Broad consensus reached on main problems and main priorities to address these problems

Step 6: Municipal Strategic Action Planning Workshop

Workshop objectives:

- To develop a collective vision for the City to be achieved in the next five years
- To rank priority programmes developed through City Profile stage
- To agree to membership of Technical Working Group representatives to perform further work and elaborate priorities developed through consensus into programmes for funding and implementation.
- Programmes guided to be aligned to ANDS Benchmarks + Afghanistan Compact + Donor preferences and priorities as much as possible to facilitate future funding for implementation of activities in the City

Linking priorities and sectors to develop programmes:

Priorities Identified:	Sector	Programmes:
1. Application , enforcement and strict follow up of rule of law 2. A long lasting security	Security and Rule of Law	1- 2- 3-
1. Elimination of bureaucracy 2. Develop guidelines and procedures for establishment of a better relationships with the private sector 3. Establishment and strengthening community-Municipality relationships. 4. Inclusion of all marginalized segments of the society in all levels of development efforts	Governance	

Programme Development: 2006-2010

Programs	Goal	Objective	Project ideas	Inputs	Expected Output	Relevant Departments	Assumption
Comprehensive Water supply program for Kandahar city	Enhance health and well being through management of the environment	1. Collection, disposal and composting of 46,000 m3 of solid waste each year	1. Build capacity of municipality and community to carry 125m3 of solid waste to the dumping site every day 2. Community awareness on environmental and health issues through community mobilization and school 3. Composting and recycling of the solid waste	Skilled and unskilled labor Equipment Budget Truck, sweeping truck Loaders Unskilled labor Tools Sanitation suit Budget Training to the technical staff Budget Recycling/composting plant Machineries Skilled and unskilled labor	125 m3 of solid waste is taken out the city every day	Municipality, Community, Habitat, JICA	

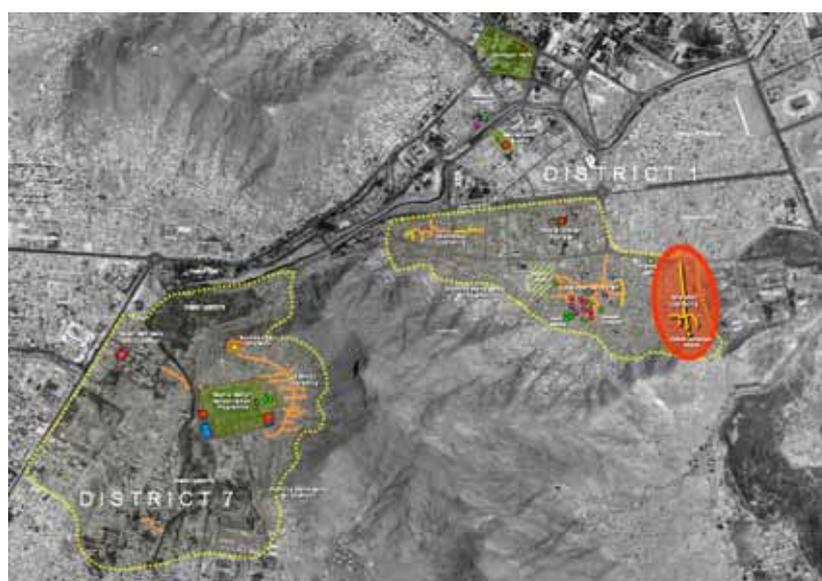
▪ **Habib Noori and Soraya Salim, AKTC**
Planning with people

A case study of community-driven upgrading

Key activities:

- Survey and document surviving historic fabric and assess living conditions
- Invest directly in upgrading and restoration of public and private buildings
- Advocate for granting of special status for historic areas
- Reintroduce traditional building crafts and generate employment
- Support and work through existing community structures

Focus of AKTC physical upgrading and conservation in Kabul: 2002-06



The case study: KHARABAT

Key characteristics:

- Badly damaged housing stock and infrastructure
- Area undergoing rapid reconstruction process
- High percentage of owner-occupied properties (90 percent) + dynamic and respected community leaders and proactive cultural groups (musicians)

The Community:

