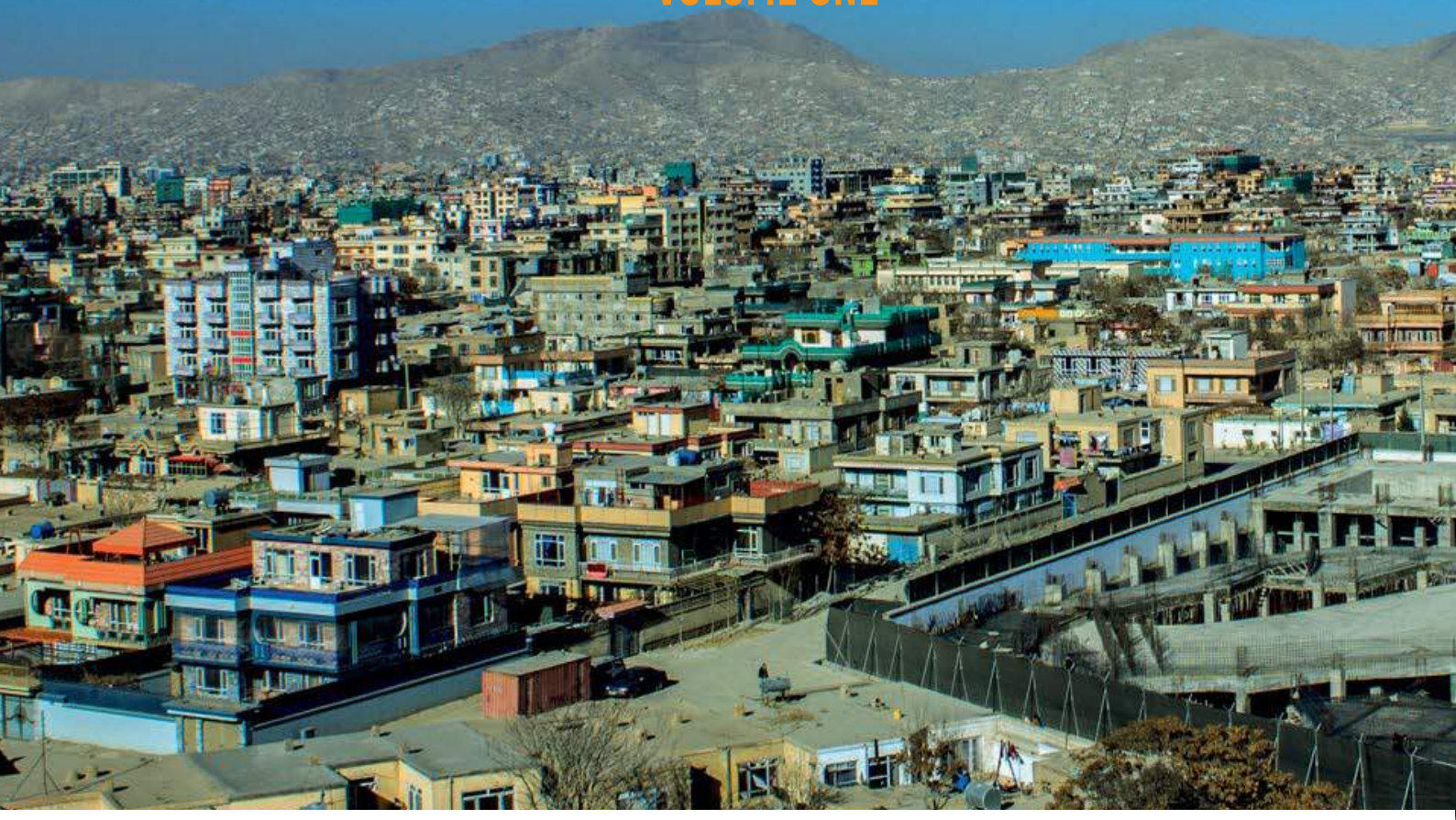
STATE OF AFGHAN CITIES

2015

VOLUME ONE



Ministry of Urban Development Affairs
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
MUDA

دولت جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان
اداره مستقل ارگانهای محلی

د افغانستان اسلامی جمهوری دولت
د سیمه ییزو ارګانونو خپلواکه اداره

Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Independent Directorate of Local Governance

Kabul Municipality
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

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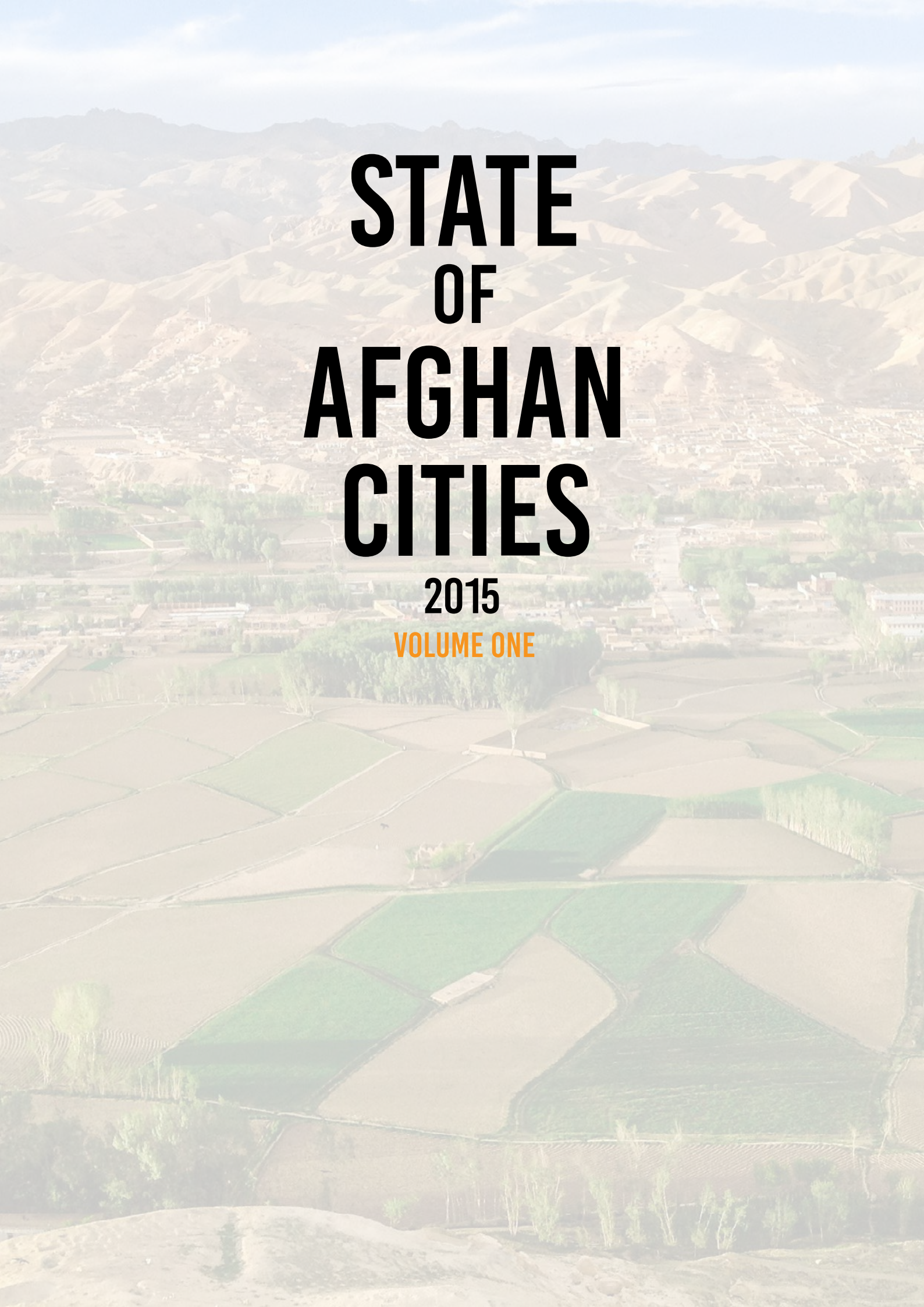

STATE OF AFGHAN CITIES

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VOLUME ONE

MINISTER'S FOREWORD

Ministry of Urban Development Affairs

Cities have great potential to improve livelihoods, drive economic growth and provide safe and affordable housing and adequate services. With continued urbanisation in Afghan cities occurring in the next few decades, there is a great opportunity to promote urban development that is sustainable, equitable and a catalyst for economic growth.

The priorities of the National Unity Government of Afghanistan for the urban sector are very clear. The 'Realizing Self-Reliance' Framework presented at the London Conference on Afghanistan in 2014 explicitly stated cities are to be drivers of economic development. The Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA) is currently leading the drafting of an Urban National Priority Programme (U-NPP) and associated comprehensive urban development programme. Together these will lay the foundations for a sustainable urban future.

However in Afghanistan, basic information for urban areas does not exist, is outdated, or not shared. As a result, MUDA has been challenged to pro-actively guide the growth of Afghanistan's cities and harness urbanisation as a driver of development.

This State of Afghan Cities 2014/15 report and associated dataset is already providing essential inputs to these ongoing processes. It will ensure the outcomes are pragmatic and reflect the ground realities across the country.

I sincerely thank all programme partners, the Government of Australia, and UN-Habitat for supporting MUDA to implement this programme. It has been of significant benefit. The data – as well as our increased capacity for urban monitoring – will continue to be used for better urban planning and policy-making to improve the lives of the Afghan people.

H.E. Sadat Mansoor Naderi, Minister for Urban Development Affairs

DIRECTOR GENERAL'S FOREWORD

Independent Directorate of Local Governance

The Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) is proud to have taken a leading role in the development and implementation of this catalytic programme. The State of Afghan Cities 2014/15 focuses on one of IDLG's core mandates: overseeing the 33 provincial municipalities and over 150 district municipalities, under the leadership of the General Directorate of Municipal Affairs (GDMA).

The urban future facing Afghanistan is just as much a challenge for urban planning and housing as it is for sub-national governance. For more than one-quarter of the Afghan population, municipalities are the first 'point of contact' – the everyday 'face of the state'.

This report demonstrates both the enormous challenges as well as opportunities in terms of municipal governance. Challenges include insufficient capacity and resources, corruption, gender inequality and limited transparency and accountability. Opportunities include the mandate to raise local revenues and ability to reach a considerable percentage of the population with increased tenure security and improved service delivery.

IDLG remains committed towards improving the capacity, transparency and accountability of municipal governance. Through presenting a detailed picture of the state of Afghanistan's provincial municipalities, the report is a positive step towards laying the foundations for municipal elections, improving the transparency of municipal staffing and finances, and better planning and coordination of municipal service delivery.

H.E. Ghulam Jilani Popal, Director General, Independent Directorate of Local Governance

KABUL MAYOR'S FOREWORD

Kabul Municipality

Kabul Municipality is home to the largest share of the total urban population in Afghanistan. It has witnessed considerable expansion over the past decade and has greatly contributed to national economic growth, stabilisation and reconstruction.

Numerous studies of Kabul City have been undertaken over the past decade however none has undertaken such a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the existing situation as this one. Furthermore, no studies have directly compared Kabul with the other major cities in the country in order to understand their similarities and differences in terms of key dimensions such as land use, access to services and dwelling characteristics and population densities.

The findings and dataset that have been produced under this programme are of enormous value for Kabul Municipality. The land-use and dwelling maps lay the foundations for the detailed planning of each Nahia (city district), which will help to guide public and private investments, improve municipal revenue collection (especially safyee/property taxation), and ensure community-based upgrading interventions are linked with larger-scale urban upgrading investments to maximise their impact.

It is with slight regret that this activity was not undertaken a decade ago in order to have an earlier baseline assessment and to therefore be able to properly track how Kabul City has changed over the past ten years. Nevertheless, learning this lesson, Kabul Municipality is committed to implementing the activity on a regular basis (at least every five years) in order to monitor urban change in the city and demonstrate its impact on improving access to affordable land and housing, livelihoods, and basic services for all Kabul residents.

H.E. Abdul Ahad Wahid, Kabul Mayor (a.i)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the first-ever comprehensive and reliable assessment of Afghanistan's 34 Provincial Capital Cities. It is a key output from the ambitious one-year programme, The State of Afghan Cities 2014/15, developed and implemented by three lead partners: Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA), Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), and Kabul Municipality (KM); with technical assistance from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and financial support from the Government of Australia.

The programme developed an innovative, reliable and cost-effective methodology in order to examine the 'state' of Afghanistan's major cities. It used recent and high-resolution satellite images to extract key land-use and dwelling data. This was combined with field checks and city workshops to engage local stakeholders, improve data accuracy, and build human and institutional capacities for improved urban data monitoring and use.

Overall, the report demonstrates that because the 'urban agenda' has been largely missing in the past decade, Afghan cities have grown haphazardly, informally, with limited access to affordable and quality basic services, and with considerable socio-economic divisions and exclusion. There has been insufficient national policy and regulations to guide urban development; limited realistic and grounded spatial plans; and weak municipal governance to ensure equitable service delivery and effective management of the inevitable urbanisation transition facing the country.

The programme and this associated report come at an opportune time. The 'urban agenda' has been explicitly prioritized by the National Unity Government of Afghanistan as a driver of economic and social development. This recognition that urbanisation is an inevitable phenomenon is long overdue.

Urbanisation is not a problem to be solved but, if done well, is an effective instrument and driver of prosperity, stabilisation, and state building. The basis for harnessing urbanisation is having accurate and timely information upon which to base policy and planning decisions. This report makes a step forward in this direction.

> *"We will make cities the economic drivers for development. In order to do so we need to improve living conditions and service delivery in urban centers."*
>
> GoIRA (2014) Realizing Self-Reliance, London Conference on Afghanistan

KEY MESSAGES

Afghan cities are a driving force of social and economic development, state-building and peace-building, yet their full potential has been constrained by the absence of an effective urban policy and regulatory framework, insufficient and poorly coordinated investment, and weak municipal governance and land management.

- Afghanistan's urbanisation has largely been informal. Cities have expanded rapidly over the past decade without effective spatial plans and limited access to formal land and housing. The result has been informal, low-density sprawl; increasing socio-spatial inequality; and significant infrastructure deficiencies.
- Yet Afghan cities have been a significant source of economic and social development. Urban-based economic activity such as services now account for over 50% of national GDP, with agriculture accounting for 25% (down from 50% in 2002). Urban communities and citizens have demonstrated significant capacity to lead neighbourhood upgrading and local peace-building efforts.
- A change is needed to combat the negative by-products of urbanisation. An improved national policy, legal and regulatory framework is essential, along with increased capacity and authority of municipalities, to avoid another decade of informal 'laissez faire' urban growth, and to harness cities as drivers of economic and social development.

The 34 Provincial Capitals are home to over eight million Afghans, roughly one-third of the total population. While Kabul is overwhelmingly large, the Regional Hubs and Transit and Trading Hubs are home to significant urban populations as well.

- Afghanistan has a relatively geographically balanced urban spatial structure although Kabul dominates with an estimated 41% of the urban population. Kabul and the four regional hubs of Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Jalalabad are home to 69% of the urban population (in the 34 provincial capitals).
- In addition to these five largest cities, the eight Trading and Transit cities: Lashkar Gah, Kunduz, Taluqan, Pul-i-Khumri, Sheberghan, Zaranj, Maimana, and Ghazni also contain significant populations and are important regional economic and transit centres.
- At the smaller end of the spectrum, Provincial Centres and Urban Villages have comparatively smaller populations but still represent more than was previously recognised in many cases.
- Interventions should be tailored to the particular typology of cities: Kabul, Regional Hubs, Trading and Transit Hubs, Provincial Hubs, and Urban Villages. A national spatial strategy can help to promote spatially balanced and equitable urban growth in the coming decades, creating a 'system of cities' and reducing pressure on Kabul.

Afghan cities have unique land-use and spatial patterns that reflect a decade of informal, laissez faire urban growth. However they also have significant potential to accommodate urban growth in the coming decades, within existing urban areas by utilising available vacant plots.

- On average, 27% of the built-up area of cities are vacant plots (land subdivided but not yet occupied), reflecting a decade of land grabbing, land sales by municipalities, and private sector speculation. These vacant plots are sufficient to accommodate another 4 million people at current densities, adequate for urban growth in the coming 10 years.
- Agriculture is an important aspect of Afghan cities, with agricultural land occupying an average of 34% of total municipal land.
- The lack of planning to guide urban growth means that Afghan cities have inefficient spatial patterns and insufficient public space. For example the road network comprises an average of only 10% of the built-up area, and parks and sports grounds only 1.4%.
- Many of Afghanistan's urban challenges have a clear land dimension, including land grabbing, inefficient use of land, tenure insecurity in informal settlements (70% of dwelling stock), limited access to well-located land for housing by middle- and low-income households, insufficient land for economic activity, and undeveloped land-based financing for local service delivery.
- A national programme on strategic spatial planning and improved land administration and management is urgently required to address these land bottlenecks, improve urban mobility and public space, and promote the supply of affordable land for residential, industrial and commercial uses.

The vast majority of urban Afghans live in under-serviced, informal housing with little tenure security and very poor access to basic services such as water and sanitation. This is the result of a lack of viable formal alternatives and under-investment in basic urban services.

- The urban dwelling stock is 962,467 dwelling units (DU), comprised largely of irregular and hillside housing (54% and 7% respectively) and 31% regular housing. Apartments comprise only 4% of the national urban housing stock, and are mostly located in Kabul and the Regional Hubs.
- Afghan cities have low residential densities compared with international norms (avg. 19 DU/Ha; 142 people per hectare). This limits viable public transport options and greatly increases service delivery costs.
- Access to improved water sources is relatively high in cities (71%), yet this figure masks severe quality issues. Only 14% of urban dwellings are connected to the piped water network.
- Access to improved sanitation is low (29%), and no Afghan city has a comprehensive sewerage system.
- Solid waste management is the most visible municipal governance deficiency and the largest municipal expenditure.
- There is enormous potential to expand the availability of affordable housing by upgrading the stock of informal housing through a community-based regularisation process that improves tenure security, infrastructure and services.
- To cope with new housing demand a combination of housing options are needed (e.g. serviced land, incremental housing construction), stimulated by a clear national urban land/housing policy and making land available for middle- and low-income households, including IDPs and returnees.

Afghan cities contain considerable challenges including poverty, inequality, social exclusion, youth unemployment and gender inequality, which are a result of weak governance and insufficient focus on shaping an inclusive, pro-poor process of urbanisation.

- Due to a lack of effective stewardship of the urbanisation process, coupled with the rapid growth of cities, the last decade has seen both poverty and inequality increase in urban areas. Nearly one-third of the urban population lives in poverty (29%, over 2 million Afghans), and are denied access to affordable and well-located land, housing, and services.
- Gender inequality is a major challenge in cities with women and girls facing significant structural barriers to their full social and economic participation in urban life. Urban female illiteracy (62%) is double urban male illiteracy (31%); the female labor force participation rate in cities is only 13%, one-third lower than the national average (19%).
- Cities are home to a disproportionate number of youth (aged between 15 and 24), who constitute nearly a quarter of the urban population (23.6%), notably higher than in rural areas (17.8%). Yet cities are not providing jobs and opportunities commensurate with demand, with youth becoming increasingly disenfranchised as a result.
- As of 2014, urban poverty is worsening, due in part to the drawdown of the international presence in Afghanistan and corresponding economic slowdown. Poor households, IDPs, returnees and female-headed households in cities are, and will continue to be most affected by these macro-economic changes.
- Experience has shown that community ownership is an essential element of interventions to reduce urban poverty. Urban Community Development Councils (CDCs) have demonstrated enormous capacity to organise, find solutions to local social and infrastructure challenges, and engage in peace building efforts. This latent energy needs to be harnessed within a more participatory municipal governance framework and scaled-up to all cities.

Afghanistan's future is urban. The population of Afghan cities is expected to double within the next 15 years, and be 50% urban by 2060. Urbanisation can be a source of significant development, not simply a 'problem to be solved'. The inevitable urban transition presents both opportunities and challenges given the current form and structure of the major cities.

- A key challenge facing Afghanistan is how to manage it's inevitable urban transition, to ensure environmental protection, sufficient job and livelihood opportunities to meet demand of a growing urban population, equitable service delivery, access to land and housing, and balanced rural-urban development;
- There is more than enough land in cities to accommodate all urban population growth for the coming decade. For example, the five largest cities can accommodate an additional 3.6 million people without requiring any more built-up land, rather by simply utilising existing vacant plots.
- A clear national framework is required (e.g. National Urban Policy), spatial strategy for promoting balanced development; and increased international, national and municipal financing for urban development, particularly basic urban infrastructure and services.
- A better understanding of city-region dynamics is needed to develop programmes that harness rural-urban linkages, improve connectivity and promote the orderly growth of cities that enhance economic benefits and minimise negative environmental impacts.
- Fostering inclusive, safe and prosperous cities requires stronger urban institutions and municipal governance, and a clear focus on pro-poor and citizen-orientated development.

ACRONYMS

AGEs	Anti-Governmental Elements
AISA	Afghanistan Investment Support Agency
ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy
ARAZI	Afghan Land Authority
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
AUWSSC	Afghanistan Urban Water and Sewerage Supply Corporation
CDC	Community Development Council
CSO	Central Statistics Organization
DFID	Department for International Development
EU	European Union
GA	Gozar Assembly
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDMA	General Directorate for Municipal Affairs
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoIRA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IARCSC	Independent Administrative Reform Civil Service Commission
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KIS	Kabul Informal Settlement
KM	Kabul Municipality
LAS	Land Allocation Schemes
LML	Land Management Law
MAB	Municipal Advisory Board
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MOE	Ministry of Education
MoPW	Ministry of Public Works
MUDA	Ministry of Urban Development Affairs
NAPWA	National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan
NCs	Nahia Councils
NDMP	National Disaster Management Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NNS	National Nutrition Survey
NPP	National Priority Program
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PIN	People in Need
RAMP-UP	Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations
SNG	Sub-National Governance
SoAC	State of Afghan Cities Programme
UMSP	Urban Management Support Programme
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Affairs
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VCs	Value Chains
WB	World Bank

GLOSSARY

Terms	Description
Nahia	City district within a municipal boundary
Wakil I Gozar	A person chosen to represent a community to resolve disputes, represent the interests of the community and articulate the community's issues to government officials.
Sharwali	Municipality
Sharwali Uluswali	Rural (District) municipality
IDP	Person who has been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or made-man disasters; and who are within the territory of their own country
Kuchi	A nomadic ethinc group in Afghanistan
Gozar	A neighborhood area based organization structure at the sub district (Nahia) level
Tashkeel	Government civil service
Safay	An annual property tax/rates payable by all property owners (residential, commercial, institutional, etc) to cover city cleaning and solid waste collection (Safayi means cleaning/sanitation in Dari)
Zakat	Charitable contribution; one of the five pillars of Islam

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Rapid urbanisation is both an opportunity and a challenge for Afghanistan. As cities grow, it is vital that policy makers and city leaders have access to timely and reliable data to support evidenced-based decision making.

Lacking detailed knowledge of the demographic, economic, cultural, physical and environmental dynamics of Afghan cities, and the capacity to collect and use such information, many planners and decision makers are operating in a climate of uncertainty, allocating resources to immediate and pressing issues rather than investing in progressive change over the long term.

The costs of this widespread information and capacity deficit are both far reaching and immeasurable, and accrue in, for example, the form of expanding informal settlements, land grabbing, decreasing agricultural land, deepening social problems, rising urban inequality, and greater insecurity.

Programme aims and objectives

The State of Afghan Cities 2014/15 Programme (SoAC) aimed to increase knowledge and information on urbanisation in Afghanistan and improve human and institutional capacity for urban data collection, monitoring and use. The ultimate objective is to see "evidenced-based urban policies, strategies, and plans improve the living conditions and well-being of citizens in Afghanistan's cities and contribute to stabilisation and economic growth."

Implementation

The programme was implemented under the leadership of MUDA, IDLG and KM, with technical assistance provided by UN-Habitat. An Advisory Committee comprising key stakeholders (MUDA, IDLG, CSO, Kabul Municipality, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, NEPA, AUWSSC, DCDA, as well as UN sister Agencies (e.g. UNFPA, UN-WOMEN, UNEP), and civil society (e.g. AWN, AREU, AKN, and leading experts) met regularly and guided the overall programme design and implementation. This Committee essentially functioned as the precursor to a multi-stakeholder Afghan Urban Observatory that will eventually take over national urban data and monitoring.

Report structure

The SoAC 2014/15 Report comprises two volumes. Volume One, presents the key findings in five Chapters according to thematic areas: Demographics and spatial structure; Governance, Economy, Land and Housing, and Environment. The Chapters are a combination of secondary data (e.g. literature, government and partner databases) and primary data (e.g. SoAC GIS and field survey analysis).

Volume Two presents the SoAC primary data in a larger 'atlas style' format through a combination of maps, graphs and data tables for each city.

A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

This section gives a general overview of the SoAC methodology in order to situate the findings for the reader and make explicit the programme scope and limitations. Annex 1 outlines the SoAC methodology in more technical detail.

SoAC has developed a pioneering methodology that extracts data from up-to-date, high resolution satellite images of urban areas. From the image analysis, two data sets are produced: (i) house counts (hillside, irregular, and regular, apartments, apartments mixed-use, and IDP camps); and (ii) land-use (residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, agriculture, vacant plots, etc). The scope of the satellite image analysis was limited to within the new municipal boundaries approved by MUDA, IDLG/GDMA, CSO and AGCHO, however some cities do not have updated and approved municipal boundaries, so in those cases the urban built-up area was used.

Dwellings

Geographic Information System (GIS) is used to review each satellite image and digitise every house, thus producing an inventory of houses for each municipality. The dominant Afghan housing form is detached housing in individual compounds with high walls – very easy to see from the satellite image, although the more informal and irregular residential areas are slightly more difficult.

It must be emphasised that SoAC is not a population census. The principle aim of counting houses and apartments is to have spatially-attributed housing data (e.g. density and housing types) to support municipal governance and management (for example, tax mapping, detailed urban planning, and settlement upgrading, service demand, etc.) based on the existing ground conditions. Nevertheless, the dwelling counts enable population estimates to be calculated based on the average household size. The average number of households per residential compound can be determined from CSO's household listing while the average household size can be calculated using the NRVA (2011/12) figure (7.5 persons per household), other representative surveys (e.g. 2014 Urban Poverty Study, variable averages for the five big cities), and the UN-Habitat urban household-level database of over one million people (over 100,000 households) from baseline surveys undertaken in urban community-based programming over the past decade (see Annex 1).

Land-use

The existing land-use of cities was identified through the interpretation of satellite images, classified, and digitised using GIS into (i) 'built-up' and (ii) 'non-built up', with land-use classes and sub-classes for each as per international norms. Similar to house counting, land-use interpretation is relatively straightforward, although quite time-consuming, and requires a 'trained eye'. Agriculture areas and water bodies are clearly visible, as is the built form of residential areas (house compounds and apartment blocks), industrial (e.g. long sheds and circular tanks), and commercial areas (inner-city, along main roads), all of which are identifiable from the high-resolution image. Identifying sub-classes in the image is less straightforward (e.g. details of the institutional land use (schools, hospitals, clinics)). These cannot always be reliably ascertained from image interpretation and requires field verification and checking.

Field checking and city workshops

Understandably there are some areas in which the exact land-use is not comprehensible in the satellite image. The GIS team marked these as 'unknown'. Also, the image interpretation was just that, an interpretation, and it needs to be checked through field verification. Therefore, after the draft dataset is generated from the interpretation of satellite images, participatory city workshops and field surveys were undertaken to improve data accuracy,

Land use classification and dwelling counting

Dwelling points on the satellite image

Field verification and apartment field counting

City Workshop, Charikar City

check 'unknown areas', and harness the extensive local knowledge that exists within cities. This was undertaken between November 2014 and June 2015.

Participatory city workshops were held in 24 cities, accounting for 91% of the total land area of cities covered by this report. The city workshops reflect the fact that local residents themselves know their environment and therefore significant knowledge on city-level conditions rests with city residents and sub-national institutions - but it needs to be systematically collected, analysed, stored and shared. The SoAC city workshops were one-day events held under the leadership of IDLG/GDMA and the respective municipalities, attended by between 40 and 100 local stakeholders including Mayors and Municipal Advisory Board (MAB) members, municipal department staff, District (Nahia) managers, line departments, Wakili Gozars, Community Development Council leaders, and civil society. The draft district (Nahia) land use maps were presented and participants systematically reviewed these in working groups and updated and changed where required.

Following the city workshops the field survey involved teams of surveyors first-hand (i) cross-checking the accuracy of land-use and house counts; (ii) ascertaining the land-use of unknown areas; plus (iii) counting apartments (the satellite image shows the apartment blocks, but not how many apartments in each, which is required).

Box 1
Afghanistan's urban data deficit

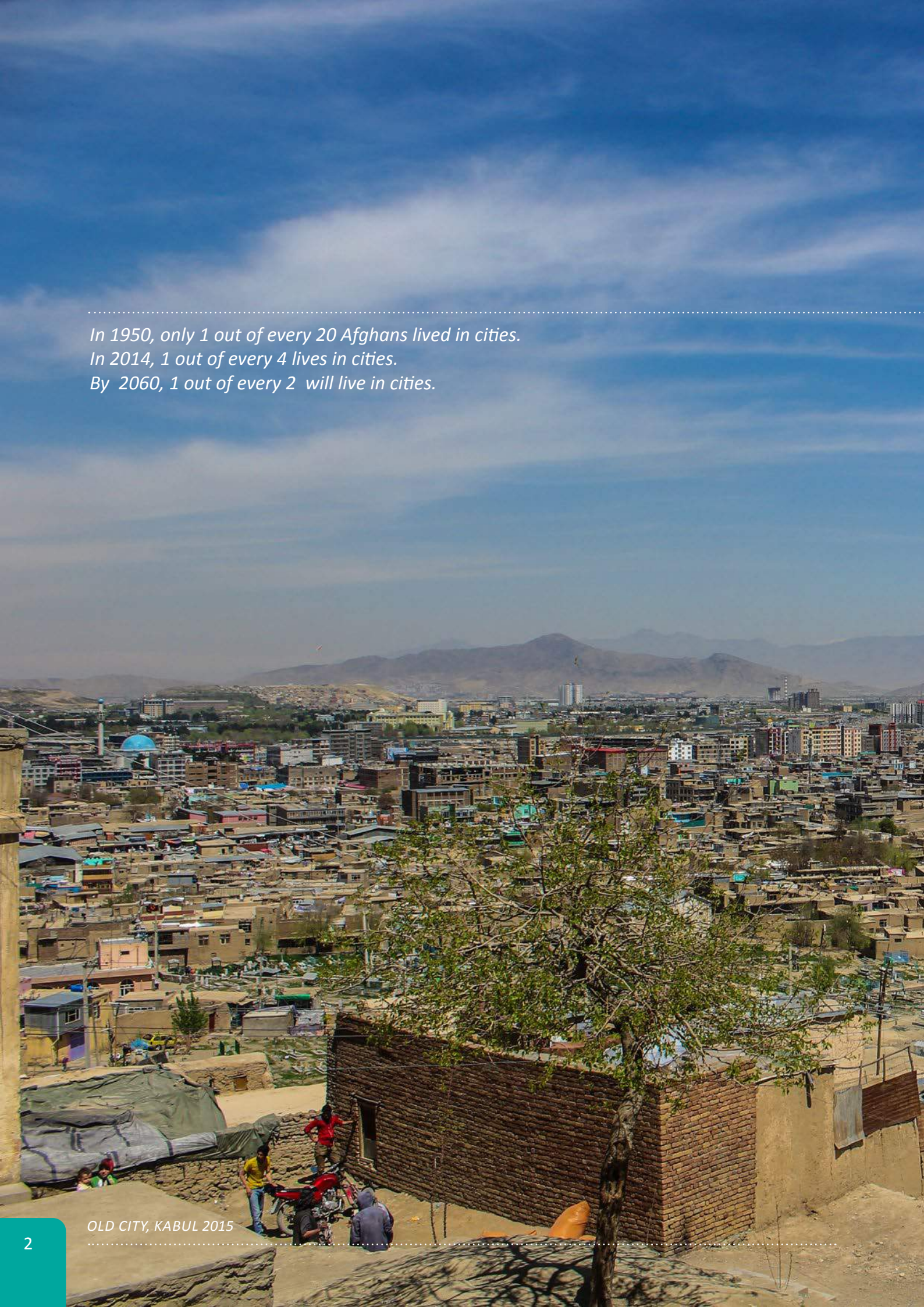
While most countries face significant challenges with collecting, analysing, publishing, and using urban data and information, the challenge is particularly acute in Afghanistan. The last census was held in 1979, and even that was not completed. The most rigorous quantitative dataset on basic urban indicators is the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA), produced by the Central Statistics Organisation (CSO). The NRVA is quite an achievement. It has been carried out over four rounds since 2003 (2003, 2005, 2007/8, and 2011/12), and focuses on a national-level set of representative household-level data. Other government institutions also have various sets of urban data. In 2008 the Ministry of Urban Development (MUDA) published eight significant volumes of city data for all the major cities. IDLG has an 'Assessment of Municipalities' database produced in 2013.

Looking at the urban data environment it is clear that: (i) no systematic urban monitoring systems exist; (ii) most data and reporting is not rural/urban disaggregated, or not done in a way that makes it clear what is 'rural' and what is 'urban'; and (iii) city-specific data is very limited, which makes city-comparisons extremely difficult.

These challenges are a symptom of a weak urban monitoring environment in Afghanistan which is characterised by: (i) a lack of coordination amongst government agencies, donors, implementing agencies, and other stakeholders; (ii) limited information sharing (especially raw data) and details of methodologies used; (iii) deep mistrust and insecurity amongst stakeholders, including competition (perceived and/or real) for using data for resource mobilisation, and fear of uncovering weaknesses with methodology or quality of data which is a threat to the institutions that produce it; and (iv) socio-political sensitivities around data (e.g. population figures, ethnicity, municipal revenues and expenditures).

City workshop in Nili, Daikundi Province

In 1950, only 1 out of every 20 Afghans lived in cities.
In 2014, 1 out of every 4 lives in cities.
By 2060, 1 out of every 2 will live in cities.



OLD CITY, KABUL 2015

CHAPTER 01 A TUMULTUOUS PAST, AN URBAN FUTURE

Key Messages

- Although Afghanistan is a predominately rural society this is changing fast. Approximately 8 million people currently live in Afghanistan's cities, yet **the urban population is expected to double within the next 15 years** and be 50% of the total population by 2060.
- Afghanistan has a **relatively balanced national urban spatial structure**, although Kabul dominates. Based on the SoAC findings, the 34 provincial capitals can be categorised into five city typologies. The 'Capital City', Kabul is the financial and political centre and largest city of the country. Four 'Regional Hubs' with populations over 290,000 include Herat (Western Region); Kandahar (Southern Region); Mazar-i-Sharif (Northern Region); and Jalalabad (Eastern Region). Eight 'Trading and Transit Hubs' include: Lashkar Gah, Kunduz, Taluqan, Pul-i-Khumri, Sheberghan, Zaranj, Maimana and Ghazni. 'Provincial Centres' are cities that are smaller and largely support their surrounding districts include: Khost, Charikar, Faiz Abad, Tarinkot, Gardez, Qala-i-Naw, Aybak, Asad Abad, Sar-i-Pul, Qalat, Farah, Bamyan, Mehterlam, and Ferozkoh. 'Urban Villages', with small populations and largely agricultural based economies include Mahmood Raqi, Bazarak, Pul-i-Alam, Nili, Sharan, Maidan Shahr and Paroon.
- Urban growth over the last decade has been fueled by **returnees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and rural-urban economic migrants** whom have migrated to cities in search of improved services; better safety and security; and livelihoods and employment opportunities. Since 2002, over 5.8 million refugee returnees have returned to Afghanistan with roughly half settling in urban areas.
- **Afghanistan has one of the youngest populations in the world**. Over three-quarters (79%) of the Afghan population is under the age of 35 years; including nearly half below the age of 15 (47%); and roughly a third (32%) between 15 and 35 years of age.[1] Cities are home to a disproportionate number of youth (between 15 and 24), who constitute nearly a quarter of the urban population (23.6%), notably higher than in rural areas (17.8%).
- **Poverty and inequality** are serious problems in Afghanistan's cities. Nearly one-third of the urban population lives below the official poverty line. Furthermore, cities present a unique set of dynamics that often compound the vulnerability of poor urban households; who frequently suffer from weaker coping mechanisms, higher incidence of food insecurity (34%) and less social capital and support networks compared with rural households.
- **Gender inequality** is a major challenge in cities with urban women and girls facing significant structural barriers to their full social and economic participation in urban life. The female labour force participation rate in cities is only 13%, one-third lower than the national average (19%). Whilst having access to housing, land and property is a crucial element of participation in the urban economy, it is estimated that less than 1% of urban land is owned or held by women.
- The inevitable and irreversible urbanisation process in Afghanistan poses both challenges and opportunities. Ensuring access to land, adequate housing, and services for another 16 million people are immense challenges, yet there are also **opportunities to harness urbanisation as a driver of economic growth, peace building and poverty reduction.**

1.1
AFGHANISTAN: A PORTRAIT OF DIVERSITY AND COMPLEXITY

Afghanistan is situated at the cross roads between Central Asia and South Asia and for centuries has been an important strategic trade route. Since 1979, following the Soviet invasion, Afghanistan has been at war. Only after the fall of the Taliban in 2001 has Afghanistan enjoyed a period of relative stability. Billions of dollars in foreign aid and assistance has since flowed in to Afghanistan to support the rebuilding process (over 120 billion USD since 2002) - the largest post-war reconstruction effort in history, larger even than Europe's post WWII Marshall Plan.[2]

Afghanistan is a land-locked and mountainous country that covers a total area of 652,230 square kilometers.[3] Geographically, Afghanistan is divided into three major regions: the Central Highlands, the Southwestern Plateau and the Northern Plains. The Hindu Kush mountains run through the north east to the south west, essentially dividing the country into these regions. The Central Highlands account for two thirds of the country's land area and form part of the Himalayas; the Southwestern Plateau forms one-fourth of the land area; and the Northern Plains contain the most fertile land of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's climate is extreme. Winters are cold with heavy snow and summers hot and dry. For example, temperatures in Ferozkoh (Chaghcharan) city (Ghor Province) can drop as low as -45 degrees Celsius in the winters, while temperatures in Zaranj city (Nimroz Province) in summer can reach above 50 degrees celsius.

Afghanistan's neighboring countries include Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and China. It shares its largest border with Pakistan (2,670 km) followed by Tajikistan (1,357 km), Iran (921 km), Turkmenistan (804 km), and Uzbekistan (144 km). Afghanistan's shortest border is with China; only 91 km.

Afghanistan has many ethnic groups, the most numerically significant of which include Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Turkmens and Baloch. In total, 14 ethnic groups are recognised in Afghanistan.[4]

The two official languages are Dari and Pashto, the former largely spoken in the country's north while the latter is traditionally associated with the south. Other languages such as Uzbeki, Pashai and Balochi are also spoken in some areas. Among all the ethnic groups, Hazaras remain one of the poorest and most marginalised groups in the country.[5] Approximately 80% of Afghanistan's population is Sunni Muslims, while Shia Muslims make up approximately 19%.

Kandahar City, Kandahar Province

1.2
NATIONAL URBAN SPATIAL STRUCTURE

Afghanistan is administratively divided into 34 provinces (Figure 1.1). Each Province is governed by a Provincial Governor and Provincial Council. In total these provinces contain 374 districts and over 120 municipalities.[6] Afghanistan is connected by road to most of its neighboring countries (Figure 1.1). For example, it is connected to Pakistan at Torkham and Spin Boldak (Chaman); with Iran at Islam Qala; with Turkmenistan at Tor Ghundi; and with Uzbekistan at Hairatan. These are significant trading and transit points (Table 1.1). The routes to neighbouring countries play a vital role in Afghanistan's economy. For example, the total trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2013 was worth 2.3 billion USD.[7] The majority of this trade took place through trade routes Torkham and Chaman.

Many of the Provincial Capitals in Afghanistan are connected by a 'ring road' that has linkages to most Provinces. For example, the ring road connects Kabul to Parwan, Baghlan and Balkh provinces to the north. Similarly in the south, it connects Kabul to Kandahar passing through Ghazni and Zabul.

Afghanistan's major cities include Kabul (the capital and the largest city), Herat, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif and Jalalabad. With the exception of Kabul, these major cities are situated close to the borders with the neighboring countries. For example, Kandahar and Jalalabad are close to the border with Pakistan at Torkham and Chaman respectively; Herat is situated near the borders of Iran and Turkmenistan; and Mazar-i-Sharif is close to the borders of both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

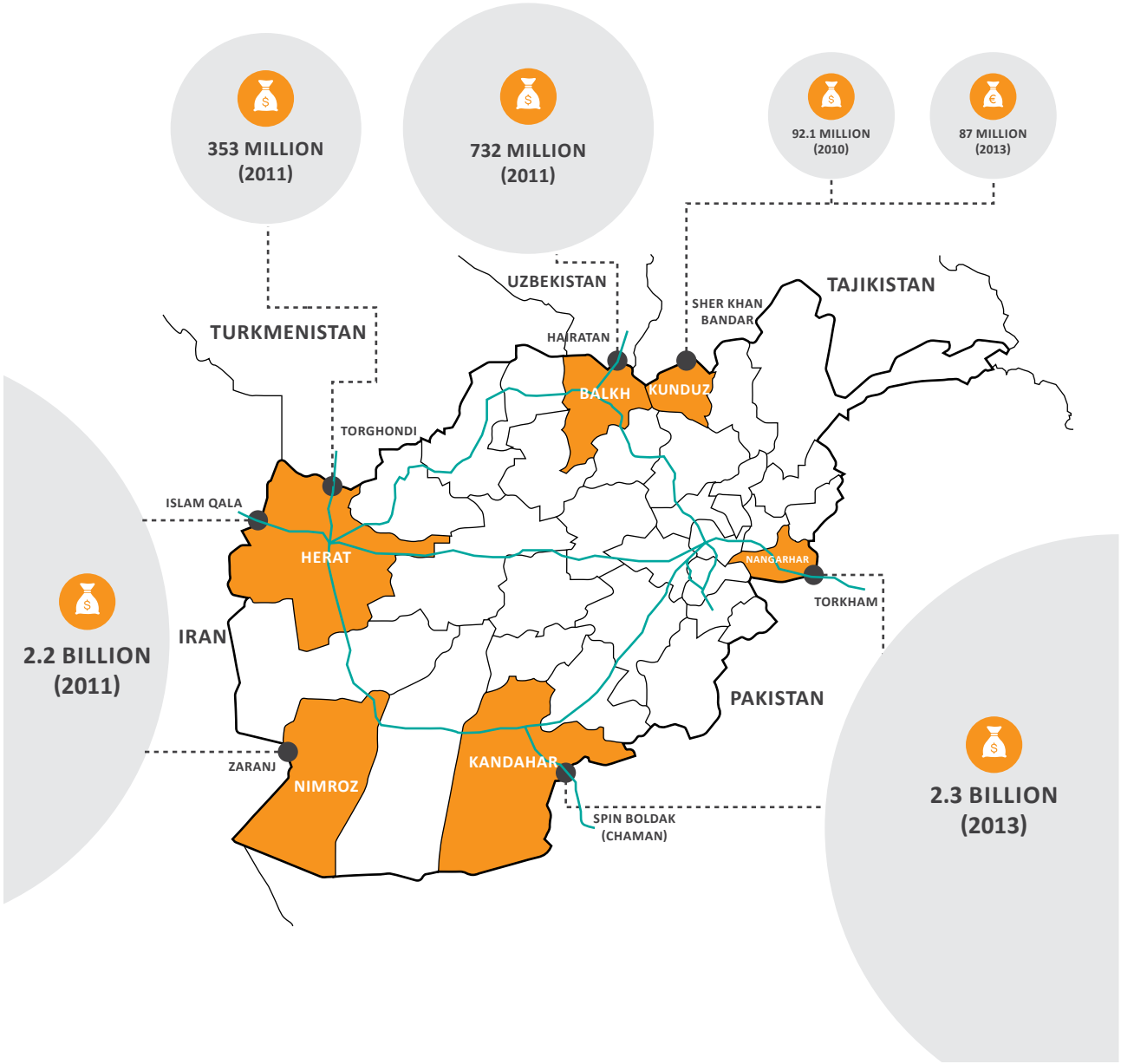
Each Province has a Provincial Capital, which is the largest city in terms of land area and population (Figure 1.1 and Table 1.2) in each respective Province. Each Provincial District has a District Municipality, which is also considered an urban/municipal area, though these are typically much smaller and function more as large villages.

Based on the findings from the SoAC analysis, Afghanistan's Provincial Capitals can be divided into five distinct categories; based on land area, dwelling units/population, relationship to their province and region, and city function/characteristics. Table 1.2 shows each of the 34 Provincial Capitals according to these five categories.

Children playing in the streets of District 1, Kabul

FIGURE 1.1: AFGHANISTAN'S 34 PROVINCES, PROVINCIAL CAPITAL CITIES AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

FIGURE 1.2: KEY BORDER CROSSINGS AND TRADE ROUTES



SOURCE: UNESCAP (2015); EUROSTAT (2013) PAKISTAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS (2014); STATISTICS AGENCY UNDER THE PRESIDENT OF TAJIKISTAN (2010); AHMADIAN (2013); PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (2013).

TABLE 1.1: KEY BORDER CROSSINGS AND TRADE

Afghan Province	Neighbouring Country	Transit Point	Trading figures (USD)
Nangarhar	Pakistan	Torkham	2.3 Billion (2013)
Kandahar	Pakistan	Spin Boldak (Chaman)	
Herat	Iran	Islam Qala	2.2 Billion (2011)
Nimroz	Iran	Zaranj	
Herat	Turkmenistan	Torghondi	353 Million (2011)
Balkh	Uzbekistan	Hairatan	732 Million (2011)
Kundoz	Tajikistan	Sher Khan Bandar	92.1 Million USD (2010) 87 Million Euros (2013)

SOURCE: UNESCAP (2015); EUROSTAT (2013); PAKISTAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS (2014); STATISTICS AGENCY UNDER THE PRESIDENT OF TAJIKISTAN (2010); AHMADIAN (2013); PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (2013).

TABLE 1.2: AFGHANISTAN'S 34 PROVINCIAL CAPITAL CITY TYPOLOGIES

City Type	Characteristics	Cities	Land Area (Km²)	Number of Dwelling Units
Capital City	Political, administrative, educational and financial centre of the country; at least six times the population size than the next largest cities (Regional Hubs) and under considerable urban growth pressure due to in-migration and urban expansion.	Kabul	1,049 Km²	396,095
Regional Hub	Historic cities that dominate the northern, western, and southern regions; connected through trade and sub-culture to neighboring countries. Surrounded by large and fertile agricultural plains. Have strong and relatively diversified economies including robust construction, manufacturing and services sectors. Under considerable urbanisation pressure.	Herat	182 Km²	89,790
		Mazar-i-Sharif	83 Km²	77,615
		Kandahar	273 Km²	61,902
		Jalalabad	122 Km²	39,586
Trading and Transit Hub	Smaller provincial capital cities that are strategically located on the ring road or borders and are commercial transit points, often between districts and the Regional Hubs and/or Capital City. Smaller populations than the Regional Hubs and lower urbanisation pressure.	Lashkar Gah	384 Km²	30,709
		Kunduz	112 Km²	29,877
		Taluqan	107 Km²	28,691
		Pul-i-Khumri	181 Km²	24,586
		Sheberghan	73 Km²	19,511
		Zaranj	48 Km²	17,878
		Maimana	35 Km²	16,560
		Ghazni	57 Km²	15,931
Provincial Centre	Cities that, due to their geography and positioning, mainly serve their surrounding provincial area. They are also important trading and distribution hubs, especially for the agricultural sector. Lower urbanisation pressure.	Khost	71 Km²	11,787
		Charikar	30 Km	10,671
		Faiz Abad	159 Km²	10,605
		Tarinkot	41 Km²	7,956
		Gardez	62 Km²	7,849
		Qala-i-Naw	28 Km²	7,125
		Aybak	32 Km²	6,983
		Asad Abad	92 Km²	6,350
		Sar-i-Pul	30 Km²	5,675
		Qalat	48 Km²	5,462
		Farah	29 Km²	5,299
		Bamyan	35 Km²	4,435
		Mehterlam	14 Km²	3,661
		Ferozkoh	26 Km²	3,474
Urban Village	Small towns that are little more than villages in terms of their population size and urban form (e.g scattered villages) with low urbanisation pressure.	Mahmood Raqi	40 Km²	5,610
		Bazarak	91 Km²	2,747
		Pul-i-Alam	38 Km²	2,546
		Nili	94 Km²	1,994
		Sharan	59 Km²	1,739
		Maidan Shahr	33 Km²	1,585
		Paroon	4 Km²	183

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

FIGURE 1.3: AFGHANISTAN'S 34 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS ACCORDING TO CITY SIZE, TYPE/FUNCTION

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

1.3
DEMOGRAPHICS: AN INCREASINGLY URBAN AND YOUTHFUL POPULATION

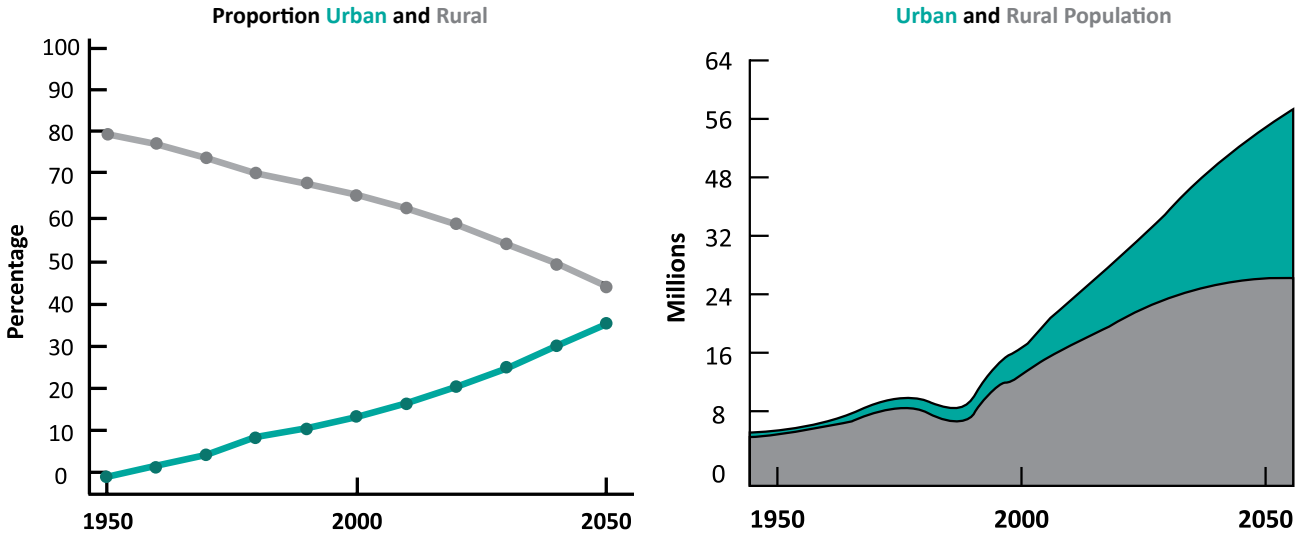
Afghanistan is still a predominately rural society with only an estimated 24% of the population living in cities.[8] Yet this is changing fast. In 1950, only 1 out of every 20 Afghans lived in cities. In 2014, 1 out of every four Afghans lived in cities, and by 2060 1 out of every 2 - 50% of the population - will live in cities.

Although accurate and reliable data on urbanisation is not currently available, estimates indicate that Afghan cities are growing at a rapid rate of around 4% per year, one of the highest rates of urbanisation in the world. Within the next 35 years the country's urban population is projected to triple to 24 million (Figure 1.4).[9] It is estimated that although the natural population growth rate will slowly decline over the next 35 years, Afghanistan's urban population is expected to grow at an average of 3.14% up to 2050 - still one of the fastest rates in the world.[10] In absolute terms this equates to at least 320,000 additional urban dwellers every year.

Since 2001, the urban population of Afghanistan has increased from an estimated 20% to 24% of the total population. In absolute numbers this represents a significant increase from 4.6 million in 2002 to 7.1 million in 2012.[11] Kabul has been the centre of much of this growth, with estimates indicating the city has grown at a rate of almost 10% per year during the last decade (see Box 1.1).

Figure 1.6 shows Afghanistan's projected urban population in the regional context, reaffirming that Afghanistan, in keeping with neighbouring countries, will continue to urbanise over the coming decades. The figure shows that Iran and China - both powerhouses of economic development in the region - have witnessed significant urbanisation in previous decades and are now between 60 and 70% urban (Figure 1.6). In 2014, Afghanistan had the lowest urban population of all countries in the region (24.5%), slightly below that of Tajikistan (26.7%).

FIGURE 1.4: AFGHANISTAN'S URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION DYNAMICS



SOURCE: UNDESA (2014)

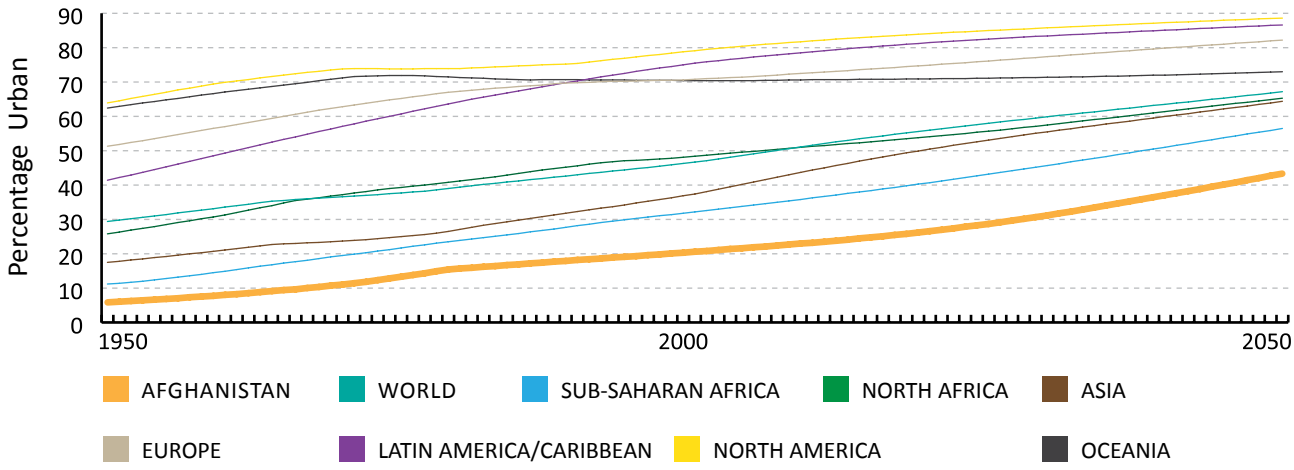
Figure 1.5 shows that Afghanistan is far behind the average for global regions, yet has followed - and will continue to follow - a similar trend toward a more urban society.

Table 1.3 provides an overview of comparative population estimates for the 34 provincial capitals. The variation between CSO, Municipality and SoAC 2014/15 estimates can largely be attributed to differences in the geographic area used to define the 'urban/city areas'. Principally, CSO uses a smaller area for cities than the recently updated municipal boundaries. Municipality figures however were not based on any thorough field survey and are likely to be over-estimates.[12] Nevertheless, SoAC estimates fall between the CSO figures (always lower) and Municipality figures (always higher).

The SoAC findings reveal an estimated population between 2,970,713 and 3,564,855 for Kabul City, which is by far the largest city (Box 1.1; Table 1.3). Based on the low estimate of 7.5 people per dwelling, the 'Regional Hub' cities all have populations of approximately 300,000 and higher: Herat at 673,425; Mazar-i-Sharif at 582,113; Kandahar at 464,265; and Jalalabad at 296,895 (Table 1.3). Together these five largest cities account for approximately 69% of the total estimated urban population in the 34 provincial capitals.

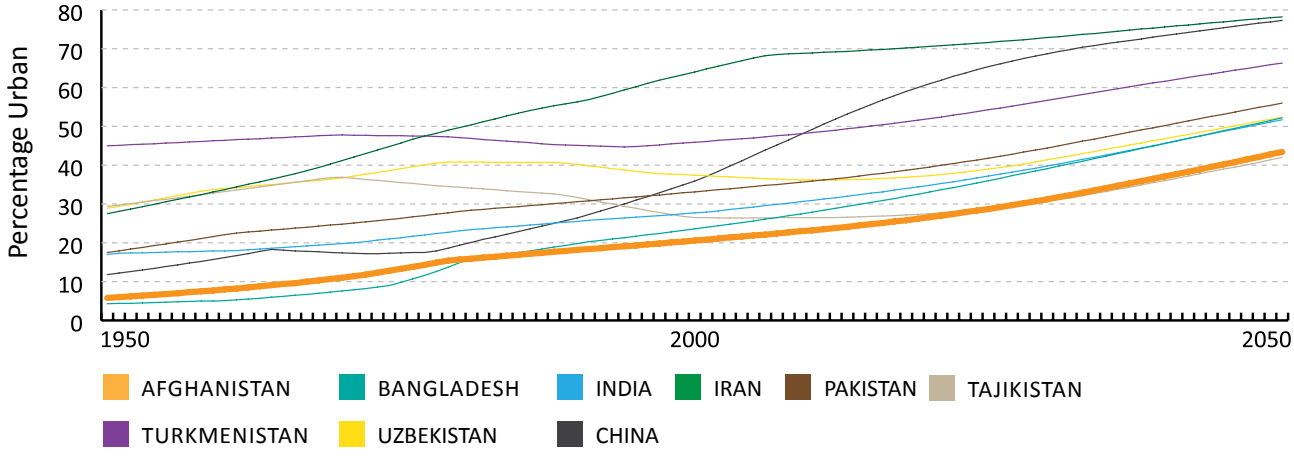
Again using the low estimate for density, the 'Trading and Transit Hubs' have populations between 119,000 and 231,000. Notable large cities include Lashkar Gah: 230,318; Kunduz: 224,078; and Pul-i-Khumri: 184,395. The 'Provincial Centres' have smaller populations, for example: Khost: 88,403; Charikar: 80,033; Bamyan: 33,263; and Farah: 39,743. The smallest cities or 'Urban Villages' include: Nili: 14,955; Pul-i-Alam: 19,095; and Paroon 1,373.

FIGURE 1.5: URBANISATION TRENDS OF AFGHANISTAN IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT, 1950 - 2050



SOURCE: UNDESA (2014)

FIGURE 1.6: URBANISATION TRENDS OF AFGHANISTAN IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT, 1950 - 2050



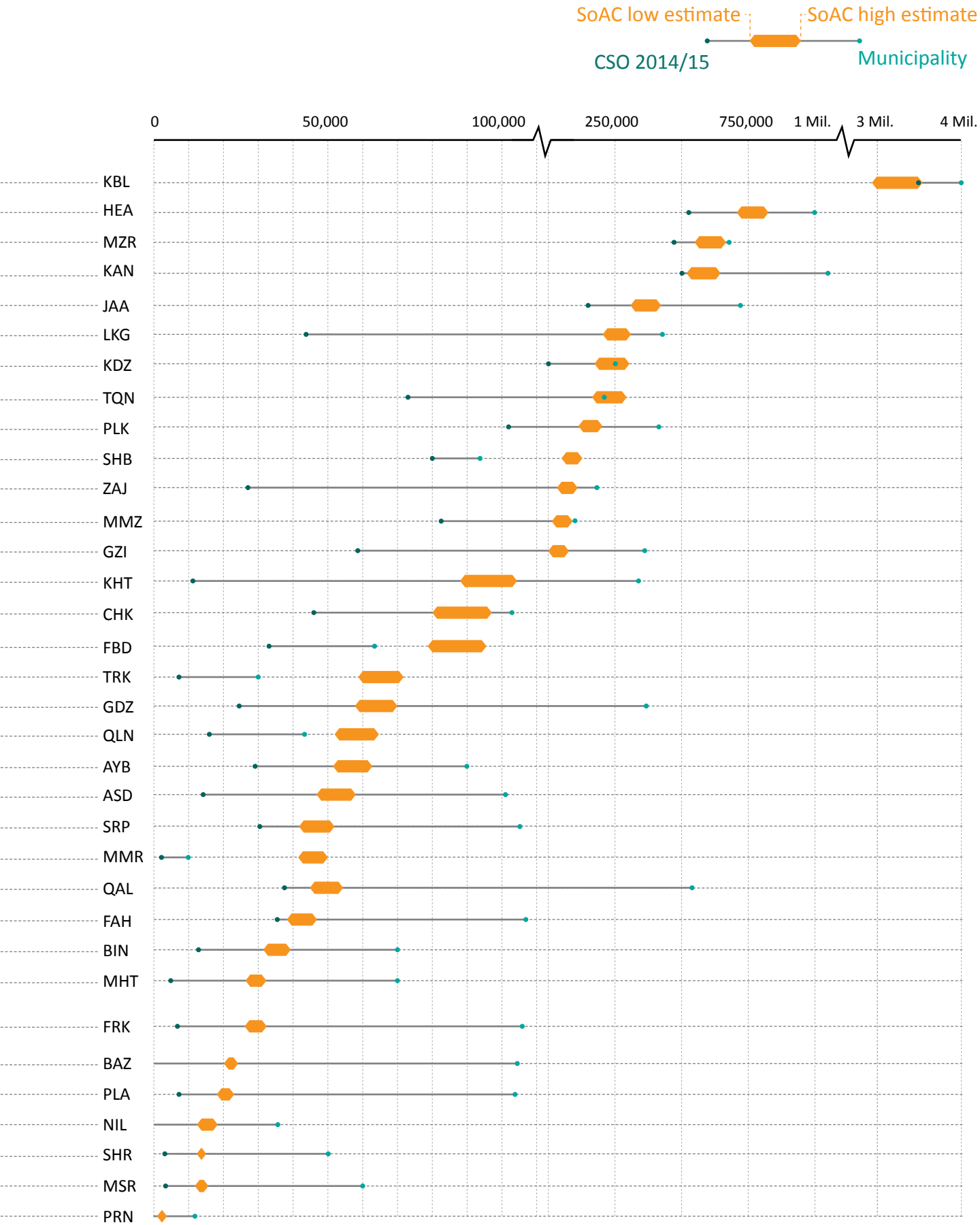
SOURCE: UNDESA (2014)

TABLE 1.3: AFGHANISTAN'S 34 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS

Provincial Capital	Province	Province Population (CSO)	Provincial Capital Population Estimates			
			CSO (2014/15)	Municipality	SoAC 2014/15	
					Low (7.5 per Dwelling)	High (9 per Dwelling)
Kabul	Kabul	4,227,200	3,543,700	4,000,000	2,970,713	3,564,855
Herat	Herat	1,852,800	463,300	1,000,000	673,425	808,110
Mazar-i-Sharif	Balkh	1,298,300	390,900	700,000	577,500	693,000
Kandahar	Kandahar	1,201,000	422,200	1,200,000	464,265	557,118
Jalalabad	Nangarhar	1,489,800	219,300	700,000	296,895	356,274
Lashkar Gah	Helmand	909,400	43,600	300,000	230,318	276,381
Kunduz	Kunduz	991,000	152,800	250,000	224,078	268,893
Taluqan	Takhar	966,600	71,800	220,000	215,183	258,219
Pul-i-Khumri	Baghlan	894,900	105,900	400,000	184,395	221,274
Sheberghan	Jawzjan	530,700	80,100	94,333	146,333	175,599
Zaranj	Nimroz	162,100	26,000	200,000	134,085	160,902
Maimana	Faryab	981,200	82,200	152,600	124,200	149,040
Ghazni	Ghazni	1,208,600	59,100	280,000	119,483	143,379
Khost	Khost	565,200	11,500	260,214	88,403	106,083
Charikar	Parwan	653,400	56,400	106,000	80,033	96,039
Faiz Abad	Badakhshan	935,300	33,000	63,000	79,538	95,445
Tarinkot	Uruzgan	380,500	6,700	20,000	59,670	71,604
Gardez	Paktya	427,700	24,300	285,000	58,868	70,641
Qala-i-Naw	Badghis	487,800	14,500	42,000	53,438	64,125
Aybak	Samangan	381,400	29,000	90,000	52,373	62,847
Asad Abad	Kunar	443,300	13,700	107,000	47,625	57,150
Sar-i-Pul	Sar-e Pol	550,200	30,100	115,000	42,563	51,075
Mahmood Raqi	Kapisa	433,900	1,500	10,000	42,075	50,490
Qalat	Zabul	299,100	12,000	530,000	40,965	49,158
Farah	Farah	498,900	36,600	109,000	39,743	47,691
Bamyan	Bamyan	439,900	12,600	70,000	33,263	39,915
Mehterlam	Laghman	438,300	5,000	70,000	27,458	32,949
Ferozkoh (Chaghcharan)	Ghor	679,000	6,900	132,000	26,055	31,266
Bazarak	Panjshir	151,000	-	130,000	20,603	24,723
Pul-i-Alam	Logar	385,600	5,500	110,000	19,095	22,914
Nili	Daykundi	417,500	-	35,000	14,955	17,946
Sharan	Paktika	543,000	2,800	50,000	13,043	15,651
Maidan Shahr	Wardak	586,600	3,000	60,658	11,888	14,265
Paroon	Nooristan	145,600	-	12,000	1,373	1,647

SOURCE: CSO (2014/15); SoAC GIS; POPAL (2014)

FIGURE 1.7: POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR THE 34 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS



Youth bulge

Afghanistan has one of the world's youngest populations. Over three-quarters (79%) of the Afghan population is under the age of 35 years; including nearly half below the age of 15 (47%); and roughly a third (32%) between 15 and 35 years of age.[13] The National Youth Policy, approved in 2014, defines 'youth' as between the ages of 18 and 35.

Cities continue to attract thousands of young Afghans every year. This is particularly true for those aged between 15 and 24, who constitute nearly a quarter of the urban population (23.6%), notably higher than in rural areas (17.8%). These different age structures are to a considerable extent caused by in-migration of students and young adults looking for educational opportunities and jobs in the urban labour market.[14]

The youth bulge presents a unique opportunity. Urban youth represent a key, dynamic human resource to contribute to Afghanistan's development objectives of peace, security and prosperity.[15]

Urban youth, however, face many challenges, including (i) almost complete exclusion from participation in urban governance, management and decision making that can lead to disenfranchisement from state-building efforts; (ii) lack of transferrable skills for effective labour market participation; (iii) limited provision of dedicated youth services and amenities, which are fundamental for providing recreational and personal development opportunities, minimising frustration that has the potential to lead to extremism and radicalisation; (iv) poor urban safety and security, especially for young women and girls; (v) psycho-social problems, including being torn between traditions, culture and religion of their elders, and modern cultural messages, propagated through the media and other channels more prevalent in cities.

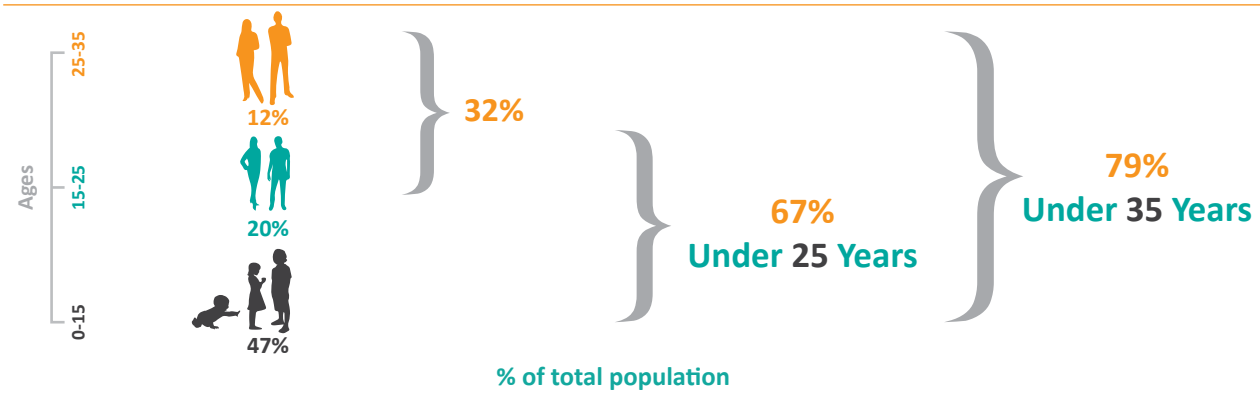
Above all, there are simply insufficient educational and employment opportunities in Afghan cities to meet the demand, resulting in high youth unemployment and underemployment. Within the last two years, the lack of opportunity has been compounded by the international withdrawal and corresponding economic slowdown.[16] Young women and men who typically have a lesser degree of job security and are more vulnerable to economic fluctuations have been disproportionally affected. The increasingly competitive urban labour market is characterized by skills mismatch and problems of a proliferation of informal, irregular employment in both the informal and the small formal sectors.[17]

With limited alternatives, urban children and youth, predominantly boys, are compelled to engage in begging, selling items on the street and in traffic, and working as child labour (e.g. in brick kilns and carpet weaving factories). As the size of the economically active population is growing by nearly 400,000 each year, the challenges will only become more acute.

It is therefore not surprising that Afghanistan's cities are increasingly hostile places for youth. Large numbers of disenfranchised young men creates a situation conducive to recruitment into Anti-Government Elements (AGEs), extremists and criminal groups, presenting a highly significant risk to security and stability. With little hope in their future, boys and young men living on the margins of urban society are also vulnerable to the lucrative and flourishing narcotics trade, undermining economic and educational gains and the massive investment of the international community over the past decade.

Furthermore, Afghan youth are increasingly seeking illegal passage to other countries, and in the process becoming caught in a dangerous web of international traffickers and facing abuse, exploitation and deportation.[18] Young women and girls attempting illegal international passage are particularly at risk of trafficking and sexual slavery.

FIGURE 1.8: AFGHANISTAN'S YOUTH BULGE



SOURCE: CSO (2012)

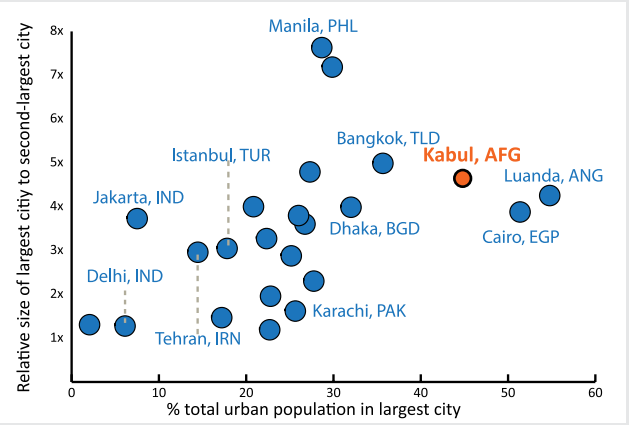
Box 1.1:
Kabul City - A Primate City

Kabul is a clear case of a 'primate city'. As the name suggests, a 'primate city' is one that is dominant and proportionally larger (at least twice as large) in population size than the next largest city, or cities, in a country. Kabul is estimated to be roughly four times larger than the next largest cities, such as Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kandahar.

In terms of primacy ratio and percentage of total urban population, Kabul even dwarfs globally-recognised primate cities such as Dhaka, Bangladesh; Karachi, Pakistan; Delhi, India; and Bankgkok, Thailand. Furthermore, many of these countries have a more proportional urban hierarchy, a 'systems of cities'. For example, India has a network of similarly-sized large cities, such as Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Hyderabad, which are linked with medium and smaller cities. This helps promote balanced growth and development and reduces pressure on primate cities to supply services, housing, land, etc., for such an overwhelming number of people.

In an effort to plan in advance of growth, in 2009 'New Kabul' City was planned to accommodate an additional 3 million people. It is to be located on land to the north of Kabul in the DeShabz/Barikab area, on the road of Baghram and Charikar.

To date it has not been implemented for a number of reasons, including limited water availability, issues of land grabbing and contested land owernship, conflict with existing residents, and lack of adequate finance for infrastructure investments on such a large scale.



Source: UNDESA (2014)

New Kabul Master Plan

1.4
SEARCHING FOR A HOME IN THE CITY: RETURNEES, IDPS AND MIGRATION

Since 2002, over 5.8 million refugee returnees have returned to Afghanistan.[19] Among the returnees, 3.8 million have returned from Pakistan, while 1.6 million have returned from Iran. In 2002 alone, 1.8 million refugees returned to Afghanistan.[20] The largest cities have attracted considerable numbers of IDPs, returnees and economic migrants. While exact data is not available, it appears that a considerable proportion of Afghans returning back to the country have settled in urban areas.

It is estimated that

> *"49 percent of households that reported to have returned from displacement are located in urban areas. Compared to the national distribution of households – 24 percent urban and 76 percent rural – this figure is twice as high. This supports the idea that towns and cities, and mainly Kabul, disproportionally absorb households that have a displacement history."*[21]

In addition to repatriation, the last decade has witnessed considerable rural to urban migration, with the concentrated economic activity and relative security in cities functioning as strong 'pull factors'.[22] Over one-third of the urban population was born outside the city in which they currently reside (35.9% from another district; and 17.5% from another province; and 4.3% in another country).[23] Evidence indicates that whilst security is a major factor in the decision to move, many Afghans come to cities seeking greater livelihood opportunities, education and access to services.

As of December 2014, over 805,000 Afghans remain internally displaced throughout the country.[24] While tracking the movements of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is difficult, especially in cases of multiple displacement, whereby individuals or groups have been forced to relocate on more than one occasion, evidence suggests that many displaced Afghans live

TABLE 1.4: ANNUAL RETURNS (NUMBER OF PERSONS) TO AFGHANISTAN 2002-2014 ASSISTED BY UNHCR

Year	Pakistan	Iran	Other	Total
2002	1,565,066	259,792	9,679	1,834,537
2003	332,183	142,280	1,175	475,638
2004	383,321	377,151	650	761,122
2005	449,391	63,559	1,140	514,090
2006	133,338	5,264	1,202	139,804
2007	357,635	7,054	721	365,410
2008	274,200	3,656	628	278,484
2009	48,320	6,028	204	54,552
2010	104,331	8,487	150	112,968
2011	48,998	18,851	113	67,962
2012	79,435	15,035	86	94,556
2013	30,388	8,247	131	38,766
2014	9,918	3,734	193	13,845
Total	**3,816,524**	**919,138**	**16,0733**	**4,751,735**

SOURCE: UNHCR (2014)

in and around Afghanistan's urban centres. As is the case with rural to urban migrants, economic activity, educational opportunities and relative security are significant 'pull factors', attracting IDPs to locate in cities.[25]

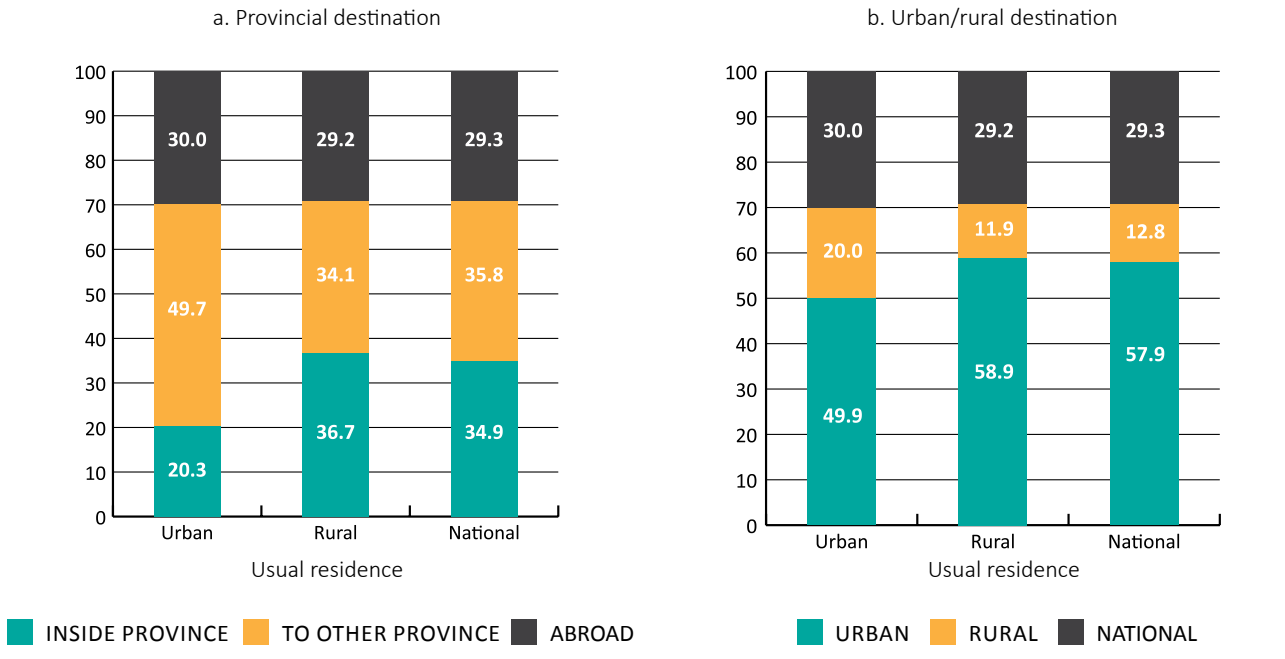
Urban IDPs are extremely vulnerable, particularly in the first year after their displacement. Often lacking identity documentation, IDPs can face significant barriers to accessing justice services, enrolling children in school and securing employment in the formal urban economy. Lacking the means to enter the formal housing market, urban IDPs frequently come to reside in informal settlements, with very limited access to water and other basic services sub-standard, overcrowded housing conditions and little or no tenure security. Largely excluded from participating in urban society, IDPs face a whole range of protection challenges including increased rates of crime, insecurity, increased risk of Gender Based Violence (GBV), child exploitation, and negative coping mechanisms, with women and girls in particular at greater risk.[26] In addition, urban IDPs tend to have significantly higher rates of illiteracy and lower paid jobs, with a clear 'skills disadvantage' compared with other urban residents, even the urban poor.

Whilst the majority of IDPs who settle in or around Afghanistan's towns and cities, come to reside in overcrowded and under-serviced informal settlements, in other cases returnees and IDPs have been settled in specific sites under the Government's Land Allocation Schemes (LAS). Launched in 2005 with Presidential Decree #104, the LAS legalized the distribution of intact and uncultivated government land to landless returnees and IDPs. Whilst a significant number of plots have been distributed, a far lesser proportion of those have been settled.

LAS sites have been criticized for being located too far from livelihoods/employment opportunities to be a viable option for returnees and IDPs, with limited access to basic services (including potable water), infrastructure, educational opportunities, and health care. Living in such conditions, women and girls are again exposed to considerably greater risk.

What is clear from the research and lessons learned from the previous decade is that many uprooted Afghan women, men and youth do not want to, and will not, return to their rural places of origin. A representative household sample of rural to urban migrants from the five major cities found that 90% had no intention to leave the city[27] - a common demographic and socio-economic trend in most developing countries. The preferred durable solution for uprooted people is local integration in appropriate urban locations (i.e. with adequate access to relevant livelihood opportunities, basic services, education, healthcare etc.). In areas where integration has been achieved, positive outcomes have been seen, not only for IDPs and returnees themselves but for host communities and urban residents.

FIGURE 1.9: POPULATION 14 YEARS AND OVER MIGRATING FOR SEASONAL WORK, BY USUAL RESIDENCE AND BY DESTINATION



SOURCE: NRVA (2013)

For example, emerging evidence from Kabul shows that the majority of returnees and IDPs who are able to locally integrate in suitable locations tend to achieve a standard of living and access to services on par with the local population after three years.

'Urban to urban' migration is also a feature of Afghan migration patterns (Figure 1.9). Regarding internal migration since 2004, "net movement between urban areas is more important than that between urban and rural areas;"[28] 414,000 people moved to another urban area compared with 346,000 migrating from rural areas to an urban area during 2004-2011. Anecdotal evidence suggests urban-urban migration patterns include: (1) 'stepping stone' migration, from rural village, to district capital, then provincial capital, then Kabul City; as well as (2) movement between the large cities; motivated by seeking greater access to employment, land and housing and services.

Regarding those born abroad who have migrated to Afghanistan, ('life-time immigrants'): "32 percent now reside in urban areas and 60 percent in rural areas (the remaining part being Kuchis). For the non-Kuchi population this implies that a preference for urban settlement is observed. This preference is stronger for immigrants from Iran (55.6%) than for those coming from Pakistan (25.5%).[29]

Urban areas feature strongly in seasonal migration (taking up temporary residence for at least one month, but less than one year) (Figure 1.9). NRVA 2011/12 data shows that nearly 60% of rural seasonal migrants move to urban areas (58.9%) (Figure 1.9). Of urban seasonal migrants, nearly half move to another urban centre (49.9%). Strikingly, 30% of both rural and urban dwellers seasonally migrate abroad (mostly to Iran and Pakistan).[30] In absolute terms approximately 530,000 persons migrate seasonally, largely due to changing employment opportunities. The seasonal migratory workforce is almost exclusively male (94 percent).

Jalalabad, Nangahar Province

1.5
THE URBAN DIVIDE: POVERTY, GENDER INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Poverty

There exists a perception that poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion are predominantly rural concerns in Afghanistan. In reality, however, this could not be further from the truth. Whilst cities are centres of economic activity, the social safety nets, access to land, and subsistence living of rural areas are not features in cities where the cash economy reigns and enormous market pressures shape the accessibility of services.

Urban dwellers frequently find themselves in situations of compounded vulnerability, without access to a number of important coping mechanisms that may be available in rural areas. These urban Afghans are denied their human right to adequate shelter, are excluded from social services, and often live under constant fear of eviction.

Afghanistan is a low-income country with an average annual income of a mere 424 USD per capita.[31] Thirty-six percent of Afghanistan's total population lives under the national poverty line; equating in absolute terms to 11.5 million Afghans living in poverty. Thirty-eight percent of Afghanistan's total rural population and 29% of the total urban population live under the poverty line.[32] In essence, over two million people in urban centres live in poverty.

With the exception of Balkh, a trend is evident whereby more urbanised provinces generally have a lower official poverty rate than more rural provinces. This is the case in most areas, with the exception of those rural provinces that have benefited from a massive influx of aid, often based on strategic and military priorities rather than any greater need (e.g. Helmand).[33] It should be noted that within the absolute number of Afghans living in poverty are important distinctions between rural and urban households; with the latter typically facing increased household expenditure and more limited coping mechanisms.

Female Community Development Council (CDC) meeting

Gender inequality

Due to the concentration of economic activity, Afghan cities can be empowering spaces for young, educated and socially mobile women. In particular women with higher levels of education, tertiary degrees (often obtained abroad) and high-levels of transferable skills are more likely to find opportunities in cities. Such women, however, are a small minority, and the vast majority of Afghanistan's urban women face considerable structural constraints to equitable participation in urban society, including:

- Female-Headed Households, either due to widowhood or a disabled spouse, face many challenges. Urban female-headed households are particularly vulnerable because of their higher rates of poverty, higher dependency ratio, lower income, higher rates of landlessness, limited social and family networks/social capital, and greater vulnerability to abuse and exploitation;[34]
- Poor urban safety and security including harassment, abuse, and unsafe routes for girls to walk to school, plays a decisive role in parents' decisions on whether or not to enroll girl children in education;[35]
- The female labour force participation rate in cities is only 13%, one-third lower than the national average (19%), highlighting that, contrary to popular opinion, the urban environment is not particularly conducive to a higher level of participation in the labour market for the majority of women. Urban women predominantly work in low skilled, low-income jobs, such as domestic help (cleaning) and home based activities (e.g. sewing, tailoring, embroidery), work that is low-paid and inherently irregular. Data for the major cities indicates that women earn only one-fifth of the male average income [50AFN (0.9 USD) compared to 250AFN per day (4.3 USD)]. According to the Central Statistics Organization, "cultural impediments to a large extent prohibit tapping the economic potential of women in Afghan society";[36]
- Cultural and social barriers are "still very present in cities, which do not offer the relative safety that village or rural communities may offer". Many Afghan women and girls that have migrated to cities with their families have less freedom because they lack the social and community networks that provide socially-acceptable opportunities to leave their houses and undertake independent activities separately from their male relatives;[37]
- Women and girls, typically responsible for domestic labour, are often the most affected by poor basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity and healthcare;
- It is estimated that less than 1% of urban land is held or owned by women, yet women's access to housing, land and property "is a crucial element of economic empowerment. It increases participation in household decision-making, expands their range of choices, enables them to deal better with economic loss and crisis, and provides them with security and protection if and when they lose access to a man's income through widowhood or divorce";[38]

Ethnic minorities

The nomadic Kuchi are one of the ethnic minority communities which have suffered the most from the past years of conflict. Nonetheless, the Kuchi are urbanizing too. An estimated 40% have exchanged their nomadic lifestyle for a fixed abode - mostly settling in the peri-urban areas of the large cities.[39] This urbanisation transition is attributed to a loss of livestock and grazing opportunities, but also the availability of alternate, non-pastoral incomes from the urban economy.

Kabul City features prominently in Kuchi urbanisation. The 'new city' (Deh Sabz) was previously only a stop on their seasonal migration route but now is permanently inhabited with many Kuchi working in the neighbouring brick kilns and in the construction sector in Kabul. Across all social and economic

Box 1.2:
Gender Inequality in Afghan Cities

62% of the urban female population is **illiterate**, double the urban male illiteracy rate of 31%

Women in the urban informal sector earn **75% less** than men

Only **13%** of urban women work, one-third lower than the rural and national average of 19%

less than **1%** of urban land and property is held by women

indicators Kuchi rank at the bottom, even below the urban poor. Nationally, 53% live in poverty, much higher than the average of 36%.[40] The Kuchi also face increasing social stigma, and are increasingly involved in inter-communal tensions and disputes (often over land use and water access), which are increasingly common due to urban expansion. They are subjected to the pressures of the urban land market, and new housing development projects which place increasing forcible eviction pressure upon Kuchi households and communities.

While the *Kuchi* are well known there are other ethnic minorities that are almost wholly invisible among the urban poor, including the *Jogi, Gorbat,* and *Chori Frosh*.[41] Like the Kuchi, but numbering only between 1,500 - 3,000 households, these previously-nomadic ethnic minorities have increasingly settled on the outskirts of the major cities, especially cities in the north. Their income is half that of neighbouring urban poor and mainly derived from begging. Jogi women's labour participation rates average 60%, which contributes to their social exclusion, given the cultural context where women's participation in the labour market is not commonplace. Food insecurity stands at 70%, compared with 25% for non-Jogi; and they are at risk of statelessness due to their lack of documentation, with the majority (80%) having no documentation which is a fundamental barrier to social inclusion, access to education and services.

The above description of the urban *Kuchi, Jogi, Gorbat* and *Chori Frosh* is an account of ethnic discrimination and marginalization. This stands in contrast to prior assumptions that a move to sedentary urban lifestyles would improve contact with state institutions, access to public services, opportunities for urban employment and improved livelihoods; and reduced conflict and security-related challenges. Rather, the opposite appears to be the case for these groups.

Box 1.3:
A Focus on the Urban Poor in Kabul and Regional Hub Cities

A 2014 representative household-level sample, focused on the urban poor, showed that 78% of urban households in Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif fall below the poverty line of 1,710 AFA (30 USD) per person per month. Urban poverty is pervasive across the board and there is little difference across cities, with about one in five Kabuli households (22% ± 4%) above the poverty line, Herat, Kandahar and Mazar-i-Sharif at around 15% and Jalalabad at a very low 3% (± 1.5%).

The high proportion of poor households is directly linked to the size of urban households which remains very high, especially in Kandahar and Jalalabad, which showed an average household size of 9.6 and 9.5 members respectively, while the three other cities fared below the national average with 7.1 members.

Some 13% of the urban poor have no family income earners at all and 65% only have one. These earners are mainly working in building construction, retail and as drivers. The percentage of these main earners working all year round varies from 45% in Mazar-i-Sharif to 67% in Jalalabad, while approximately 30% of main earners can only work on an irregular basis. Mazar-i-Sharif stands out with 45% of main income earners making an irregular living only.

Livestock ownership among the urban poor is rare at only 13% (±1%), though about one in five urban poor in Kandahar and Jalalabad own animals.

The main economic problems faced by the urban poor are high food prices and the lack of job opportunities.

Comparing their current economic situation (2014) to the one that they were in one year ago (2013), the urban poor's assessment is dire: 51% (±4%) of the urban poor residents of Jalalabad to 75% (±4%) of Heratis consider their situation deteriorated.

Source: Samuel Hall (2014) Urban Poverty Report. For PIN/DRC.

1.6
URBAN SAFETY AND INSECURITY

Security remains one of the greatest challenges facing Afghanistan. Every year thousands of Afghans are killed or injured due to the ongoing conflict. In 2014, 45% of the population cited insecurity as the biggest problem of Afghanistan.[42] Twelve percent of the population reports suffering from insurgent actions, 41% suffer insecurity from land disputes, 21% from non-insurgent-related physical attacks, and 20% from petty crime.[43]

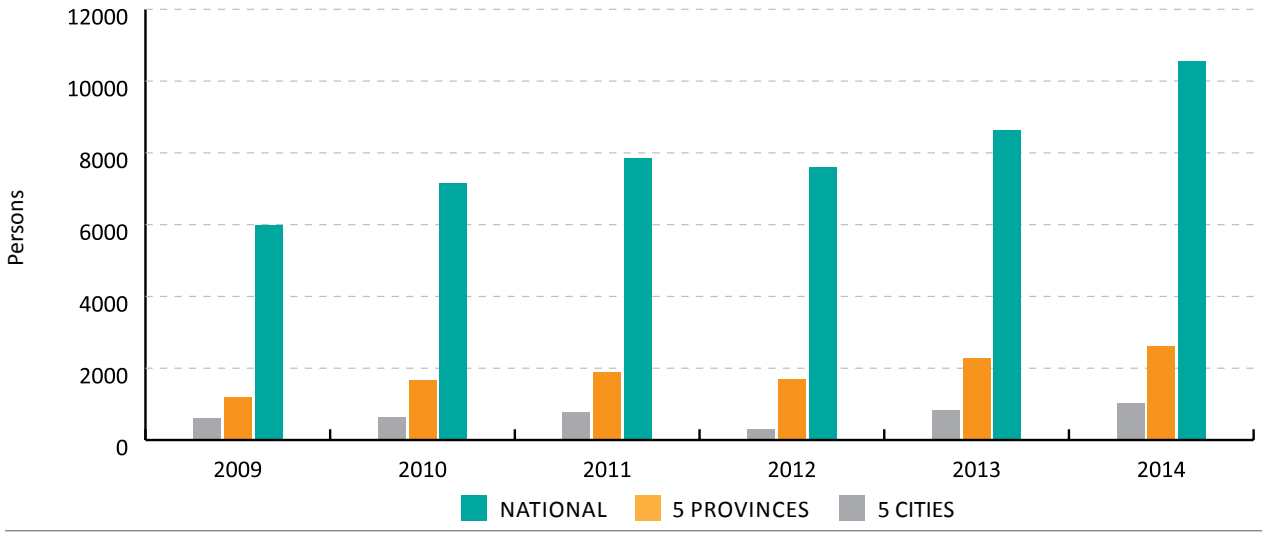
Whilst Afghanistan's cities are seen to be generally safer than rural areas, the safety and security dynamics of cities present a different set of challenges. Afghanistan's cities continue to witness 'spectacular attacks' by Anti-Governmental Elements (AGEs), predominately in the form of suicide and complex attacks against government offices and officials, foreign embassies and convoys. These have a major impact on urban citizens, both psychologically as well as in terms of casualties. Since 2009 the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has been systematically documenting civilian casualties (deaths and injuries as a result of the conflict) across the country, a key measure of safety and insecurity.[44]

Overall, in 2014, there were 10,548 documented civilian casualties in the country, an increase of 22% on 2013 and the highest on record since 2009 when documentation started. In 2014, there were 1,006 civilian casualties (889 men and 117 women), in the five major cities (Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Jalalabad) as a result of the conflict an increase of 20% compared with 2013. Of these urban cases, nearly one quarter (24%) result in death while 76% in injury.

The civilian casualties in the five major cities accounted for only 9.5% of total national civilian casualties in 2014 (Figure 1.10). Considering that these five cities host approximately 20% of the total Afghan population, this figure (9.5% of the total) is relatively low which suggests that these cities are comparatively safer in terms of per-capita civilian casualties than other areas.

The data shows the higher prevalence of civilian

FIGURE 1.10: CIVILIAN CASUALTIES 2009-2014, NATIONAL AND FOR KABUL, KANDAHAR, HERAT, BALKH, NANGARHAR.



SOURCE: UNAMA, HUMAN RIGHTS UNIT; UNAMA (2015).

casualties in Kabul, Kandahar, and Jalalabad. In 2014 over half of urban civilian casualties were in Kabul (51%), followed by Jalalabad (21%), and Kandahar (16%). The first four months of 2015 (January - April) saw a significant proportional increase in Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif.

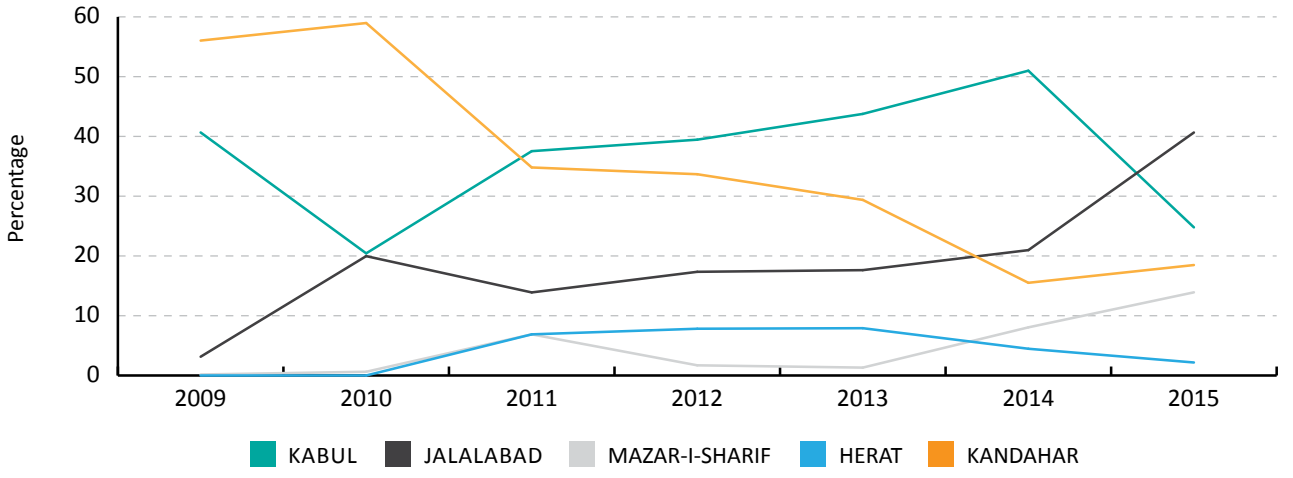
Trends from 2009-2015 show a similar pattern: Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif have consistently had significantly fewer civilian casualties than other cities (Figure 1.11). This supports prevaling discourse that these two cities and their regions (North and West) are comparatively safer than southern and eastern regions. Interestingly, the share of civilian casualties in Kandahar City has decreased significantly between 2009 and 2014 whereas Jalalabad shows a clear upward trend over the period.

The gender dimensions of civilian casualties are quite striking. In 2014, 88% of civilian casualties were male, 12% female, at both city and provincial levels for these five cities/provinces. This makes 2014 on par with 2013, and one of the deadliest years for urban females since 2009. In 2014 there was a higher percentage of female civilian casualties in cities than national average (12% in five cities versus 9% for national), suggesting a greater chance of death or injury for urban women compared with rural women.

While the percentage of female civilian casualties is relatively low, the impact of the death or injury of a male relative from the conflict cannot be underestimated; "for Afghan women and children, the anguish of losing a husband and father in the conflict is often only the beginning of their suffering and hardship. The long-term social and economic consequences are devastating."[45]

Urban safety and security is not only about life or death, but about urban inclusion and access to public spaces, services, and infrastructure. As noted above, urban insecurity and poor safety is particularly acute for women and girls. The situation has worsened in recent years with violent crimes against women reaching record levels.[46] 87% of women suffer at least one form of physical, sexual or psychological abuse, with more than half experiencing multiple kinds of abuse and violence.[47] Women's safety is not helped by the fact that less than 1% of the National Police Force is female.[48]

FIGURE 1.11: PERCENTAGE SHARE OF URBAN CIVILIAN CASUALTIES 2009-2015 (JANUARY-APRIL) IN KABUL, KANDAHAR, HERAT, MAZAR-I-SHARIF AND JALALABAD.



SOURCE: UNAMA, HUMAN RIGHTS UNIT; UNAMA (2015).

Kabul City

1.7
WAYS FORWARD

- Raise awareness and build consensus on urbanisation in Afghanistan for the need for a stronger urban agenda. Shift the discourse away from 'urbanisation as a problem' to be reversed toward valuing it as a force which, if effectively steered, can help Afghanistan overcome some of its major challenges, including entrenched poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, fragility and conflict.[49] Evidence shows that no country has ever achieved sustained economic growth, rapid social development and gender equality without urbanizing. The transition from low- to middle-income country status is almost always accompanied by a transition from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban economy.
- At the national level, develop a National Urban Policy (NUP) and Spatial Strategy to help guide the urbanisation transition over the coming three decades and promote geographically balanced development. The spatial strategy should aim to reduce the inward migration pressure on Kabul (already a primate city) by stimulating the regional hub cities and harnessing cities and resource corridors for improving the urban economy and stimulating job creation. The NUP should promote urban development that is people-focused where cities are not only for economic growth but also harnesses in a manner that respects, protects and promotes human rights for all.
- Support the development of a National Social Policy, paying particular attention to the specificities of cities and vulnerable populations;
- Plan in advance of growth to reduce the incidence of informal sprawl. This should ensure access to affordable land and housing, in good locations, especially for the majority of the population who cannot afford housing developed by the private sector.
- Recognise and promote pro-poor urban development that facilitates the socio-economic inclusion of women and girls, vulnerable, migrants, returnees and IDPs - groups that constitute a large proportion of the nation's urban population. This may include developing and implementing a national urban poverty reduction programme that can address the significant infrastructure and service deficiencies for the most vulnerable households.
- Improve data and monitoring of urbanisation to guide policy and planning. The lack of key data consistently proves to be a significant obstacle for urban planning and policy making. Establish a multi-stakeholder, government-led 'Afghan Urban Observatory' that can monitor urban growth could represent a very significant step towards addressing this need.

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Experience has shown the enormous potential of Afghan men, women and youth to contribute to state-building and improved urban development, particularly through urban Community Development Councils (CDCs) and Gozar Assemblies (GAs).