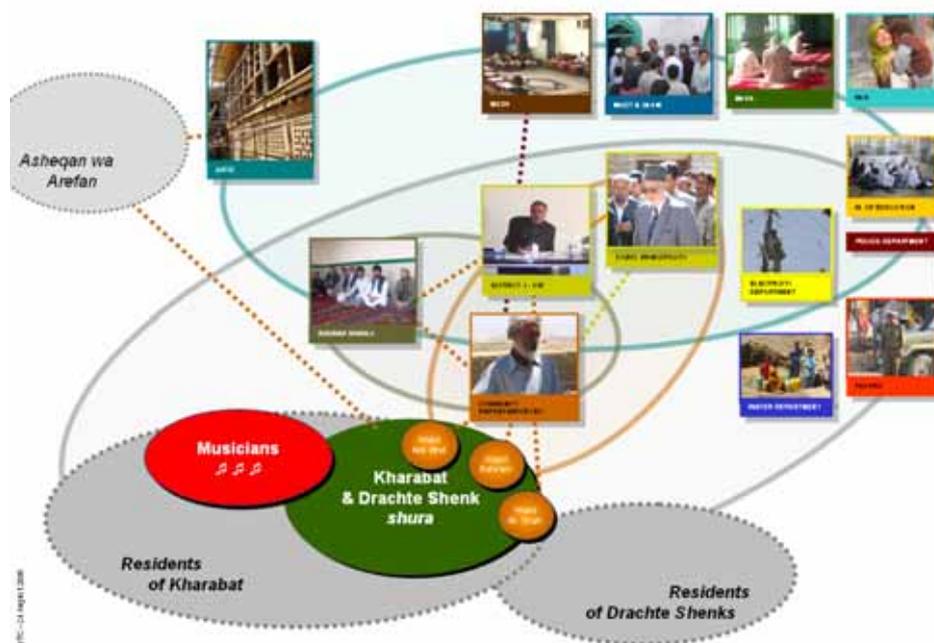
Self-determination

- Early 2005: the community decides to prioritise drainage and surfacing of the main Kharabat road
 - ↓
- People persevere in:
 - Drafting requests through official administrative channels
 - Drafting petitions to possible donor agencies and NGOs

Community mobilisation > Government

- The wakil-i- gozar and the musicians invite government officials to visit the area
 - ↓
- Succeeded in “putting Kharabat on the map”
- Raise awareness on living conditions and chronic lack of investments
- Assessment of conditions of historic and cultural facilities
- Raised expectations

Spheres of Representation - KHARABAT



In parallel: AKTC SURVEYING

- AKTC conducts surveys of the area as part of its ongoing work in the Old City
↓
- Undertaking site visits and meetings with residents and their representatives
- Engaging District officials and community representatives in identifying key “pressure points”
- Developing a comprehensive profile of land use characteristics, infrastructure, public services and facilities

Assessments:

- AKTC develops a joint assessment of infrastructure conditions & environmental problems
↓
- Development of thematic maps, including infrastructure issues
- Updating information held by the authorities
- Analysing transformations
- Systematic feedback to the community and district officers

***AKTC and representatives - Decision-making***

- AKTC staff set up meetings to engage the wakils in planning
↓
- Stimulating interest in collaborative work
- Graphically mapping needs and priorities (basic infrastructure)
- Deciding how to allocate and identify resources
- Building confidence

Community mobilisation > Municipality

- Representatives meet the Deputy Mayor and are promised support for upgrading works
↓
- Wakils are referred to KM and are assured of support
- The community levels the street
- The Municipality sends debris and loose material instead of gravel
- Works prove difficult due to the winter
- The initiative has limited impact

Wakil-i-Gozars > AKTC

- The community gathers in Drachte Schenk and invites AKTC to attend
↓
- The community officially requests AKTC for support in upgrading Kharabat road
- It agrees to pool community resources and conduct necessary negotiations
- AKTC and the community agree on the sequence and timeframe of work

Community mobilization > Commitment

- A second meeting was called by the wakil-i-gozaar to draft a binding agreement between AKTC and the community
↓
- The community commits to their contribution, as follows:
 - negotiation with residents affected by the works
 - excavation and levelling
 - monitoring of works
 - watering of concrete
- AKTC commits to undertake the excavation of the drainage channels and the surfacing

of the Kharabat road

Road Survey

- AKTC proceeds to undertake topographic survey of the road and define technical options
- ↓
- Survey of key levels for drainage
- Cost estimation
- Mapping of vacant properties
- Joint selection of optimal connections of drains to Tachtapul

Community + AKTC > Mobilisation

- A number of community members (not wakils) work with the AKTC team with no compensation to:
 - ↓
- Mobilise the community for labour and collaboration
- Find absent owners
- Negotiate consent from home owners for channels passing through their properties
- List those needing future piped water

Community Mobilization > Celebration

- Inauguration of the upgrading of the road
 - ↓
- The community itself organised the event and extended the invitations to the authorities
 - Head of District 1 and his deputy
 - Head of Police
 - Head of Security
 - Head of the Old City Shura
 - Well-respected members of the Kharabat community

Community > “Owning” The Process

- Ongoing work
 - ↓
- The community fully participates in the implementation process:
 - Excavations, levelling
 - Stopping traffic
 - Security of equipment
 - Oversight of the works
 - Safety of children and pedestrians
 - Watering the concrete

Key Challenges

For the Government

- Actively promote a people-centred approach to planning and endorse neighbourhood planning
- Tap into the ability and experience of communities to manage their neighbourhoods
- Agree on institutional roles and responsibilities
- Make more effective use of the resources of partner agencies
- Avoid raising expectations

For donors and implementing agencies

- Move beyond “flagship” urban projects
- Identify critical needs in order to address deepening urban poverty
- Insist on participatory approaches in designing, implementing and monitoring projects
- Work within existing community structures

For local representatives and community-based organisations

- Be realistic as to the capacity of government and aid agencies
- Ensure representation from all sections of the community and promote accountability
- Learn lessons from the experience of other communities
- PERSIST!