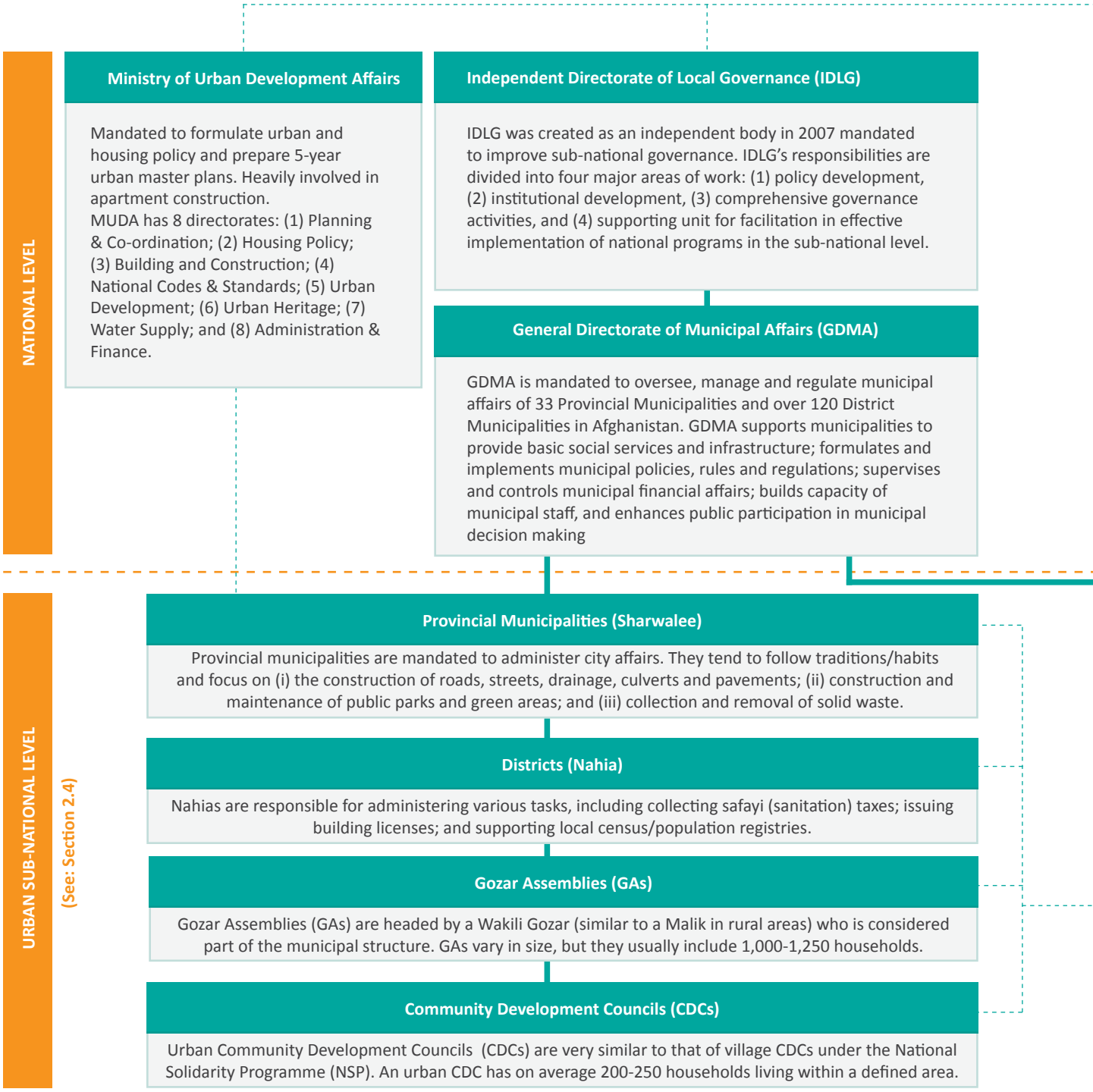
CHAPTER 02 URBAN GOVERNANCE FOR INCLUSIVE CITIES

Key Messages

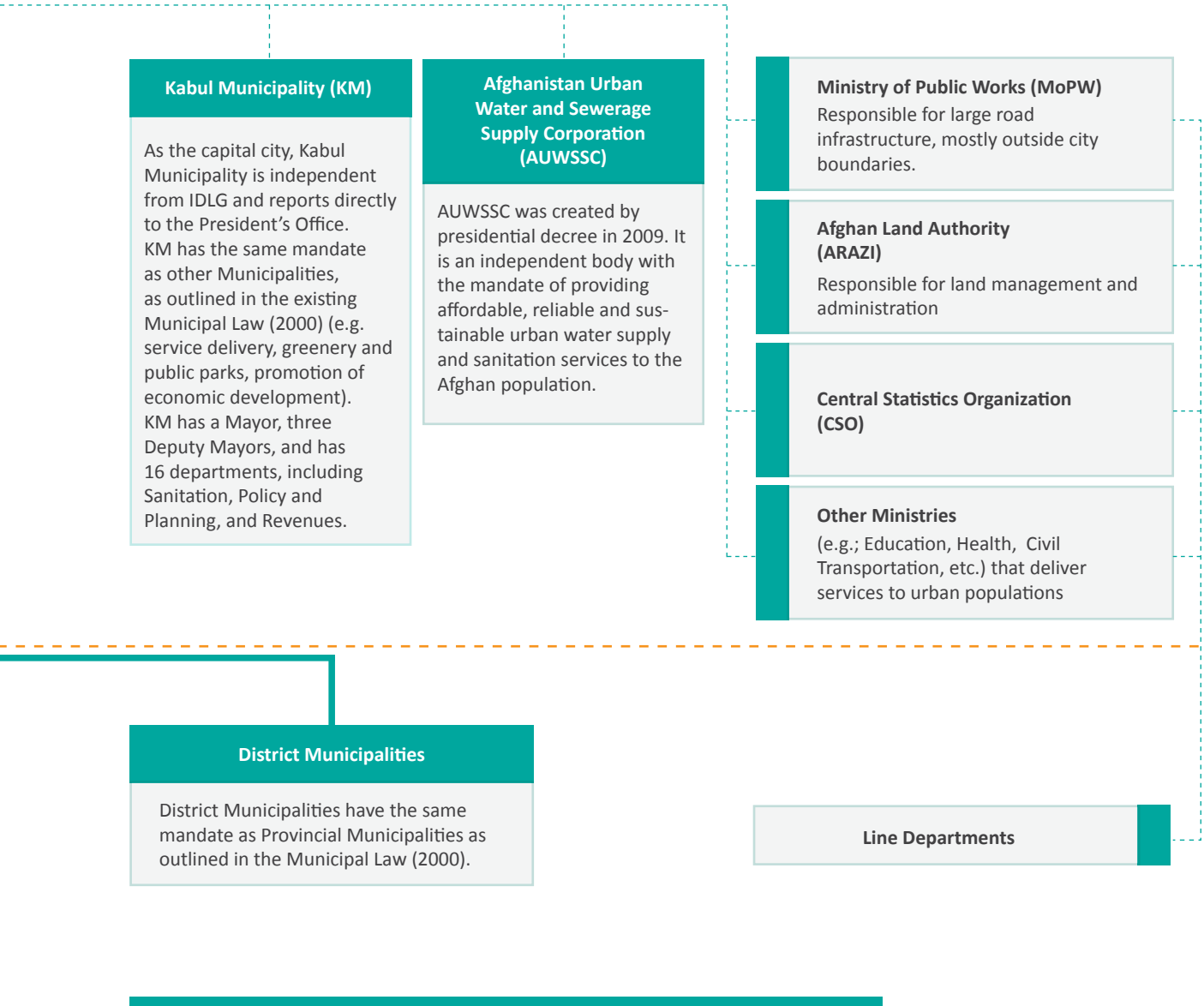
- There are serious **gaps in the urban policy, legal and regulatory framework.** There is no national urban policy or national housing policy (common in most countries). A well-intentioned Informal Settlements Upgrading Policy is drafted but has been pending for over two years, as is the draft new Municipal Law. Urgent policy and legal improvements need to be made to effectively manage the urbanisation process and harness it as a driver of development.
- **Unclear responsibilities and relationships between central government**, municipalities, line departments, and municipal service providers contribute to the weak planning and management of urban development, competition and duplication of efforts, and the lack of coordinated plans and investments at city level, severely constraining development potential.
- **Limited human and institutional capacity** of municipalities to deliver services and guide urban growth contributes to weak state-society relations. Human capacities are low as are institutional capacities. Few municipalities have as many as 10% or more female staff, and most women are generally employed in low-level positions.
- Municipalities are the only sub-national governance entity that can **raise and spend own-source revenues.** Between 2011 and 2013, the 34 provincial capitals collected an average of 95 million USD per year. The five largest cities contributed the vast majority: 55% from Kabul Municipality and 26% from the regional hubs of Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Jalalabad.
- **Current Municipal boundaries** pose a number of major issues: (i) they are not well-known by many stakeholders; (ii) they are not consistent in approach (some are too large, some too small); (iii) they often overlap with District Municipalities; and (iv) they are not used by all stakeholders resulting in inconsistent data and monitoring of urban/rural dynamics.
- Some **progress has been made to improve municipal governance.** For example, Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs) are established in over 30 cities to act as 'interim municipal councils' and 'Citizen Service Centres' are being installed to act as a bridge between citizens and the municipality.
- Experience has shown the enormous potential of **Afghan men, women and youth** to contribute to state-building and improved urban development, particularly through urban Community Development Councils (CDCs) and Gozar Assemblies (GAs) as a mechanism for engaging urban civil society. This participatory approach should be institutionalized and expanded, which requires an improved legal and institutional framework for peoples' participation.
- There remains considerable **potential for municipalities** to strengthen state legitimacy, raise local revenues and guide inclusive urban development. Municipalities' ability to raise and spend own-source revenues offers considerable scope for strengthening the mandate of municipalities and, beyond contributing to 'self-reliance' in the coming decade, is a development imperative if services and infrastructure are to be financed to a level required to meet massive demand.

2.1
INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE AND ACTORS

FIGURE 2.1: OVERVIEW OF KEY URBAN INSTITUTIONS AND MANDATES



As Figure 2.1 outlines, the urban sector in Afghanistan is governed by a range of institutions at the national and sub-national level, most notably the Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA), Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), Kabul Municipality (reporting directly to the President) at the national level, and municipalities and line departments at the sub-national level. There are considerable institutional bottlenecks to effective management of the urban sector, including overlapping and poorly delineated mandates (e.g. for undertaking spatial planning); a disconnect between national and municipal governance (e.g. development and implementation of urban master plans); and formal/informal governance (e.g. Provincial Governors having considerable informal control over municipalities even though they are administratively separate).



2.2
NATIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

A change is taking place in Afghanistan whereby urbanisation is increasingly being seen not as a problem to be solved but rather as a potential driver of social and economic development. The change in perceptions is evidenced in the Government's vision and commitment to reforms, outlined in the Realizing Self-Reliance (RSR) paper presented at the 2014 London Conference on Afghanistan:

> *Making cities the economic drivers for development. In order to do so we need to improve living conditions and service delivery in urban centers. Urbanisation will need to be managed by reducing disparity between rural and urban areas and thereby controlling rural-to-urban migration. The government plans to appoint mayors based on merit and a public consultation process. The government will prioritize municipal development by advancing revenue improvement plans in Afghan cities. Establishing metropolitan development authorities and funds will allow for coordinated development planning and professionalized management.*[1]

This shift towards viewing urbanisation as a source of development is significant because, in general, the urban agenda has not been a strong feature of the past decade of Afghanistan's development. Table 2.1 gives an overview of key development frameworks that have guided urban development.

TABLE 2.1: KEY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

Framework	Urban components
Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) (2008-2013)	The ANDS strategic objective for urban development was to "greatly improve the management of urban areas through a devolution of authority and responsibilities to municipalities in a way that improves urban infrastructure and services, reduces urban poverty and allows urban residents to live safe, healthy and productive lives and cities to grow and prosper" (p. 10).
NPP4: Local Governance (May 2012)	Component 3: Municipal Administration of the NPP4 on Local Governance directly reflects the targets for improved municipal governance and urban management. It notes: "Municipal Administration requires special attention, not only because of the particularities of municipalities as a sub-national government entity, but also because of their growing significance in the context of Afghanistan, particularly the problems related to the booming urban population, the need for improved urban management, and to address the growth of the urban-rural divide."
NPP for Urban Management and Support Programme (UMSP) (not officially endorsed)	UMSP had three components: 1) Establishing the foundations for 'Effective Urban Management'; which "addresses the general deficiencies in policy, planning, coordination, information and institutional capacities"; 2) Investing in Urban Infrastructure; which focuses "on material improvements in urban areas across the country"; and 3) Afghanistan Capital City Development Programme, which "will tackle the particular challenges of promoting security, welfare and economic development in Kabul City."
National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) (2008-2018)	The NAPWA sets a vision of "a peaceful and progressive country where women and men enjoy security, equal rights and opportunities in all aspects of life" (p.7). Pillar 1: Security "presents the government's strategy for creating a safe environment for women within both the public and private spheres" (p.23).
'New Deal' for Engagement in Fragile States (2011)	The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States was endorsed by self-identified fragile states and bilateral and multilateral donor partners in 2011. It prioritizes five interdependent Peacebuilding and State building Goals (PSGs): (1) legitimate politics, (2) security, (3) justice, (4) economic foundations, and (5) revenues and services. Afghanistan is one of the seven New Deal Pilot Countries, and is supported by Denmark, Netherlands and the United Kingdom as partner countries.

2.3
POLICY, LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Afghanistan has no National Urban Policy. Rather, the urban sector is guided by a range of policies that to varying degrees, reflect government intent for urban development and management.

The **Constitution of Afghanistan,** drafted and approved in 2004, defines Afghanistan as an Islamic, independent, unitary and indivisible Republic. It states that municipalities should be established in order to administer city affairs.[2] The mayors of the municipalities should 'be elected through free, general, secret and direct elections'.[3] Thus far, there have been no municipal elections. Mayors are instead appointed by IDLG and endorsed by the President.

The **Sub-National Governance Policy** (SNG) (2010) provides a framework for improved public participation in municipal governance: "The municipality shall provide for structures and mechanisms for maximum public participation in municipal affairs. For structured public participation, the local communities shall designate their representatives, who shall be accredited under appropriate rules and regulations and by competent government agencies" (p. 33). In line with the human rights-based approach, "women and men will be recognized as key actors in their own development, rather than passive recipients of commodities and services. Participation will be recognized both as a means and a goal" (p. 48).

The **Informal Settlements Upgrading Policy** has been under preparation for over six years, led by MUDA in conjunction with IDLG/GDMA. Writing and technical endorsement of the Policy was completed in 2013 but for various reasons it still has not been presented to Cabinet for approval. The Policy states the intent to upgrade informal areas in the major cities where technically feasible through a combination of infrastructure upgrading; urban planning regularization; and improving tenure security.

The **National Land Policy** was drafted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and adopted in 2007. The Policy's objectives are to "provide every Afghan access to land, promote and ensure a secure land tenure system, encourage the optimal use of land resources, establish an efficient system of land administration [and] ensure that land markets are efficient, equitable, environmentally sound and sustainable to improve productivity and alleviate poverty."[4]

The **National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons** ('IDP Policy'), approved on 25 November 2013, provides a framework for ending displacement and achieving local integration and durable solutions for IDPs. The Policy includes the specific right to adequate housing and access to land as one of the basic rights of IDPs. The Policy notes that: "One of the greatest needs of the displaced population is adequate housing and that one of the greatest obstacles that [IDPs] in Afghanistan face in the search for adequate housing is lack of access to land and security of tenure."[5]

The **National Youth Policy** was approved in September 2014 given the fact that over 60% of the Afghan population is under the age of 25. The policy is structured in four pillars: Youth Employment; Adolescent and Youth Health; Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training; and Participation. A National Youth Strategy is currently under preparation to implement the policy.

The current **Municipal Law** (2000) dates from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban era) and sets municipalities as public legal and juristic entities.[6] However, it is contrary to the Constitution and SNG Policy. Therefore, a new Municipal Law that supports a decentralised system of governance in line with the SNG Policy has been drafted and is awaiting approval from the Cabinet. The new Law aims to improve urban governance and better regulate the affairs of municipalities; it identifies the conditions for the establishment of municipalities, and their operations. The Law places an elected Mayor as the executive head of the municipality, and a Municipal Council comprised of elected representatives of the

people as the highest level of municipal decision-making. The Law retains the power of municipalities to generate, retain and spend own-source revenues.

The **Land Management Law** (LML) of 2008 covers the following areas: obtaining title deeds; settlement of land with regard to ownership; restoration of appropriated lands to their owners; land distribution; transfers and alterations of land; land leasing; pastures; civil and criminal penalties, including usurpation; and other miscellaneous provisions. The Law vests all land management and ownership-related affairs in the MAIL, which was subsequently transferred to ARAZI in 2010. ARAZI became independent from MAIL in 2013.[7] An amended law was put before the National Assembly in 2013, yet this remains pending.

Action planning in female CDCs, in line with public participation of the SNG Policy (2010)

2.4
SUB-NATIONAL URBAN GOVERNANCE

Provincial Municipalities are on the frontline of many of Afghanistan's most pressing challenges. In urban areas national, provincial, and district challenges intersect, such as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) seeking improved security; economic stagnation and rising unemployment; land grabbing; rising food insecurity; more frequent and spectacular attacks by Anti-Government Elements (AGEs); rising rates of drug addiction, particularly among youth; and increasing inequality and social exclusion.

The national frameworks guiding municipalities set a vision for a smaller, more efficient and productive local governance tier that sees mayors and municipal councils democratically elected, accountable to the people, delivering services to their constituents, and leading the development and sustainable management of cities.

The Afghan Constitution (2004) covers municipalities in Article #141: "To administer city affairs, municipalities shall be established. The mayor and members of municipal councils shall be elected through free, general, secret and direct elections."[8] The Sub-National Governance Policy (2010) (SNG Policy) mandates that municipalities will assume responsibility over public services that are best planned, produced, and delivered at the local level; lead public participation by "linking bottom-up and top-down planning"; and raise and spend own-source revenues for service delivery.

Under the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG), the **General Directorate of Municipal Affairs** (GDMA) is responsible for all municipalities in Afghanistan (33 provincial municipalities and over 120 district municipalities (urban centres of rural districts)).[9] Kabul, as the nation's capital, is distinct, and reports directly to the President. Each of the 33 Provincial Municipalities has a mayor who is directly appointed by IDLG and endorsed by the President.[10] Municipalities do not receive any central government fiscal transfers and must raise all their own revenue.

Each municipality is divided into **Nahias** (city districts) that are headed by a district manager, who is appointed by the mayor. In principle each Nahia has an office, located in the Nahia geographical area, and includes various departments (e.g. revenue department, engineering department etc.), though in practice some Nahias are without office buildings and share with the municipality. Nahias are generally the first point of contact between citizens and the municipality. They are responsible for administering various tasks, including collecting safayi (sanitation) taxes; issuing building licenses; and supporting local census/population registries.

Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs) have been established in over 30 provincial municipalities to act as 'interim municipal councils'. "Municipal Advisory Boards can give advice and make recommendations to the mayor and to the municipal administration. They have no decision-making authority and cannot veto any municipal plans, activities or the budget."[11] The functions and responsibilities of MABs include; (i) citizen representation and engagement; (ii) supporting monitoring mechanism for citizen complaints; (iii) monitor municipal service delivery; (iv) review of municipal budget, development plans and contracts; (v) review of municipal fees and charges; and (vi) accountability monitoring of the municipal administration.[12]

The number of MAB members reflect the number of Nahias in each city. Members are selected from existing representative groups (e.g. urban CDCs, Gozars, and Nahia Councils (NCs), and/or chosen at the mosque level, from each Masjid Jame, Takia Khana or other religious centres. In addition, one member is selected from each of the following groups: women, youth, civil society, media, martyrs/disabled, religious scholars (Ulema) and one representative from the private sector (traders or craftsmen). Ten percent of MAB seats are allocated to women, though the long-term target is 25%.

Box 2.1

Mazar-i-Sharif Municipal Advisory Board (MAB) increasing engagement between the municipality and citizens

The Mazar-i-Sharif Municipality Advisory Board (MAB) was established on May 6th 2013. It has 28 members, 20 representatives from 10 districts of Mazar City and 8 representatives from various demographic groups including; Youth, Media, Civil Society, Women and Martyrs & Disabled.

The MAB members were selected through an election process under the leadership of IDLG/ GDMA supported by UN-Habitat, UNDP and RAMP-UP North representatives. After the general election, a male chairman, female deputy and clerk were identified and appointed.

The MAB uses its own office building. The building has enough office rooms for all MAB staff including a meeting room, kitchen, toilets for men and women and a large hall for large gatherings.

The MAB has five active sub-committees; Committee on Governance and Public Participation, Revenue Growth and Development Committee, Cleaning and Greening Committee, Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee and Complaints Committee.

Each of these committees has a regular meeting schedule and works with related Departments of the Municipality to solve routine problems. All committees are responsible to report their activities in MAB official meetings.

Members of the MAB outside the Municipal building;

MAB Committee General Meeting

MAB Head and Deputy at opening of Mazar-i-Sharif municipal infrastructure canal project along with Deputy Mayor and Head of Construction Department

Mazar-i-Sharif MAB Deputy Head monitoring construction progress of CDC sub-project in District 5.

Each Nahia is divided into **Gozar Assemblies** (GAs), headed by a Wakili Gozar (similar to a Malik in rural areas) who is usually an elder of the area. The Wakili Gozar is identified by the residents of the area and introduced to the municipality, and is therefore considered part of the municipal governance structure athough they receive no salary. Gozars vary in size, but they usually include 1,000-1,250 adjacent households. Recent programmes have formalised the Gozar structure through supporting the establishment of mixed-gender Gozar Assemblies (GAs) through local area-based elections, and linked with Community Development Councils (CDCs).[13]

Each Gozar Assembly can be divided into **Community Development Councils** (CDCs) (Figure 2.2). The urban CDC approach is very similar to that of village CDCs under the National Solidarity Programme (NSP). An urban CDC has on average 200-250 households living within a defined area. In conjunction with municipalities, the CDC formation process includes: (i) community mobilisation through a series of small and large gatherings; (ii) Council elections with voting open to all residents of the neighbourhood (including voting of a chair, secretary and treasurer); (iii) formal registration with the municipality; (iv) community action planning to identify local needs and priorities; (v) sub-project design, review and approval by the Municipal Advisory Board; and (vi) project implementation through community contracts.[14]

In most cases there are separate male and female CDCs (with the same geographical boundaries for each). Male and female CDCs share their action plans and agree on sub-projects. Some mixed-gender CDCs have been established in Kabul. Also worthy of note is that some cities have existing operational CDCs established under the NSP, which, due to expanding municipal boundaries, have been incorporated within the municipal area.

FIGURE 2.2: A SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR PEOPLE'S ENGAGEMENT: DISTRICT 2, MAZAR-I-SHARIF

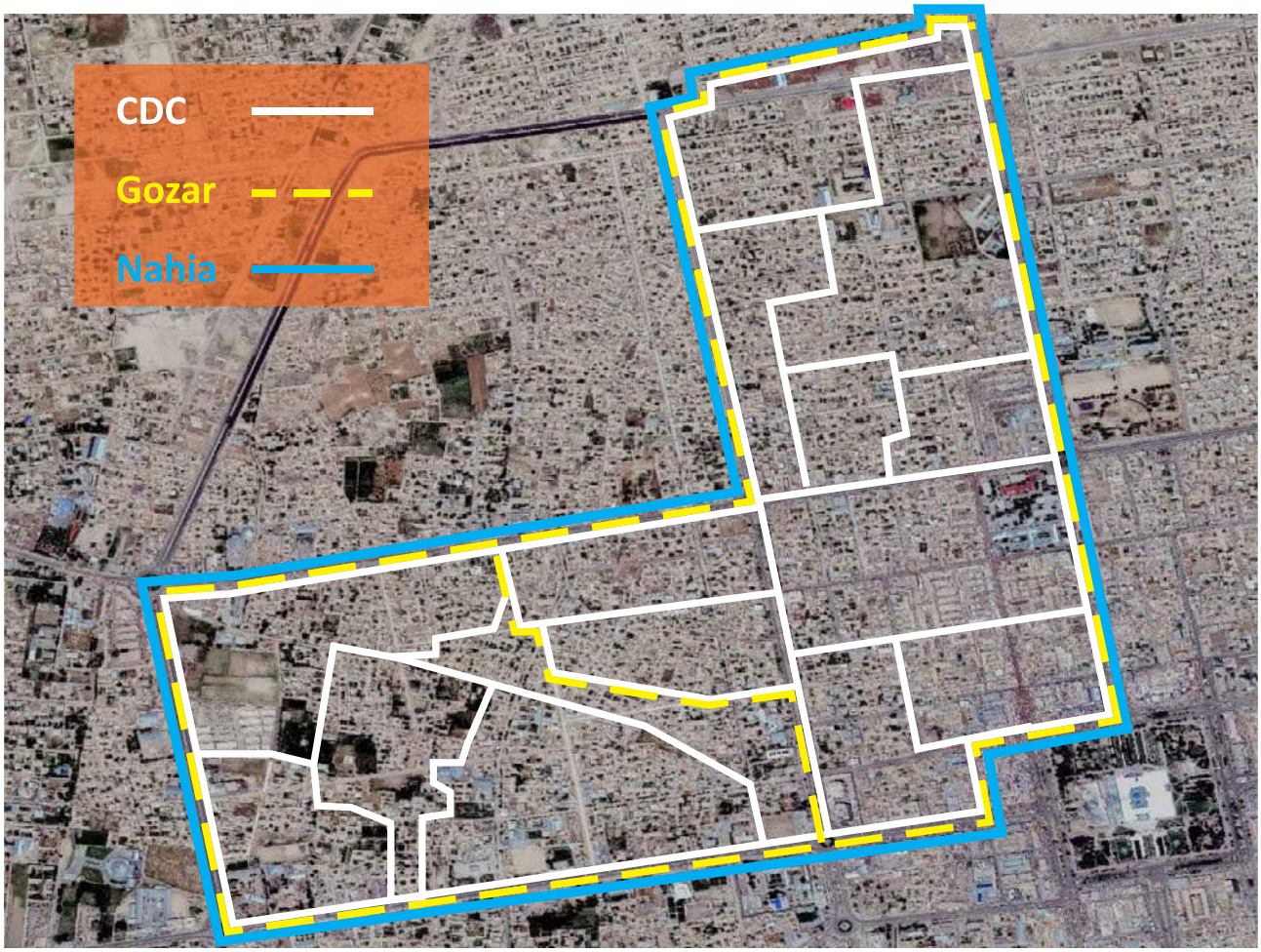


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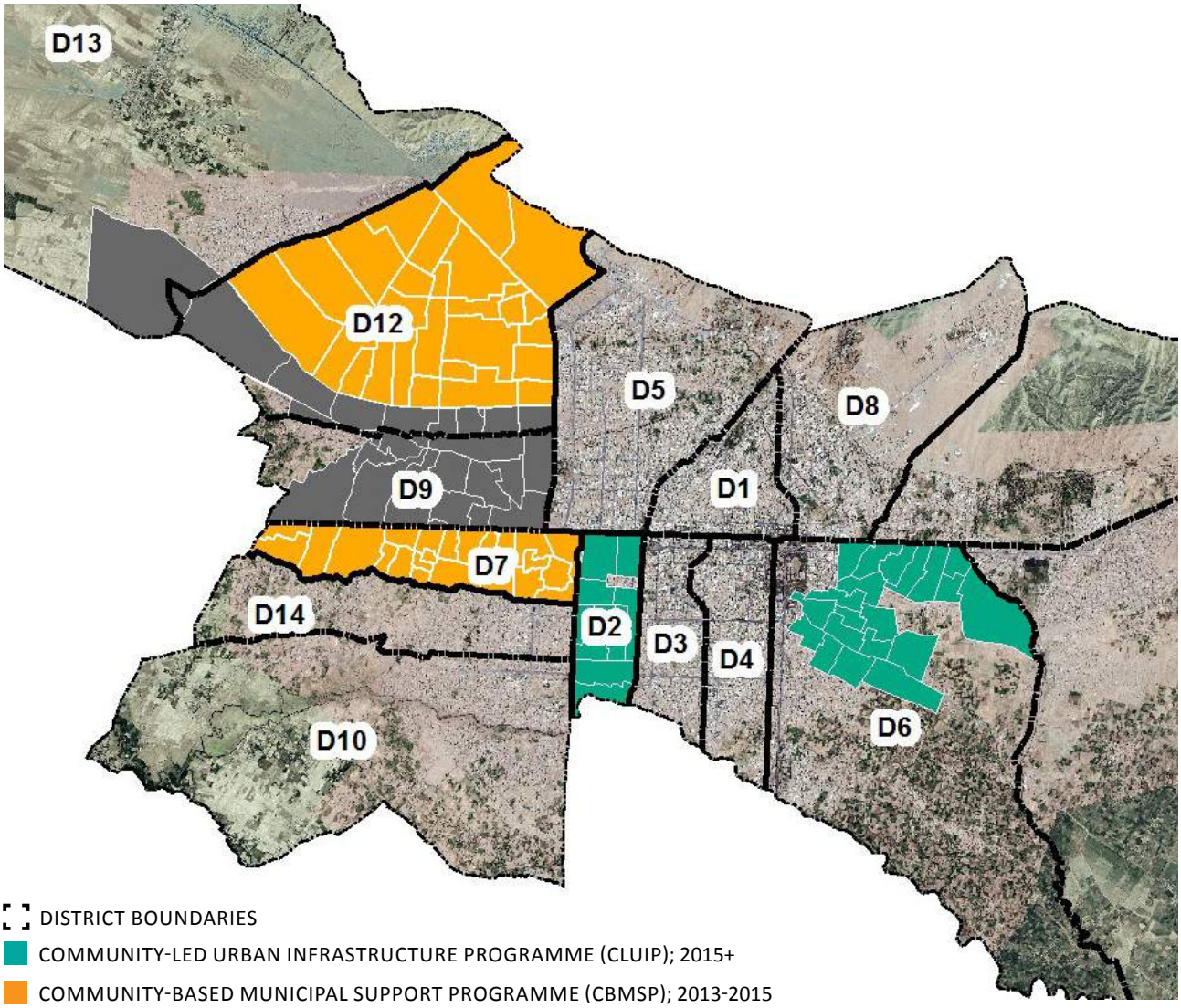
TABLE 2.2: CDC COVERAGE IN KABUL AND REGIONAL HUBS

Municipality	Number of Community Development Councils (CDCs)	% City Dwellings Covered by CDCs
Kabul	247	14%
Kandahar	139	35%
Mazar-i-Sharif	128	42%
Herat	105	34%
Jalalabad*	87	43%

*NOTE: *IN JALALABAD, 92% OF THE DWELLINGS WITHIN THE OLD CITY BOUNDARY (DISTRICTS 1-5) HAVE BEEN COVERED BY CDCS.*
NOTE: CDCS ALSO EXIST IN FARAH, LASHKAR GAH, CHARIKAR AND BAMYAN BUT DATA IS NOT RELIABLE SO NOT INCLUDED ABOVE.

SOURCE: UN-HABITAT DATABASE AND SOAC GIS

FIGURE 2.3: MAP OF HERAT CITY SHOWING EXISTING CDCS



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2.5 MUNICIPAL CAPACITY

Municipal infrastructure and services

Table 2.3 gives an overview of the facilities and operating conditions of the 34 municipalities, based on IDLG/GDMA's Municipal Assessment (2013). In general, the data shows that municipalities are extremely underequipped to fulfill their mandate, and that there is significant variance in their operating capacity. As expected, larger municipalities are more equipped than smaller ones, yet larger municipalities also have a larger population and land area to serve, placing additional strain on limited municipal operating infrastructure and services.

Furthermore, the quantitative figures do not reveal the equally important quality aspects of infrastructure and services. For example, the number of municipalities with connections to electricity and internet services is high, but this does not take into account the irregular and unreliable quality of these services which significantly impacts daily municipal operations.

TABLE 2.3: MUNICIPAL OPERATING INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Facility/Service		Coverage
Municipal Offices	Municipal building	31 of the 34 have their own buildings.
	Electricity	All municipalities apart from Sharan report to have electricity in their offices. 11 have generator only; 10 have city power only, and 12 have both.
	Internet connection	14 municipalities report having an internet connection.
	Use of computers	33 of the 34 municipalities use computers. Over 300 computers are in use across the 34 municipalities.
	Prayer room	10 do not have any prayer room; 14 have male-only prayer rooms; and 8 not specified. Only 2 municipalities have prayer rooms for both men and women.
	Bathrooms	Only 35% have bathrooms for both men and women (12 out of 34). 17 have bathrooms for men and one does not have a bathroom; (4 not specified).
City District (*Nahia*) Offices	Buildings in *Nahias*	26 municipalities report that their city is divided into district/*Nahias.* Of these, only 35% of the total have operational districts/*Nahias* have offices
	Equipment	47% of *Nahia* offices are not equipped at all; 30% somewhat equipped, and 23% sufficiently equipped.
Public Outreach Facilities	Customer service section/ centre	15 municipalities have a customer service section where citizens can engage with the municipality.
	Visitors room	25 have a visitors room; 7 do not (2 not specified).
	Visitors bathroom for women	Only 2 have women's bathroom for visitors.
	Citizen phone number	20 municipalities report having a phone number for citizen engagement
	Notice boards	24 Municipalities have public notice boards displaying information
	Website	9 Municipalities have a website.
	Magazine and/or newsletter	17 are reported to publish newspaper and/or magazine.

The assessment highlights the significant challenges in terms of creating gender-responsive and inclusive municipal operating environments. For example, only 35% of municipalities have bathrooms for female staff; only two municipalities have dedicated bathrooms for female visitors; and only two have prayer rooms for women. This lack of dedicated facilities is a significant structural constraint to improving both the number of female municipal employees and opportunities for municipal public engagement with female citizens.[15]

Human resources/capacity

On average for 2013 and 2014, there was a total of 3,460 municipal Tashkeel (civil service) staff in the 34 Provincial Capitals. Almost half of these staff were in Kabul Municipality (1,614; 46% of total), and the other large cities, such as Herat (223); Jalalabad (215); Mazar-i-Sharif (173); and Kandahar (172) (Figure 2.4). There are also an estimated 10,808 staff working for the municipalities on a contractual basis (i.e. not Taskheel), mostly in street cleaning and solid waste collection roles (6,391 in Kabul and 4,417 in other 33 provincial capitals).[16]

Herat and Kandahar have much higher numbers of contracted staff than the other regional hubs, with 793 and 730 contracted staff respectively, compared with only 486 in Jalalabad and 327 in Mazar-i-Sharif. The other cities have smaller numbers but relatively similar ratios of Tashkeel to contracted staff.

In terms of qualification levels of municipal Tashkeel staff, the GDMA database reveals that on average 30% have education up to 6th Grade; 11% to 9th Grade; 50% to 12th grade; 8% have Bachelor Degrees; and 1% have a Masters Degree.

Figure 2.4 shows the breakdown of staffing for each municipality (based on an average of 1392 and 1393 (2013-2014)). It shows the significant variation in the ratio of municipal staff to the number of dwellings in each city. The lowest ratio is Mehterlam with 1 municipal staff for every 19 dwellings; the highest is Taluqan city with one staff for every 171 dwellings. The discrepancy may be the result of the fact that Tashkeel reform has not kept pace with the urban growth and new municipal boundaries (e.g. boundaries adjusted to include more households whilst the Tashkeel remains the same).

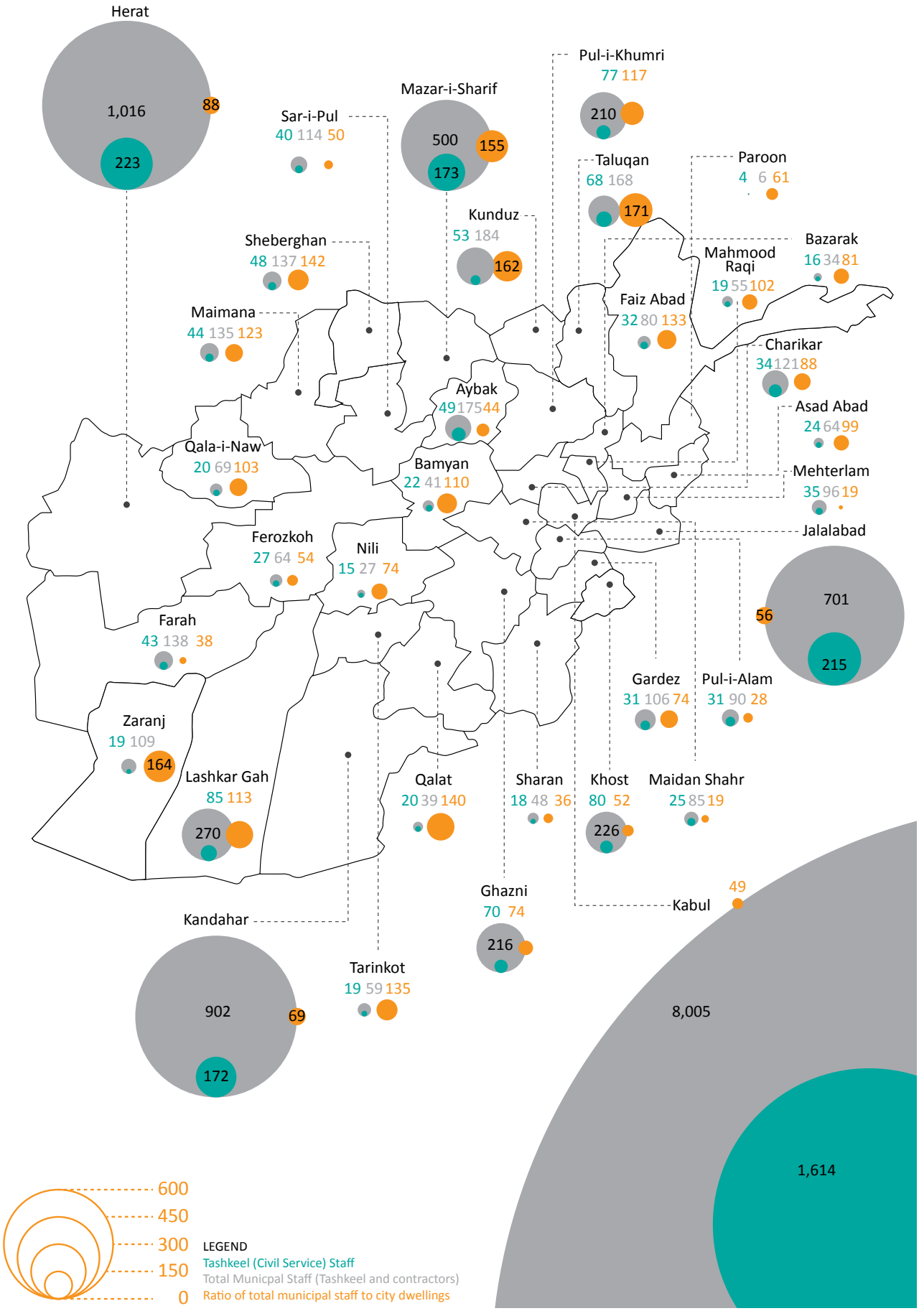
Among the many challenges faced by Afghan municipalities, acquiring and retaining qualified staff is one of the most pressing. Municipalities lack incentives to attract qualified workers, particularly because remuneration rates are significantly lower than private companies or international organisations. As a result of the challenges in retaining staff, 18% of Tashkeel positions remain vacant.[17] Parallel systems with externally paid 'experts' and 'advisors' have undermined sustainable institution building and capacity development of municipalities; and in many cases it has been a case of 'capacity substitution' with external experts performing key municipal functions, rather than the capacity development of Tashkeel staff. Only five municipalities had more than 10% female staff (Faiz Abad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Sheberghan, Maimana and Charikar) and these were in low positions.[18]

Municipalities are included in the national Tashkeel reform (Public Administration Reform (PAR)) undertaken by the Independent Administrative Reform Civil Service Commission (IARCSC). The PAR aims to produce a smaller, more efficient and productive civil service. Beginning in 2013 for Provincial Municipalities, the PAR has focused on installing a merit-based system that assesses the performance of staff bi-annually, and subjects civil servants to examination and competitive appointment. However, "although progress is being made, the civil service remains plagued by low capacity, poor salaries, corruption and ethnic preference".[19]

Corruption in Afghanistan is endemic; with Afghanistan ranking 172 out of 175 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index in 2014. The challenge is particularly acute in Afghanistan's cities. Municipalities, with a relatively large degree of autonomy over the land within their boundaries, municipal assets and their finances (with the ability to generate and spend their own revenues) are particularly vulnerable to corruption, in particular the sale/grabbing of state/municipal land.

The lack of bottom-up accountability and limited citizen participation in municipal governance has not helped the situation. The scale of land parceling/development whereby new plots are demarcated is clearly evident in the SoAC GIS analysis, with cities on average having between 15% and 45% vacant parcels. Corruption undermines institutional legitimacy and weakens state-society relations; it is a major barrier to increasing local revenues with citizens unwilling to pay local taxes unless municipal funds are spent transparently and accountably for service delivery.

FIGURE 2.4: MUNICIPAL STAFFING IN THE 34 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS (AVERAGE 2013/2014)



SOURCE: GDMA DATABASE AND KABUL MUNICIPALITY; SOAC GIS

Municipal boundaries

Since 2013 new municipal boundaries have been defined for 22 of the 33 provincial municipalities under GDMA.[20] Prior to this the exact boundaries of cities were unclear and not officially demarcated.

Clear municipal administrative boundaries are important to (i) ensure all current and future built-up areas are under the jurisdiction of one government entity (municipality); (ii) promote planned, orderly development that can be efficiently serviced and good local land governance, the development of social and physical infrastructure, protection of environmentally sensitive areas, avoiding urban development in unsuitable locations, and for the municipal taxation of land and properties; and (iii) to support municipal elections as stipulated by the Constitution.

Figure 2.5 shows the case of Jalalabad where much of the current built-up area spills over the municipal boundary, demonstrating the need for the old boundary's extension.

While the need to update the municipal boundaries is clear, the original approach to the creation of boundaries has not been consistent. As a result some boundaries are too large and some too small. For example Lashkar Gah and Kunduz have very large non built-up areas (mainly agriculture and barren land) that are included in the new municipal boundaries (Figure 2.6). The built up area of these cities could expand more than tenfold and still not occupy the total land area within their boundaries. In contrast, Mazar-i-Sharif and Ghazni, for example, have a considerable built-up area outside their municipal boundaries (Figure 2.6).

FIGURE 2.5: MAP OF JALALABAD CITY OLD AND NEW MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY

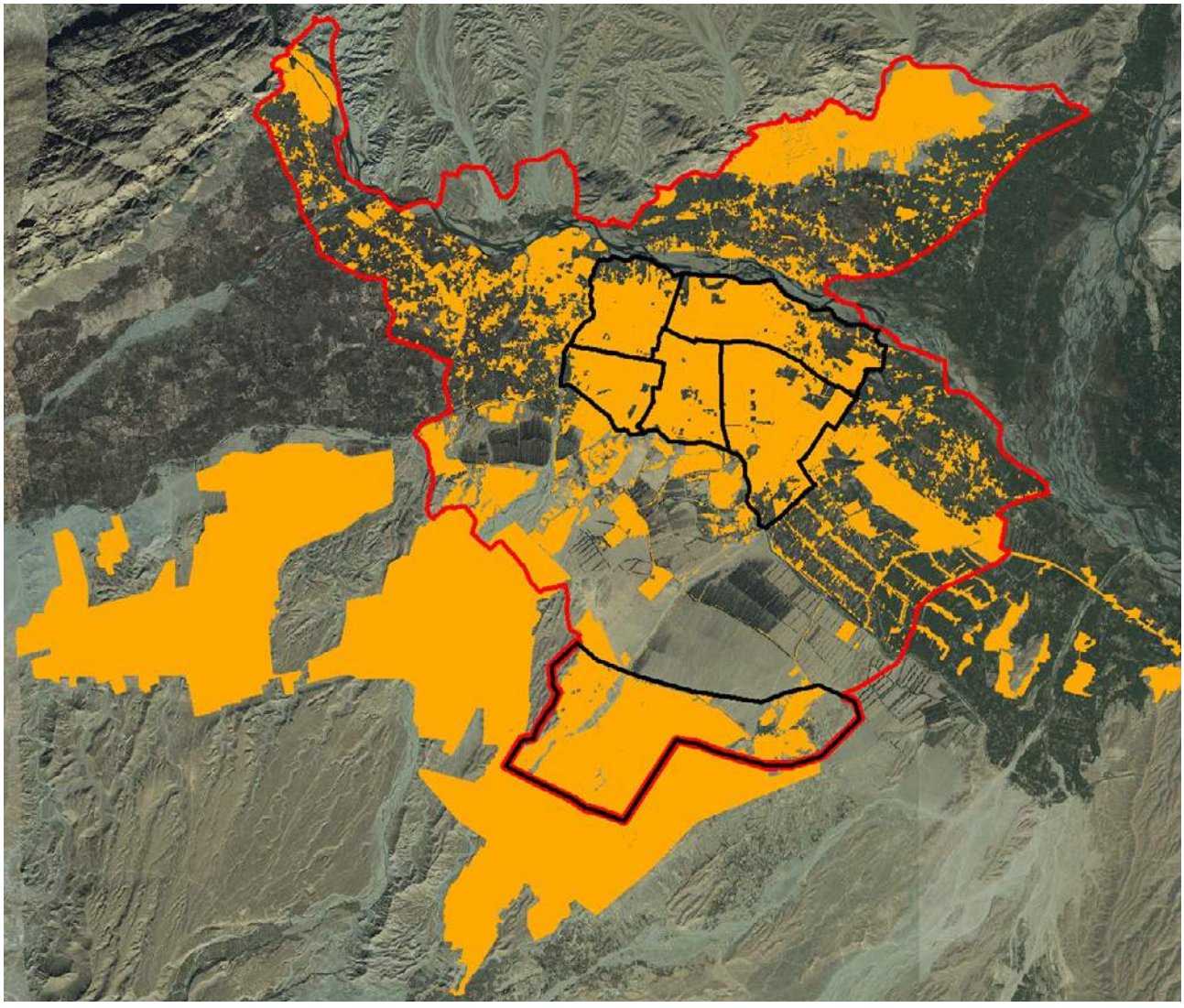


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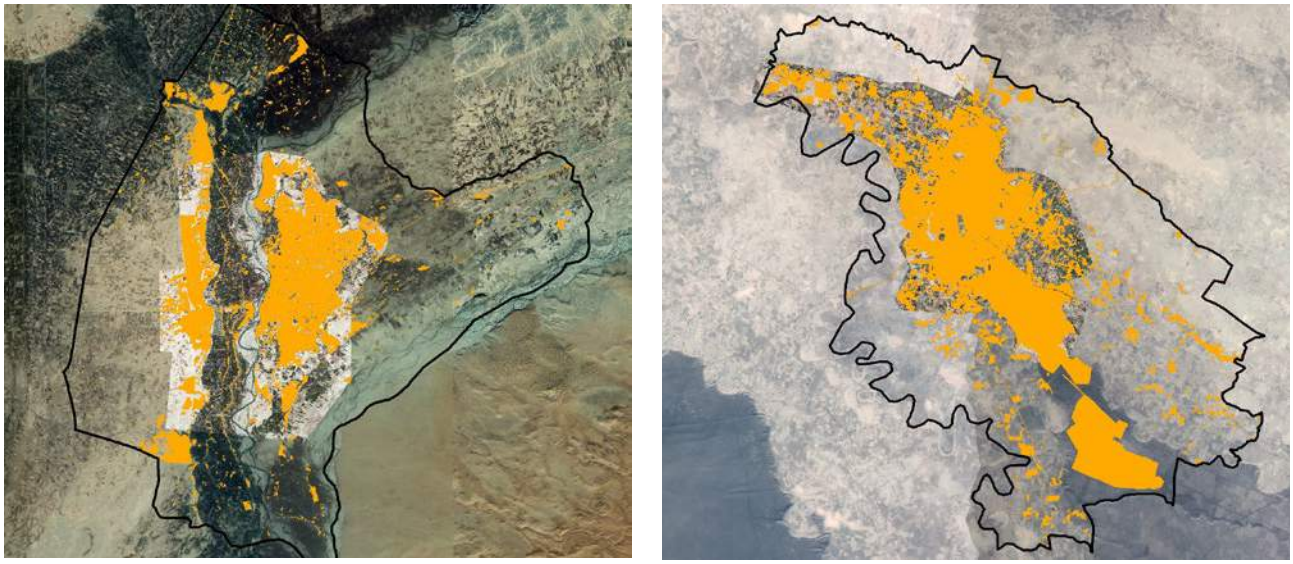
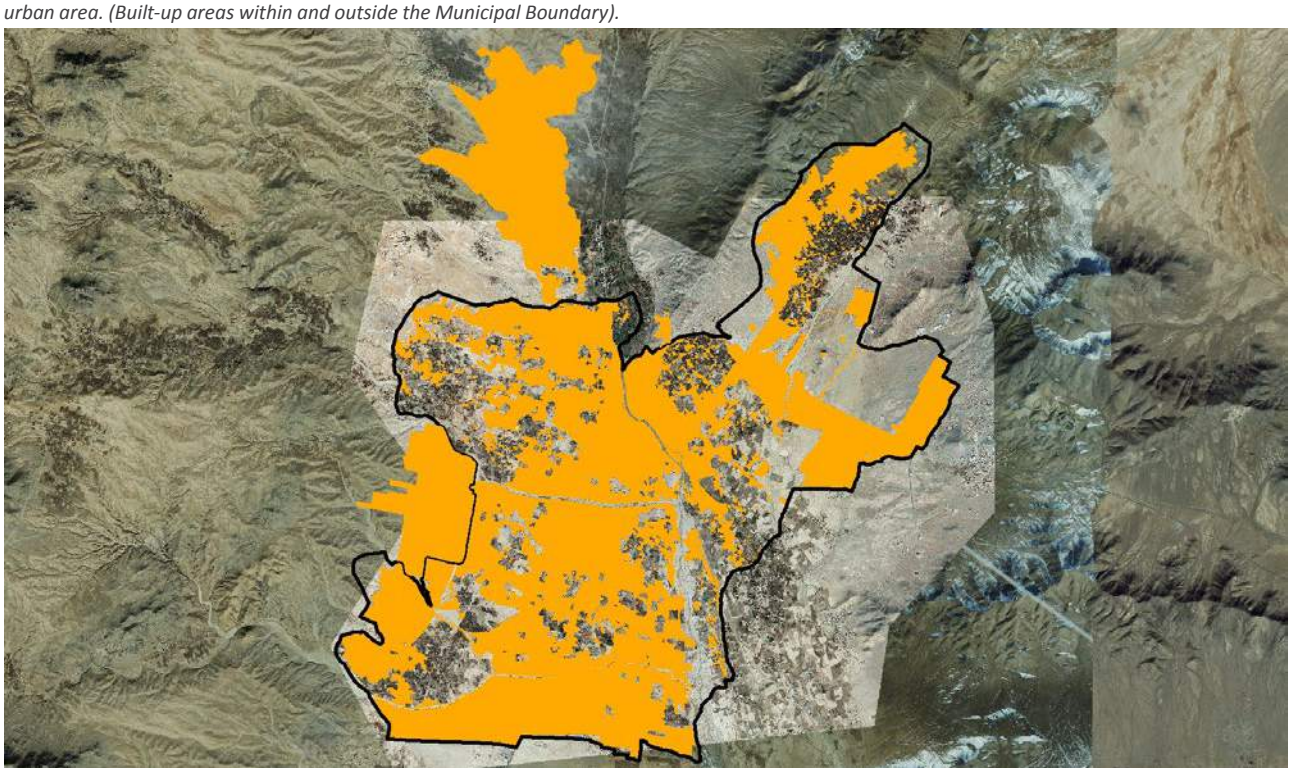
FIGURE 2.6: EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES AND BUILT-UP AREA



Lashkar Gah and Kunduz are examples of contained urban areas within large boundaries (all built-up areas are located within the Municipal Boundaries).

Mazar-i-Sharif (above) and Ghazni (below) are examples of municipal boundaries that are too small because they do not accommodate all the built-up urban area. (Built-up areas within and outside the Municipal Boundary).



SOURCE: SoAC GIS; IDLG; © DIGITALGLOBE, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

2.6 MUNICIPAL FINANCE

As Afghan municipalities do not receive any central government revenue transfers, loans, or on-budget development assistance, own-source municipal revenues are essential for delivering local services and sustaining operations. The one exception is Kabul Municipality which does receive a transfer from the central government to supplement its own-source revenue. Therefore a review of municipal finance[21] can shed light on the capacity of municipalities to collect revenues as well as spend them for their operations and local service delivery.[22]

Municipal revenues

Over half (53%) of total municipal revenues in the 34 provincial capitals during 2011-2013 were collected by Kabul City (Figure 2.7). The four regional hubs of Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad comprised approximately one-quarter of total revenues (27%); including 11% in Herat, 7% in Mazar-i-Sharif, 5% in Kandahar and 4% in Jalalabad.

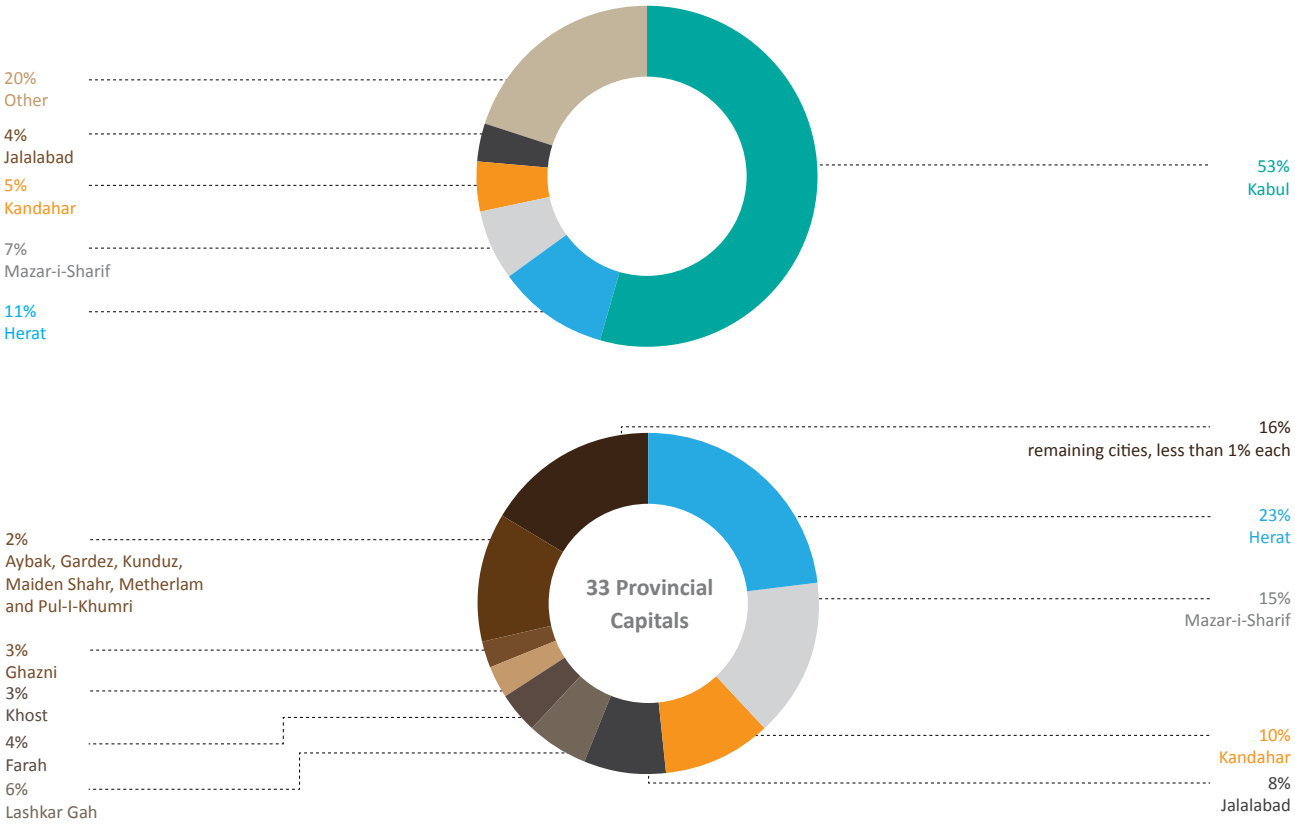
When analysing revenues of the 33 provincial capitals (i.e. Kabul excluded), nearly three-quarters (72%) of 2011-2013 revenues were raised by only 8 cities: the four regional hubs (which account for 56% of the total), and four other cities: Lashkar Gah (6%); Farah (4%); Khost (3%); and Ghazni (3%) (Figure 2.7).

In 2011 Kabul Municipality collected 2.9 billion AFN and the other 33 cities 3 billion AFN. In 2012 and 2013 the revenue of Kabul Municipality was significantly higher than all 33 other cities combined: 29% higher in 2012 and 42% higher in 2013. The disparity reflects lower revenue collection achievements in the 33 provincial municipalities during 2012-2013 compared with 2011, rather than fluctuations in levels of revenue collection for Kabul Municipality which have remained relatively constant.

There are over 50 local revenue sources that municipalities are permitted to collect. These range from fees, fines and penalties; service charges; and the lease, rent and sale of municipal land and properties.[23]

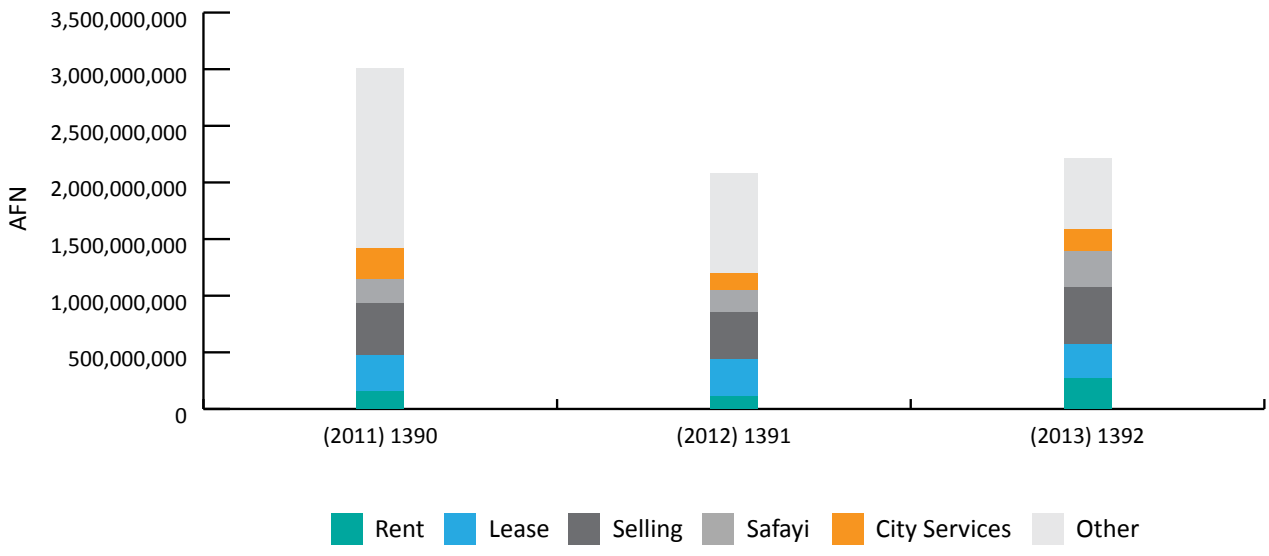
Municipal finance systems and procedures are still manual in many municipalities

FIGURE 2.7: SHARE OF TOTAL MUNICIPAL REVENUES, 2011-2013



SOURCE: GDMA AND KABUL MUNICIPALITY

FIGURE 2.8: REVENUE COMPOSITION 2011-2013 FOR THE 33 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS (KABUL EXCLUDED).



SOURCE: GDMA (2013) AND KABUL MUNICIPALITY

Selling of municipal land and properties is the largest revenue source, contributing an average of 22% of total annual revenues in Kabul and 19% in the 33 cites (Table 2.4) over the 2011-13 period. Leasing and renting municipal properties together comprise 20% of revenues (13% leasing and 7% rent) on average in cities other than Kabul, where the figures are (3% and 6% respectively). Safayi and Municipality (City) Services Tax are the two main sources of tax revenue, contributing 17% and 14% respectively in Kabul, and 10% and 9% to total revenues respectively for other cities.

The share of these five main revenue sources have increased over the three-year period, from 47% to 71% of total revenues in the cities outside Kabul. Three revenue sources have significantly increased their share of total revenues during the period. Firstly, safayi taxes, which have increased from 7% of total revenue in 2011, to 10% in 2012, and 14% in 2013. This increase can likely be attributed to significant international technical assistance in property registration and safayi taxation during these years, which helped expand the safayi tax base and improve tax collection rates. Secondly, the sale of land and properties: which have increased from 15% of total revenue in 2011, to 23% in 2013, although, as elaborated below, this source of revenue is problematic given it is unsustainable and prone to corruption. Thirdly, rent revenues have more than doubled, from 5% of total revenue in 2011 to 12% in 2013.

The above figures, however, disguise the significant variance among cities, which can be seen in Figure 2.9. For example, Bamyan reported a relatively balanced revenue split (35% rent and lease, 27% selling, 4% safayi, and 33% other) whereas Lashkar Gah received a considerable 63% of income from land sales, 11% from safayi, 6% rent and 20% from other sources.

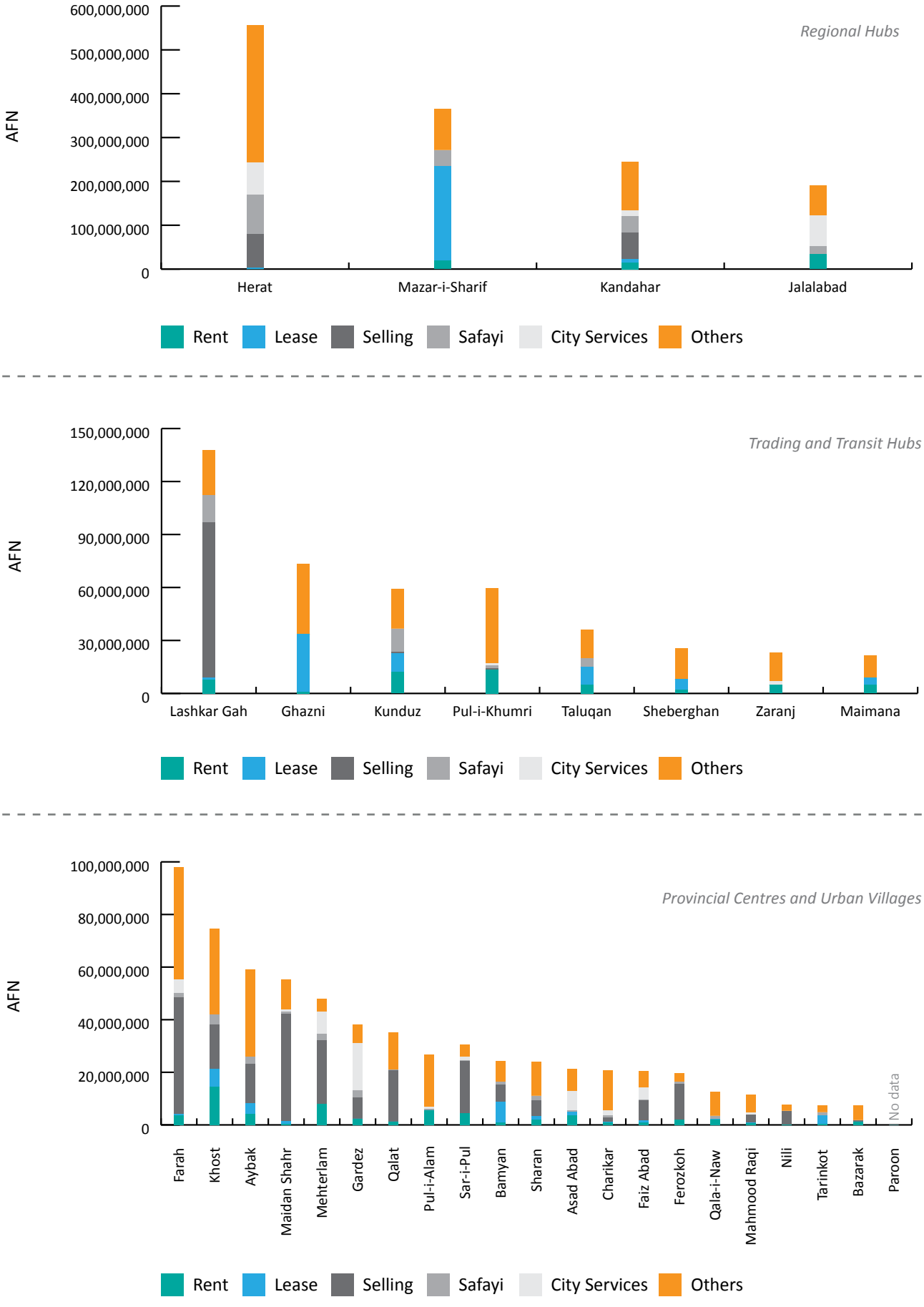
The variation in revenue composition cannot be attributed only to city size, population, location, municipal assets, etc., but appears to be influenced by a variety of local factors such as (i) local capacity (e.g. for revenue collection, accounting, etc.) and (ii) willingness to accurately report revenues through official channels (e.g. some cities appear to under report revenues, especially land and property sales). For example no official land sales have been reported in large cities such as Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad, Ghazni, Maimana, Pul-i-Khumri, Qala-i-Naw, and Taluqan.

TABLE 2.4: MAIN MUNICIPAL REVENUE SOURCES, AVERAGE 2011-2013

Source	Description	% Total revenues average 2011-2013	
		33 Cities	Kabul Municipality
Sale of land and properties	The sale of land and properties (residential, commercial, industrial and institutional)	19%	22%
Lease of properties	A written agreement between renter and the owner which gives the renter the right to occupy the space for an agreed period of time for an agreed lump-sum (paid at the beginning of the contract)	13%	3%
Rent of properties	A rent is a monthly payment the renter needs to pay to the owner of the property.	7%	6%
Safayi Tax	Essentially an annual property tax/rates payable by all property owners (residential, commercial, institutional, etc) to cover city cleaning and solid waste collection (safayi means cleaning/sanitation); regulated by safayi regulation.	10%	17%
Municipality (City) Services Tax	A tax on products (goods) entering the cities, these goods can be of intra-provincial trade, collected at the entrance points of cities; regulated by the City Services Regulation.	9%	14%
Business Licenses	License issued by the Municipality to all businesses (large and small) operating within the city, regulated by Business License tax table.	1%	2%

SOURCES: MUNICIPAL LAW; GDMA (2015); KABUL MUNICIPALITY

FIGURE 2.9: REVENUE COMPOSITION 2011-2013 FOR THE 33 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS



SOURCE: GDMA MUNICIPAL FINANCE DATABASE

Although city sizes and revenue collection vary considerably, logic suggests a relationship between a city's population and its revenue: in theory the larger and more populated a city, the more opportunities for revenue collection, as well as higher demand for services, and therefore revenue necessity. Figure 2.10 graphs revenue against SoAC 2014/15 dwelling counts to identify average revenue collection per dwelling as an indicator of revenue collection performance.

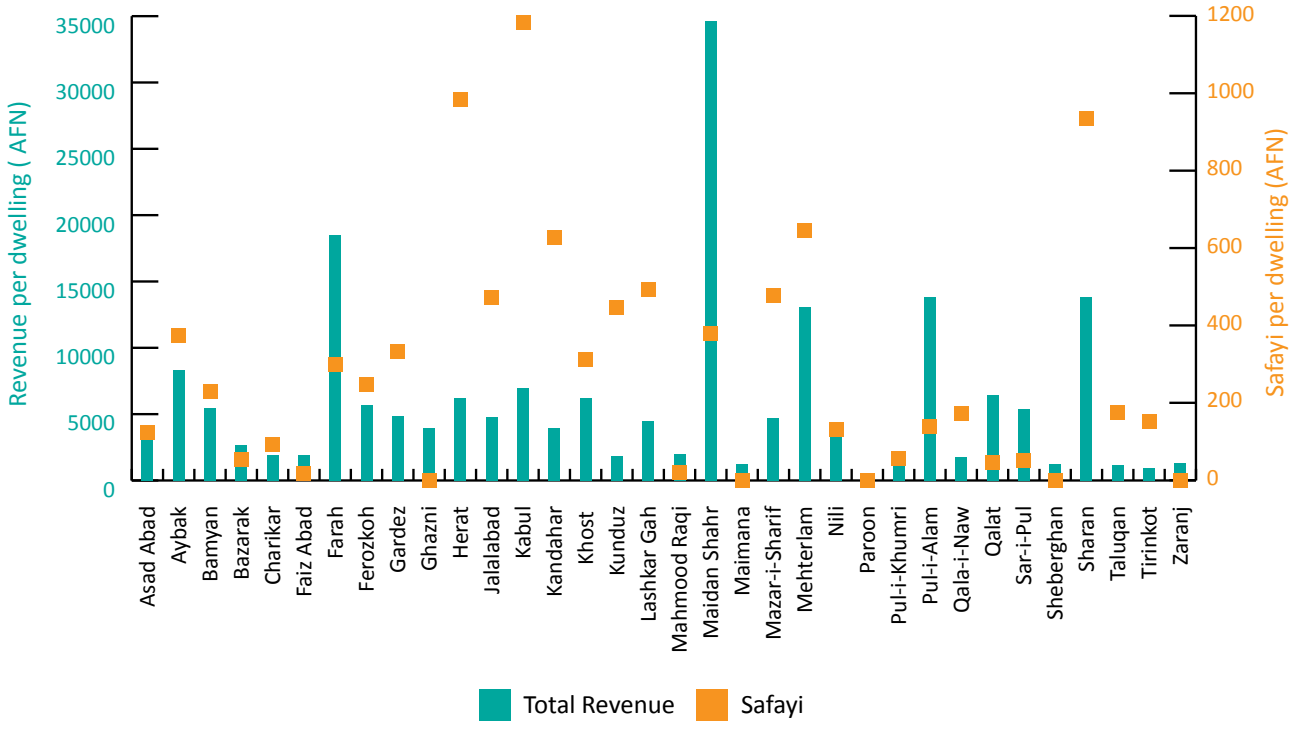
The data shows an average revenue collected per dwelling of 5,366 AFN (96 USD) per annum for the 34 cities. Two cities, Maidan Shahr and Farah have extremely high per-dwelling revenues with 34,661 AFN (608 USD) and 18,500 AFN (325 USD) respectively. This can be largely attributed to the large-scale sale of municipal land and property which constitutes a massive 73% of total revenues in Maidan Shahr and a smaller, but still very significant, 43% in Farah.

Figure 2.10 also graphs safayi revenue per dwelling. Safayi is a relatively stable fixed source of local revenue that, as described above, has consistently grown over the past years and has potential to grow further. Although safayi is not only a residential tax (it is also payable for commercial, institutional, industrial, etc., properties), examining safayi collection rates per dwelling shows interesting findings:

- Kabul has the highest safayi revenue collection per dwelling of all cities with 1,182 AFN revenue per dwelling (21 USD).
- Two other cities significantly outperform the others: Herat and Sharan. Herat municipality collects on average 984 AFN (17 USD) per dwelling and Sharan 935 AFN (16 USD).
- The lowest collection rates are in the Urban Villages', likely attributable to the 'rural' nature of these cities and their limited experience with safayi taxation. For example, Bazarak collects only 52 AFN (0.92 USD) per dwelling.
- All cities are not collecting to the level of their potential safayi tax. Based on UN-Habitat experience in Afghanistan, the average safayi per residential property is ~25 USD, and commercial/ institutional properties average ~100 USD. It appears there remains enormous potential to improve safayi collection rates as potential safayi for the 34 cities is estimated at least 57 million USD per annum.[24]

Land and property sales are a major feature of municipal revenues for most of the 34 cities. As will be explained in Chapter Four, it has been common for municipalities to subdivide and sell land plots both within their city boundaries and outside them.

FIGURE 2.10: TOTAL AND SAFAYI REVENUES PER DWELLING, AVERAGE 2011-2013 (AFN)



SOURCE: GDMA MUNICIPAL FINANCE DATABASE; KABUL MUNICIPALITY; SOAC GIS ANALYSIS

In absolute numbers, the 33 provincial municipalities reportedly collected 1.3 billion AFN (23 million USD) from the sale of land and property between 2011 and 2013; Kabul city collected a total of 1.7 billion AFN (32 million USD). As mentioned above, it is likely the actual figure is considerably higher as this is only the reported revenue; in all cities, many land sales have occurred outside official municipal finance records.

As Figure 2.11 shows, land and property sales are a significant feature in the large cities of Lashkar Gah, Herat, and Kandahar.[25] Lashkar Gah is the most striking: between 2011 and 2013, reported sales comprised an average of 63% of annual municipal revenues equating to an average of 88 million AFN (1.5 million USD) per annum. In Maidan Shahr, sales comprised 73% of total revenues equating to 40 million AFN (716,000 USD) per annum.

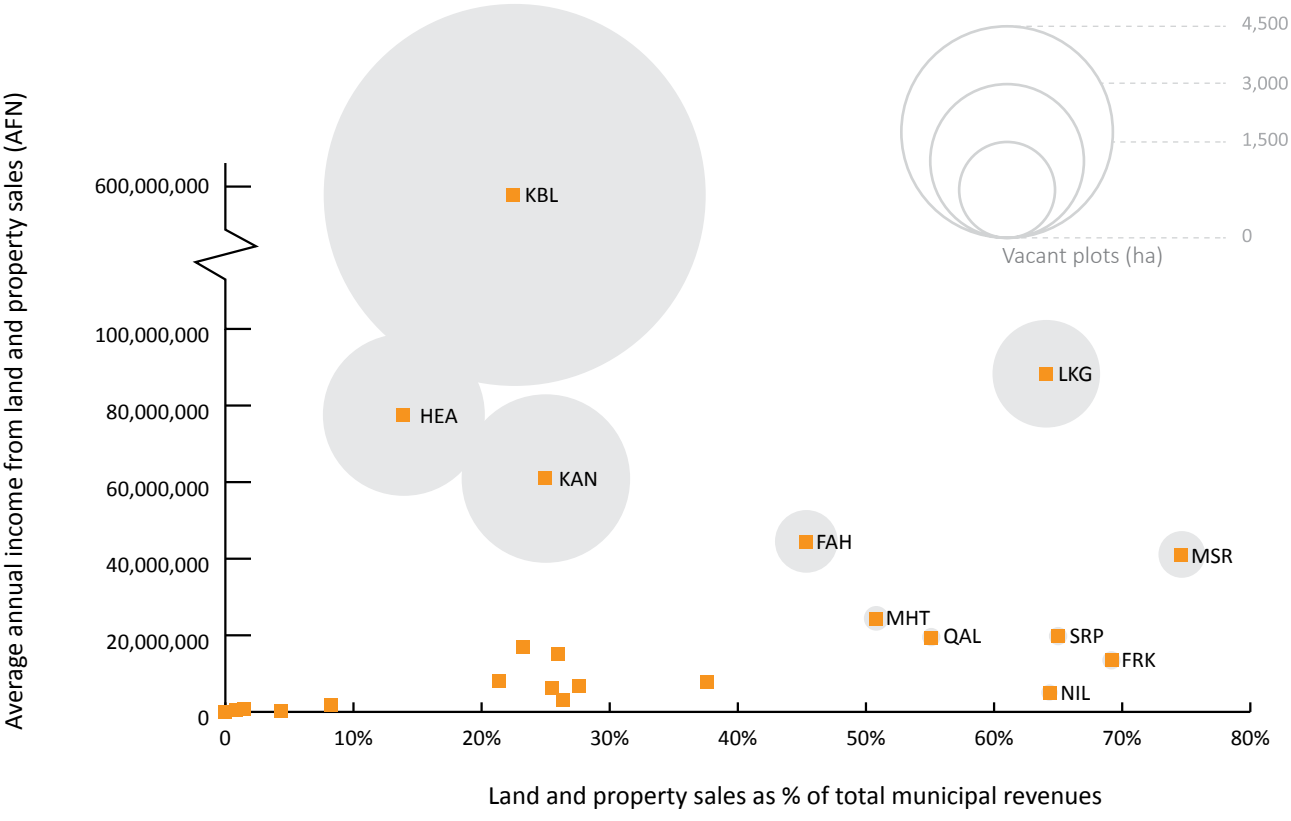
The reliance on land and property sales to generate revenue also increased during this period. On average, sales comprised 15% of total revenue in 2011, increasing to nearly one-quarter (23%) in 2013. This phenomena is concerning, not least because municipal land and property is a finite resource, and thus its sale is not a sustainable revenue source. In addition, unless adequate measures to ensure transparency are in place, the sale of land and property is highly vulnerable to corruption. It can also greatly constrain development opportunities in the future for municipalities as they may have insufficient land and property holdings necessary for implementation of expansion and upgrading plans and projects.

Municipal expenditures

Municipal expenditures in Afghanistan are generally categorized into two groups: 'Ordinary' (operational costs) and 'Capital' (costs associated with capital development projects). Ordinary expenditures are further sub-classified into 'Salaries and Allowances' and 'Goods and Services'.

For the 33 provincial municipalities, the average split between ordinary and development expenditures is 28% Ordinary and 72% Capital expenditure. There is significant variance within the 33 municipalities; from Mazar-i-Sharif, with only 13% Ordinary and 87% Capital, to Taluqan, with 61% Ordinary and only 39% Capital expenditure (Figure 2.12). While there is no perfect split, in general, a balanced split suggests that everyday services are being delivered (for example that solid waste is routinely collected, (an ordinary

FIGURE 2.11: LAND AND PROPERTY SALES REVENUE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MUNICIPAL REVENUES AND SALES REVENUE (AFN), AVERAGE 2011-2013; AND TOTAL LAND AREA OF VACANT PLOTS



SOURCE: GDMA MUNICIPAL FINANCE DATABASE; KABUL MUNICIPALITY; SOAC GIS

expense) and long-term city infrastructure and the environment is being improved (e.g. construction and/or maintenance of roads, public spaces, etc., a capital expense).

Kabul is distinct in that 80% of its expenditures are for Ordinary expenses and only 20% are for Capital expenditures. On average for 2011-2013, Kabul Municipality spent 2.6 billion AFN (46 million USD) on Ordinary expenses per year and only 658 million AFN (11 million USD) on Capital expenditures. This could in part be attributed to the considerable off-budget support the city receives from international donors for capital infrastructure projects, thus reducing pressure on the city's own-source capital development budget.

For ordinary expenditure for the 33 provincial capital cities, salaries and allowances comprise an average 43% and goods and services 57%. Overall, this means that salaries and allowances comprise only 12% of total municipal expenditure.

As with revenue, examining expenditure per dwelling enables a more nuanced comparison across cities. Smaller cities like Maidan Shahr, Mehterlam, Sharan and Pul-i-Alam spend more per dwelling than the bigger cities like Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul. Other notable findings include: (i) as with revenues, there is considerable variation across cities, and this does not seem to relate to city size, function, etc.; (ii) Kabul spends on average 6,688 AFN per dwelling (117 USD); (iii) of the Regional Hubs, Herat spends 6,111 AFN (107 USD), Kandahar 5,227 AFN (91 USD), Mazar-i-Sharif 5,524 AFN (96 USD), and Jalalabad 4,814 AFN (84 USD); and (iv) Maidan Shahr reportedly spends 35,789 AFN (596 USD) per dwelling, likely possible given the city's significant revenues from land and property sales, as discussed above, and low number of dwellings (only 1,585).

Municipal budgeting

When examining municipal finances, a recurring theme is the considerable variation in performance across cities and the annual irregularity of revenues and expenditures. The variations are indicative of the extent to which budgeting remains a significant challenge in Afghanistan. Municipalities are required to prepare annual budgets that are sent to the Ministry of Finance for approval via GDMA. However, as elaborated below, many municipalities view budget preparation and reporting as a negative

FIGURE 2.12: MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURE COMPOSITION, AVERAGE 2011-2013.

NOTE: KM ORDINARY EXPENDITURE NOT BROKEN-DOWN TO SUB-CLASSES.

SOURCE: GDMA MUNICIPAL FINANCE DATABASE; KABUL MUNICIPALITY.

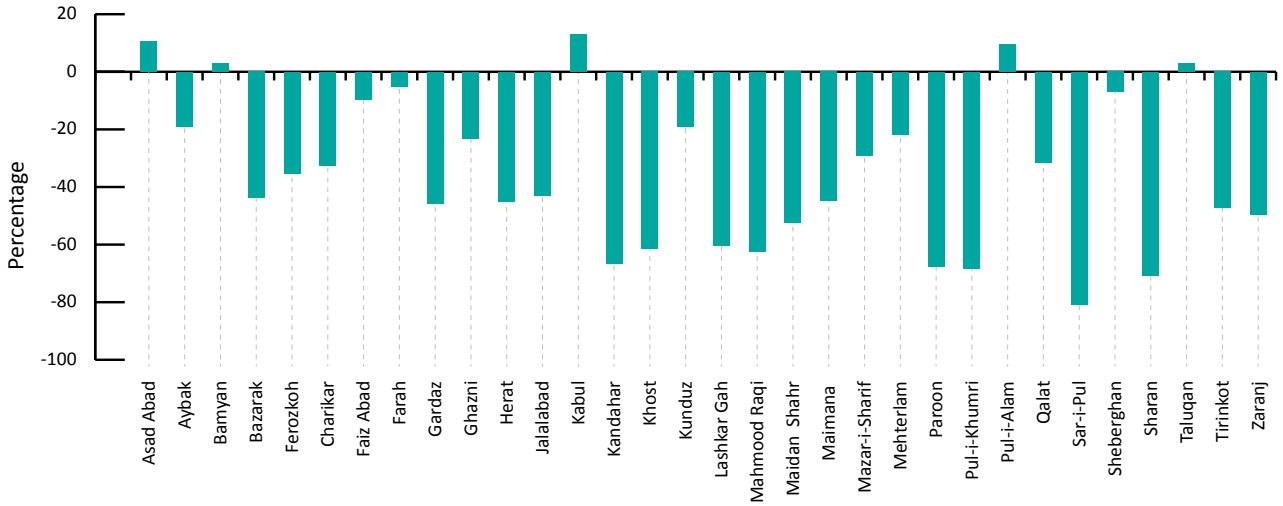
bureaucratic requirement rather than as a tool to improve governance and service delivery.

Revenue projection, whereby a municipality estimates the revenue it will generate during a specific period, usually one year, presents a particular challenge. For the 33 cities other than Kabul, only 53% of projected revenue was actually collected during 2011-2013. Figure 2.13 shows the gap between actual and projected revenues for each of the 34 municipalities. Only five cities collected more revenues than their projections (Asad Abad, Bamyan, Pul-i-Alam, Taluqan and Kabul). For the remaining 29 cities, the 'revenue gap' can often be attributed to a combination of the following: (i) overly ambitious revenue projections/targets, (ii) weak collection mechanisms, including a lack of qualified staff, limited motivation and accountability for meeting targets, (iii) poor monitoring and management systems to monitor progress during the financial year and take corrective action when necessary, and (iv) limited recourse at the local level to enforce payments such as taxes, fees, fines, penalties and service charges.

Revenue projections per dwelling show hugely different values. Some degree of variation is understandable as there are more determinants of revenue than just the residential/population characteristics of a city. However, four cities stand out dramatically: Maidan Shahr, Pul-i-Khumri, Sharan, and Farah all have extremely high per-dwelling revenue projections. The variation appears to support anecdotal evidence that budgeting is not done on a rational assessment of the local tax base and conditions but rather by developing an 'idealistic' goal for revenue collection.

Budget execution is another key challenge for Afghan municipalities. Very few municipalities execute their annual expenditure budget according to plan. This is likely due to the fact that expenditure budgeting, like revenue budgeting, is overly ambitious and is not always prepared based on an accurate understanding of the local realities. Even so, there is significant variance between cities in terms of disbursement rates of actual revenue. Fifteen cities performed well in terms of disbursement, spending within 10% of actual revenues. However, most cities either significantly under-spent or overspent. For example, Qalat and Bamyan spent only 26% and 56% respectively of their actual collected revenues respectively. As with revenues, disbursement rates do not seem to be correlated to city size or type but most likely are related to local conditions and capacities.

FIGURE 2.13: GAP BETWEEN PROJECTED AND ACTUAL REVENUES, AVERAGE 2011-2013



SOURCE: GDMA MUNICIPAL FINANCE DATABASE; KABUL MUNICIPALITY; SoAC GIS

Box 2.2
Summary of key challenges for municipal finance

Municipalities are caught in a vicious cycle. Citizens have very low trust in municipal financial performance, which contributes to low revenue collection rates, especially for sustainable fixed revenue sources such as safayi taxation. Yet without sufficient revenues municipalities cannot effectively deliver services and build a broader base of sustainable local revenues, which in turn can improve and expand service delivery and thus citizen trust.

Because municipalities do not receive any central fiscal revenue transfers, grants or on-budget development assistance, municipalities have in practice often prioritised unsustainable non-fixed revenue sources e.g. the sale of land and property. Such transactions are highly vulnerable to corruption and the sale of finite assets undermines a city's ability to utilise its land and property holdings to guide and promote orderly urban development.

The poor financial performance of municipalities stems from four underlying structural issues that need to be addressed. Firstly, there is a lack of financial management capacity at municipal levels (human and institutional). However capacity alone is not the sole issue, as municipalities have demonstrated some capacity to raise revenue through the avenues mentioned above. The second issue therefore is a lack of political will and capacity to improve the municipal budgeting process, increase revenue collection, transparently manage municipal land and properties (sales, rentals, leases), and spend revenues transparently, fairly (across the city population) and accountably. Third, there is insufficient oversight and technical assistance from the central level to municipalities, and non-existent mechanisms for inter-city sharing and exchange of experiences, performance benchmarking, and financial account sharing. Fourth, fragile municipal systems are highly vulnerable to political changes and informal power dynamics, which wield a very significant influence on municipal financial operations, especially in provinces with strong provincial governors and councils. Fifth, at the heart of the problem is that Mayors and Municipal Councils are not elected and there is no accountable executive to citizens. Nevertheless, there is huge potential to raise local revenues through sustainable revenue sources, such as safayi taxation.

In summary, there are four main challenges with the municipal financial planning and budgeting environment:

1. Budget monitoring systems are weak, especially in smaller municipalities, with municipal budgets not regularly used during the fiscal year as a tool for tracking service delivery and municipal performance.
2. Rather than having their expenditure tied to revenue projections, municipalities adjust their expenditure to suit actual revenues and carry over any surplus/deficit to subsequent years.
3. Municipalities have little other option apart from this 'adjustment' approach as they are largely 'on their own' given they lack meaningful and timely financial and technical support from central level authorities to improve municipal budgeting and execution processes.
4. The current situation is unfortunately desirable by some actors who prefer limited accountability, transparency, and oversight as it reduces central government intervention in local municipal affairs and thus creates and/or sustains conditions for questionable activities that are financially beneficial for local actors (e.g. land grabbing, sales, etc.).

2.7
WAYS FORWARD

- Improve the policy, legal and regulatory framework so as to progress toward the underlying vision of the Constitution whereby mayors and municipal councils are elected, and municipalities are empowered and self-sufficient service providers, that build state legitimacy and capacity, and play their part in improving state-society relations. Stop addressing only parts of the issues through detached interventions and ensure a strong new Municipal Law adequately empowers municipalities to meet the challenges of urbanisation.
- Address the institutional bottlenecks to reduce overlapping mandates and poor coordination of interventions in urban areas, including line departments and donor projects that are too often implemented piecemeal and without meaningful municipal involvement and alignment with municipal plans.
- Recognise and value the enormous potential of citizens to contribute to urban development. Strengthen citizen participation and engagement by instituting systemic mechanisms for participation, including utilising existing mechanisms such as Municipal Advisory Boards and urban Community Development Councils; and lay the foundations for municipal elections.
- Address the unclear/poorly delineated municipal boundaries that limit effective urban management and governance. Remove overlaps, ensure consistency in approach to accommodate future growth and existing functional relationships, and ensure awareness at both central and municipal levels of approved boundaries.
- Continue to build the planning and management capacities of municipalities but with greater focus on building national tashkeel capacities, implementing the Public Administration Reform (PAR) in municipalities, fighting corruption, and adopting a 'learning by doing' approach for planning, participation, and service delivery rather than capacity substitution from donor-driven projects.
- For improving municipal finance, in the short-term, undertake detailed municipal finance assessments to get a clearer baseline assessment and improve the accountability and transparency of municipal finances, with a view to increasing sustainable local revenues, improving budgeting, and instituting more accountable and transparent expenditure systems (and reporting). Efforts should be made to increase the yield of revenue and tax sources beyond land and property sales, and gradually shift emphasis to recurring land and property tax and other land-based financing instruments.
- Consider central government fiscal transfers to municipalities and/or the creation of a Municipal Development Fund. Action should be taken now and incrementally strengthened in the short to mid-term. Consider performance-based financing, in line with a national programme, and linked to municipal finance performance on key indicators. This should be accompanied by technical capacity support focused on improving transparency, accountability and citizen engagement, and incentivising municipalities to increase own-source revenues alongside fiscal transfers.
- Improve urban data collection and monitoring – good urban governance and management requires reliable data upon which to make decisions regarding the management of public services, determining and collecting taxes, and spatial planning.
- Commit to gender empowerment in municipal operations and MABs to reach the target of 25% participation of women by 2020. Take pro-active steps to address the structural constraints (mentioned above) to improving the number of women in municipal operations and the ability of female citizens to engage in municipal planning and governance.

CHAPTER ENDNOTES

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20. Remaining cities include: Nili, Khost, Zaranj, Paroon, Gardez, Sharan, Qala-i-Naw, Tarinkot, Farah, Ferozkoh, and Sar-i-Pul.
21. The section is based on municipal finance data provided by GDMA and Kabul Municipality which gives a broad overview of municipal finance dynamics. However, the data should be taken with caution as it has not been independently verified or audited. Most notably, revenues are likely to be higher than reported; anecdotal evidence suggests land and property sales in particular are under-reported, as these funds are sometimes not channeled through official revenue channels.
22. A complete dataset for 2014 is not yet available, so the section uses data from 2011-2013 (1390= 21 March 2011 - 20 March 2012; 1391= 21 March 2012 - 31 December 2012; 1392= 1 Jan 2013 - 31 December 2014). For most analysis, the section takes the average over these three years in order to account for the significant fluctuations across years and thus give a more realistic view of the state of municipal finances than by taking one year alone.
23. See: Popal, A.B. (2014). Municipalities in Afghanistan, p 33-35, for a list of all revenue sources in English.
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25. Note: Official GDMA data for Mazar-i-Sharif and Jalalabad shows no income from land sales hence they are not plotted.

Informality is at the core of urban livelihoods in Afghanistan.

CHARIKAR, PARWAN, 2014.

CHAPTER 03 CITIES AS DRIVERS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: URBAN ECONOMY

Key Messages

- Although the majority of the Afghan population is engaged in agricultural activity, agriculture only accounts for approximately one-quarter (24.6%) of total Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Largely 'urban' economic activities (such as wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing, public administration, services, transport and construction) have increasingly been driving the Afghan economy, and now comprise roughly three-quarters of total GDP. **Cities, therefore, play a fundamental and increasingly important role in Afghanistan's economy.**
- The **services, manufacturing and construction sectors** in Kabul and the regional trading hubs of Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, as well as some secondary trading and transit hubs such as Kunduz, have experienced a massive surge of growth over the past decade, largely due to an influx of foreign aid. The service sector now comprises over half of GDP (52%), whilst manufacturing comprises 10%, and construction 8%. However, these sectors have been shrinking in recent years due to the international military drawdown, protracted 2014 election process and general uncertainty around Afghanistan's security and stability.
- **Unemployment and underemployment** in urban centers is a serious and growing challenge. Day-labour employment opportunities have become scarcer for poor urban households in recent years, making them even more vulnerable to shocks. Close to 80% of poor urban households have only one income earner or none at all. Youth unemployment is a serious problem and one that will only increase given that 49% of Afghanistan's population is under the age of 15.
- **Informality is at the core of urban livelihoods in Afghanistan.** It is estimated that up to 90% of economic activity in Afghanistan occurs in the informal sector. The bulk of the labour force is employed by the informal economy. Interventions have erroneously attempted to eliminate the informal sector, such as street vendors, in urban areas, to the detriment of informal workers and the functioning of city economies and spaces.
- **Urban poverty** is pervasive and requires serious attention. In 2011, roughly one-third of urban Afghans lived in poverty (29%); this is likely to have increased since then given the economic slowdown in recent years. The vulnerability of urban poor households is often compounded by the higher cost of living, and narrower range of coping mechanisms available in cities.
- Afghanistan's large cities can be key drivers of economic growth given their agglomeration economies, yet this fundamentally requires **increased investment** in key urban economic infrastructure (industrial parks, roads, electricity, etc.), a higher skilled workforce, and improved **governance and land management** to promote private sector confidence and investment.

3.1 MACROECONOMIC CONTEXT

Economic growth and sector contributions

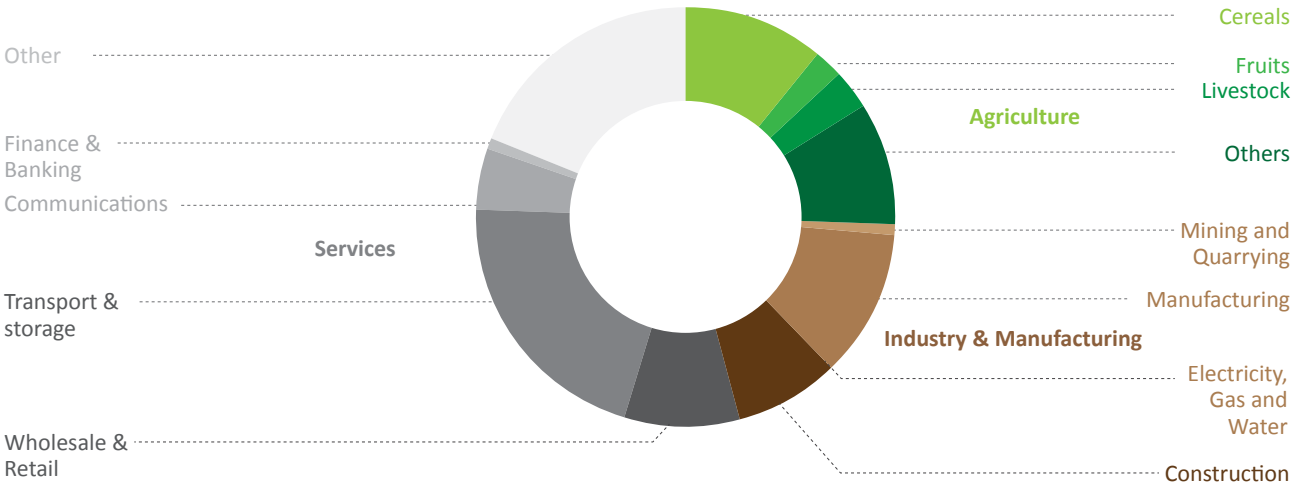
Afghanistan's annual GDP stands at an estimated 20.3 billion USD in 2013. GDP grew by an average of 9% per year between 2004 and 2013,[1] but the GDP growth rate has begun to decrease: falling sharply from 11% (2012-13) to 6% (2013-14).[2] Growth is likely to decrease further, with projections of GDP growth between 2.5%[3] and 3.5%[4] for 2015 as the "protracted political transition and weak reform progress dealt a further blow to confidence in the non-agriculture sectors."[5]

Over the past twelve years, Afghanistan's socio-economic development has been largely fuelled by the services sector (Figure 3.1). As of 2013, over half (51.8%) of Afghanistan's GDP was derived from 'services' (Telecoms, Infomation Technology (IT), transportation, retail trade, etc.), which had been steadily increasing since 2002. Industry, by comparison, has remained comparatively static as a proportion of GDP whilst agriculture has been declining in relative terms since 2002 and now comprises only one-quarter (24.6%) of total GDP.

The recent slowing of growth is primarily due to declining output in construction, manufacturing and services sectors. In 2012, services and industry performed extremely well with an annual growth rate of 16% and 8% respectively. However, in 2013 their growth rate fell drastically to just 6% and 5% respectively.

Table 3.1 and Figure 3.2 show that Afghanistan's agricultural sector is extremely volatile and vulnerable to changes in climatic conditions. The sector is not modernised to the extent where technology can provide some safety net to mitigate external factors. However, agriculture, particularly peri-urban agriculture, is likely to be an important 'shock absorber' over the coming years as international funds become less significant in Afghanistan's economy and the services sector may not be able to maintain the relatively high levels of growth of recent years.

FIGURE 3.1: GDP SECTOR SHARES, 2013



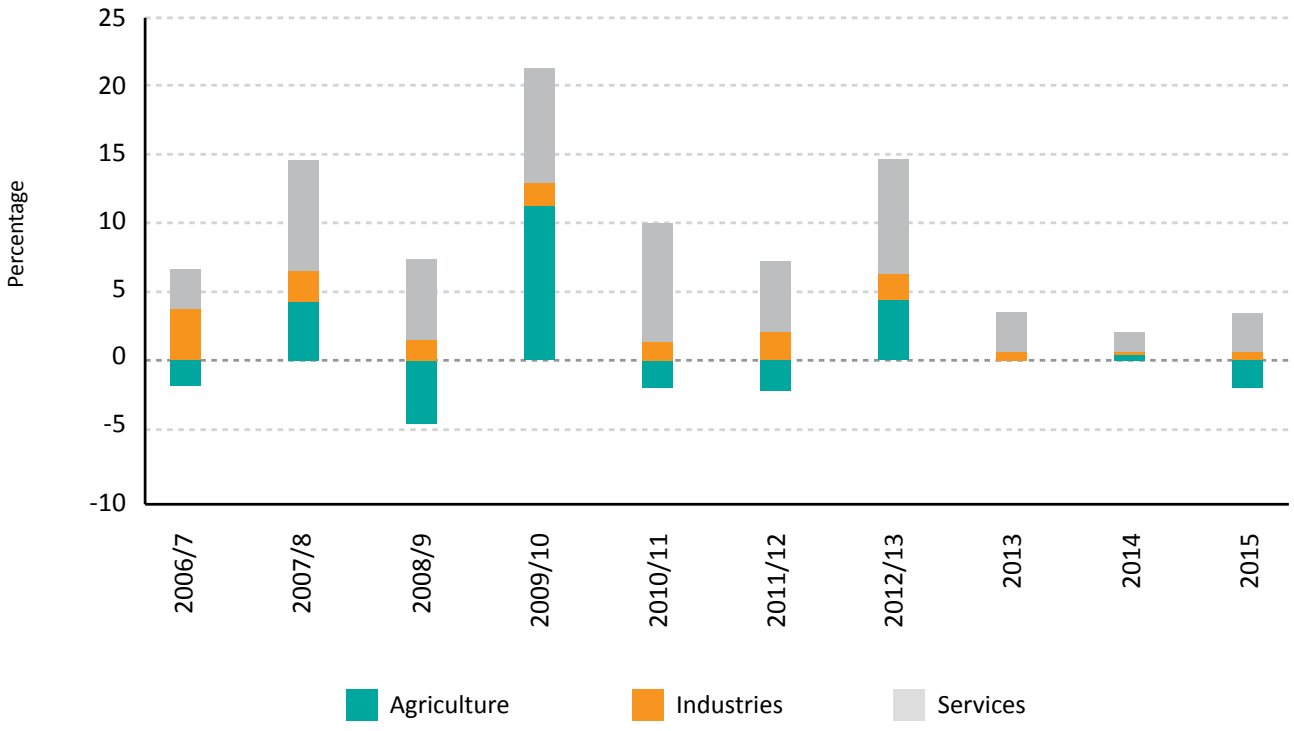
SOURCE: CENTRAL STATISTICS ORGANIZATION, (2013)

TABLE 3.1: GDP SECTOR SHARE AND GROWTH RATES, 2011-2013

Sector	2011	2012	2013	2011	2012	2013
	Real Growth (%)			Share of GDP (%)		
Agriculture	**4.7**	**3.2**	**8.1**	**27.0**	**25.4**	**24.6**
Cereals	-22.2	42.8	2.3	8.0	10.6	10.6
Fruits	10.3	8.0	3.2	2.6	2.4	2.1
Livestock	3.0	0.4	-1.7	3.8	3.1	2.9
Others	24.4	-16.2	16.6	12.5	9.3	9.0
Industry	**9.8**	**7.8**	**4.9**	**21.6**	**20.5**	**19.7**
Mining and Quarrying	90.0	-1.1	7.0	1.2	0.9	0.8
Manufacturing	3.1	7.3	1.6	13.1	12.0	11.0
Electricity, Gas, and Water	-9.4	4.3	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.1
Construction	13.3	8.9	8.0	7.3	7.5	7.8
Services	**10.3**	**16.0**	**6.3**	**47.8**	**50.3**	**51.8**
Wholesale & retail	10.8	25.0	0.5	8.0	8.8	8.5
Transport & storage	9.0	28.1	7.4	15.2	18.2	20.0
Communications	11.8	9.0	17.0	4.3	4.1	4.4
Finance & Banking	-44.4	3.8	5.5	1.1	1.0	1.0
	Real Growth Rate (%)			Total (Constant, Billion USD)		
GDP at Market Prices	9	11	6	7.3	8.1	8.7

SOURCE: CSO (2014)

FIGURE 3.2: SECTOR CONTRIBUTION TO GDP GROWTH, 2006+



SOURCE: AFGHANISTAN ECONOMIC UPDATE, APRIL 2015.