Synthesis

▪ *Jolyon Leslie*

After listening to discussions yesterday and today, the recurring theme expressed is: many people in the country are **struggling**.

1. *Struggle for survival*. We see how poor many people are but we have to keep in mind that they are highly resourceful. Given the opportunities, they'll know how to better their lives; we must do everything we can to provide them with their basic needs to stay healthy and make sure they get employment opportunities that will allow them to pursue a meaningful life for their families.
2. *Struggle of understanding*. There's a huge gap of understanding between the public on the one hand, and the agencies and government on the other. Whether we like it or not, NGOs are perceived as part of the government (and as the problem for those constituents who feel left out of any progress). We have to bridge this huge gap of understanding, if we can't, we might as well go home.
3. *Struggle to respond*. We need to move from a welfare/reactive response to a more institutional one. Aid agencies talk long-term but pay short-term; agencies offer a "feel good" handout and then take a "We'll see..." stance.
4. *Struggle with coordination*. It's an absolute scandal that we can't coordinate our efforts!
5. *Struggle with change of attitude*. Perhaps we need to revisit our approach. We need to understand what the limitations are, do more participatory planning, make sure money goes to services. Right now, the poor people we're supposed to be helping feel that we're wasting time and resources. We must PLAN EFFECTIVELY!

Closing Remarks

▪ *Mir Ahmad Joyenda, Member of Parliament, Kabul*

Members of Parliament had a month-and-half holiday during this time. I am among the ordinary people and I came to understand that a rift has grown between the people and the government.

Instead of seminars or workshops, we should be practically joining the various welfare projects to solve the basic problems of the community rather than having it as a paper work. At the moment seminars/workshops are only formalities to discuss issues, while we are already under the objections of citizens that NGOs/government projects are a waste of time and resources. Donor agencies have no confidence in governmental agencies because of corruption, waste of resources and the lack of professionalism. Government professionals have left the government services and have joined the NGOs because NGOs pay good salaries and they are happy with their jobs.

Policy makers should be recommending how to provide the basic facilities for the citizens and the immediate needs of urban sectors. They should take advantage of the information provided in the research outcomes and incorporate them into policies because this research was conducted directly with the poor community and their voices have been heard and expressed in the research.

In the country, insecurity, unemployment, bureaucracy and corruption have made the situation very difficult. The population of Kabul city was around 1.5 million 30 years ago, whereas right now, the population has reached around 4 million citizens living in Kabul and even other major cities are facing these problems. People have migrated from rural to urban areas which are a large burden for urban areas. Those returnees, who come from Pakistan and Iran, are looking to settle down in urban areas because they know that more facilities are available in the cities than rural areas.

These problems have stopped the international and national investors from investing in the country. This government and the Parliament have been elected by the people but now it seems as if there is a steel wall separating the public and the government so how can we say that we have a democratic government that can solve people's basic problems?

Before the establishment of the Parliament, Ministries and Directorates had an extra budget for their dry fruits expenditures, which was around 500-700 million Afs. When the Parliament was established, it passed a bill rejecting the extra expenditures of Ministries and then President Hamed Karzai issued an ordinance in this regard and implemented the bill. This action was good which reduced the ministries expenditures and assisted the economy of the country.

Minister of Finance, Dr Abdul Haq Ahadi, was asked to present the annual financial reports to the Parliament and he was asked why the salaries of civil servants are not increased? Mr Ahadi said that the government is not in a position to increase the current salaries by an additional 300 Afs because foreign aid is limited. There are no coordination and cooperation existing among the public and the government.

Day by day, construction and rehabilitation processes are increasing in the cities, particularly in Kabul. Kabul Municipality has allowed the public to build multi-story buildings in some areas but they don't care about the sewage system. They dig a deep hole around 100-200 metres deep for the sewage of toilets and these holes pollute the underground potable water, leading to so many contagious diseases.

Although we have enough resources and facilities available to reduce poverty, we don't have skilled labour and the labourers we have, such as carpenters, mechanics, architects, electricians, engineers and agronomists, are not experts in their respective fields.

Unfortunately, no one feels responsible and accountable in the government departments. If the situation stays like this, there should be no expectations for the development of the country. If the government had worked in capacity building, we may not face this situation now.

As a Parliamentarian representing the people of Kabul, I would like conclude my speech by declaring that this conference is quite helpful for policy makers, the international community in Afghanistan and NGOs working for the development of the country. I urge that policy makers and decision makers take AREU's research into consideration.