Trade

Although Afghanistan's exports have increased over the years, its imports are still relatively high leading to a large trade deficit. Exports equate to only 6% of GDP, while its imports equated to 47% of total GDP in 2014. This is less than half the figure from neighbouring countries for example India (25%); Tajikistan (19%) and Pakistan (13%).[6]

Exports have increased from 141 million Euros in 2003 to 471 million Euros in 2013. However, over the same time period imports have increased from 1,423 million Euros to 6,484 million Euros. The Afghan economy is heavily dependent on imports as Afghan companies primarily operate at a local and domestic level and, due to the structure and capability of the economy most of the inputs companies need for production are not produced domestically.

Afghanistan's main export trading partners are India (146m Euros, 2013) and Pakistan (130m Euros, 2013), while its imports mostly originate from Pakistan (1,788m Euros, 2013), USA (1,189m Euros, 2013) and the EU (612m Euros, 2013).[7] Afghanistan generally exports raw unprocessed items, and imports processed consumption items, indicative of the fact that domestic manufacturing capabilities are insufficient to meet demand for processed products.

Employment

Despite significant improvements in education indicators over the last ten years, a very significant proportion of Afghanistan's workforce remains unskilled. Data from the World Bank Enterprise Survey (2014) indicates that more than 40% of the workforce is unskilled.[8] Access to adequately skilled labour is considered to be a major constraint for approximately half of the firms in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif; whilst in Herat 90% of firms report suffering from this issue.[9]

There is a risk that the shortage of skilled labour is further exacerbated by 'brain drain'. In urban centres, a massive emigration of the most educated and skilled youth may soon become a reality as a significant portion of the 400,000 youth who join the labour market every year choose to migrate to neighbouring Iran and Pakistan in the absence of work opportunities in their native cities, and faced with the reality of a worsening domestic economic and security situation in recent years.

The labour market in Afghanistan is characterised by large-scale unemployment and under-employment. The 2013 official figures are 8% and 17% for unemployment and underemployment respectively, although some estimates place the figure much higher.[10] Afghanistan's official 2013 unemployment rate of 8% does not adequately represent the reality where the poor simply cannot afford not to work (especially in cities where in the absence of other coping mechanisms there is a constant need to generate sufficient cash to be able to eat).[11] In practice, this means that many urban people (men at least) work only a few hours a week, accept multiple unskilled roles with no job security, and have to deal with a mismatch of skills. In rural and peri-urban areas, seasonality is a key factor in terms of agricultural unemployment/underemployment, especially in the North, Central Highlands and Western regions given the harshness of winters.

However these employment indicators omit several key characteristics of the Afghan workforce, including: (i) the vast majority of women are not included in the labour force and are thus excluded from these indicators; (ii) more than 90% of the jobs that do exist should be classified as "vulnerable employment" as they do not offer secure stable employment and income. These jobs include own-account (self-employed) workers, unpaid family workers and day labourers; and (iii) Youth unemployment is much higher than overall unemployment, at 23% for young females and 16% for young males.[12]

On a provincial level, although the trend is not perfect a trend is evident whereby there is a lower labour market participation rate in provinces that have larger urban hubs. Underemployment is higher in cities, and labour force participation is lower than in rural areas. The difference could be attributed to the fact that virtually anyone (including women) can be occupied in some productive role at least for part of the year, in a rural agriculture-based setting, whereas in the cities, as outlined in Chapter One, uneducated women are largely excluded from the labour force.

The informal economy

Formal wage employment is the exception in Afghanistan, including in cities.[13] It is estimated that up to 90% of economic activity in Afghanistan occurs in the informal sector.[14] The bulk of the labour force is employed by the informal economy working in petty trade, construction (as day workers), brick making, etc. Paid by the day (often at a rate of 250 - 350 AFN (4.4 - 6.3 USD) for an unskilled worker), many urban workers make considerably less money in the winter than in the summer. A very significant proportion of Afghan city dwellers are thus extremely vulnerable to seasonality and income shocks.

In general, it has become more difficult to find even casual jobs in the construction and manufacturing sectors, as a result of the above-mentioned macro-economic factors, dwindling private investment, and the significant influx of displaced populations into

cities increasing competition at the bottom end of the labour market.

The narcotics industry arguably comprises the largest share of informal economic activity. Drug-related activities (including opium production and processing) were estimated to equate to 9% of GDP in 2011, significantly lower than their estimated 50% share in 2003, although this relates more to the expanding licit economy rather than a contraction in production of narcotics; which has actually increased during this period (Figure 3.4).[15]

The total area under opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan was estimated at 224,000 hectares in 2014, a 7% increase from the previous year and the highest on record.[16] The vast majority (89%) of opium cultivation took place in nine provinces in Afghanistan's Southern and Western regions, which include the country's most insecure areas. Helmand remained Afghanistan's most significant opium-cultivating province, followed by Kandahar, Farah, and Nangarhar. Between 2013 and 2014, opium cultivation increased significantly in most of the main

Box 3.1:
Moving to the city: stories of economic migrants

Mohammad Husain (middle) waiting for a job opportunity with other day laborers in the streets

Ahmad in front of his metal carriage in Kabul

A deteriorating security situation in the rural areas or the hope for better job opportunity in the city has led many Afghans to move to urban centers. These displaced persons or economic migrants face many challenges settling into the urban setup.

Forty-year old Mohammad Husain now lives in Kabul, in the Naw Abad district 10. He is a day laborer, waiting every day in the streets of Kabul for someone to hire him. It has been 8 years since he moved back to Kabul. "I am a day laborer and I earn 5,000 to 9,000 AFN (80 to 160 USD) a month, sometimes even less. I support a family of eight and sometimes I can't feed them all. I don't earn enough to pay for my family's expenses and house rent." Despite the economic problems, the security situation is much better now for

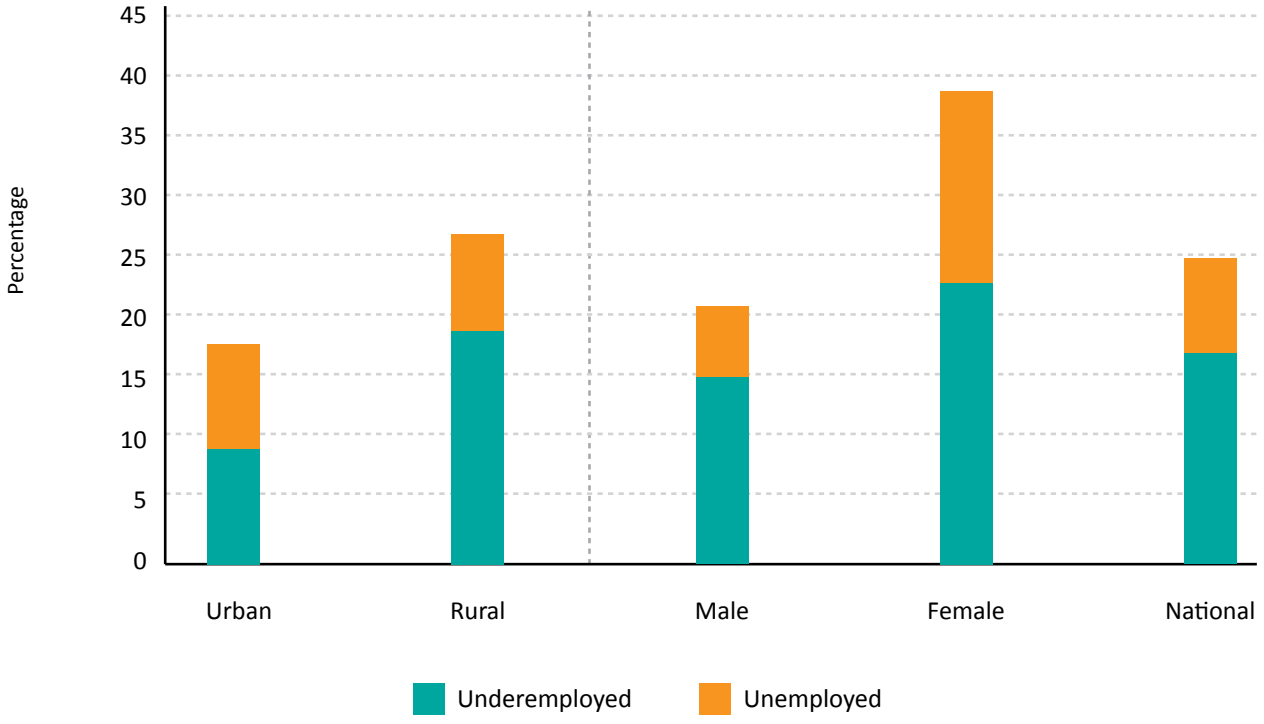
Mohammad Hussain: "The village I lived in was very dangerous because of the Taliban, thefts and gangsters. When I moved from Samangan district to Kabul I hoped for a better future for my children. But without a decent job, I am not sure how to provide opportunities for them."

Like Mohammad Husain, Ahmad is a day laborer with nothing but a carriage full of metals. Born and raised in Samangan, Ahmad has lived most of his life in urban slums, in sheds without any facilities such as water and sanitation.

He is a displaced Afghan with economic difficulties, leading him to accept any small opportunity the city offers. "My village in Samangan is small and there are few jobs for people like me. When I moved to Kabul, I left my family behind. I was planning on bringing them to Kabul later, but I don't earn enough money here." Ahmad's carriage is the only opportunity for him to support his family back home, but it is not enough to provide for them in Kabul.

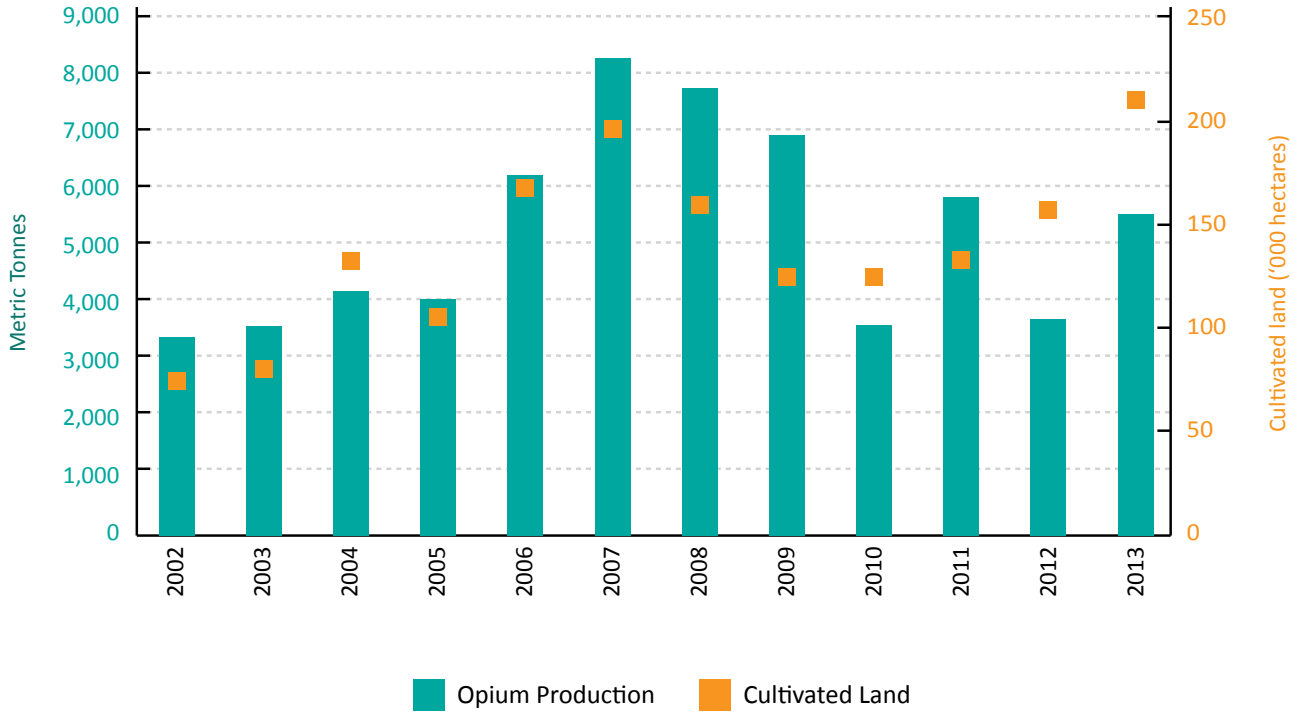
"It has been a year since I have come to Kabul and still I have nothing but some pieces of metal to sell. The amount of money I earn is not a lot, but still it's better than nothing."

FIGURE 3.3: OFFICIAL UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDER-EMPLOYMENT, 2011/12



SOURCE: NRVA (2011/12)

FIGURE 3.4: OPIUM PRODUCTION AND AREA UNDER CULTIVATION, 2002-2013



SOURCE: UNODC (2014)

poppy-cultivating provinces, but was relatively stable in Helmand itself (+3%).[17]

The informal economy also includes subsistence agriculture and livestock, illegal barter trade, some small-scale manufacturing activities as well as smuggling, re-exports and other un-reported services (e.g., the hawala system[18] or electricity from small-scale generators). A major determining factor for businesses operating informally is the dominant perception among Afghan urban entrepreneurs that the business registration process is costly, inefficient and corrupt. A survey in Balkh, Kunduz, Badakhshan, and Takhar provinces, showed that 94% of companies surveyed acknowledged that they knew that a company has to be officially registered to operate, yet only 10% were registered with the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA), while only 9% reported being registered with the Ministries of Economy or Commerce.[19]

Box 3.2:
Reforms designed to encourage private sector development

Afghanistan's business environment is gradually making progress towards facilitating economic activity by private investors. Reforms in licensing policy coupled with a relatively stable macro-economic environment over the past decade has made starting a business in Afghanistan easier.

Key policy initiatives designed to encourage private sector development in Afghanistan include the creation of the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) in 2003 as an autonomous regulatory body designed to create and enforce licensing requirements. Starting in 2004, the government set up industrial parks; geographically demarcated zones often located in peri-urban areas which offered on-site critical infrastructure like power, storage, paved roads, etc. The year 2006 saw the divestiture / sale of 65 state-owned enterprises in a bid to encourage private sector development.

However, there remain 'structural' and 'environmental' issues that undermine the business atmosphere. Structural issues include the lack of credit, power infrastructure, and private sector regulatory laws that are still inadequate. Environmental issues include conflict, insecurity, and an unpredictable political climate weakening business confidence.[20]

These constraints are reflected in Afghanistan's low position on the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business' rankings.[21] In 2014 Afghanistan ranked 183 (out of 189 countries), lower than its neighbours including China (90); Pakistan (128); Iran (130); Uzbekistan (141); and Turkmenistan (166); (Tajikistan no data).

Charikar central market, Parwan Province

3.2
THE URBAN ECONOMY

Overview of predominant occupational activities

While there is considerable agricultural activity in Afghanistan's urban areas (as explained in Chapter Five), manufacturing/services and sales/trade are important economic sectors and therefore job providers in Afghanistan's cities.[22] In Kabul and the four important regional hubs, construction accounts for a highly significant proportion of total employment, especially for the urban poor. This is particularly the case in Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif (Figure 3.5).

On average in Afghan cities, doctors, medical workers and non-government workers have the highest average income. Following this group are mechanics, road construction workers and other people engaged in other production work. Among those with the lowest average income are those dependent on agricultural wage labour, shepherding, Zakat (charitable contributions), production and sale of livestock, and field crops.[23]

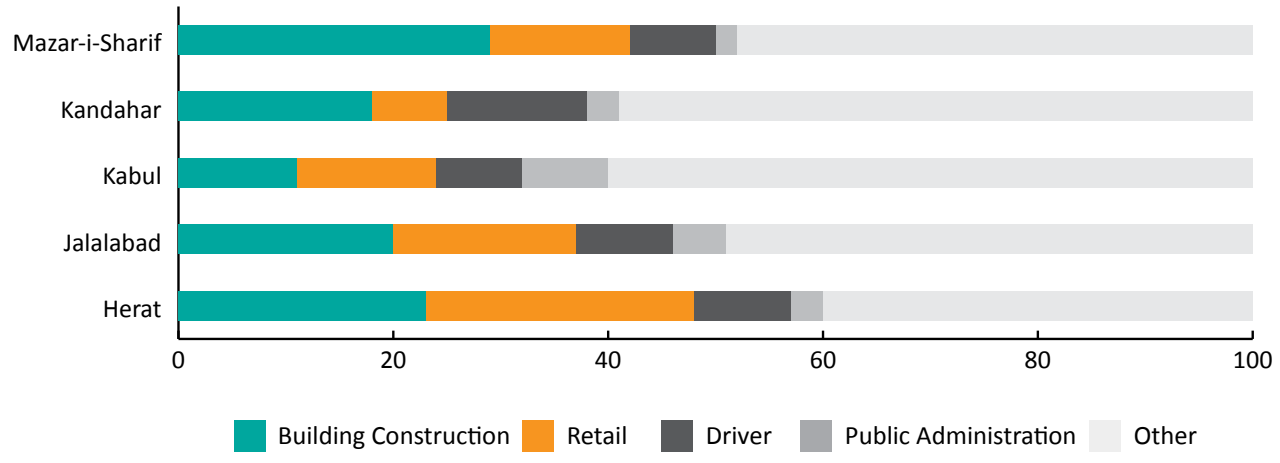
Urban economic profile of selected Afghan cities

As the capital, Kabul is host to most of the international agencies currently with a presence in Afghanistan and has thus experienced significantly higher levels of industrial development than the rest of the country. Despite the population of Kabul Province being 80% urban, many of its inhabitants are dependant on agriculture for a living, either directly or indirectly. As vendors of agricultural produce are also counted among those employed in agriculture, the sector remains highly significant in the city relative to the service sector.

The capital has better employment opportunities than most cities due to the presence of a greater number of businesses and administrative offices. The proportion of salaried workers in the urban workforce is by far the highest in Kabul whilst the official unemployment rate in 2008 was 10%.[24] Kabul already has two operational Industrial Parks, with an extension of one of those parks planned in the near future.[25]

Herat is very close to Afghanistan's borders with Iran and Turkmenistan, and has historical trade ties with these countries. A significant percentage of imported materials for use in production enter Afghanistan via Herat. Iran and Turkey are the main countries of origin for production inputs. Herat's customer base has

FIGURE 3.5: MAIN INCOME SOURCES FOR LOWER-INCOME URBAN HOUSEHOLDS, 2013



SOURCE: SAMUEL HALL (2014)

changed in the last five years due to the withdrawal of much of the international presence. Estimates suggest that international NGO customers at one point accounted for 20% of sales, but this figure is now only 2%. The SME (Small Medium Enterprise) industry is well developed particularly in handicrafts, rugs and silk. The majority of the labour force of the SME industry is active either as day labourers or as small entrepreneurs.

Mazar-i-Sharif serves as an export/import hub as well as a regional trading centre for northern Afghanistan. Mazar-i-Sharif has good opportunities for trade through inland borders with Central Asian countries. It is an industrial centre with a large number of small and medium enterprises, and several large-scale manufacturing operations. Mazar-i-Sharif acts as a regional economic hub for the surrounding province with imports of capital equipment, automobiles, clothes and foodstuffs. The SME industry in Mazar-i-Sharif is well developed, providing Qaraqul skin, handicrafts, rugs and carpets. Mining, textiles and agro-based products are also growing in significance.

Like Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar city is a regional hub. It provides services to the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. Manufacturing including carpentry and metal work is the activity of some 10% of all companies, whereas one company in five is involved in carpet making, handicrafts and the production of clothing. Kandahar's labour force is overwhelmingly comprised of self-employed casual workers. As outlined in Chapter One, Kandahar has consistently suffered from insecurity, which continues to undermine investment and job creation.

Besides olive plantations and extractive industries which employ a significant portion of Jalalabad's workforce, Nangarhar's capital has an important textile industry (cotton weaving and the production of fabrics, hats, scarves, etc.) mostly based on small-scale and labour intensive manufacturing units. Approximately half of the working population (48%) are self-employed casual workers.[26]

The main economic activity in Kunduz province is agriculture: cotton, beets, cane sugar, and melons are the primary crops. In recent years, Kunduz has attempted to establish a light-manufacturing or industrial base producing silk weaving, vegetable oil, soap, and carpets.

In the capital, Kunduz City, there is a concentration of trading entities and service providers. Kunduz is on a major international trade route; Pakistan, Iran and Tajikistan are the main trading partners. Kunduz is the closest provincial capital to the Shir Khan border crossing with Tajikistan, a gate to central Asian markets. Manufacturing is also well represented. Most of the Kunduz city workforce is comprised of day labourers and self-employed workers.

Gardez's economy is still highly dependent on agriculture. The city and the surrounding area have served as a stronghold for the Taliban, a forward operating base for the U.S. military, as well as a base for the Afghan National Army. Besides services for these strategic operations, forestry and agriculture are important sources of income here. Gardez is at the heart of an agricultural area and previously had a thriving commercial centre, supplying grain and ghi (clarified butter) to Kabul markets, as well as flocks of sheep. Ongoing insecurity and weak infrastructure however continue to undermine business activities.

Key economic sectors in Pul-i-Khumri include wholesale and retail trade as well as manufacturing (metalwork and carpentry). Indirectly, however, agriculture remains the main source of economic activity locally as the wholesale and retail trading sectors supply agricultural inputs and sell locally produced products respectively. The transport, manufacturing and construction sectors are also highly dependent on the agricultural sector. The post-harvest sector, which has the potential to produce value added agricultural and livestock products, is underdeveloped but has considerable potential.

TABLE 3.2: LABOUR FORCE SEGMENTATION IN SELECTED AFGHAN CITIES

	Day laborer	Salaried Worker	Self Employed	Employer	Unpaid Family worker
Kabul	10%	47%	28%	1%	14%
Herat	47%	8%	43%	0%	2%
Mazar-i- Sharif	14%	20%	58%	6%	2%
Kandahar	6%	6%	84%	2%	2%
Jalalabad	38%	13%	47%	2%	2%
Kunduz	28%	13%	57%	1%	1%
Gardez	16%	16%	58%	8%	2%

SOURCE: SAMUEL HALL (2015)

Land use and the economy

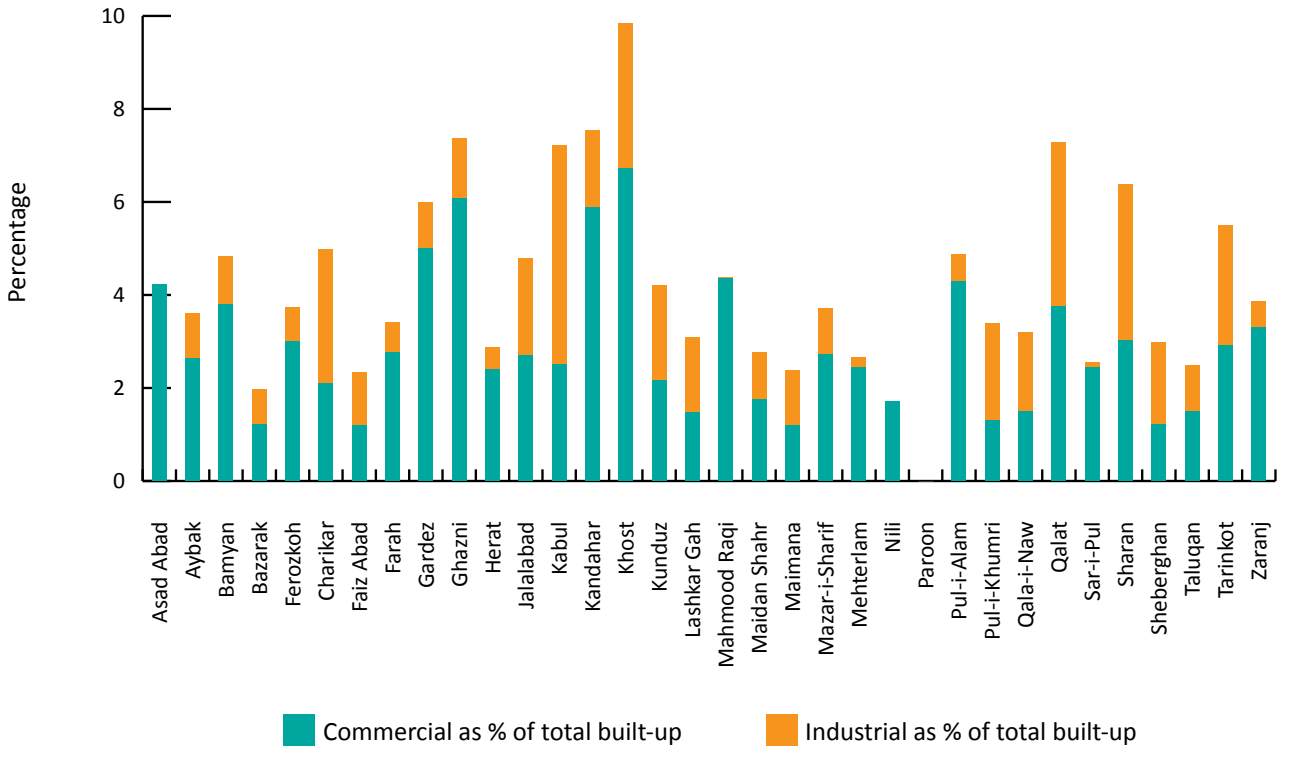
The SoAC land use analysis of commercial and industrial land in the 34 cities gives an indication of the scale of economic activity in the provincial capitals. However, it should be noted that field verifications of industrial land use found some locations where industrial areas were derelict/not in use; in addition small scale commercial uses frequently occupy a footprint too small to identify using satellite imagery and thus may be underrepresented in figures. However despite the limitations, the analysis is illuminative of the different underlying economic dynamics of cities.

Overall, findings show that commercial land occupies a small share of total built up area, between 7% (Khost) and 1% (Faiz Abad), with an average of 3% (Figure 3.6). Industrial land occupies a similar proportion of built up area, with an average of 1%, and ranging from 0.1% in Sar-i-Pul to 5% in Kabul (Figure 3.6). As expected, a trend is evident whereby larger cities have a larger proportion of commercial and industrial land use. Kabul city has 3% commercial and 5% industrial; Herat has 2% commercial and 0.5% industrial; Mazar-i-Sharif has 3% commercial and 1% industrial; and Kandahar has 6% commercial and 2% industrial as a proportion of total built area. However, some provincial centres have more commercial and industrial land, for example Khost (10%) and Qalat (7%).

Roads and the transportation networks are essential for ensuring the efficient movement of goods and people, both within cities and for ensuring connectivity with the wider region. The SoAC land use data for roads can also be examined as a proxy-indicator for the relative economic efficiency of the 34 cities.[27] In theory, a higher percentage of roads is indicative of better urban mobility and transportation, which is a both a prerequisite and an effect of increased urban productivity.

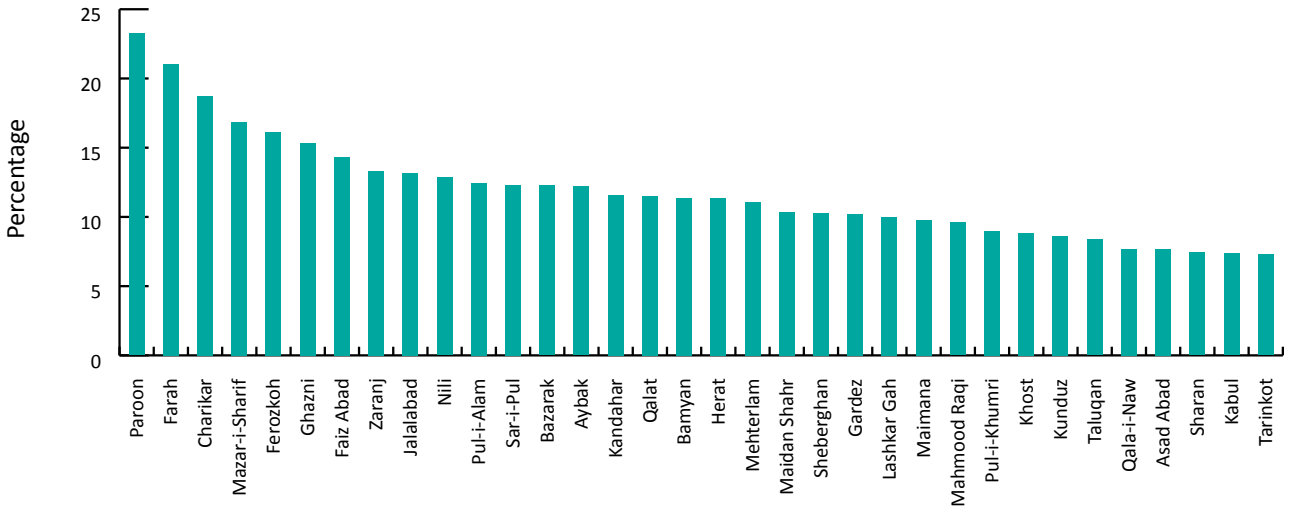
The analysis shows that the percentage of built up area dedicated to roads varies from 23% in Paroon to just 7% in Tarinkot, with an average of 12%. This is well below global norms and best practice of 30%.[28] In absolute terms, Kabul has the largest total area of roads (2,957 Ha) followed by Kandahar (1,305 Ha), and Mazar-i-Sharif (1,257 Ha). Paroon and Bazarak have the smallest total areas of roads 6 ha and 21 ha respectively.

FIGURE 3.6: COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LAND USE AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL BUILT-UP AREA



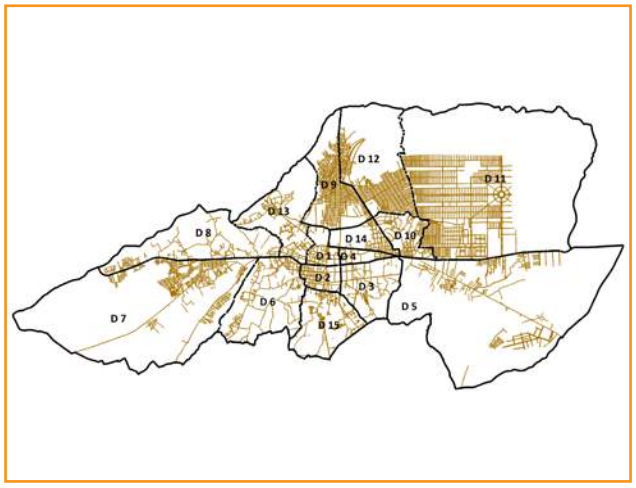
SOURCE: SoAC GIS

FIGURE 3.7: ROADS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUILT-UP AREA

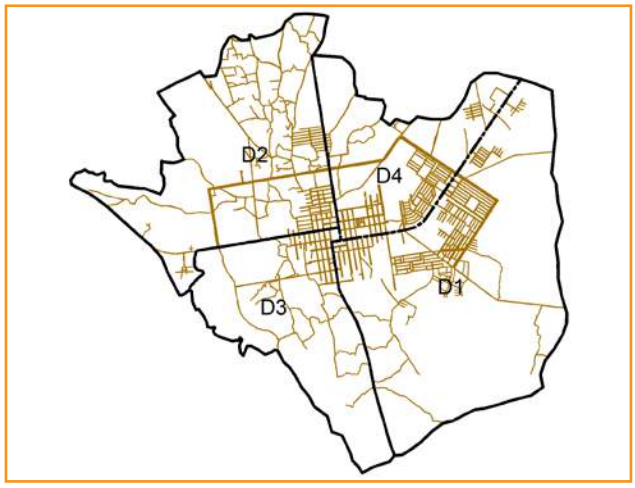


SOURCE: SoAC GIS

FIGURE 3.8: EXAMPLES OF ROAD NETWORKS



KANDAHAR, REGIONAL HUB



SHEBERGHAN, TRADING AND TRANSIT HUB

FARAH, PROVINCIAL CENTRE

TARINKOT, PROVINCIAL CENTRE

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

Cities as conduits for the agro-economy and value chains

'Value chains' (VCs) refer to the processes or activities by which value is added to an article, from the provision of inputs, to manufacturing, transportation and trade, until its final consumption. Most of Afghanistan's value chains are agricultural in nature – it is in the agricultural sector that Afghan products are the most competitive.

Towns and cities play a key role as it is in these locations that trade, value adding, distribution and a significant proportion of consumption of many products typically occurs. Unfortunately, there are many structural and other barriers preventing Afghan companies from exploiting the most profitable segments of the value chain. Infrastructure needed for transport, storage and processing is generally lacking. In particular, unreliable electricity coverage prevents merchants from being able to store and/or transport perishable goods (See Box 3.3).

The following section examines three agricultural trading/value chains that illustrate the complexities of producer-to-consumer microeconomics in Afghanistan, both in terms of geography (nuts, onions) and in terms of profit distribution (liquorice).

Afghan nuts

Afghanistan's almonds, pistachios, walnuts and pine nuts are highly regarded in both India and Pakistan, and increasingly in the Middle East. Afghan nuts today are a lucrative export product, contributing on average 90m USD annually to the economy. High demand for Afghan nuts make them Afghanistan's second largest exported agricultural product after raisins. Information from farmers, traders and exporters indicates that over 70% of the Afghan nuts qualify for export markets, though strong domestic consumption means slightly less than this are actually exported.[29]

Afghanistan's almonds are predominantly produced in the Central Region (48%), the Northern Region (29%), and the Western and Southern Regions (10% each). There are five regional almond markets in Afghanistan, in the cities of Kandahar, Ghazni, Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat.

Jalalabad as a hub for onion trading

Onions are a cash crop traded as an export commodity. Onion production in Afghanistan has been expanding rapidly but the market is inherently risky, as onions are highly perishable and storage infrastructure is rudimentary. Prices fluctuate significantly, being heavily susceptible to demand in India, collusion between traders over prices and hoarding, and variable yields affecting levels of supply.[30]

About 4% of the irrigated land in Nangarhar Province is cultivated with onions. The expansion of onion cultivation in Nangarhar has been closely linked with the dynamics of the poppy economy and has grown since 2004 when bans on the cultivation of poppy were implemented.

Jalalabad is Afghanistan's main transit point for onions. It is positioned close to the border with Pakistan and is strongly linked with Pakistan and its relatively stronger economy (the Pakistani Rupee is the most used currency in Jalalabad). Jalalabad is the main route for trade between Pakistan and Kabul.

Pakistan is by far the main trading partner for Nangarhar's onions, with the majority of the trade passing through the Torkham border, although not necessarily through the wholesale market in Jalalabad, with some farmers and small traders dealing directly with wholesale markets in Kabul or Peshawar.

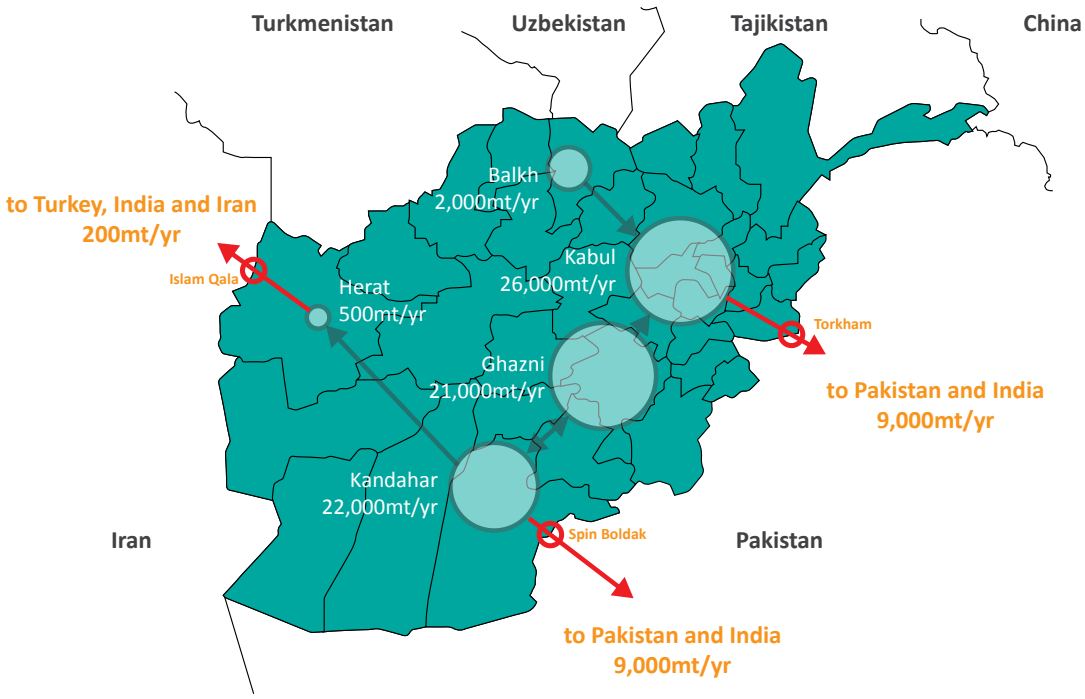
Liquorice

The liquorice value chain is a typical example of value creation involving an agricultural product in Afghanistan.[31] As of 2007, there was no cultivation of liquorice in Afghanistan, only wild collection. Local collectors collect the roots and take them to a local or regional market. More than 3,500 tons of liquorice roots are traded at the city market every year. It is estimated that approximately 40% of exports are registered with the Ministry of Trade, the rest are exported illegally.[32]

Regionally, Pakistan and India are the most important markets for liquorice; it is there that value is generally added through extraction and refinement. From there, the refined product is sold all over the world at a considerably higher price (Figure 3.10). The Afghan portion of the value chain ends where the regional market begins, at a value of 0.54 USD per KG for a product that will eventually be sold for 1.40 USD per KG to importers in Europe and the United States.

Afghan traders themselves have little to no access to international buyers. They also have difficulty complying with international product standards (certification, traceability etc.), problems which the liquorice cultivated in Central Asia, Australia, Brazil, France, Italy and Spain is less likely to face.

FIGURE 3.9: ALMOND TRADING DYNAMICS



SOURCE: HTTP://SAMUELHALL.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2011/10/AGRIBUSINESS-AND-NUT-FEASIBILITY-STUDY.PDF

FIGURE 3.10: THE LIQUORICE VALUE CHAIN

SOURCE: SAMUEL HALL (2013)

Industrial parks

Industrial parks have been established on the periphery of Afghanistan's large cities in an effort to address infrastructure and land constraints and facilitate increased economic activity, particularly for the manufacturing and industrial sectors. These parks are designed to offer investors the benefits of high-quality infrastructure and reliable power supply in 'build to suit' sites, strategically located in several key industrial areas. Designed to accommodate small, medium and large-size firms, the parks help investors to avoid costly title disputes, and to reduce risks and delays associated with land acquisition, zoning and obtaining use permits.

As of 2012, industrial parks are managed by Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) that is in charge of their development, expansion, operations and maintenance. According to local news sources, more than 30 areas have been demarcated for the construction of industrial parks in 18 provinces.[33] Presently, approximately 12 industrial parks have been constructed, the majority of those are located next to or in the main cities: Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Lashkar Gah and Mazar-i-Sharif.

The Baghrami industrial park is located 7 km north of Kabul and covers approximately 24 ha. As of 2014, 11 ha has been developed and is fully operational, whilst plans exist for expansion into the remaining area.

Box 3.3:
Supply chain development of vegetables in Farah

Mirwais in his green house

Hamid, shop owner in Farah

The warm climate in Farah is ideal for growing vegetables such as cucumbers, potatoes, or coriander, and with simple greenhouses made of plastic, farmers can grow them throughout the year. Three years ago, Mirwais seized this opportunity and built a greenhouse on barren land his father bought over 40 years ago. Several times a year he buys European seeds from the local market in Farah, and 35-50 days later he packs the cucumbers in bags and sells them to shop owners in Farah city.

One of these shopkeepers is Hamid. His family owns a small store in the center of Farah, next to a busy road. For over a decade, Hamid's family has been selling groceries, fresh vegetables and fruits to customers in Farah city as well as to other shop owners in Herat, Kabul, and Kandahar. "This is only possible because I have family in those cities; there is no support from government or trade associations. Just like the goods I buy from Iran – I can only buy them because one of my brothers lives there".

However the lack of formal organized supply chains and distribution channels is not the only challenge for Hamid: "Electricity is a major challenge. We could expand our business if there was reliable electricity in Farah for our cold store. The prices vary a lot between the season and we could sell vegetables with huge profits. But without electricity, we cannot keep the vegetables fresh for long and have to import them from other provinces or countries".

Another challenge is insecurity: "Distribution of goods to other provinces is also very dangerous" says Hamid. "Many roads are inaccessible because the Taliban stop our cars. Some years ago, my father was kidnapped and we had to pay all our savings to get him freed. We wanted to use the money to buy a generator for the cold store, but now we have to start saving again."

Available infrastructure includes electric power, site security, water and sewage as well as paved roads. Potential industries include light manufacturing, plastics, textiles, pharmaceuticals, food products and beverages.

Herat industrial park is located near the international airport. The park was developed in three phases with a fourth set to expand it further. Potential industries that could locate in the park include textiles and mining, light manufacturing, agro-production and stone cutting. (See Box 3.4).

The Gorimar industrial park is located 22 km east of central Mazar-i-Sharif. It covers an area of approximately 25 ha. A project is ongoing to extend power transmission an additional 22 km to supply the park with electricity. The park is most suitable for light manufacturing in plastics, chemicals and food processing industries.

Shorandam industrial park is located 10 km east of Kandahar City. It currently occupies 15 Ha of an estimated 400 ha of allocated industrial land. Potential industries that could locate in the park include plastic, oil, marble, food and ice production.

Hisar-E-Shahi industrial park in Nangarhar Province is located 22 km southeast of Jalalabad, on the Jalalabad-Torkham Highway with a total reserved area of 207 ha. Infrastructure works have been completed while the facilities for wastewater treatment are currently under construction.

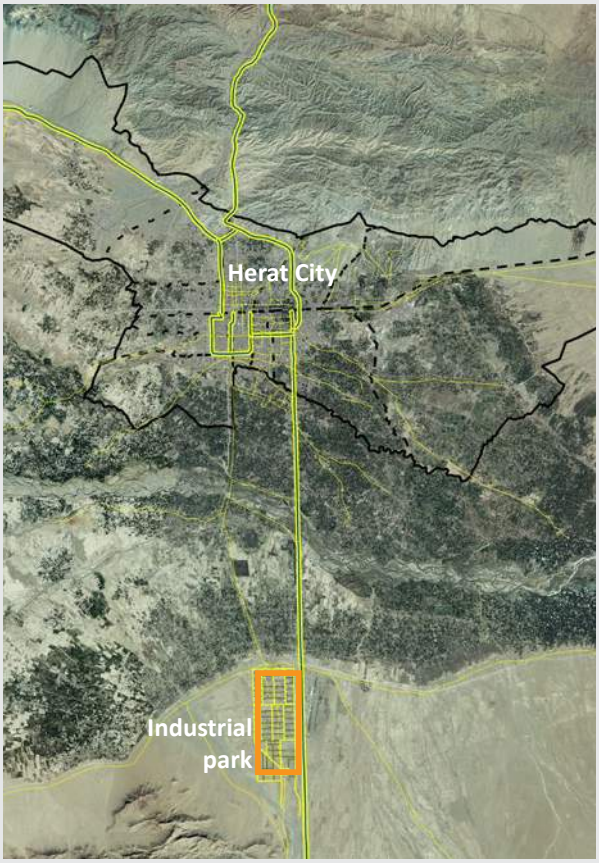
Bost Agricultural Business Park spans 32 Ha and is located near Lashkar Gah. Basic infrastructure such as roads, sewerage and electricity distribution were developed in 2008. Further developments are on hold pending additional funding.

Box 3.4:
Improved infrastructure in the Herat industrial park

Kabir in his steel factory in the Industrial Park in Herat

Many families in Afghanistan are involved in small and medium scale production of goods. Production usually takes place in run down rented houses in cramped residential or commercial districts in the major cities, as it was for Kabir, who for over 6 years ran his small steel factory in downtown Herat City.

However, in mid-2014 he decided to shift his business to the Herat Industrial Park located on the edge of Herat City, opposite the airport and next to the main road connecting Herat with Kandahar and Kabul.



"I shifted my factory because production and distribution of goods is much better here. In Herat city, we have many power cuts and had to stop production several times a day. In the industrial park, the government provides much more reliable power as well as water and transportation networks. The park is right next to the main road, so it is easy for our customers to reach our factory". Since Kabir moved, not only has production and distribution become easier for him, but he was also able to hire more staff and now employs a senior engineer and an assistant.

3.3 WAYS FORWARD

Ways forward for the urban economy cannot be considered in isolation from the general macroeconomic context. Although beyond the scope of this report, it is clear that actions need to be taken to address the macro-economic structural constraints to growth (elaborated above), including fighting corruption, reducing the trade deficit, improving the financial/banking sector and availability of finance for investment, improving export competitiveness, etc. In terms of the urban economy, the following are ways forward based on the analysis in this chapter:

- Cities can be drivers of economic development, yet for this to happen they require a national policy and associated programme (Chapter One and Two) to harness their agglomeration potential, cluster investments to maximise impact, and avoid negative outcomes from unplanned, informal and haphazard urban development. The current laissez-faire approach to urban development does not foster investor confidence or harness economies of scale from investments.
- Broad-based economic growth is required to lift the majority of the population out of poverty. However in the absence of effective government economic management with no sector prioritization, industries and services have been highly susceptible to externalities, which has resulted in a very superficial industrial and services base largely reliant on fluctuating and inconsistent foreign demand. A practical way forward could be to undertake economic cluster analyses of the major cities with a view to identifying their natural and local economic comparative advantages, and clustering businesses and investment to increase competitiveness and output. In line with this, Local Economic Development (LED) strategies should be promoted in a context of city strategic development planning.
- Another study is not needed, however, to repeat what has been widely known for over a decade: economic development and growth in cities requires significant improvements to the physical environment, notably to power and transport infrastructure, and addressing the immense bottlenecks and corruption with land management and administration. The SoAC analysis has shown a lack of land in cities is not the problem, rather the issue is the effective use of land and the need to make appropriate land available for economic activities. Strengthening and/or creating new industrial parks can help achieve these goals though they must be better planned and integrated with their 'host' cities and regional networks (e.g. supply chains and markets), and to avoid becoming empty and derelict.
- Improve coordination between 'urban' stakeholders, such as MUDA, GDMA, and municipalities, and 'economic' stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Economy, AISA, Chamber of Commerce, etc. These stakeholders rarely cooperate on joint projects and operate in an environment of limited exchange.
- Citywide strategic planning (see Chapter Four) offers a feasible and cost-effective mechanism for improving coordination and aligning investments of multiple actors to achieve greater impact and amplify positive outcomes (e.g. job creation, private sector investment).
- Agriculture will continue to remain an important part of the urban economy, especially in medium and small cities. The government should support the improvement of agricultural productivity and value chains through improved infrastructure (trunk and local), and promote a better economic and spatial integration between the main regional hubs and provincial capitals, as well as with export markets. The SoAC analysis has shown a considerable percentage of urban land is agriculture (on average 34%). There is enormous potential to improve yields through more improved farming methods (e.g. greenhouses),

and the need to reduce the encroachment of urban sprawl onto valuable agricultural land (see Chapter Four and Five). This is especially important as urban and peri-urban agriculture will be a critical shock absorber in the coming years.

- Improve labour market functioning and productivity with a view to reducing unemployment and underemployment, especially for youth. Although largely a national challenge, adequate attention to the urban specificities are required, including recognising intra-city variations in labour demand (e.g. ensuring that vocational trainings and employment programs take into account private sector demand for labour based on city cluster/comparative advantages), private sector capacities (e.g. variation across cities), and the needs and priorities of women and youth (e.g. that skills and vocational training programmes are relevant, accessible and appropriate).
- Seek to integrate rather than eliminate the urban informal sector through more responsive national policy, as well as inclusive city-level plans and actions. For example, consider licensing street vendors and small-scale businesses and softly regulating their activities in order to increase tax revenue, improve city functioning (e.g. traffic management and access), and improve their protection from mafias.
- Finally, of all sectors, the urban economy has among the least available current data, and this needs to be addressed. Successful policies and programme interventions must be assessed based on solid evidence yet available data is riddled with gaps. Improvement in coordination for the production and use of economic statistics is a necessity.

Creating sufficient opportunities for Afghan youth is a critical challenge in the coming years

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Over 40,000 adequate, affordable and suitably located dwellings must be created every year to meet urban housing demand between 2015-2025

INCREMENTAL DWELLING CONSTRUCTION

CHAPTER 04

A HOME IN THE CITY: LAND AND HOUSING

Key Messages

- Land use in Afghan cities is characterised by **low dwelling density**. For public agencies, delivering basic services to low-density residential areas is inefficient and expensive. By developing compact cities, through densification and infill, population growth can be accommodated for many years without the need for developing new urban areas and avoiding urban sprawl.
- The low-density is mainly due to the existence of **large areas of subdivided, unoccupied land (vacant plots).** For example, on average over one-third of the built-up area in the Regional Hub cities is comprised of vacant plots (in Herat a staggering 42% of the total built-up area is vacant plots). Kabul City has sufficient vacant plots to accommodate another 1.5 million people. This phenomena is the result of more than a decade of land grabbing and the rapid rise of a speculative real-estate market.
- 86% of the urban housing stock could be classified as **slums** based on the UN-Habitat definition of lacking one or more or the following basic elements of adequate housing: (i) access to a safe water source, (ii) improved sanitation, (iii) durable, structurally sound housing materials, (iv) adequate living space and (v) security of tenure.
- Informal development has led to undesirable and spatially **inefficient patterns of land use.** Residential developments have been created on unsuitable areas such as unstable hillsides, flood-prone areas, and formerly productive agricultural areas. Illegal occupation of land or 'squatting' by IDPs, returnees, rural-urban migrants or other urban poor has also contributed to the ad-hoc development of residential land. Whilst relocation may be unavoidable for households living in unsuitable or dangerous areas, **the vast majority of informal housing can be cost-effectively upgraded** through incremental regularisation and basic service provision.
- Harnessing Afghanistan's rapid urban growth as a force for positive change requires advance **strategic spatial planning** at scale, **acceptance of incremental housing development/upgrading,** and strong management of public and privately owned land. Housing is an important sector of the economy in Afghanistan and needs to be guided appropriately so that its contribution to nation building and economic regeneration is harnessed.
- In order to meet Afghanistan's future urban housing requirements for the period of 2015-2025, between 41,700 and 43,960 new adequate, affordable and suitably located dwellings must be created every year. The majority of residential development is largely focused on high-end apartments out of reach for the majority of Afghan urban citizens. Residential development in cities must **cater for a range of housing options** in different location and catering for different income levels. Fundamental to meeting the need for housing is the supply of well-located, serviceable urban land for lower income groups.

4.1 LAND USE

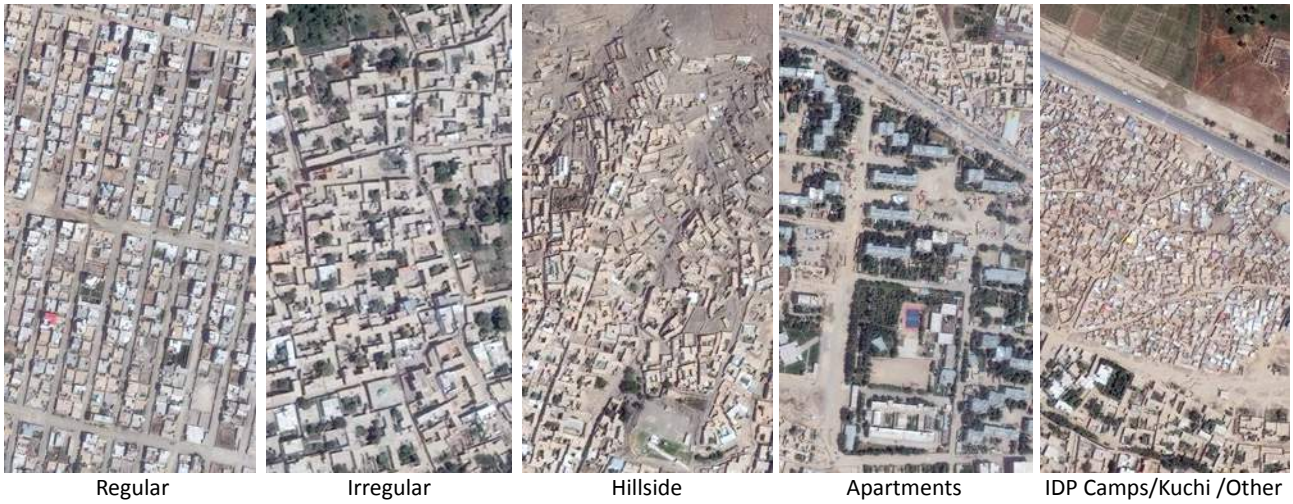
Land use is categorised as either 'built-up' or 'non-built-up'. These categories are then further grouped into sub-categories such as 'residential', 'commercial', 'institutional', 'agriculture', etc. The sub-category 'residential' is further subdivided into areas with a regular street layout (planned areas) and irregular street layout (unplanned areas), areas developed on hillsides, and IDP/Kuchi settlements (see Annex 1 for full land use classification).

Figure 4.1 shows the land use distribution of the residential sub-categories for all 34 provincial municipalities. A common trait of virtually all of the cities is that residential areas occupy the largest proportion of the built-up land area. On average, 42% of built-up area is residential, with Sar-i-Pul, Taluqan and Mahmood Raqi having the largest percentage (70%, 72% and 73% respectively) and Maidan Shahr and Farah the smallest (11% and 19% respectively).

All cities have high rates of irregular residential land use. In Kabul for example, the culmination of unplanned residential areas, residential development on hill sides, IDP settlements and Kuchi camps comprises 71.5% of the total residential area. Irregular residential areas comprise 85% of the total residential area in Kunduz, and 96% in Asad Abad. Irregular residential areas often occupy areas unsuitable for human habitation, such as very steep slopes and areas prone to floods, landslides or other risks. In addition, the many of the residents in such locations are typically 'squatting' i.e. possessing no security of tenure over the occupied land. Irregular settlements are also the outcome of small-scale, incremental, unplanned development, for example farmers informally subdividing and selling their land. As outlined in Chapter Five, the conversion of agricultural land into residential use must be conducted with care, as well as adequate planning. Although developing land in this way may increase opportunities for affordable housing, it can come at the cost of opportunities for the efficient provision of food to cities and adverse environmental impacts.

A large number of vacant plots is a phenomena in all large Afghan cities. Kabul City has a total of 9,391 ha of vacant plots, equating to approximately 200,000 individual plots and 23% of total built-up area. The majority of vacant plots are located in Districts 17 and 21 which account for 42% of all vacant plots in Kabul (Figure 4.3).

FIGURE 4.1: RESIDENTIAL LAND USE WITH AVERAGE SHARE OF TOTAL RESIDENTIAL FOR ALL 34 CITIES



Regular	Irregular	Hillside	Apartments	IDP Camps/Kuchi /Other
31.2%	59.6%	6.9%	1.1%	1.2%

SOURCE: SoAC GIS; © DIGITALGLOBE, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

In Kabul vacant plots have the potential to accommodate 1.5 million residents, without requiring any additional land area.

In Herat, 42% of the built-up area consists of vacant plots, located predominantly in Districts 11, 13 and 15 (Figure 4.4). In District 13, 95% of the built-up area is vacant plots. Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 are consolidated and centrally located districts with little vacant land.

Mazar-i-Sharif appears to have a relatively low proportion of vacant plots, however this finding is heavily influenced by the poorly-delineated municipal boundary, which does not cover all of the built-up urban area (see Chapter Two). Outside of the municipal boundary yet within the de-facto urban area are a large number of vacant lots, however these were not considered as part of the city and thus were not included in the SoAC analysis.

In Kandahar vacant plots occupy a staggering 4,023 ha, compared to the 3,865 ha occupied by dwellings. Vacant plots are not scattered throughout the city but mostly clustered in one very large development consisting of around 10,000 plots with a regular, planned layout in District 11.

Compared with global norms, commercial, institutional and industrial land uses occupy a relatively small proportion of land in Afghan cities; on average accounting for only 2.9%, 12.4% and 2.6% respectively. In addition, field verification of the satellite imagery conducted during SoAC data collection revealed that in fact many industrial areas are abandoned and no longer in use.

The proportion of cities dedicated to transport (roads and other mobility networks, parking, bus terminals and airports) varies greatly depending on whether these activities are located inside or outside

FIGURE 4.2: EXAMPLE OF VACANT PLOTS IN DISTRICT 6, FARAH CITY

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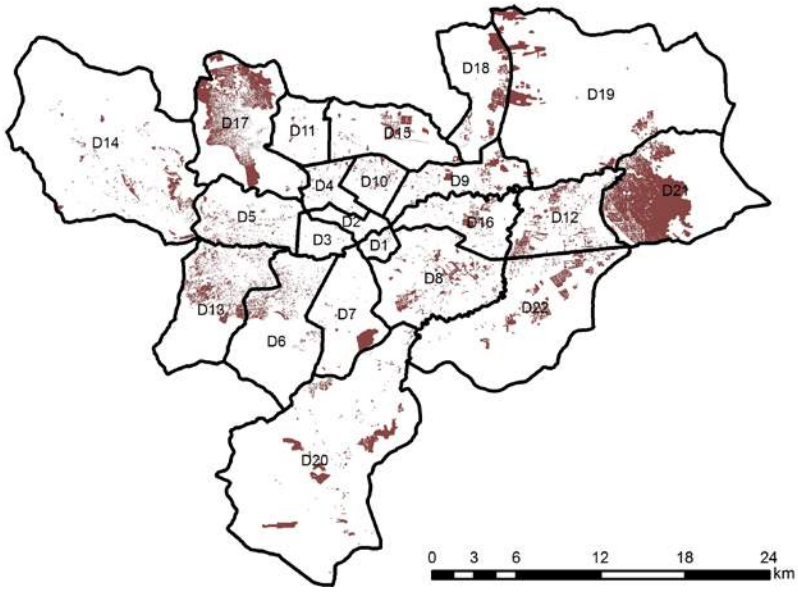
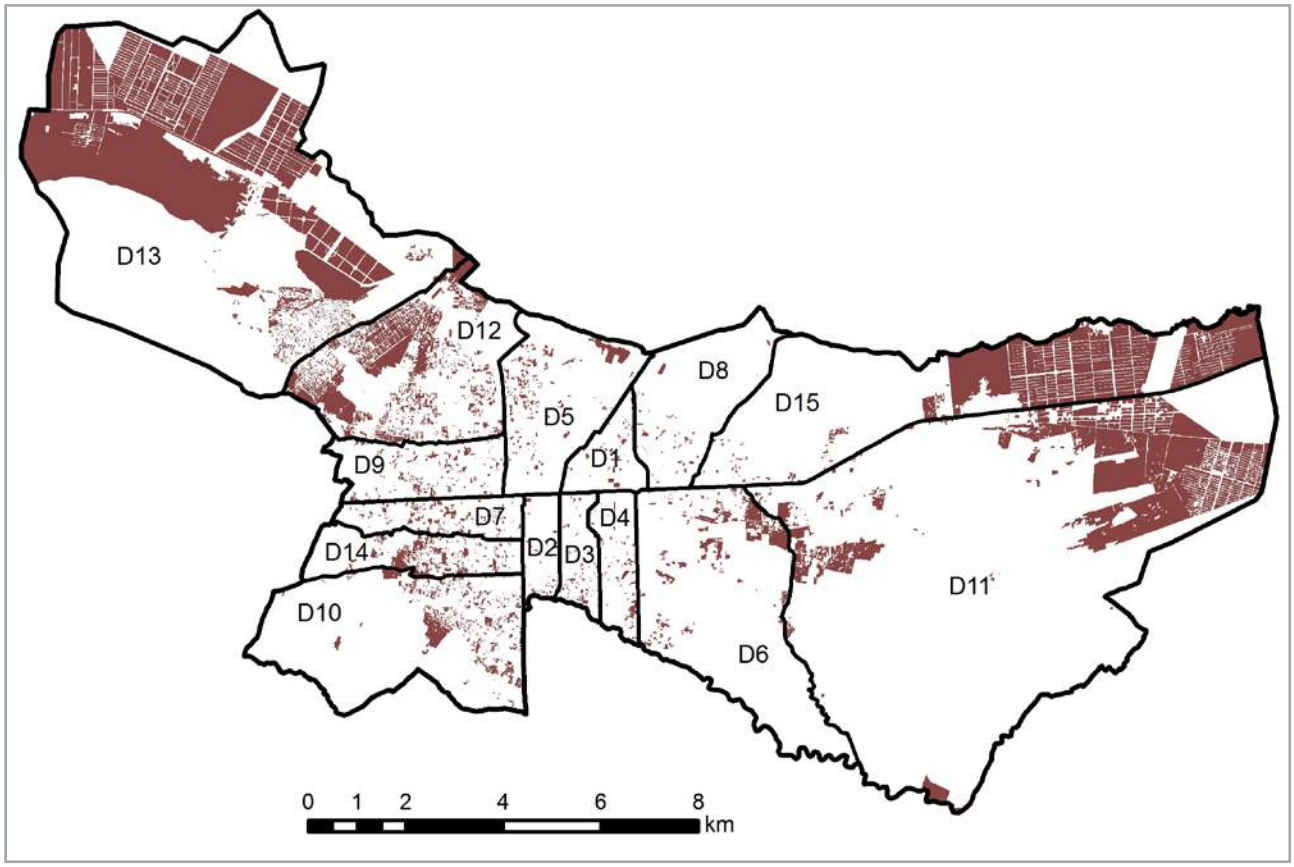
FIGURE 4.3: VACANT PLOTS IN KABUL

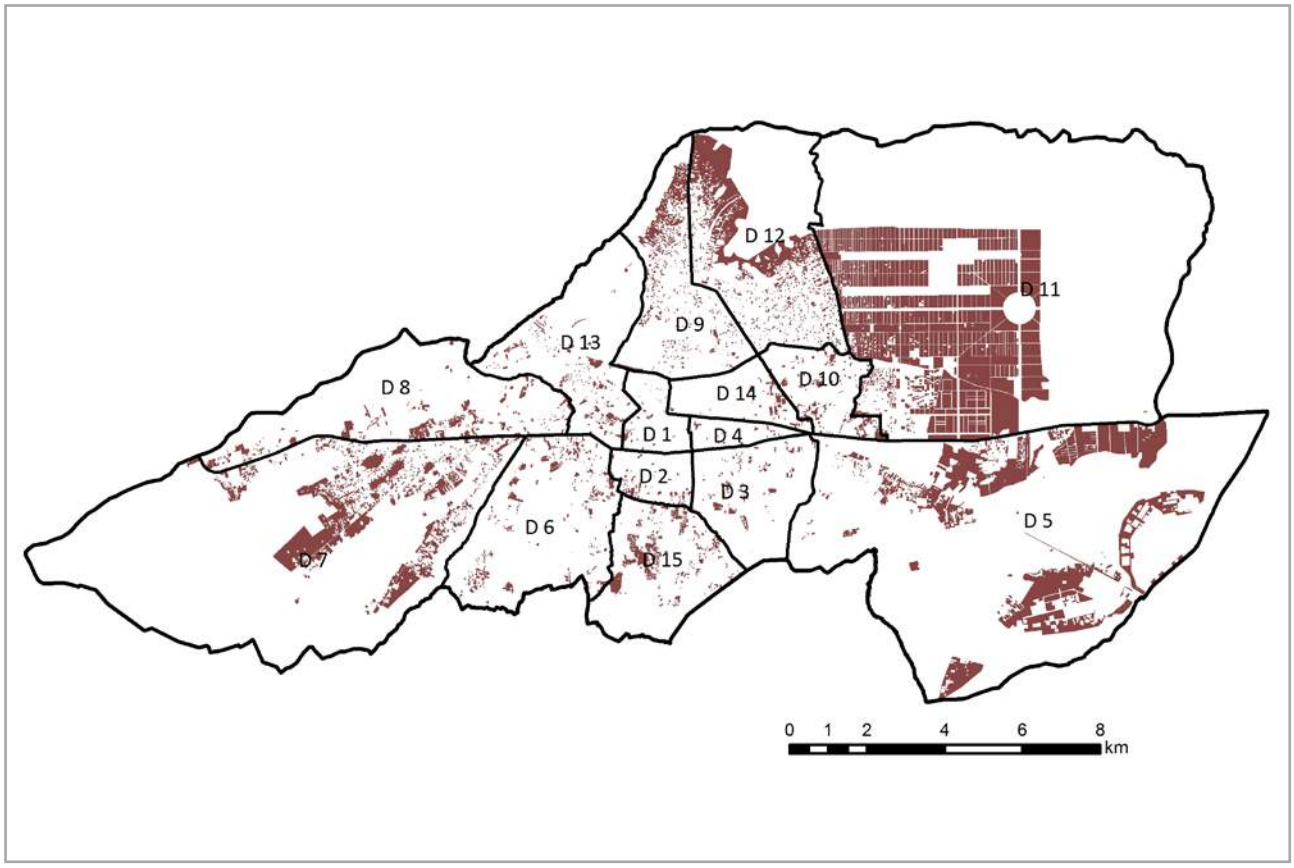


SOURCE: SoAC GIS

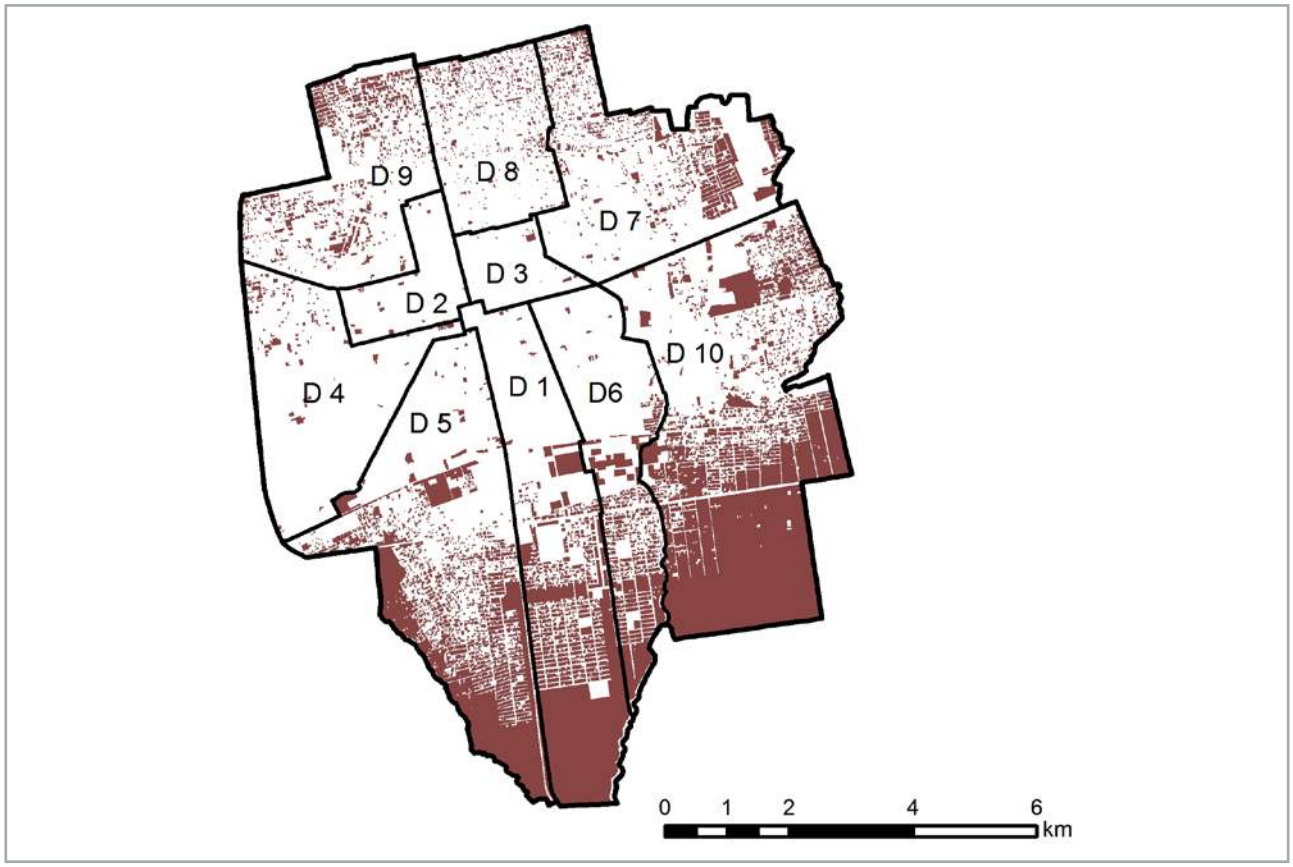
FIGURE 4.4: VACANT PLOTS PER DISTRICT/NAHIA FOR THE FOUR REGIONAL HUBS



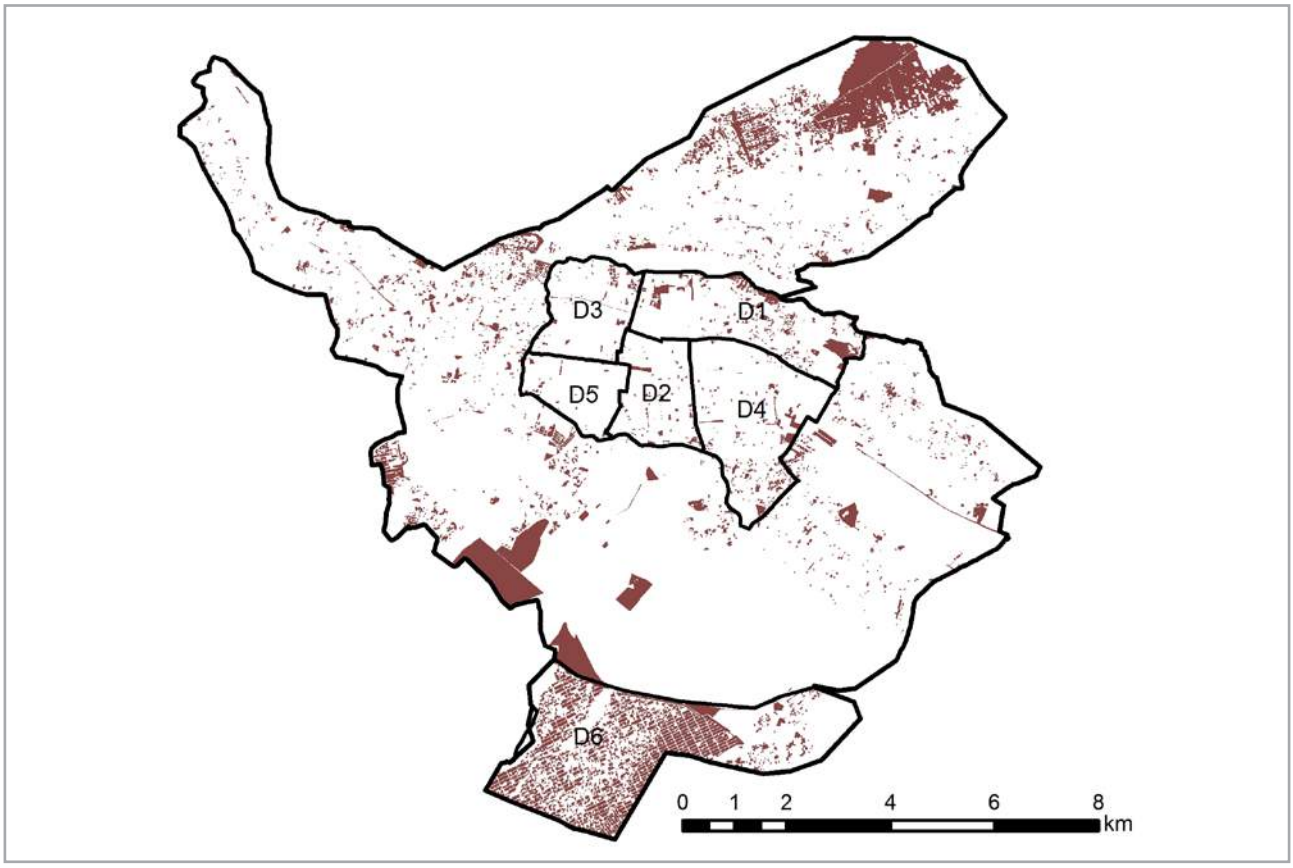
HERAT



KANDAHAR



MAZAR-I-SHARIF



JALALABAD

SOURCE: SOAC GIS

the municipal boundaries (Figure 4.5). For example, Kunduz has an airport located within its municipal boundaries while the airports of Mazar-i-Sharif and Kandahar are located outside. Space for circulation (roads) is relatively limited in Kabul (7.4% of built-up area) whilst other cities have relatively larger areas dedicated to roads.

In Kabul there are over 12,000 apartments currently under construction (as of January 2015), equating to over 50% of the current occupied apartment stock (22,900 units). The resulting oversupply when units under construction come on the market may put downward pressure on prices, however the apartment stock is still vastly too expensive for the majority of Kabul citizens. Meanwhile the gradual slow-down of construction of new apartments will reduce employment opportunities in Kabul's extremely significant construction sector. In other cities, buildings under construction are less prominent; accounting for only 0.3% of total built-up area.

Non built-up areas within municipal boundaries predominantly consist of agricultural activities (e.g. Kunduz, which has 66% municipal land dedicated to agriculture) or barren land (e.g. Bazarak, 84%; and Nili, 78% of total land area). Whether these non built-up areas are suitable for urban development and expansion depends on certain criteria such as topography, access to water, vulnerability to natural hazards, and agriculture productivity.

Box 4.1:
Living on Kabul's hills

Mohammed and his friends

Ghulam Nabi and his colleagues taking a short break while carrying goods up the hill

What is life like for more than 480,000 people that live on Kabul's hills? When you walk up the steep trails in the Kabul Old City (District 1), it feels like you are entering a different city. Children run around playing and flying kites, people sit outside and look over the skyline of Kabul, and it is quiet: the usual Kabul traffic noise stops at the bottom of the hills where the paved roads end.

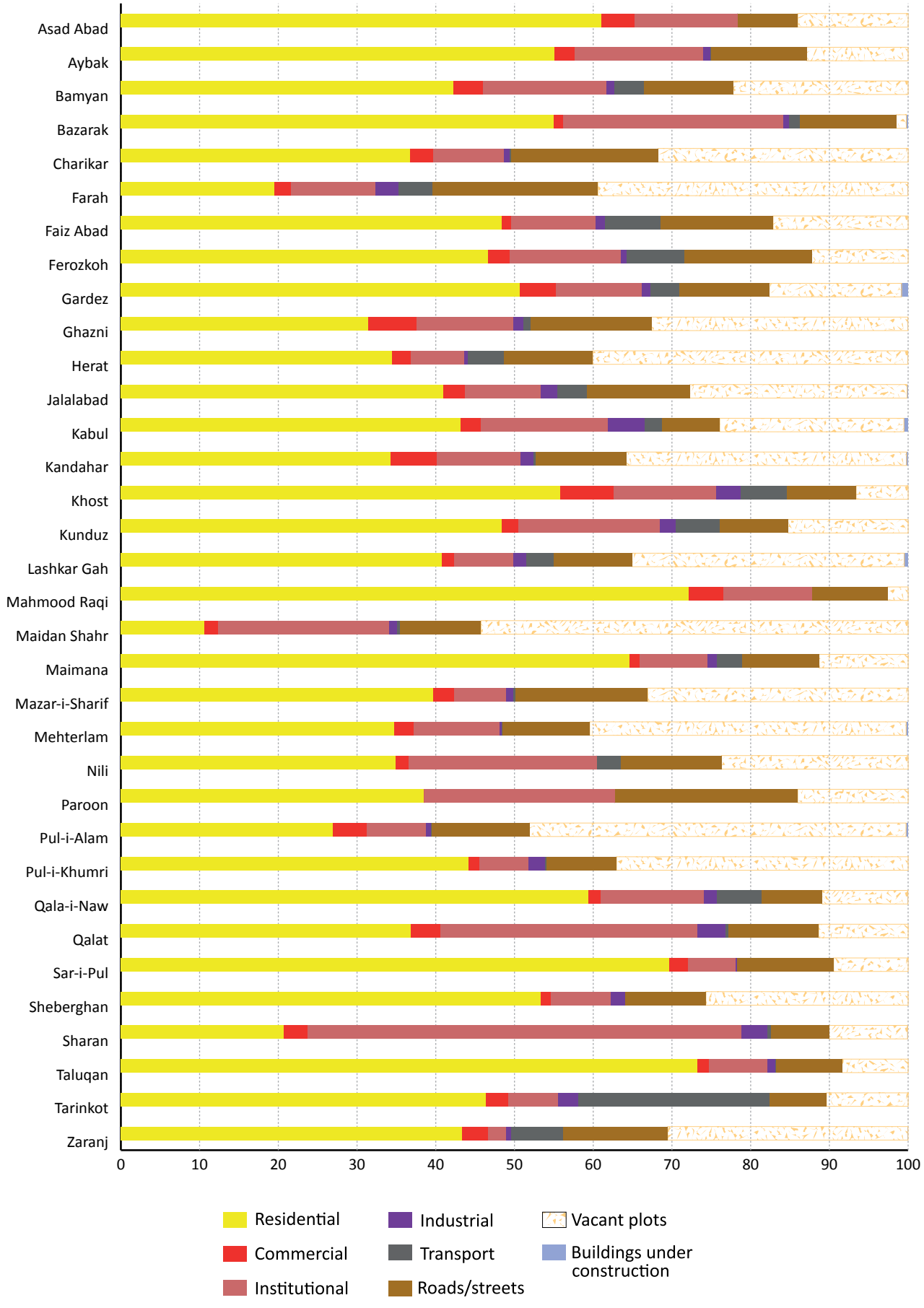
Mohammed and his friends were born here and don't want to leave: "The Kabul hills are very safe and much cheaper than living in the city. All our friends live here and we know everyone. And we have the basic things we need such as water and electricity." The water comes from a spring in the Shoda Hills and is stored in a large reservoir on the top of the hill, and a pipe system distributes it to most of the houses.

But not all is positive here: "It's a different story for older or sick people, for small children or pregnant women." says Wali, Mohammed's friend.

"Especially in winter or after heavy rains, walking up the hills can be extremely difficult if you're not young and healthy. And not all of us have piped water. Also, a big problem here is the waste. The municipality comes maybe once a year to collect it, and especially in summer you can smell it rotting. It's not healthy."

For some unskilled labourers, the hills provide work throughout the year. Ghulam Nabi is one of the many day labourers who carry goods like coal or groceries up for families and older people. It takes Ghulam Nabi and his two colleagues 30 to 45 minutes to carry 80 kg of coal and rice to a family living on the top of the hill. "For ten years I have been carrying things up the hills. It is a good opportunity for me to earn money and much better than in the city where there are so many other labourers waiting for jobs every day. People here know me and trust me."

FIGURE 4.5: BUILT-UP LAND USE FOR ALL 34 CITIES



SOURCE: SoAC GIS

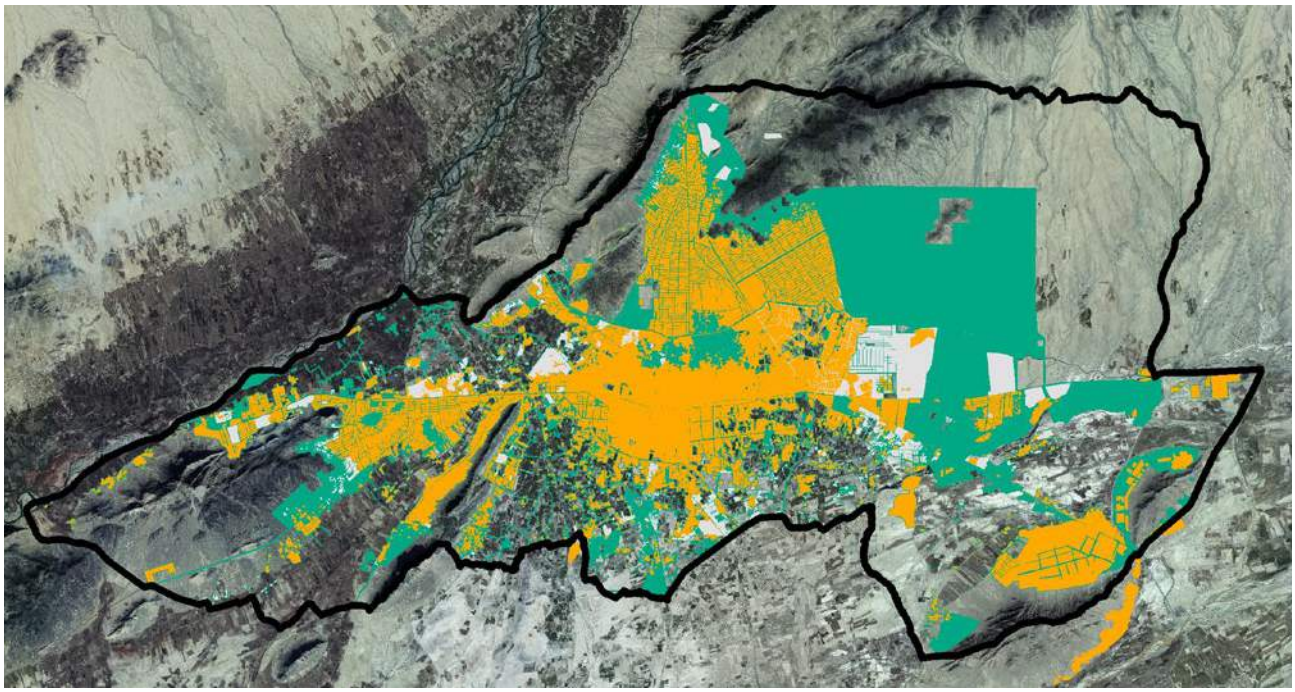
4.2
URBAN PLANNING AND INFORMAL DEVELOPMENT

Urban planning is a tool to promote orderly, efficient, equitable and sustainable urban development. However, aspects of the Afghan context, such as the fact that urban land is often highly contested, and governed by a weak and ambiguous regulatory framework, present formidable barriers to effective spatial planning.

To date, masterplanning for Afghanistan's cities has been hampered by inadequate consultation of key stakeholders, including municipalities and communities, during their preparation, as well as a lack of government enforcement and implementation capacity. Updating master plans is also a costly and time-consuming exercise, requiring specialised technical capacity. As such, master plans in Afghanistan tend to have little influence on guiding urban growth and quickly become out-dated.

Figure 4.6 shows urban growth between 2008 and 2014 in Kandahar. Between 2011 and 2014 a very large area (Aino Mina Phase 2) with over 10,000 plots was added to the city but it still consists mainly of vacant plots. Figure 4.7 shows the 1980 Kandahar master plan boundary compared to actual land use in 2008. It shows that considerable urban growth took place between 1980 and 2008, and whilst some of that was in accordance with the master plan, the majority occurred in areas not planned for urban expansion. In 2008, 58% of built-up urban area was

FIGURE 4.6: URBAN EXPANSION IN KANDAHAR: 2008 -2014



	Built-up March 2008	5,475 ha	Annual spatial growth rate 2008-2011 4.5%
	Built-up November 2011	6,414 ha	Annual spatial growth rate 2011-2014 25%
	Built-up March 2014	11,890 ha	

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

outside the 1980 master plan, demonstrating the plan's ineffectiveness in guiding and containing urban growth within the masterplan boundary.

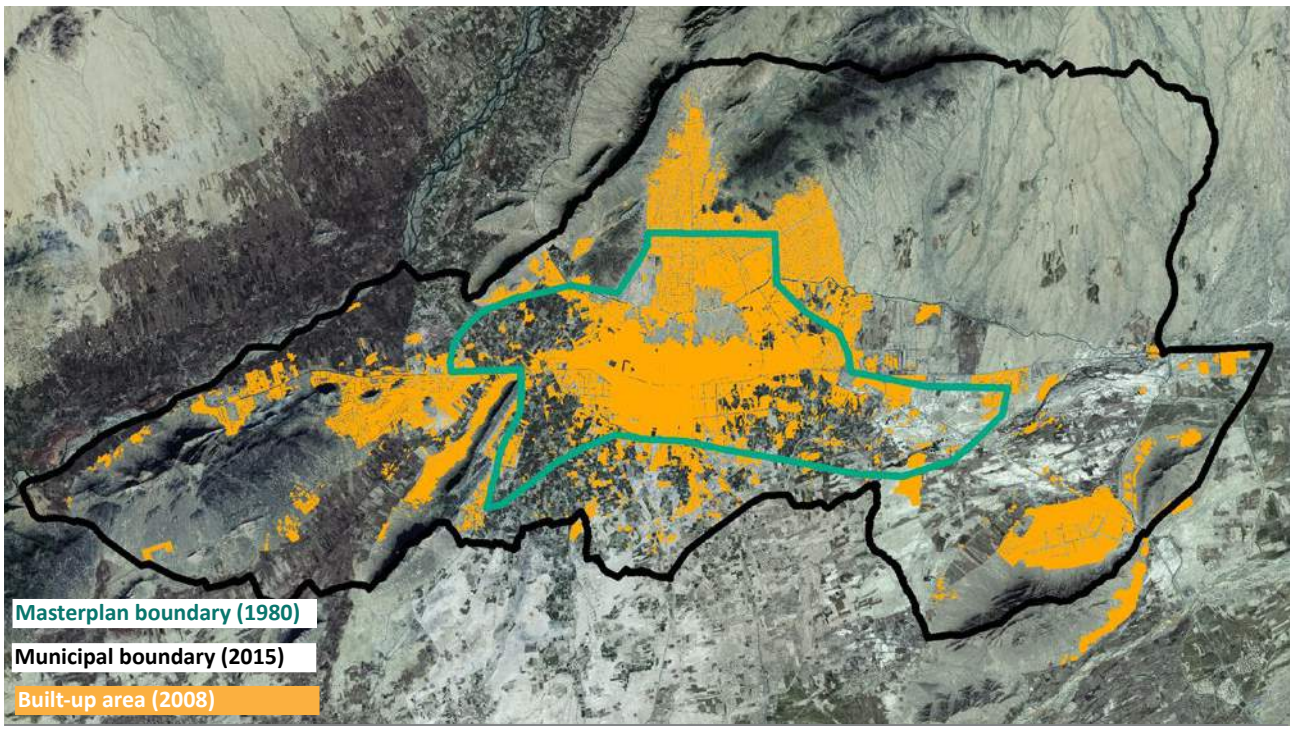
There are a range of formal and informal approaches to residential development in Afghanistan's cities (Figure 4.8). 'Formal' development refers to development facilitated by the legal acquisition of land, and construction in compliance with master plans and building regulations. Formal government initiatives to increase the residential land supply such as the Land Allocation Scheme (LAS) offer a relatively affordable alternative to enter the formal housing market. However the majority of LAS sites have been criticised for being underserviced and being located too far from livelihood opportunities. Thus, for the vast majority of urban lower income groups, LAS sites are not a feasible option and the majority of plots created under this Scheme remain empty.

'Informal' developments are those that are not based on the official acquisition of land, and are not in compliance with master plans or other regulatory controls. Large areas of grabbed urban land have been subdivided and distributed and/or sold to individuals. These developments often have some degree of spatial planning (e.g. regular street grid layout) however they are typically inadequately serviced, especially with limted water and sanitation services. Other forms of informal residential development include land that is informally sold to individuals or simply occupied in lieu of any transfer of ownership. For example the hillsides of Kabul (comprising approximately 18% of the total residential land area of the city) were largely occupied in this fashion (Box 4.1).

Informal development is often characterised by irregular street and plot layouts, narrow street patterns, poor dwelling conditions and services, particularly in the initial stage of development.

In the capital, Kabul, the group of 54 sites known as the Kabul Informal Settlements (KIS), present an protracted and increasing challenge. The KIS sites are mostly located on valuable land which is coming under increasing development pressure. However the vast majority of inhabitants are employed in the urban informal economy and need to remain in close proximity to the city. KIS sites also have a high proportion of conflict induced IDPs and returned refugees. Unfortunately, there is limited political will to find a durable solution for these settlements. 'Winterisation assistance' (providing blankets,

FIGURE 4.7: KANDAHAR: COMPARISON OF THE MASTER PLAN OF 1980 (GREEN BOUNDARY) AND THE BUILT-UP AREAS (ORANGE) IN 2008



Master Plan (1980) proposed built-up area for 2000	5,065 ha	
Built-up areas (2008) within Master Plan	2,280 ha	42%
Built-up area (2008) outside the Master Plan	3,195 ha	58%
Total Built-up 2008 (2+3)	**5,475 ha**	**100%**

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

firewood, etc., in winter) is common every year but not a permanant solution.

Land tenure security and the freedom from the threat of eviction is fundamental for urban development and for households to invest in their dwellings. The absence of tenure security has been shown to exert downward pressure on an area's productivity, as households and businesses are unwilling to invest in upgrades and new activities in their area. The largely informal nature of Afghanistan's urban development means that tenure insecurity is a pervasive issue that, to differing degrees affects the majority of urban citizens.

The sheer scale of informal developments renders it simply unrealistic to consider that informal settlements could be somehow 'cleared' and replaced with formal housing. Rather what is required is an approach of incremental upgrading

FIGURE 4.8: DOMINANT URBAN DEVELOPMENT TYPOLOGIES IN AFGHANISTAN

FORMAL

Detached Houses	Apartments	Government Land Development Schemes
		
E.g: Jalalabad, District 3 + Location, dwelling quality and flexibility (expansion, adjustments, incremental development, tenure security, access to services - Unfordable for low-income groups	*E.g: Kabul, District 8* + Location, dwelling quality, access to services, tenure security - Unfordable for large majority of people	*E.g: Kunduz, District 5* + Affordable, incremental development, tenure security - Low level of services in initial stage of development, initial low densities

INFORMAL

Land subdivisions	Spontaneous settlements	Squatting
		
E.g: Kandahar, District 12 + affordable - informally developed, tenure security unclear (e.g. grabbed land), locations sometimes not suitable for urban development, no or limited services	*E.g: Kabul Hillsides* + affordable, location, incremental development - minimal basic services, limited tenure security, difficult or costly to upgrade, no (emergency) vehicle access	*E.g: Kabul IDP camp District 5* + affordable, location, humanitarian assistance - no services, upgrading not permitted, poor dwellings, no tenure security and many areas under eviction pressure

and regularisation of existing informal settlements. In doing so it will be necessary to develop a set of criteria to determine which settlements are suitable for regularisation and which are not suitable due to insurmountable conflicts of land ownership, technical constraints (e.g. accessibility) or are developed in unsuitable locations (e.g. prone to natural hazards).

A process of incremental regularisation also requires recognition that the traditional dichotomy between 'informal' land occupation and 'formal' land ownership is insufficient to describe the situation in which the majority of urban Afghans live. Regularisation, rather than seeking to immediately grant freehold land titles, seeks to move people forward along the 'continuum of tenure security'; from adverse possession, to more resilient forms of de-facto occupation to ultimately de-jure ownership.

Increasing tenure security for property occupants (households, businesses and others) will provide a major incentive to invest in dwelling upgrades and local business activities with positive economic consequences, as well as mutually reinforcing positive impacts on the population's perceptions of citizenship and inclusion in the city.

Box 4.3:
The Urban Dwelling Divide

Informal low-income housing

Upper-middle income formal housing

Shakeba moved into her brother's house after her husband died several years ago. Without a job or regular income, she could not afford to stay alone with her son in their house in Kabul. Her brother's rented mud house now accommodates four adults (her brother and his wife, her aunt, and herself) plus their 13 children in three rooms. They don't have money to repair the broken windows, so they covered them with plastic they found on the street.

Their 'bathroom' is a makeshift stall in the backyard that is not connected to any sewage system but has to be emptied by hand every week. "We are very poor but must be happy with what we can afford. We are lucky to have a hand pump in our yard. However, the quality of the water is so poor that our children are sick all the time. My aunt had problems with her kidneys some time ago because of that and needed expensive treatment." When their children play in the backyard, they can see their neighbour's three-storey mansion rising above their muddy compound walls. The 10 rooms, five bathrooms and two kitchens are currently empty after the last tenant moved out. "These houses are all because of corruption – people like us could never afford to live like that" says Shakeba when asked about their neighbour's house.

On the other side of the street lives Khaled, father of five, part of the Afghan urban middle class. His father bought the small but very clean concrete house several decades ago, and Khaled did some improvements to it over the years. It is now home to his family, including his brother and two sisters. "We are very lucky to have inherited this nice house. We could sell it for a lot of money because the land is so valuable, but we would rather stay here. We have reliable electricity and the neighbourhood is safe". These stories highlight the enormous inequality in Afghan society, how this impacts access to adequate housing, services and tenure security, and how in many neighbourhoods of Afghan cities the poor, middle-income and rich live side by side, albeit in very different dwelling conditions.

4.3
HOUSING: A HOME FOR ALL AFGHANS

The SoAC analysis found that the total housing stock in Afghanistan's 34 provincial capitals is 962,467 dwelling units (Box 4.2). The vast majority of the housing stock is irregular, detached or semi-detached dwellings (524,074 units), followed by regular detached dwellings (315,556 units); and hillside dwellings (71,788). Kabul is the only city where apartments form a significant share of the housing stock with 7.8% of the total dwelling units (including 2% mixed-use apartments with commercial uses on ground floors).

Access to adequate housing is a major challenge for the majority of urban Afghans. As examined in Chapter One, poverty and inequality are the harsh reality for roughly one-third of all urban households. This combined with a lack of affordable housing options and an oversupply at the top end of the formal housing market results in a difficult housing situation for low- and even many middle-income Afghans.

As is the case in many rapidly urbanising developing countries, a large proportion of Afghanistan's middle and low-income households have come to reside in poorly located and under-serviced informal settlements. In severely contested space, overcrowding is a pervasive issue. Many households accommodate more than one family.

The majority (86%) of the urban housing stock in Afghanistan can be classified as a 'slum' as per the UN-Habitat definition: lacking one or more or the following basic elements of adequate housing: (i) access to a safe water source, (ii) improved sanitation, (iii) durable, structurally sound housing materials, (iv) adequate living space and (v) security of tenure.[1]

The legal and regulatory framework governing land and property registration is inefficient, ambiguous, prone to corruption and inaccessible for significant portions of the urban population. The process of registering land and obtaining title deeds is both complex and costly. It is estimated that only 10% of land transactions are conducted in accordance with the formal legal procedure.[2] The expense involved in land registration is also a significant disincentive to engage with the formal system; with a court fee of

Informal self-built housing dominates Afghan cities

3% of the total land value as well as an additional 2% of the land value for the municipality and Ministry of Finance fees.

The procedure to obtain formal approval for a planning and building permit is equally complex, costly and time consuming. The process begins with the submission of an application form to the municipal district/nahia, who then verifies if the proposed land use complies with the zoning denoted under the master plan. There are no publically available copies of the master plan or any scope for the public to complete this process. A simple activity is thus rendered a procedural bottleneck that is susceptible to corruption.

Following this, the municipal property department is required to check if the owner has any outstanding safayi tax bills to be paid. The fact that safayi tax debts are not examined proactively but rather 'reactively' in this manner when an application is made is a further disincentive for landowners to deal with the municipality. Engineering departments then verify if a proposal complies with various standards of structural integrity. Meanwhile planning departments are responsible for verifying if a proposed use is in keeping with the 'orderly and proper' development of the city (i.e. not incompatible with surrounding land issues), as well as various district and local planning schemes.

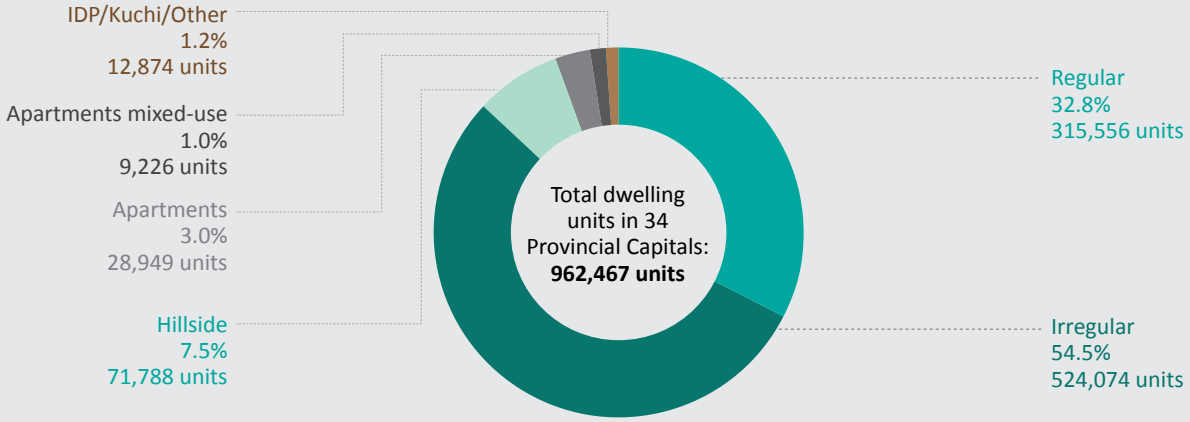
Each process typically involves a distinct set of bureaucratic steps, all of which are susceptible to corruption. If a permit is issued applicants are obligated to complete building within three years. The municipality meanwhile is obligated to send staff to monitor construction and verify the development's compliance with approved plans.

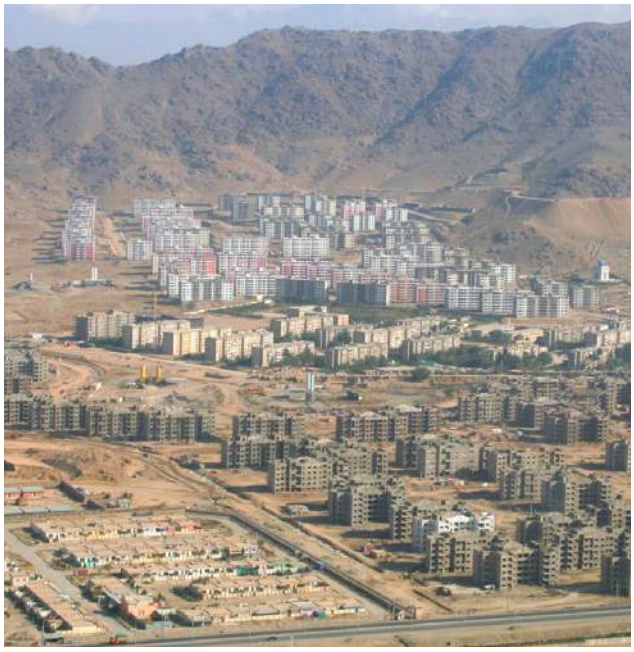
Box 4.2:
Urban housing typologies in Afghanistan

Housing typologies in Afghan cities can be categorised as either formal (apartments, detached or semi-detached dwellings) and informal housing options. Informal housing options are either 'planned informality' (regular layout but no building permission, lack of compliance with master plans/other planning schemes and lacking formal land documentation) or 'spontaneous' (irregular layout and occupation e.g. hillsides).

The formal housing options have an average monthly rent of almost 2 USD/m² (Kabul 2.8 USD/m²) while for informal housing the monthly rent is between 0.6 and 1 USD/m² (Table 4.2). Purchasing a formal house comes at an average cost of 700-900 USD/m² (Kabul 700-1,500 USD/m²) whilst an informal house can be purchased at a price of 150-300 USD/m². Informal housing options are considerably more affordable, however there is significant variation between different areas and within cities-are typically characterized by lower quality of dwellings and poor access to services.

Detached or semi-detached houses and apartments dominate the formal housing sector. The informal sector meanwhile is comprised of dwellings developed on informally acquired land (through means such as land grabbing, famers informally subdividing and selling land to individuals, and 'spontaneous' housing located on hillsides or other informal settlements. These different typologies differ considerably in quality and price.





Apartments under construction, Kabul

Informal self-built housing, Bamyan

TABLE 4.2: SAMPLE HOUSING SURVEY

Housing Types		Plot Size (M^2)	Floor Area (M^2)	Occupants (People)	Monthly rent (USD)	Value (USD)	Water	Sanitation	Tenure
Formal	Apartment Kabul	n/a	90	4	250	65,000	Piped water or own well	Septic tank or composing toilet	Owner with title deeds/ Owner with other documents (sales transaction) / renter
	Apartment Large Size	n/a	150	8-9	250-350	100,000			
	Apartment Medium Size	n/a	80	5-7	150-250	80,000			
	Apartment Small Size	n/a	50	4-6	100	40,000-65,000			
	Average	**n/a**	**90**	**6**	**200**	**80,000**			
	Dwelling Kabul	300	170	9	600	250,000			
	Dwelling Large Size	300-450	200	10-12	300	150,000			
	Dwelling Medium Size	200-300	150	10-12	250	100,000			
	Dwelling Small Size	200	100	8-9	200	50,000			
	Average	**300**	**150**	**9**	**250**	**100,000**			
Informal	Planned Kabul	400	200	7	180	50,000	Piped water or own well	Septic tank or dry pit latrine	Sales transaction/ Inheritance / municipal notebook
	Planned Large Size	500	200	8-15	200	60,000			
	Planned Medium Size	400	150		150	45,000			
	Planned Small Size	300	100		100	30,000			
	Average	**400**	**150**	**11**	**150**	**45,000**			
	Spontaneous Kabul	180	120	9	160	-	Shared well/ public taps/ water tanker	Dry pit latrine	No documentation / municipal notebook
	Spontaneous Large Size	250- 600	100-200	10—15	60	20,000			
	Spontaneous Medium Size	150	80	7-9	50	15,000			
	Spontaneous Small Size	80-100	50- 70	5-6	40	7,000			
	Average	**150**	**80**	**9**	**50**	**12,000**			

SOURCE: SOAC FIELD SURVEY

4.4
DWELLINGS AND DENSITY

Population density in cities is significant because it is a key indicator of the efficiency of urban land use. At the global level, population densities have tended to decrease in recent decades.[3] The resulting increase in land consumption can be attributed in part to higher household incomes, increased mobility and aspirations towards more decentralised ways of living. Such a trend has significant implications, as more sparsely populated and increasing sprawling urban areas are more costly to service, impose additional transport costs on the population and can have negative environmental impacts. In a regional context, Asian cities are, in general, very dense; ranging from 100 to 200 persons/ha, approximately twice as dense as cities in Latin America and triple those in Europe.[4]

Annex 1 (Methodology) outlines the SoAC approach for estimating population. It identifies a figure based on an overall dwelling count, and an average number of occupants per dwelling of 7.5 persons for a low-end estimate and and 9 persons for a high-end estimate.

Using both the higher and lower estimates, Afghan cities have considerably lower population densities compared to other Asian cities, although densities vary significantly both between and within cities (Table 4.3). For example, as Table 4.3 shows, the average 'urban density' (built-up area divided by number of dwelling units (DU)) in Kabul is 9.8 Du/ha (74 to 89 people per hectare (P/ha)) whereas Kandahar has a density of 5.4 DU/ha (41 to 49 P/ha).

TABLE 4.3: RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES FOR SELECTED CITIES

Dwelling and Population Densities		Kabul	Mazar-i-Sharif	Kandahar	Kunduz	Asad Abad	Nili	All 34 Municipalities
Total Dwellings		396,095	77,615	61,902	29,877	6,350	1,994	962,467
Total Residential Area (Ha)		17,335	2,989	3,865	1,479	424	83	50,529
Total Built-Up Area (Ha)		40,143	7,546	11,299	3,059	695	239	120,259
Residential dwelling density (DU/Ha) [5]		23	26	16	20	15	24	19
Residential Density (P/ha)	Low estimate	171	195	120	152	112	180	143
	High estimate	206	234	144	181	135	216	171
Urban dwelling density (DU/Ha) [6]		9.8	10.2	5.4	9.7	9.2	8.4	8
Urban Density (P/ha)	Low estimate	74	77	41	73	69	63	60
	High estimate	89	93	49	88	82	75	72

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

Within Kabul, residential densities vary considerably. For example, residential densities in District 4, a consolidated built up area with 25% irregular dwellings, reach 35 dwelling units/ha (263 and 315 P/ha). In District 6, a less developed area with large areas of vacant land and 89% informal development, density is only 23 dwelling units/ha (173 to 207 p/ha). Conversely Districts 18 and 20 of Kabul have a density of only 8 and 9 dwelling units/ha respectively; with both areas sparsely developed and with a very high proportion of vacant plots.

The significant intra-city variations in residential density can be attributed to the large numbers of vacant plots as well as the presence of large areas occupied by institutional uses. In Kabul for example the population density of only residential areas is 206 P/ha (high estimate), whereas the 'urban' density of the city as a whole is 89 P/ha (high estimate).

High population density can represent a more efficient use of urban space. Adequate and effectively enforced urban planning can act as a preventative measure to combat urban sprawl and it makes cities more compact and thus more efficient from the perspective of infrastructure investment and servicing. Whether governments take actions such as effective planning, orderly infrastructure investments, and effecitve taxation and building regulations/controls - or neglect to take these steps are determining factors of population densities and land and building prices. In Afghanistan low urban densities due to unoccupied vacant land being held for speculation or future use limit the possibilities of municipalities to plan and make well-located land available at adequate densities for the efficient provision of services.

Given these low densities, and the prevalence of unoccupied vacant plots, there is considerable opportunity to increase densities in Afghan cities to accommodate forecasted urban growth. Table 4.3 shows how many years urban population growth can be accommodated without the need for spatial expansion of cities if all vacant plots are developed and residential areas that currently have low densities have increased densities to acceptable average levels. Vacant plots could be developed into a variety of land uses to improve urban areas in Afghanistan, but Table 4.4 focuses on the potential for residential development as an illustrative example for dealing with the specific housing issues.

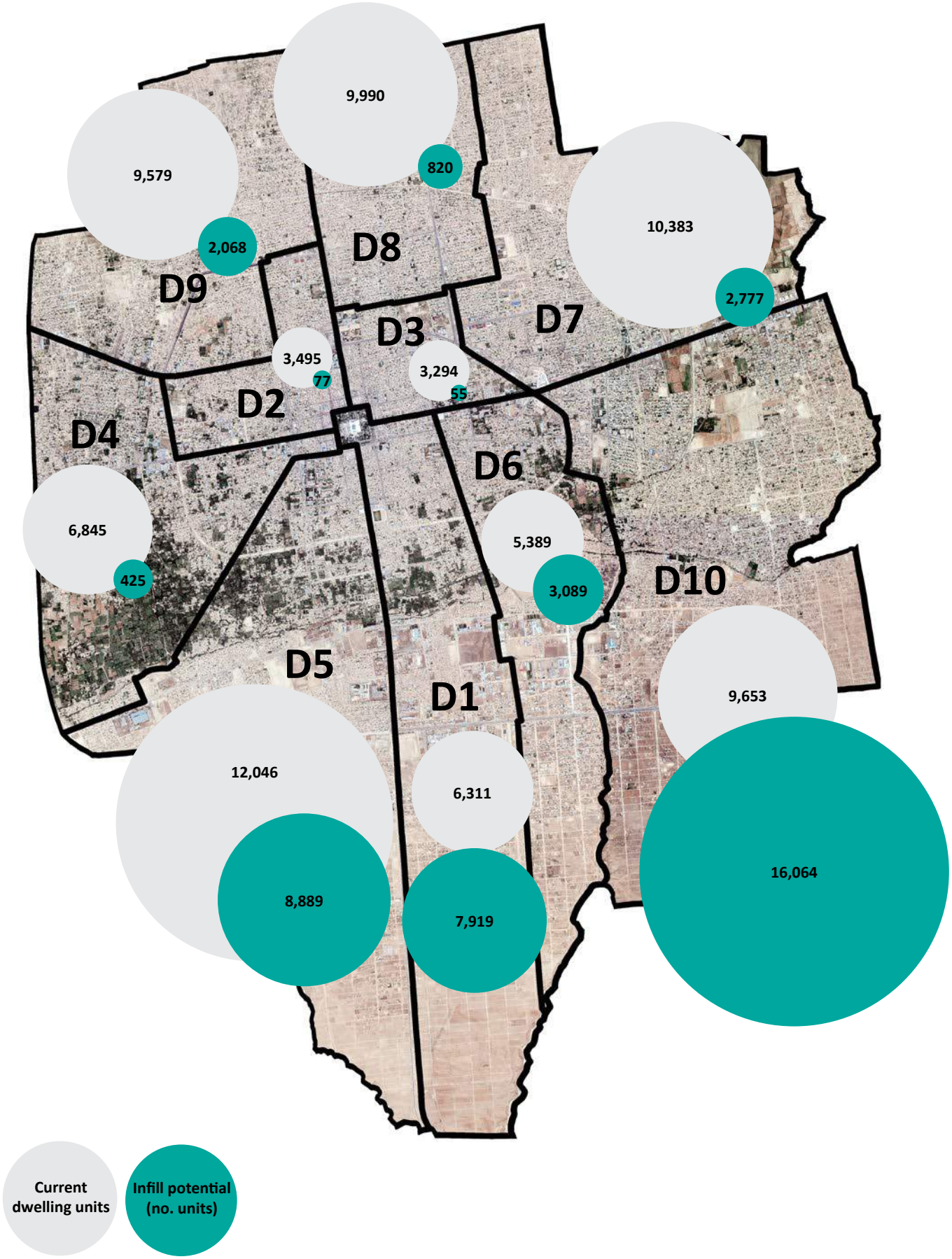
TABLE 4.4: SCENARIOS OF POPULATION GROWTH WITHOUT THE NEED FOR EXPANSION IN SELECTED CITIES

		Kabul	Mazar-i-Sharif	Kandahar	Kunduz	Asad Abad	Nili	All 34 Municipalities
Densification potential (people) [7]		0	0	215,882	26,907	27,650	0	1,443,597
Infill potential of vacant plots (people) [8]		1,257,455	379,490	376,553	55,060	8,512	8,003	3,601,705
Total pop. growth within built -up areas		1,257,455	379,490	592,435	81,967	36,162	8,003	5,045,302
Number of years without need for spatial expansion (for three population growth scenarios) [9]	2.5%	12	18	29	11	20	14	18
	3.5%	9	13	21	8	14	10	13
	4.5%	7	10	16	6	11	8	10

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

Nili, Daykundi Province

FIGURE 4.10 CURRENT NUMBER OF DWELLINGS AND INFILL POTENTIAL PER DISTRICT/NAHIA OF MAZAR



SOURCE: SoAC GIS; © DIGITALGLOBE, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
*NOTE: ASSUMING VACANT PLOTS AREA * 0.65 (HA) PER PLOT *26 (DU/HA)*

4.5
DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Demand for urban housing in Afghanistan is high due to the country's rapid urbanisation and high population growth. The government and the private sector has been unable to develop affordable low-income housing at sufficient scale to meet the demand.[10] According to a survey of the five major cities, 94% of low-income residents need new or improved housing.[11]

Assuming a 4% annual urban population growth (natural growth + rural-urban migration + returnees and IDPs)[12] for the coming five years (2015-2019) and 3.5% for the 2020-2025, the demand for housing is around 41,704 units per year expanding to 43,956 units for the period 2020-2025 (Table 4.5). These huge numbers don't include the current backlog of housing and the need to improve current dwellings.

Table 4.5 shows estimates of population growth (number of households) from 2015-2020 according to household income strata (high, medium, low and very low income) and an estimate of how much these respective households can spend per month on housing without being overburdened by the cost of housing. The current housing options, with the exception of the high-income group, are either informal or subsidised housing. The very-low and low-income groups comprise 78% of the total newcomers in the housing market with household income below the poverty line (less or equal to 1,710 AFN income per person per month). 65% of the household have only one income earner and 13% no income at all. A survey among IDP households reveals that 91% have a household income of less than 30 USD/month.[13]

The gap between demand and supply for housing is very large, and with rapid urbanisation is worsening each year. The Government of Afghanistan had plans to build 13 housing projects with a total of 19,747 apartments in Kabul with donor support however for the period 2001-2012 only 4,117 of them have been completed.[14] Data from MUDA shows that 185,175 units (consisting of houses and apartments) were planned in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Jalalabad as townships (largely self-contained formal settlements, outside of and distinct from existing city areas) however only a tiny fraction have been built.[15]

All evidence shows that the government, thus far, has not been able to meet the demand for housing, neither does it have the financial capacity to provide subsidised housing to the poor or middle-income groups at scale. The apartments built by the Government e.g. the 3,300 units in 'Shahrak-e-Amarat' township in Kabul have been distributed among government employees or other connected individuals. The employees/recipients are required to repay the cost of the house through a 15-year mortgage, although it appears that mortgage rates are below market rates, effectively subsidising these households.

The private sector housing supply is limited and caters almost exclusively for the highest income groups. The cost of formal, serviced apartments developed by the government and private sector are around 60,000 USD per unit. Formal housing supply covers only 5-10% of the total housing demand and is unaffordable for 90-95% of the population.

Maslakh IDP and returnee settlement, Herat

Poverty, inequality and affordability of housing

Chapter One and Three elaborated the significant challenges Afghanistan faces in terms of poverty and inequality. Despite considerable economic growth in recent years, Afghanistan's poorest have seen negligible improvements in their living conditions, reflected in the dominant housing conditions of these groups.[16] For the 78% of households that can spend a maximum 100 USD per month on housing (very low-, low-, and some middle-income households) it is very difficult to obtain a house in the formal housing sector. According to Da Afghanistan Bank (Afghanistan's Central Bank), it is unlikely that the need for housing for low- and middle-income will be addressed through traditional approaches like subsidised housing given Afghanistan's financial limitations.[17]

Assuming an average construction cost of between 60,000 USD and 80,000 USD for a newly-built apartment, the total cost of providing 43,800 dwelling units per year is 2.6 - 3.5 billion USD. This excludes the cost of land and providing basic services. Limited household financial capacity, lack of access to finance, limited options for government subsidies and donor support renders such an approach unfeasible.

More feasible options to meet the demand for housing will need to be explored. Among these could be approaches utilised in other countries, such as 'sites and services' schemes where a core house and some basic services are provided to a plot after which households can incrementally improve their dwellings over time. In Afghanistan, low-income housing for a basic dwelling of approximately 15,000 USD could be an option for low- and middle-income groups, if the government can make land available at suitable locations, and manage a fair and transparent distribution system in order to reach intended beneficiaries. There is potential to lower dwelling costs even more if a simpler base structure were constructed and incrementally expanded based on the financial capability of occupants. Housing finance will also require detailed examination as there is currently no effective mortgage market or housing micro-credit approaches in the country. Overall, the government needs to develop and adopt a 'pro-poor' housing policy and strategy to deal with these realities in a systematic manner.

TABLE 4.5: PROJECTED HOUSING DEMAND 2015-2025

	Urban dwellings			Annual housing demand 2015-2019	Annual housing demand 2020-2025
	2015	2020	2025		
Kabul	396,095	481,910	572,358	17,163	18,090
Regional Hubs	268,893	327,149	388,551	11,651	12,280
Trading and Transit Hubs	128,558	156,410	185,767	5,570	5,871
Provincial Centres	136,712	166,331	197,549	5,924	6,244
Urban Villages	32,209	39,187	46,542	1,396	1,471
TOTAL	962,467	1,170,988	1,390,767	41,704	43,956

NOTES: ESTIMATED ANNUAL URBAN POPULATION GROWTH 4% BETWEEN 2015 AND 2020, AND 3.5% BETWEEN 2020 AND 2025 (ASSUMING DECLINING FERTILITY. IN ADDITION THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED AND IN SOME CASES BE REPLACED.

TABLE 4.6: ANNUAL URBAN HOUSING DEMAND (2015-2020) OF NEWCOMERS BY INCOME STRATA

Income strata	Annual growth		Maximum housing expenditure per month	Current Housing Options
	# units	% total growth		
Very Low Income	14,263	34.2%	0-50 USD (2,850 AFN)	Squatting, sharing with families/friends
Low Income	18,099	43.4%	51-100 USD (2,851- 5,700 AFN)	Low quality, overcrowded and sub-standard dwelling in informal settlements
Middle Income	6,672	16.0%	101-250 USD (5,701-14,250 AFN)	Poor quality dwelling in consolidated informal settlements or informal land subdivisions
High Income	2,670	6.4%	>250 USD (>14,250 AFN)	Formal housing
TOTAL	**41,704**	**100%**		

4.6
WAYS FORWARD

- The vacant plots and low densities show that there is no shortage of urban land; the challenge is to develop this land at optimum densities, provide services, and make land affordable and accessible for the different income groups. Population growth can be accommodated without the need for spatial expansion for many years. Rather than selling municpal land (see Chapter Two), Municipalities and ARAZI should 'land bank' urban land with a view to releasing it for affordable housing and urban infrastructure.
- Given the scale of the challenge of providing adequate housing, a national policy response is urgently required. Improvements to the land and housing policy and regulatory framework are long overdue; immediate actions could include: (i) developing a National Urban Land and Housing Policy; and (ii) reviewing and endorsing the existing Informal Settlements Upgrading Policy that has remained in draft format for two years and has not yet been ratified by the Cabinet.
- As the new housing supply will continue to be insufficient to meet existing and future demand, apply a twin-track programmatic approach to solving the housing crisis in Afghan cities. One track involves settlement regularization to legalize and upgrade the majority of current informal settlements, and relocate informal settlements that are deemed to be occupying unsuitable locations (e.g hillsides, flood prone settlements, next incompatible uses etc.). The second is to develop affordable low cost land/ housing schemes including guided land subdivisions in suitable locations.
- In order to inform the design of new policy and programme interventions, more accurate data is required. Therefore, it is recommended to undertake an in-depth diagnosis of the state of the housing sector. The study should examine which key inputs (land, labour, finance, infrastructure, construction materials etc.) are constraining the effective functioning of the sector; and undertake more detailed analysis and projections of housing supply, demand and affordability. The study should also examine the rental housing market, with a view to understanding it better, promoting it, and increasing the rights and living conditions of renters.
- To address the enormous land area occupied by 'vacant plots' pragmatic action needs to be taken. Options include: (i) undertaking a detailed assessment to ascertain which areas of 'informally' subdivided land are viable and should be integrated into official plans, and if legal action should be taken to hold land grabbers to account; (ii) improving the tax regime (vacant plots are not currently taxed under safayi system) to promote more effective use of idle land; (iii) promote development in vacant plots to avoid further urban sprawl.
- New forms of effective spatial planning (such as municipal action planning) are needed to cope with the realities of rapid urbanisation in Afghanistan. Planning must be linked with finance and immediate interventions/actions to ensure plans are implemented. Planning should be aligned with broader enabling policies and a regulatory framework (land, settlement regularization-upgrading and housing), and underpinned by acceptance of different sequences of urban and housing development. It should identify in advance infrastructure needs and location and create incentives for densification and disincentives for urban sprawl development, and mix strategic urban development with local scale actions by private developers and communities.

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5. Total number of dwellings divided by the total residential area
6. Total number of dwellings divided by the total built-up area
7. Increase residential densities to 200 P/ha
8. 65% of all vacant plots developed for housing at current residential densities for each city (assuming 9 persons/dwelling)
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Incremental housing improvements in District 12, Herat

Across all indicators, the urban poor, especially women and children, are the most vulnerable to the impacts of a poor urban environment.

EVEN IN CITIES, COLLECTING WATER IS A DAILY CHORE FOR MANY YOUNG AFGHANS

CHAPTER 05 CITIES FOR LIFE: URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Key Messages

- Access to improved **sanitation** is low, with only 29% of urban dwellers having improved sanitation facilities. No Afghan city has a comprehensive sewerage system. Access to improved **water** sources is better at 71%, yet this figure masks severe issues of water quality due to polluted wells and groundwater contamination. Only 14% of dwellings have piped water access.
- While access to **electricity** is relatively high in cities (85%), it is irregular and unreliable. Almost all urban Afghans (99%) still rely on solid fuels for winter heating and cooking, which results in significant health problems, especially for women and children. Composite approaches to improving the diversity and consistency of the energy supply are required rather than a sole reliance on the electrical grid.
- **Solid waste** management is arguably one of the most pressing environmental issues in Afghan cities. Estimates indicate that only a fraction of solid waste is collected and disposed. Even the most conservative estimates show Kabul generates over 600,000 tons per year, which would require roughly 50% of the current municipality budget if waste was all adequately collected and disposed.
- **Agriculture** is a significant part of the urban environment. On average 34% of land use in the 34 capitals is agriculture. This equates to a huge total of 125,850 hectares of urban land: more than the total land area of Kabul city. In the majority of cities, agriculture, consisting of both large and small scale farming, is the largest land use and covers more land than residential dwellings.
- **Green space and forests** account for less than 2% of land area in all but three Afghan cities. Planning for green space on vacant plots and other undeveloped land would bring multiple benefits related to mental health, flood risk reduction, increased opportunities for physical activity and improved air quality.
- The **urban poor, especially women and children, are the most vulnerable** to the impacts of a poor urban environment. These groups often reside on the most hazardous land; are the most food insecure (34% of the urban population); drink from the most polluted water sources; use the most inadequate sanitation facilities; suffer the most from unaffordable and irregular energy supplies; and are the most vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters.
- Urban Afghanistan is highly susceptible to the effects of **natural disasters and climate change.** Over 500,000 urban residents live in a high seismic earthquake zones, and over 5.6 million are in medium risk zone.
- There is an interdependent relationship between cities and their **ecosystem services.** Regional planning to limit urban sprawl should be undertaken to conserve and promote these ecosystem services, including the conservation of freshwater sources and forests.

5.1
SERVICES: WATER, SANITATION, ENERGY, AND TRANSPORTATION

The access and availability of basic services and facilities in urban areas has a major impact on the quality of life of Afghan city dwellers. The manner in which these services are delivered and planned also has an impact on how the natural environment is degraded or maintained.

Water and sanitation

Improved water sources are defined as those that adequately protect water from external contamination. In Afghanistan's cities, improved water sources include: private and public pumps, private and public wells or piped water. Rates of access to improved water are relatively high in Afghanistan's cities. UNICEF's 2011 study found that 78% of the urban population has access to safe drinking water.[1] The NRVA 2011/12 estimated that 71% of urban households have access to an improved water source (significantly higher than rural areas at 40%).[2] The 2014 study of Kabul and the four Regional Hubs (Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar, and Jalalabad) found that 96% of those surveyed had access to improved sources of water.[3]

While there is broad coverage of 'improved' water sources throughout Afghan cities, it is important that these are regularly tested for water-borne diseases, chemicals and other pollutants. For example, a survey in Jalalabad in 2010 found dysentery, cholera and severe diarrhea were common, even in households with access to a piped water supply, with reported rates of affected households as high as 43%.[4] 'Unimproved' water sources in Afghan cities include unprotected wells, water tanks and surface water.

The time taken to collect water is also an important dimension of access, especially for women and children who, due to gendered division of domestic labour are often the ones most affected by the burden of having to collect water. Data from the five largest cities demonstrates that, on average, 62% of surveyed households had direct access to water in their compound, 21% took 15 minutes or less to collect water, and 10% took between 15 and 30 minutes (Figure 5.1).

Piped water is a crucial improved water source in cities. As noted in Chapter Two, the Afghan Urban Water, Sewerage and Sanitation Corporation (AUWSSC) is responsible to develop, operate and maintain urban piped water networks. AUWSSC has operational piped water systems in only half of the 34 provincial capitals (Table 5.1). Comparing AWUSSC connection data with the SoAC dwelling counts shows the percentage of households with piped water access ranges from 54% in Herat to 2% in Faiz Abad and Taluqan (and 17 cities without any connections). Key constraints to improving the piped water network include low capacity for cost-recovery, insufficient investment in maintenance and expansion of the existing network, limited recourse to enforce payments/user charges, illegal tapping of pipes, and the fact that many households have other sources (e.g. private wells) at no cost.

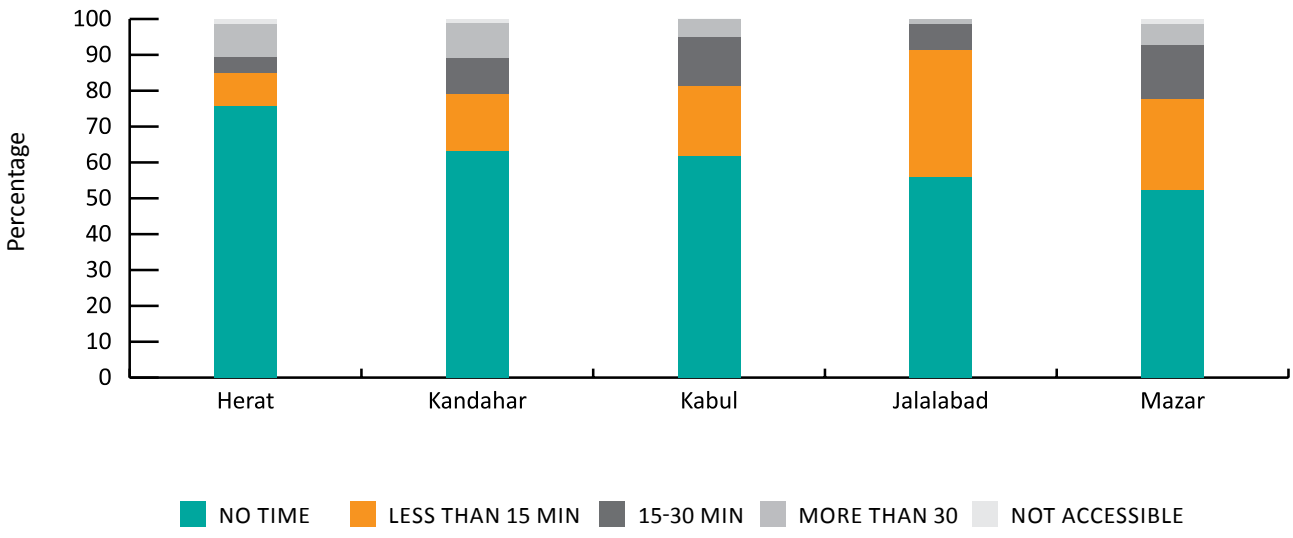
Improved sanitation is defined as facilities that hygienically separate human excreta from human contact. Access to improved sanitation in Afghanistan's cities is significantly lower than access to improved water sources. The 2011/12 NRVA found that only 29% of the urban population has an improved sanitation facility. Improved sanitation facilities include all flush toilets (whether to a sewerage system or septic tank), ventilated pit latrines and pit latrines with a concrete slab or floor. The situation varies significantly between provinces, but in general the most common form of improved sanitation in urban Afghanistan is pit latrines, with flush toilets being more common in the larger cities. (Figure 5.2).

Unimproved sanitation includes pit latrines without slabs, open pits and a lack of any facility/open defecation. According to the National Nutrition Survey, in 27 provinces, more than 50% of households have no access to improved sanitation/utilise unimproved facilities; however in six of those provinces, (Daikundi, Nuristan, Kapisa, Badghis, Paktika, Parwan) over 90%

Box 5.1:
What is the 'urban environment'?

The 'urban environment' refers to factors in the city which impact the current and future wellbeing of urban inhabitants and their environment. This accounts for issues that are serious considerations now – services such as water, energy, sanitation, transportation – as well as those longer-term concerns – such as climate change and coping with natural disasters.

FIGURE 5.1: TIME TAKEN TO COLLECT WATER IN THE FIVE LARGEST CITIES



SOURCE: SAMUEL HALL/PIN (2014)

TABLE 5.1: PIPED WATER COVERAGE IN CITIES THAT HAVE AUWSSC NETWORKS

City	Total number of AUWSSC connections	SoAC dwelling count	% of households with piped water access
Charikar	3,790	10,671	32%
Faiz Abad	194	10,605	2%
Gardez	1,181	7,849	14%
Ghazni	2,753	15,931	16%
Herat	54,090	89,790	54%
Jalalabad	9,776	39,586	22%
Kabul	45,936	396,095	10%
Kandahar	5,200	61,902	8%
Kunduz	8,419	29,877	25%
Mazar-i-Sharif	20,854	77,615	24%
Mehterlam	307	3,661	8%
Pul-i-Khumri	522	24,586	2%
Qala-i-Naw	2,358	7,125	30%
Qalat	163	5,462	3%
Sheberghan	927	19,511	4%
Taluqan	770	28,691	2%
Zaranj	1,640	17,878	8%

SOURCE: AUWSSC (2014); SOAC GIS

Box 5.2: Water woes

For many Afghans, access to clean drinking water, as well as water for cooking, cleaning and sanitation, is a huge challenge. Farida and her family live in a nice house in District 9, Loyawala in Kandahar where they moved after her husband retired from military service. Despite their comfortable home, Farida has to worry about water every day. The groundwater water level in Kandahar city is so low that the hand pump of their own well does not work – they have to use city power for the pump to work to fill their water reservoirs.

"We only have water every other day. As soon as it comes on, we turn on the pump to fill the buckets and tanks. Sometimes we get up in the middle of the night, as soon as the power comes back on, to make sure we have enough water for the coming days. Water is so precious; we cannot use it for sanitation. We collect rain water for that. Even the water from the well has to be boiled before we can drink it. Several times a year my children get sick because they drink the water." If they run out of water because of power cuts, Farida sends her youngest sons to fetch water from the common well a few streets down the road.

Just like in Farida's family, many children in Afghanistan support their mothers and families by collecting water. For Nasir Ahmad, 11 years, and his brother Makhan, 7 years, collecting water from the common well is a daily chore. Every morning, they get a wheelbarrow and canisters and walk through muddy streets or burning heat to get the daily water supply for their parents and 8 siblings. "My older brothers have to work, so my mother sends us every day. We like getting water, we meet our friends here and sometimes play football. But it is hard work, the canisters are very heavy. "

Nasir Ahmad and his brother Makhan collecting water in Kandahar

of households have no access to improved sanitation.

Moreover, no Afghan city has a comprehensive sewerage system; in 13 provinces[5] no households have a flush toilet connected to a sewage system, whilst in an additional 13 provinces[6] less than 1% of households have such a toilet.[7] Septic tanks are the norm with roadside drainage channels the most common surface-level system for discharging household waste.

Figure 5.2 shows that the sanitation situation is better in larger cities as on average, for households surveyed in Kabul and the regional hubs, 30% have a flush toilet, whilst over half (55%) have a traditional pit latrine. Herat has the highest prevalence of flush toilets with 40%; followed by Jalalabad (35%) and Mazar-i-Sharif (31%).

Energy

Whether from the electrical grid, solid fuels or renewable sources such as wind and solar – energy provision is another fundamental urban service consideration.[8] The major energy sources in Afghanistan include hydropower, natural gas and coal. Access to energy throughout the country has significantly increased over the past decade, particularly from solar and wind, although these are generally only prevalent in rural areas.

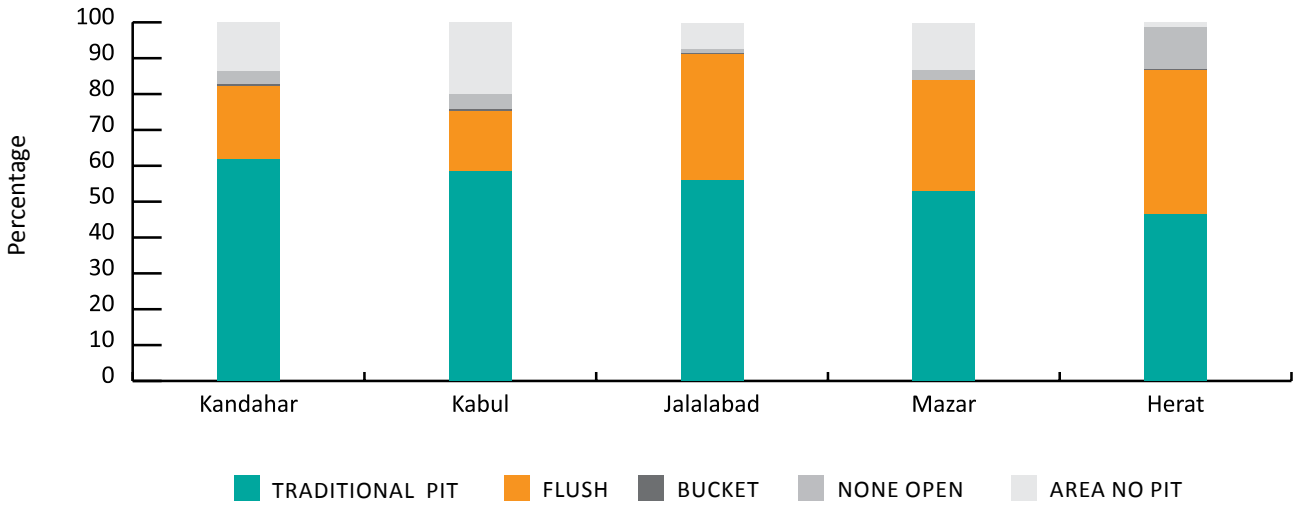
Outright access to electricity is relatively high in urban areas, with the 2011/12 NRVA reporting that 95% of urban households have access to some source of electricity.[9] However this figure masks the severe irregularity of most access, as the NRVA asked respondents whether they have had 'access any time within the last month', and did not measure the reliability of access. The electric grid is primarily an urban source, and has risen from 44% coverage in 2007/8 to 85% in 2011/12 (compared to access in rural areas of 5% and 9% respectively during the same time period). Solar power comprised only 4% of energy in urban areas in 2011/12 (compared with 29% in rural areas).

There is some household-level survey findings that support anecdotal evidence that access to the electrical grid is better in larger cities: 75% of households surveyed in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar, Herat and Jalalabad have access to the electrical grid. Of the larger cities, electrical grid coverage is highest in Mazar-i-Sharif (86%) and lowest in Jalalabad (63%).[10]

However, only an average of 38% of surveyed households had continuous electricity throughout the day, further suggesting that the supply of electricity is inconsistent for the majority of the grid. The situation is particularly challenging in Kandahar, with only 4% of households reporting uninterrupted daily access. In Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif roughly one-third of households reported having uninterrupted access (27% and 37% respectively) while Herat has the highest percentage with 67% of households and Kabul 56%.

Despite increased and relatively high electricity coverage, the NRVA study showed that virtually all urban households (99%) still rely on solid fuels, such as charcoal, wood and waste, for heating and to a lesser extent (32%) for cooking.[11] The use of household biomass fuel, such as wood and charcoal, results in substantial household exposure to air pollutants,

FIGURE 5.2: RELATIVE SHARE OF COMMON LATRINE TYPES IN THE FIVE LARGEST CITIES



SOURCE: SAMUEL HALL/PIN (2014)

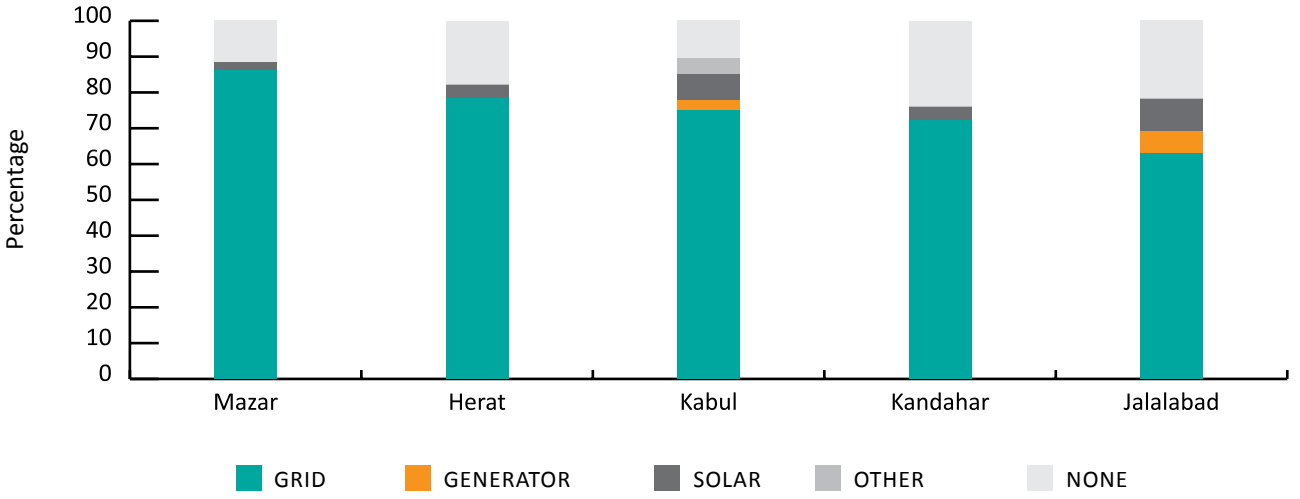
such as carbon monoxide and other small particles. This exposure is highest among poor women and young children as they are most often present during cooking. Negative health effects include (i) acute infections of the lower respiratory tract (pneumonia) in young children; and (ii) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema, in adult women who have cooked over unventilated solid fuel stoves for many years.[12] Reducing household reliance on solid fuels is thus a highly important consideration for urban public health. Improving access to safer sources of energy may require a composite approach utilising various renewable and/or decentralised sources, although as discussed in Chapter Three, large-scale and reliable electricity coverage remains important for industry and businesses.

Transportation

The transport sector is a fundamental element of how a city functions and the ability of inhabitants and goods to be moved in a safe and efficient manner. Key transportation considerations include: the relative share of transport modalities (such as personal vehicles, shared or public transport, non-motorised vehicles and even walking); road conditions and connectivity; traffic and pedestrian safety; and costs to individuals (affordability).

A significant proportion of the urban road network in Afghanistan is in a state of disrepair, severely constraining mobility.[13] In most Afghan cities, road traffic congestion is increasingly a problem particularly

FIGURE 5.3: SOURCE OF ELECTRICITY IN THE FIVE LARGEST CITIES



SOURCE: SAMUEL HALL/PIN, 2014

FIGURE 5.4: COMMON PUBLIC AND SHARED TRANSPORTATION MODALITIES IN AFGHAN CITIES

Shared taxis - mainly used for short trips within cities, but also for inter city travel	**Zarangs/three-wheelers**, common in Southern and Eastern regions	**Minibuses** on prescribed routes - privately owned, flexible pick-up/drop off	**Miliebus** - government owned with clear routes and drop off/pick up points
Average cost per journey 20 AFN	Average cost per journey 10 AFN	Average cost per journey 5-10 AFN	Average cost per journey 5-10 AFN

as car ownership rates have risen dramatically from a low base of 10 vehicles per 1,000 people in 2002 to 35 per 1,000 in 2012.[14] Increased traffic congestion also causes problems beyond mobility as it contributes to air pollution and adverse health impacts.

Whilst the area of urban land dedicated to roads is an important indicator of the functionality of the transportation sector, it is important to note that many urban Afghans are reliant on non motor vehicle based modes of transportation. Research conducted in the preparation of the Kabul Masterplan and Herat Masterplan demonstrated that 33% of commuters used walking as their primary mode of transportation in Kabul[15] and nearly 60% in Herat.[16] The research also showed that youth (aged 15-25) comprise almost 40% of total commuters and children (aged 6-14) almost 26%. Females over the age of 65 conversely were reported to not be making any trips.

Public and shared transportation as a viable means of transport is also an important consideration. Figure 5.4 gives an overview of dominant public and shared transport options in Afghan cities. While data is incomplete; indications from the research of the Kabul and Herat Masterplans suggest that existing systems of buses, minibuses and shared taxis is insufficient for the growing urban population.

As outlined in Chapter Two, considerable interventions have been undertaken by CDCs in recent years to upgrade tertiary roads (Figure 5.5). This work has greatly improved mobility in residential areas, as well as improved the environmental quality and provided safer and cleaner public spaces.

FIGURE 5.5: STREET UPGRADING IN MAZAR-I-SHARIF; BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

Collecting water from the public well, Herat

Box 5.3
Education and heath services and access in cities

The current and future wellbeing of urban residents, especially women and youth, is greatly impacted by their access to health and education services. As such, access to these services are important considerations for urban governance and spatial planning and as indicators of livable, sustainable cities.

Education

Data from the Ministry of Education provides a breakdown of the number of urban and rural schools and student populations. The definition of 'urban' used here may not directly correspond to the new municipality boundaries (see Chapter Two) but is helpful for understanding challenges of education services in urban areas. On average, there are a smaller number of schools servicing a larger population in urban areas – this could contribute to overcrowding and inadequate education facilities for the current and growing urban populations.

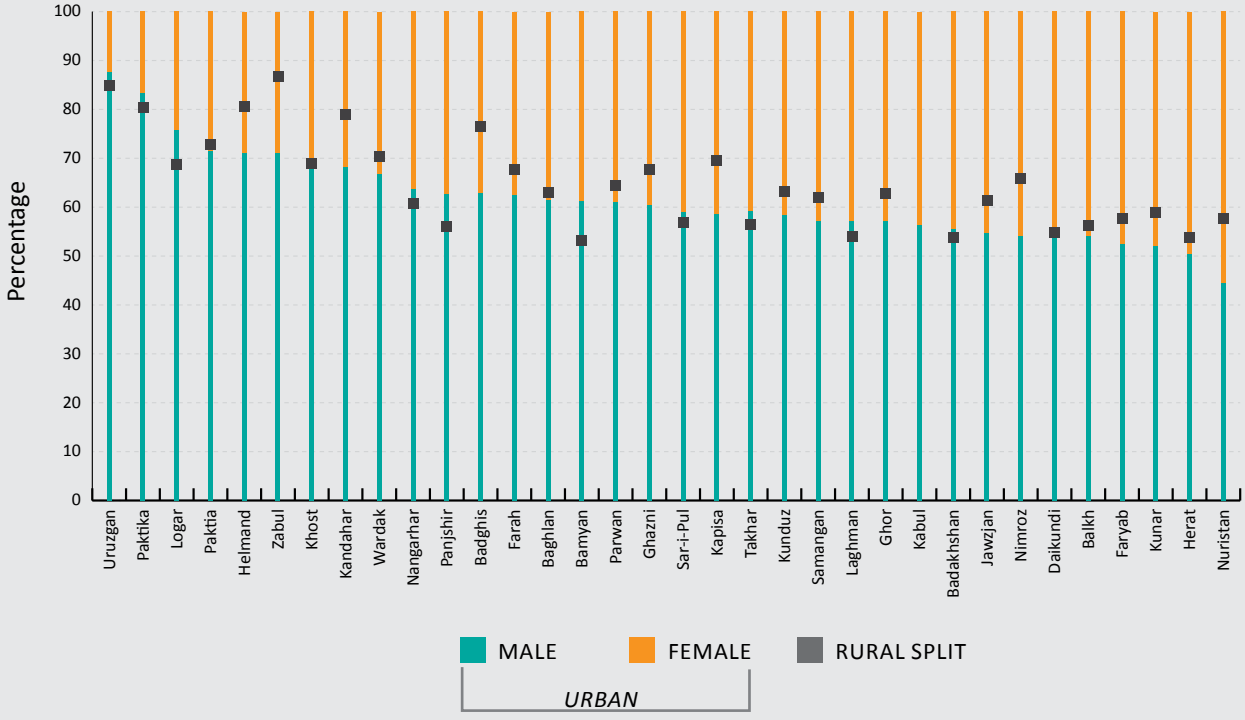
The spatial analysis found that on average 4% of urban land is dedicated to institutional uses (schools, hospitals, government and military facilities, etc.) in cities. Statistics from the Ministry of Education show that there are over 7,000 schools (half of all schools nationwide) that are without buildings, however this data is not disaggregated into rural and urban areas.

Generally students in urban areas are located within relatively short distances of schools, thus, unlike in rural areas, this does not seem to be a significant factor influencing rates of school enrollment and attendance. Instead it may be more important to examine the safety and accessibility of the routes to school as well as the suitability of buildings.

According to the Ministry of Education, in 2007 the overall gross enrollment[17] ratio at the primary level was estimated at 129.7% (157.9% for boys and 99.3% for girls), and the net enrollment ratio at 60.5% (73.6% for boys and 46.4% for girls).[18] It should be noted that: between 5% and 25% of enrolled students in each province were reported as 'permanently absent' in a 2007 survey.[19]

Examining rates of enrollment by gender reveals that while there is a slightly higher percentage of girls

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN SELECTED PROVINCES BY RURAL/URBAN LOCATION



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (2014)

attending urban schools (40.8%) than rural schools (38.3%) overall the difference is more dependent on the province (see graph). For example in Paktika province, the percentage of girls enrolled in urban schools is only 16.6%, less than the 19.64% enrolled in rural areas. On the other end of the spectrum, in Nooristan 55.45% of enrolled students in urban areas are female.

Health

Afghanistan's health sector is concentrated in the urban areas of the country; particularly the capital and regional hubs where secondary and tertiary hospitals are located and a network of primary health care facilities are based. A number of smaller cities, including provincial hubs and the smallest provincial capitals, have minimal health infrastructure and their populations face significant obstacles in accessing adequate health care. In general, urban populations are located relatively short distances to their nearest health facilities, and as such, the distance to a facility is not likely to be a significant obstacle for the vast majority of urban residents in accessing health care.

The physical location and spread/coverage area of health clinics, in particular primary health care providers, and their proximity to the populations they are intended to serve are important factors in planning and financing for health care in Afghanistan. Primary Health Care is delivered through a network of public, private and not for profit providers (NGOs), and a significant portion of the Government's own allocation for health is directed through NGO's, which are contracted to deliver the Basic Package of Health Services and Essential Package of Hospital Services.

Given the rapid urbanisation and population movement occurring within Afghanistan's cities, SoAC data on population density could be useful in planning new facility locations and re-directing and or rationalising existing facilities. In particular NGO health-care providers that are under contract and - it is assumed - intend to focus on under-served populations could benefit significantly from up to date data on population distribution.

Health facilities in Afghanistan

5.2
URBAN ENVIRONMENT LANDSCAPE

The urban environment landscape includes everything from naturally occurring green space, to built-up areas to cultural heritage sites – all of which are important for the mental health and physical wellbeing of city inhabitants. This landscape is degraded, conserved or enhanced through human interactions and land use.

Solid waste management in Afghan cities is one of the most significant issues, which can degrade both land and water in the urban environment landscape. Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive data for all provincial capitals on solid waste generation, what percentage of solid waste is collected and the percentage of that which is recycled or properly treated. Visual evidence suggests that current solid waste collection is inadequate for the current and growing Afghan urban populations. This is supported by city-specific information for Herat, Kabul and Jalalabad which shows that a significant proportion of waste is not systematically collected: nearly three-quarters in Kabul and half in Herat and Jalalabad.[20]

Uncollected and untreated solid waste has a major impact on the natural environment because untreated solid waste contaminates both land and water. Solid waste is usually the leading contributor to local flooding because it blocks local waterways and drainage.[21] In addition, in areas where solid waste is not collected frequently, the incidence of diarrhea can be twice as high and incidence of acute respiratory infections six times higher than in areas where collection is frequent.[22]

Solid waste management is costly and is typically one of the largest expenditures of a municipal operational budget. The World Bank has identified that the cost for collection in low-income countries is 20-50 USD/ton and the cost for sanitary landfill[23] is an additional 10-30 USD/ton (therefore total cost for adequate solid waste collection and disposal is between 30-80 USD/ton).[24]

Table 5.2 gives an overview of estimates of solid waste generation in the 34 cities. It assumes a solid waste generation of 0.22 tons per person, per year (based on a World Bank analysis), and multiplies this by number of people per dwelling (conservative estimate of 7.5, equating to 1.65 tons per dwelling per year), and the number of dwellings in each city, taken from the SoAC GIS analysis. This is the most conservative estimate, as it takes the lowest cost per ton, and smallest dwelling population size.

Even with these conservative figures, Kabul is estimated to generate 653,557 ton per year (1,790 ton per day). Collection and proper sanitary disposal of this quantity of solid waste would cost close to 20

Uncollected solid waste is a significant issue in all Afghan cities

Small scale recycling in Jalalabad

million USD per year, which equates to nearly 41% of the municipal revenue. The trends for the regional hubs are that solid waste management would require between 45-71% of municipal revenue. There is considerably more variation with Trading and Transit Hubs, Provincial Centres and Urban Villages. In some cases, such as Farah there is enough revenue that solid waste management would only account for 15% of revenue. In other cases, there is not enough revenue to cover solid waste management and as Table 5.2 shows, the percentage of municipal revenue which would be needed for solid waste management is well over 100%.

TABLE 5.2: ESTIMATED SOLID WASTE GENERATION AND COST FOR PROPER DISPOSAL

Typology	Cities	Number of dwellings	Estimate solid waste generation (tonnes/year)[1] (@ 1.65 tonnes per dwelling)	Estimated Solid Waste Management cost per year (USD) (@ 30USD per ton)	% Municipal revenue (average 2011-2013)
Capital City	Kabul	396,095	653,557	$19,606,703	41%
Regional Hub	Herat	89,790	148,154	$4,444,605	45%
	Mazar-i-Sharif	77,615	128,065	$3,841,943	60%
	Kandahar	61,902	102,138	$3,064,149	71%
	Jalalabad	39,586	65,317	$1,959,507	59%
Trading and Transit Hubs	Lashkar Gah	30,709	50,670	$1,520,096	63%
	Kunduz	29,877	49,297	$1,478,912	152%
	Taluqan	28,691	47,340	$1,420,205	248%
	Pul-i-Khumri	24,586	40,567	$1,217,007	135%
	Sheberghan	19,511	32,193	$965,795	229%
	Zaranj	17,878	29,499	$884,961	219%
	Maimana	16,560	27,324	$819,720	225%
	Ghazni	15,931	26,286	$788,585	72%
Provincial Centres	Khost	11,787	19,449	$583,457	46%
	Charikar	10,671	17,607	$528,215	145%
	Faiz Abad	10,605	17,498	$524,948	147%
	Tarinkot	7,956	13,127	$393,822	300%
	Gardez	7,849	12,951	$388,526	58%
	Qala-i-Naw	7,125	11,756	$352,688	161%
	Aybak	6,983	11,522	$345,659	34%
	Asad Abad	6,350	10,478	$314,325	86%
	Sar-i-Pul	5,675	9,364	$280,913	53%
	Qalat	5,462	9,012	$270,369	44%
	Farah	5,299	8,743	$262,301	15%
	Bamyan	4,435	7,318	$219,533	52%
	Mehterlam	3,661	6,041	$181,220	22%
	Ferozkoh	3,474	5,732	$171,963	50%
Urban Villages	Mahmood Raqi	5,610	9,257	$277,695	139%
	Bazarak	2,747	4,533	$135,977	106%
	Pul-i-Alam	2,546	4,201	$126,027	20%
	Nili	1,994	3,290	$98,703	73%
	Sharan	1,739	2,869	$86,081	20%
	Maidan Shahr	1,585	2,615	$78,458	8%
	Paroon	183	302	$9,059	-

SOURCE: SoAC GIS

Given the enormous cost of adequate solid waste management relative to the available municipal budgets, waste reduction at source and alternative approaches are needed. Besides sanitary landfills, alternative options for waste disposal are recycling and composting. Composting can help to reduce waste in landfills while providing potentially valuable organic material that the city can use in the development and maintenance of green space. Although composting efforts have been piloted in Afghan cities,[25] there has been very limited action in this sphere.

In addition to concerns about the impact of inadequate waste management on the urban environment, chemicals, industrial pollution and poor sanitation systems can also pollute urban land and water resources. With such a high proportion of urban Afghans relying on groundwater accessed via wells and pumps, the contamination of such sources could have extremely severe and far-reaching negative effects on health. For example, a sampling of the drinking water in Jalalabad, from 2010, demonstrated multiple types of bacterial, chemical and raw sewage contamination in different wells throughout the city.[26]

Figure 5.6 shows the types of land uses found within one kilometer of the Helmand River, the longest river in Afghanistan, which also cuts through the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah.

Box 5.4:
Cleaner cities for a healthier life: Access to solid waste collection

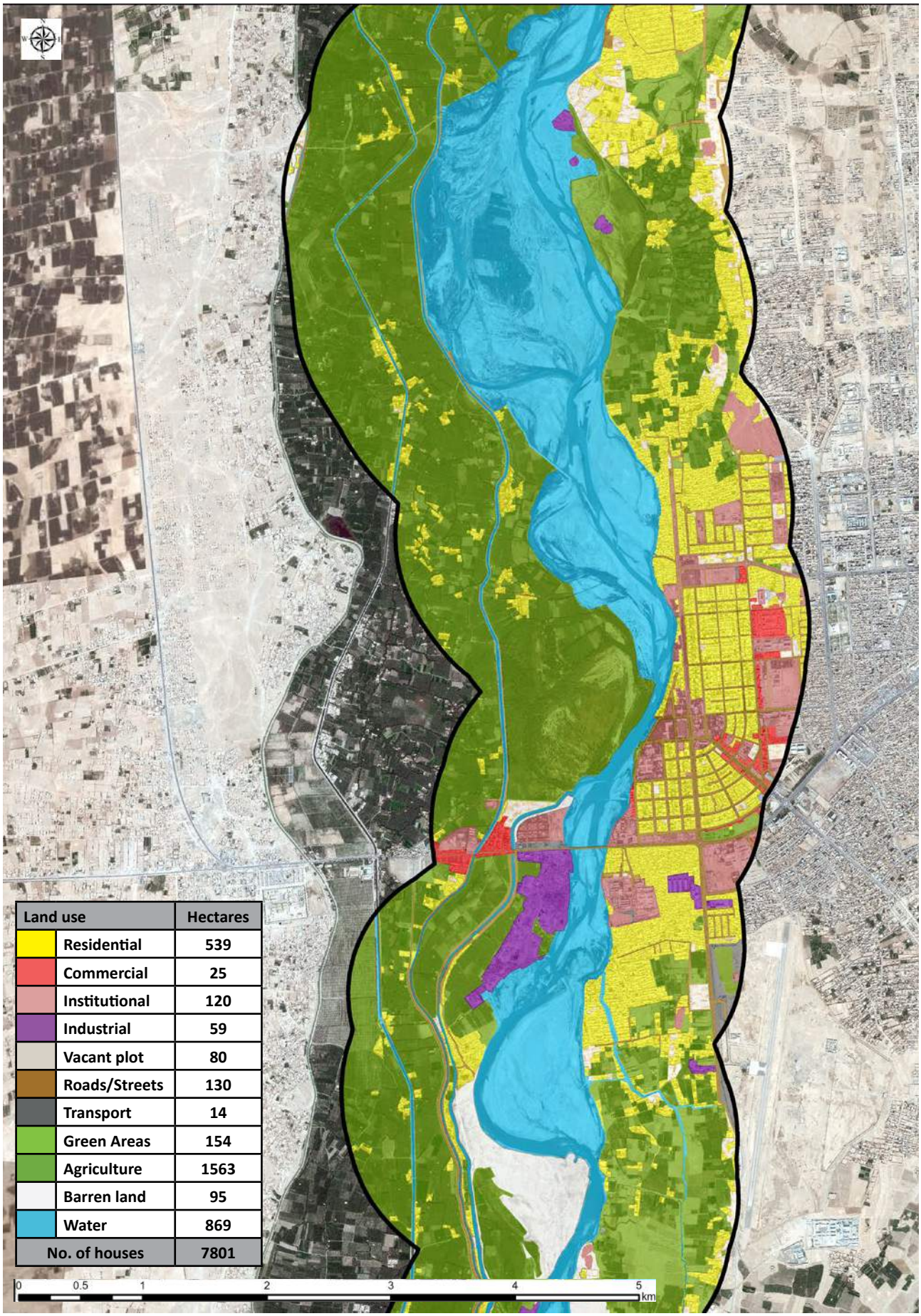
Noorgul handing over her waste to the garbage collector

Mrs. Noorgul is a 55-year-old Mazari woman living in District 5, GA 11 of Mazar-i-Sharif. Every morning she used to open her house's gate and see and smell a lot of garbage just in front of her house. Noorgul says "My children could not go out to play, they used to get sick" she continues "none of our relatives liked to come and visit our home because it was not so desirable to walk in such a dirty and smelly road to my house".

Noorgul and her neighbors complained about these conditions to the municipality, but it did not have sufficient budget to help them. So they decided to take action themselves. After organizing into a Community Development Council (CDC), the roads in front of their houses were paved and cleaned. Then Noorgul and other women in her neighborhood agreed that something had to be done about the huge amount of waste in front of their houses. So they started a program to deal with the garbage and solid waste.

Using funds which they collected from neighbours, they hired a garbage collector who now comes daily to their neighborhood to collect the garbage and take it to a joint collection site. For just a small monthly fee, their neighbourhood is now clean and their children enjoy playing football or cricket in the streets.

FIGURE 5.6. LASHKAR GAH - LAND USE WITHIN 1 KM OF THE HELMAND RIVER



SOURCE: SoAC GIS; © DIGITALGLOBE, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The predominant land use within this zone is agriculture, as the river provides necessary irrigation water in the arid climate. However, agriculture at this scale in proximity to a source of fresh water can also have negative impact, through contamination with fertilizers and other chemicals.

In addition, there are over 7,000 households in this area with the potential for negative impacts of the solid waste and sanitation from these households. Finally, there are 94 hectares of industrial land in this area that, if not properly managed, can contribute to heavy metal and chemical contamination of the Helmand River. On the positive side, there are over 150 hectares of green areas in this zone and an additional 90 hectares of barren land that could be converted to green space to further support the health of this important freshwater ecosystem.

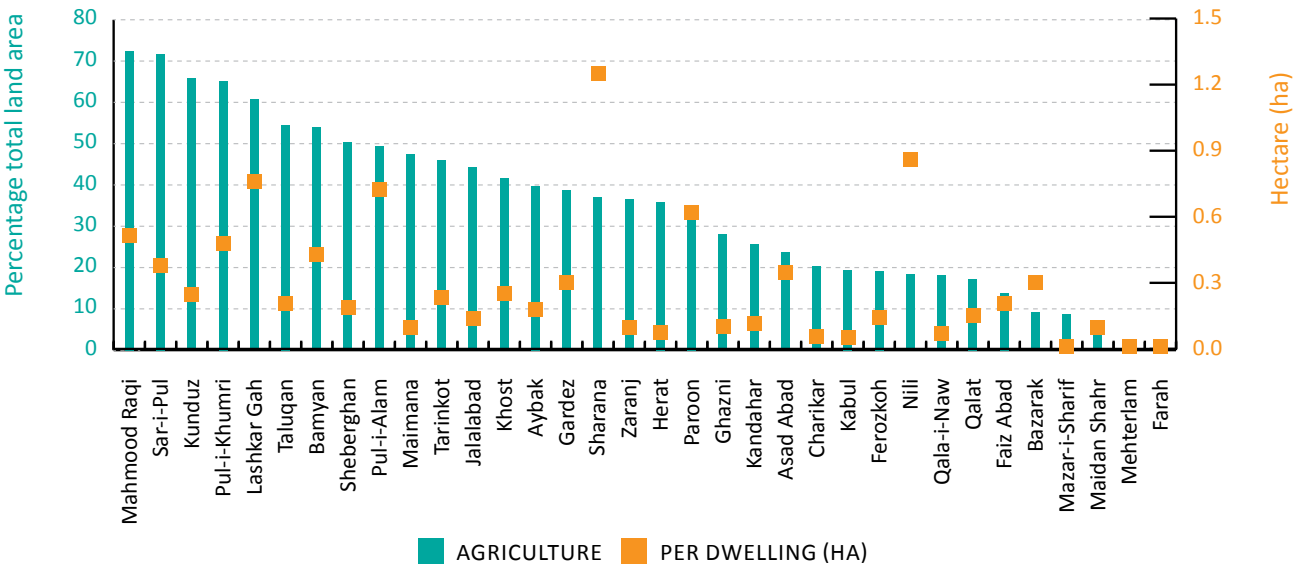
Air quality is another major problem in Afghanistan's cities, especially Kabul. A study of Kabul air quality was carried out in 2005/6 by UNEP and revealed that 60% of the population is exposed to elevated concentrations of particulate matter PM10 (fine anthropogenic dust), nitrous oxides (NOx) and sulphur dioxide (SO2).[27] The World Health Organization data from 2009 contains PM10 and PM2.5 levels in both Kabul (PM10: 260; PM2.5: 86) and Mazar-i-Sharif (PM10: 334; PM2.5: 68), but lacks data on other cities. These levels are both well above regional averages and considered significantly over the WHO recommended targets.

Unfortunately updated data and data for other urban areas is not available. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are many unsafe contributions to air quality in Afghanistan including leaded fuels and burning of waste, plastics and rubber. These have the potential for major negative health impacts such as asthma, pulmonary diseases and cancers. There are mitigating measures that can be put in place such as the regulation of fuels, improved traffic management to reduce congestion and increasing trees and green space in urban areas, however, an important first step is accurate data collection on particulate matter concentration in the air in all Afghan cities. Air pollution is probably of greater concern in the larger cities than the smaller provincial capitals due to lower population densities and lower numbers of motor vehicles, however all cities would benefit from planning for green space as cities expand and populations grow.

Green spaces, parks, rivers, agricultural lands and forests all exist within and beyond municipal boundaries and have important implications for recreation, air quality, reducing the impacts of natural disasters such as flooding, and food supply/security. Green spaces within cities can also act as important corridors for biodiversity and natural habitats for birds, small mammals and plant species. Research has also shown that there are psychological benefits to living in areas with more green space – significantly less mental distress and higher life satisfaction.[28]

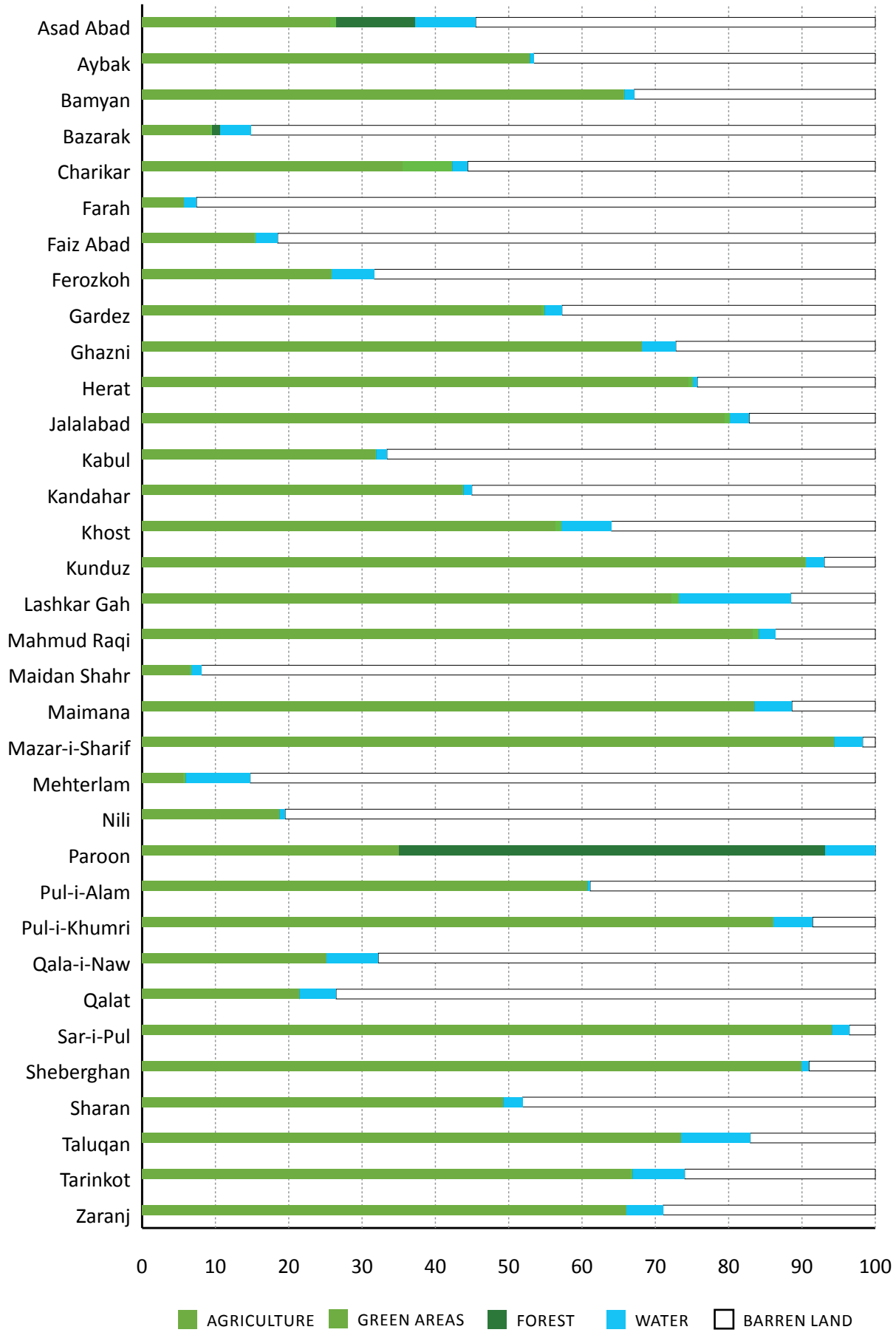
In Afghan cities, there are 'green spaces' within the built-up area which consist of manicured parks and gardens, tree-lined corridors and sports fields. On average they account for a very small percentage of

FIGURE 5.7: AGRICULTURE IN 34 CITIES; % TOTAL LAND AREA AND HECTARES PER DWELLING



SOURCE: SoAC GIS

FIGURE 5.8: NON-BUILT-UP LAND USE IN THE 34 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS



SOURCE: SoAC GIS

land area (<1%) (Figure 5.8). Charikar has the largest percentage (4%), whilst 29 of the provincial capitals have no (0%) green space. Many Afghan cities also have non-built up green areas within the municipal boundaries, as well as agriculture and forests. Forests do not account for a significant proportion of land use in Afghan cities with two exceptions: Parooan has 54% forested area and Asad Abad has 10%. The World Health Organization recommends at least 9 square meters of green space per person or 90 hectares per 100,000 people. The majority of non-built up green space in the 34 provincial capitals includes agriculture. When agriculture is excluded the amount of green space per capita falls well below the recommended standard.

Another important element of the Afghan urban environment landscape is freshwater ecosystems. All 34 cities have several hectares of water within the municipal boundaries. The majority of major cities are located directly on rivers, including major waterways such as the Helmand River which passes through the city of Lashkar Gah and smaller waterways such as those that pass through Herat.

Agriculture is a major feature of the environment of most of the 34 Provincial Capitals, even in Kabul and the Regional Hubs. On average, agriculture comprises between 34% of the total land area of cities. Mahmood Raqi and Sar-i-Pul have the highest percentage of agricultural land (72%), and Farah the smallest (2%) (Figure 5.7). Although this partly reflects the discrepancies in municipal boundaries (see Chapter Two), and therefore comparisons are difficult, the analysis shows that agriculture is a significant element of the urban landscape in almost all of the provincial capitals.

The ratio of agricultural land per dwelling for each city is indicative of the relative significance of agriculture in a city's economy. The findings show that, as expected, Kabul has the lowest ratio, with an average of only 500m^2 of agricultural land per dwelling, whereas Asad Abad averages 3,600 m^2 of agricultural land per dwelling (Figure 5.7).

Although agriculture is not traditionally considered green space by environmental definitions, it is a significant component of the Afghan urban environment landscape. Another significant element of the landscape is barren land which accounts for a sizeable proportion of land in some cities; on average 30% and as high as 84% (Bazarak). Barren lands, consisting of both mountain and dryland ecosystems, are so prevalent they are second only to agriculture as the highest average land use across Afghan cities.

The low rates of green space reflect the informal and unplanned nature of Afghanistan's urbanisation to date. Informal development has resulted in a lack of protection of public spaces and natural ecosystems, and limited promotion and development of parks and the natural environment. However the land occupied by vacant plots could provide opportunities to increase green space. For example, in cities where barren land or vacant plots are alongside bodies of water, this space could potentially be converted into parks and/or natural floodplains that would both provide green space and improve resilience to natural disasters in the case of flooding, as well as also having biodiversity benefits for local flora and fauna.

Cultural heritage sites form another important aspect of the urban landscape and are crucial for their historical, cultural and religious significance. A total of 624 hectares of urban land was classified as shrines or heritage sites with Kabul, Kunduz, Mazar-i-Sharif and Bamyan having the largest shares. While there is widespread awareness of the importance of these sites, there is largely no systematic planning or management by municipalities to conserve and promote these sites for tourism. One notable exception is the city of Bamyan which includes one of Afghanistan's two World Heritage sites, the Bamyan Buddhas. UNESCO has worked with the city to produce a cultural management plan outlining the site locations, detailed assessment of sites and implementation plan for proper management and conservation.

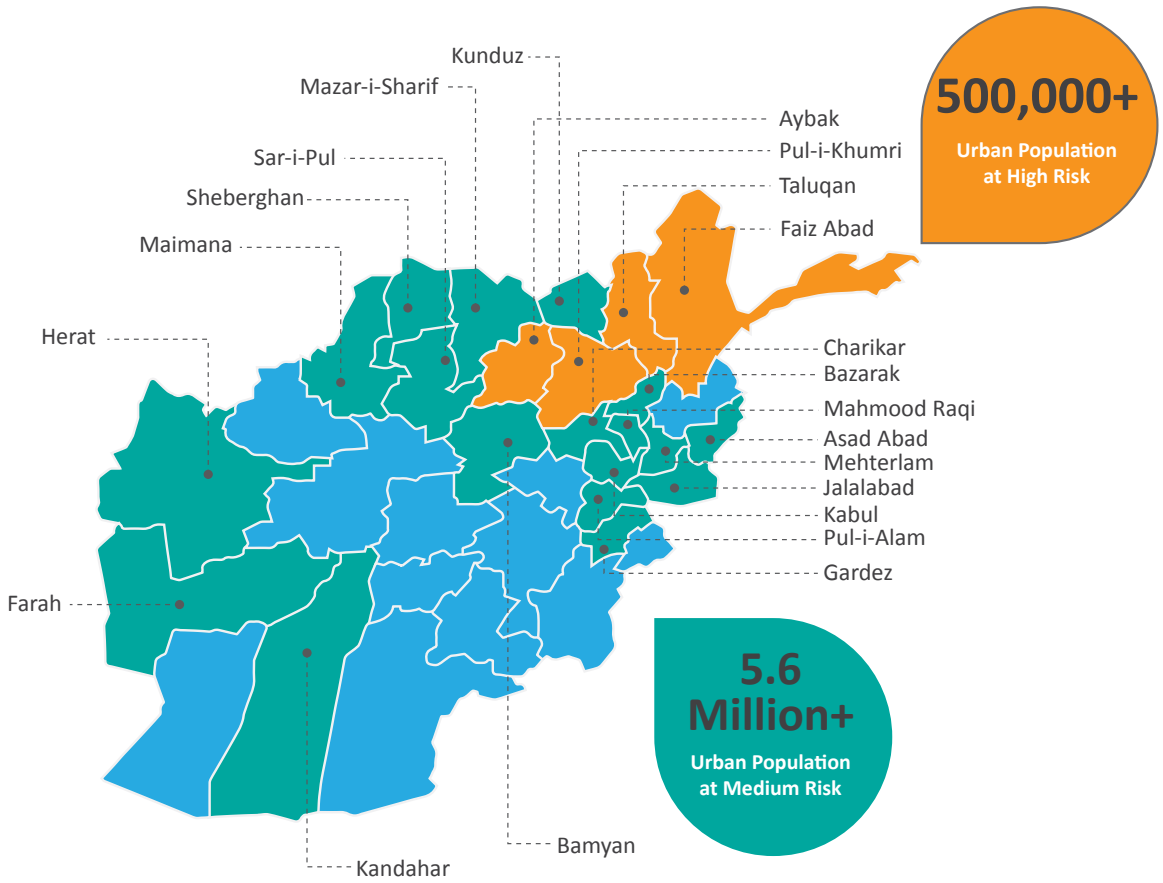
The Bamyan Buddhas, situated in Bamyan city are a UNESCO World Heritage Site

5.3
NATURAL DISASTERS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The diversity of Afghanistan's geography and climate results in diverse risks from natural disasters and future risks as a result of climate change. Currently Afghan cities face a variety of threats from flood, drought, earthquakes and intense heat. Due to the concentration of people, infrastructure, and industry combined with inadequate disaster risk reduction (DRR) and mitigation measures, urban areas tend to suffer greater fatalities and economic losses from natural disasters than rural areas. Not all cities and provinces are equally at risk, thus DRR plans need to be tailored to the local context. According to the National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) for Afghanistan from 2010, 16 provinces have a high risk of drought and 10 provinces have a high risk of flooding.[29]

Earthquakes pose one of the highest disaster risks to Afghanistan's cities (Figure 5.9). Afghanistan lies on two main fault lines that have the potential to rupture and inflict widespread damage. Four of the 34 cities are located in high-seismic zones (Faiz Abad, Taluqan, Pul-i-Khumri, and Aybak) and 18 are located in medium-seismic zones, including the capital Kabul (Figure 4.9). Over 500,000 urban residents are at high risk, and over 5.6 million at medium risk. Lack of building standards, compliance, and enforcement of regulations mean the majority of buildings will not

FIGURE 5.9 URBAN POPULATION IN EARTHQUAKE RISK ZONES



SOURCE: SoAC GIS

withstand even a moderate earthquake.

The impacts of natural disasters are determined by a combination of the severity of the hazard and the vulnerability of people and the economy. Vulnerability is directly related to poverty, poor infrastructure and unstable economic situations – by the standards of which, Afghan cities have significant vulnerabilities. Increasing urbanisation (rural-urban migration, displacement, and natural population growth in cities) increase the concentration of people in medium/high risk areas.

Chapter Four explores the high proportion of irregular housing in all Afghan cities, predominantly located in informal settlements, many on vulnerable ground and/or in unsuitable locations, such as steep hillsides. These areas are particularly vulnerable to earthquakes, whilst settlements on low-lying areas and floodplains are vulnerable to flooding. As is the case in most countries, it is the urban poor that are particularly vulnerable to natural hazards due to typical settlement patterns, temporary/low quality dwellings, limited access to basic and emergency services, and a general lack of economic resilience.

The predicament of the urban poor in Afghanistan also compounds vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Besides increasing the severity and frequency of natural disasters, climate change could also have adverse impacts on the urban food and water supply. Moreover, as with natural disasters, the urban poor with a reduced range of coping mechanisms and a higher cost of living than their rural counterparts often have limited capacity to prepare for and recover from both extreme weather events and longer term impacts of climate change.[30]

Reducing vulnerability and building resiliency of cities to cope with both small and large scale natural events is vital for sustainable urban growth. In order for Afghan cities to appropriately plan and improve resiliency, a comprehensive understanding of urban risks and vulnerabilities is crucial.[31]

Climate change modeling and scenarios are used to understand the potential temperature and precipitation changes that a country can expect to face. Recent climate change models for Afghanistan assess the potential for change using a range of 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' scenarios and found that there is projected to be an increase of temperature in all scenarios ranges from a 2.5°C increase to a 7°C increase by the end of the century. Regarding precipitation, the model projections for the mean of Afghanistan show only negligible or no changes.[32]

Figure 5.10 shows the difference between the mean annual temperatures in the period from 2021-2050 compared to the base period of 1986-2006. All models project that all regions of Afghanistan will face an increase of temperature of at least 1.1°C by 2050. However there are regional variations as well differences between lowlands and mountainous areas with the higher altitude areas forecasted for a higher increase of temperature. Cities that fall into the areas projected to see the highest increases in temperature include the large cities of Pul-i-Khumri, Taluqan and Aybak.

The temperature increase in Afghanistan will impact the ecosystems, agriculture, socio-economy and livelihoods. The distinct warming especially in the mountainous areas of the Central Highlands and the Hindukush will most likely lead to fundamental changes of the sensitive mountain ecosystems, already in the near to mid future. The particular impacts are difficult to foresee and there is a strong

Urban sprawl of Afghan cities is having serious negative environmental consequences

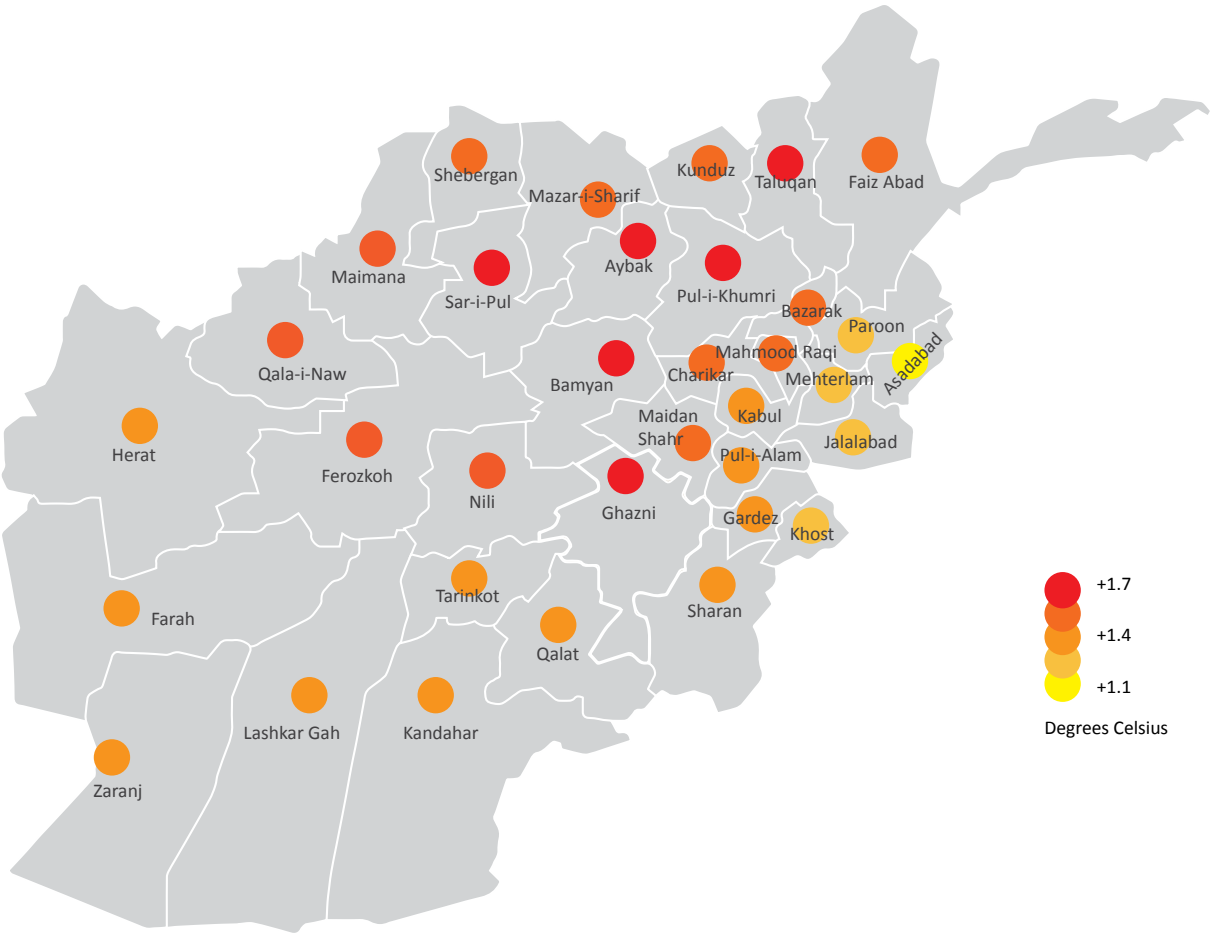
need for further scientific research, with a focus on impact modelling and adaptation.

Specific climate change impacts relevant to Afghan cities include:[33]

- Increased scarcity of water resources from extended droughts, and sandstorms in dryland cities. Relevant for Kandahar and Jalalabad;
- In-land and high altitude cities will be affected primarily by changing patterns of precipitation, potentially resulting in minor flooding. Relevant for Ghazni and Bamyan;
- Extreme, intense rain events resulting in severe flooding, road washouts and landslides as well as increased risk of vector-borne diseases. Relevant for Sheberghan, Sar-i-Pul, Mazar-i Sharif;
- Heatwave/'heat-islands' in urban areas, as cities are more affected by very high temperatures than rural areas due to the increased impermeable surfaces, thermal characteristics of the built-up environment and the concentration of human activity. Relevant for Herat and Mazar-i Sharif;
- Worsening air quality due to air pollutants with volatile compounds reacting to increasing temperatures. Relevant for Kabul, and other major cities.

The frequency of natural disasters such as landslides, avalanches and floods and the regular occurrence of agricultural droughts and fluctuations in the food supply demonstrate that Afghanistan faces significant challenges in adapting to current climatic conditions. The impacts of future climate change coupled with the booming urban population will likely compound vulnerability and further undermine the resilience of Afghan cities. Climate change adaptation therefore must underpin the planning of future urban development. Such planning should be based on research and adequate data to allow policy makers to plan appropriately.

FIGURE 5.10: PROJECTED DIFFERENCE OF MEAN ANNUAL TEMPERATURE BETWEEN THE PERIOD 2021-2050 AND THE BASE PERIOD (1985-2006)



SOURCE: UNEP (2015)

5.4
CITY REGIONS: CITIES AND ECOSYSTEMS

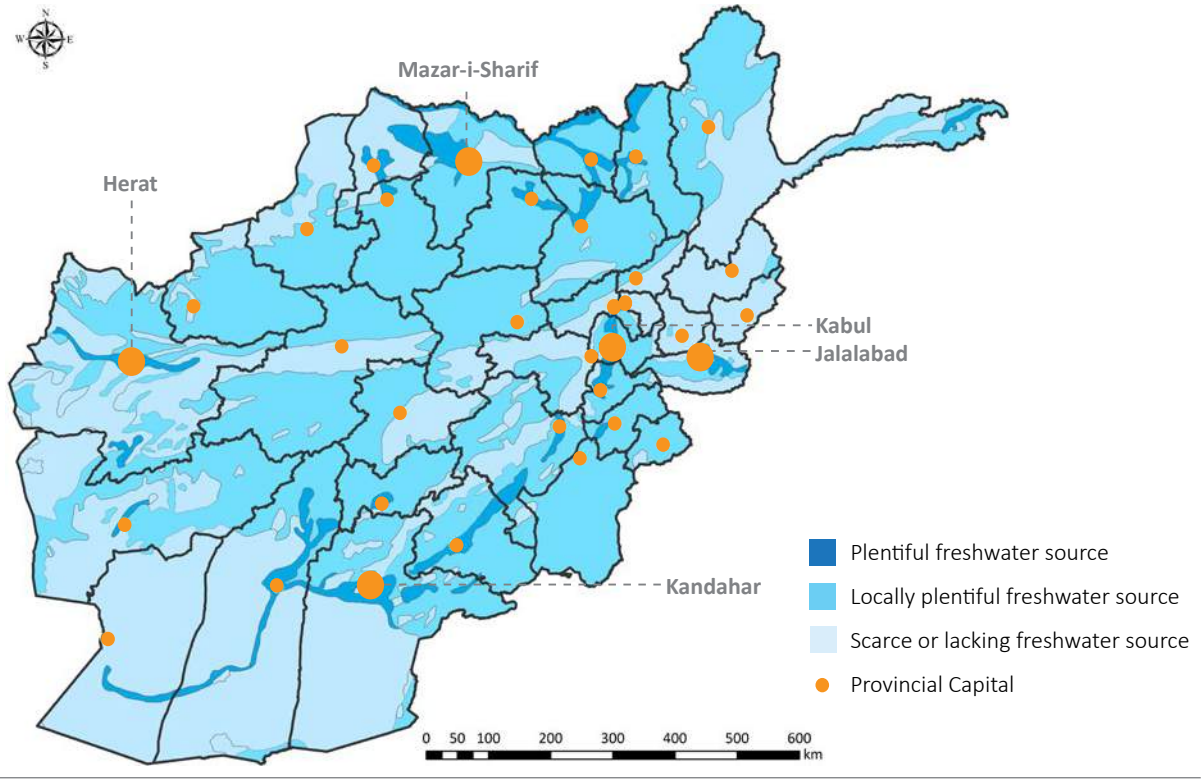
Afghan cities have complex relationships with the ecosystems that underpin them. The ecosystems found in cities are often connected to larger regions outside their administrative or functional boundaries, as in the case with freshwater ecosystems that are consequently important sources for both agricultural production and as a source of drinking water for city inhabitants.

Green spaces in built-up areas can contribute to the functioning of ecosystems in and around cities by acting as important corridors for biodiversity and natural habitats for bird, small mammal and plant species. However ecosystems are not confined by municipal boundaries rather the forests, mountains, agricultural lands and drylands in the larger region have an impact on the urban environment and its inhabitants. For example with 99% of urban Afghans relying on solid fuels (i.e. charcoal and fuelwood) for heating and minimal forests within municipal boundaries, urban Afghans are heavily reliant on the forests and dry brush in the surrounding region.

Ecosystem services are defined as the benefits people obtain from ecosystems, including (i) Provisioning services: fuel, food and water; (ii) Regulating services: flood control, carbon sequestration and purification of air; (iii) Cultural services: spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; and (iv) Supporting services: nutrient cycling and soil formation.

In addition to energy, city-region connections have implications for transportation and connectivity of people, food and goods between urban centers. Agricultural land in and around the city has major

FIGURE 5.12: GROUNDWATER RESERVES IN AFGHANISTAN AND 34 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS



SOURCE: SOAC GIS; BASED ON USGS AFGHANISTAN

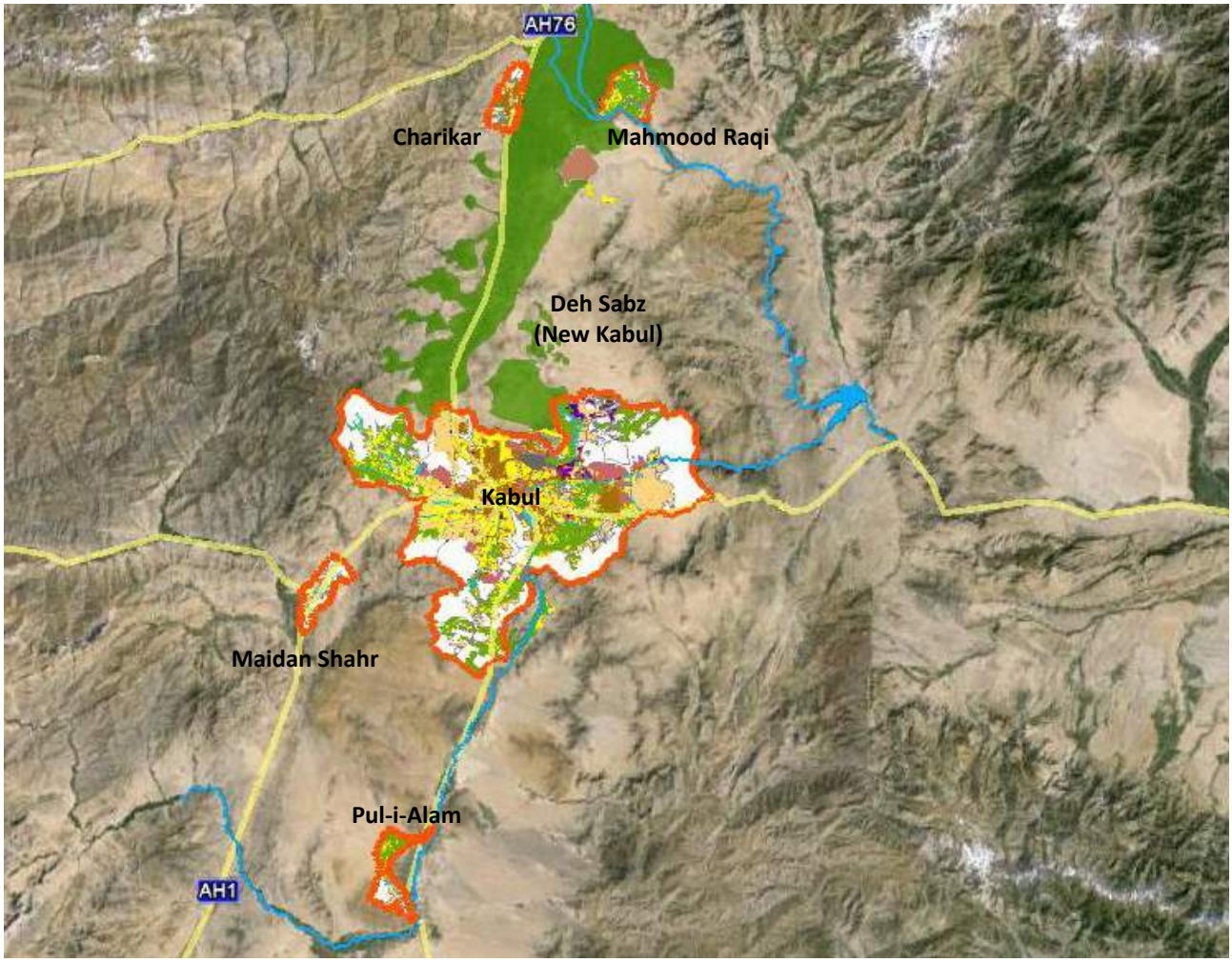
linkages to food security and the urban economy. In some cases, such as Jalalabad, there is significant agricultural land within the city boundaries (44% of total urban land), Kabul also contains significant agricultural land (19% of total land) however the majority of agricultural land is still found outside of city boundaries. An assessment of land uses and ecosystems surrounding cities is thus important for understanding the full picture of how Afghan cities function.

A recent study noted the extensive problem of food security in the five major cities of Kabul, Mazar, Kandahar, Herat, and Jalalabad, where over 90% of survey respondents were classified as food insecure.[34] Improving food security of city residents will require solutions from both inside and beyond the boundaries of the city. The NRVA 2011/12 found that 34% of urban households were food insecure (in terms of calorie deficiency), notably higher than in rural areas (29%).

Besides food security and agriculture, water security and continual access to freshwater sources is an issue that cannot be considered in the confines of city boundaries. Freshwater ecosystems themselves cannot be considered in isolation, rather they must be examined in the context of surrounding land uses; such as forests and agricultural lands.

Afghanistan has several major rivers including the Kabul, Helmand, Murghab and Abu Darya rivers; the 34 cities have over 11,500 hectares of water within municipal boundaries, although this accounts for only 3% of land use on average. Afghanistan has around 2,775 cubic meters of water resources per capita per year, which is above the recommended 1,700 cubic meters per capita, however water is not evenly distributed across the country, with some northern regions only having access to 676 cubic meters per capita.[35] The lack of infrastructure for water storage and the aging infrastructure of the 12 existing reservoirs are also causes of concerns with regard to water security. With competing demands from agricultural uses and a growing population coupled with a potentially contracting supply through decreased rainfall and snow melt, the issue of securing water for urban Afghans will likely only become more challenging in future years.

FIGURE 5.11: CITY REGION AROUND KABUL



SOURCE: SoAC GIS; GOOGLE EARTH

5.5
WAYS FORWARD

- In order to improve access of water, there is a need for a comprehensive assessment of water resources, household demand and dwelling information, and regular monitoring for water quality.
- Sustainable and effective sanitation solutions need both improved infrastructure at the municipal level and household level interventions to improve health and reduce negative environment impacts.
- Develop plans to upgrade public transportation networks, improve traffic management and improve pedestrian safety through improving roads and sidewalks. It is also important to ensure that initiatives recognize the need for safe and affordable transportation options for women and youth.
- There is an urgent need for sustainable solid waste collection and disposal to reduce pollution and improve health. Proper data collection is needed to assess the current situation and budgeting for systematic solid waste collection in municipal finance as well as the promotion of recycling and alternative, local solutions.
- Capitalise on the relatively late urban transition and plan for future growth that accommodates green spaces which can have multiple benefits in terms of increasing resilience to natural disasters, health benefits for citizens and reducing pollution. The large amount of agricultural land will also need to be considered in the expansion of built-up land use to accomodate the residential, economic and nutrition needs of the urban populations.
- Promote the protection of cultural heritage sites and explore examples of environmentally-friendly and culturally appropriate building practices and conservation techniques.
- In order to plan for safe and sustainable cities, a comprehensive assessment of the natural disaster and climate change risks and vulnerabilities for individual Afghan cities is necessary to increase future resiliency in the most susceptible areas. Undertake mitigation efforts, such as green spaces to reduce flooding along urban river basins, and improve (seismic) building codes and their enforcement, to reduce negative impacts in the future.
- Strategic, comprehensive urban planning, which takes into account cities and surrounding regions, is needed to promote sustainable growth of cities that upgrades rather than degrades urban and rural ecosystems and tackles food security and water security for the growing urban population.
- Improve coordination between municipalities responsible for urban governance and the agencies responsible for environment (NEPA), agriculture (MAIL) and water supply (Ministry of Energy and Water) to increase food and water security as well as the conservation of natural resources.

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End of the school day in Mazar-i-Sharif

ANNEX 1 - METHODOLOGY

This annex aims to give an overview of the SoAC methodology to make explicit the approach, scope and limitations. The annex is structured around the four main data sources utilised, in order of importance:

1. Data extraction from recent high resolution satellite images;
2. Field surveys and verification;
3. Workshops with national and local stakeholders (e.g. City Workshops; trainings);
4. Secondary data (e.g. Official databases and reports, academic literature; programme evaluations and reports, sector and city-level studies, etc.).

Overall, the first three data sources were utilised in conjunction with each other to arrive at the final 'SoAC dataset' for land and dwellings. This data is presented in Volume Two. Secondary data was utilised in order to develop the thematic chapters in Volume One. This situates the SoAC dataset in a broader context, including linking it to previous studies, and developing recommendations and ways forward.

The selected methodology enables a suitably nuanced overview of the 'state of Afghan cities'. It not only developed a reliable and comparable dataset for all 34 cities but also situated this within existing knowledge and data in order to inform policy and planning decision-making.

A1.1 Data extraction from recent satellite images

The land use and dwelling counts presented in this report are largely based on the visual interpretation of recent very high resolution satellite images (Quickbird, GeoEye, WorldView-2 with a spatial resolution of equal to, or more than 61 cm). The interpretation is simple, fast and affordable and the accuracy sufficient for the purpose of developing land use maps and dwelling counts to support urban planning and land management strategies and programmes.

The latest available image for each city was purchased from an international supplier (Table A.1). For the large cities relatively recent images were available (2014), however some smaller cities did not have recent images; nevertheless the most recently available was always used. This is acceptable because the built environment of smaller cities does not change as rapidly as the larger cities under more urbanisation pressure, and where possible, extra effort was taken with field checks in those cities to improve accuracy.

The satellite images have a spatial resolution (pixel size) of <=61cm, which is sufficient to distinguish built environment features, for example individual compounds, buildings and structures. Table A.2 outlines the land-use classifications used with descriptions for each.

Considering that the main application of the land use and dwelling data is for citywide urban planning and land management there is no need to identify the land use for each compound/structure. Given the mixed-use and informal nature of Afghan cities this is also not feasible. The level of resolution for the image analysis and digitisation was 1,500m^2 – 2,000m^2. The consequence is that, for example, a small shop in a residential area is classified as residential land use, not commercial. Nevertheless, the data gives a clear demonstration of the dominant land uses of an area, at a relatively high level of accuracy (within 10%), verified through field checks.

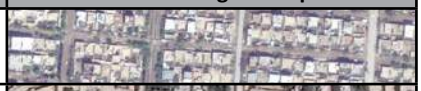
TABLE A.1: SATELLITE IMAGES USED IN SOAC 2014/15

Province	Code	Capital City	Code	Municipality	Spatial Resolution/ Meter	Image type	Date of image	Covered area
Badakhshan	BDS	Faiz Abad	FBD	Faiz Abad Municipality	0.51	WorldView-2	June 4, 2014	87
Badghis	BDG	Qala-i-Naw	QLN	Qala-i-Naw Municipality	0.59	WorldView-2	August 26, 2014	25
Baghlan	BGL	Pul-i-Khumri	PLK	Pul-i-Khumri Municipality	0.5	IKONOS	November 9, 2014	186
Balkh	BAL	Mazar-i-Sharif	MZR	Mazar-i-Sharif Municipality	0.55	WorldView-2	June 12, 2014	132
Bamyan	BAM	Bamyan	BIN	Bamyan Municipality	0.55	WorldView-1	August 11, 2013	60
					0.55	WorldView-2	August 11, 2014	
					0.5	WorldView-2	July 18, 2013	
Daykundi	DAY	Nili	NIL	Nili Municipality	0.53	WorldView-2	June 9, 2014	25
Farah	FRA	Farah	FAH	Farah Municipality	0.59	Quickbird-2	April 15, 2014	56
Faryab	FYB	Maimana	MMZ	Maimana Municipality	0.46	Geo-eye-1	November 22, 2014	48
Ghazni	GHA	Ghazni	GZI	Ghazni Municipality	0.5	WorldView-2	November 18, 2014	115
Ghor	GHO	Chaghcharan	FRK	Chaghcharan Municipality	0.8	IKONOS-2	June 29, 2014	25
					0.8	IKONOS-2	June 26, 2014	
Helmand	HEL	Lashkar Gah	LKG	Lashkar Gah Municipality	0.5	WorldView-2	October 17, 2014	122
Herat	HER	Herat	HEA	Herat Municipality	0.53	WorldView-2	October 4, 2013	134
					0.46	Geo-eye-1	July 17, 2014	
Jawzjan	JOW	Sheberghan	SHB	Sheberghan Municipality	0.5	WorldView-2	November 17, 2013	77
					0.5	WorldView-2	August 21, 2014	
Kabul	KAB	Kabul	KBL	Kabul Municipality	0.5	WorldView-2	September 1, 2014	600
					0.5	WorldView-2	April 30, 2014	
					0.5	WorldView-2	November 4, 2013	
					0.5	WorldView-2	September 1, 2014	
					0.5	WorldView-2	September 1, 2014	
Kandahar	KAN	Kandahar	KAN	Kandahar Municipality	0.56	WorldView-2	March 28, 2014	242
					0.47	WorldView-2	June 9, 2014	
Kapisa	KAP	Mahmood Raqi	MMR	Mahmood Raqi Municipality	0.56	WorldView-2	September 5, 2013	40
					0.56	WorldView-2	April 11, 2014	
Khost	KHO	Khost	KHT	Khost Municipality	0.61	Quickbird	November 14, 2014	65
					0.51 and 0.61	WorldView-2	March 12, 2014	
Kunar	KNR	Asad Abad	ASD	Asad Abad Municipality	0.52	WorldView-2	March 31, 2014	101
					0.52	WorldView-2	June 26, 2014	
Kunduz	KDZ	Kunduz	KDZ	Kunduz Municipality	0.5	WorldView-2	June 20, 2014	35

TABLE A.1: SATELLITE IMAGES USED IN SOAC 2014/15 (CONT.)

Laghman	LAG	Mehterlam	MHT	Mehterlam Municipality	0.51	WorldView-2	July 7, 2014	26
					0.51	WorldView-2	November 19, 2014	
Logar	LOG	Pul-i-Alam	PLA	Pul-i-Alam Municipality	0.42	Geo-eye-1	November 8, 2014	76
					0.48	WorldView-2	July 20, 2014	
					0.47	WorldView-2	December 16, 2014	
Maidan Wardak	WAR	Maidan Shahr	MSR	Maidan Shahr Municipality	0.5	WorldView-2	August 5, 2014	45
Nangarhar	NAN	Jalalabad	JAA	Jalalabad Municipality	0.5	Geo-eye-1/ WorldView-2	December 3, 2013	226
					0.5		October 1, 2013	
					0.5		July 23, 2014	
					0.5		December 3, 2013	
					0.5		February 14, 2014	
Nimroz	NIM	Zaranj	ZAJ		0.51	WorldView-2	May 10, 2014	32
Nooristan	NUR	Paroon	PRN	Paroon Municipality	Used Archived Sat. Imagery (2011)	n/a	n/a	
Paktika	PKA	Sharan	SHR	Sharan Municipality	0.46	Geo-eye-1	June 22, 2013	59
					0.43	Geo-eye-1	November 8, 2014	
Paktya	PIA	Gardez	GDZ	Gardez Municipality	0.54	WorldView-2	July 23, 2014	97
Panjsher	PAN	Bazarak	BAZ	Bazarak Municipality	0.53	WorldView-2	September 5, 2013	63
					0.52	WorldView-2	September 19, 2013	
Parwan	PAR	Charikar	CHK	Charikar Municipality	0.63	Quickbird-2	October 25, 2013	25
Samangan	SAM	Aybak	AYB	Aybak Municipality	0.48	WorldView-2	October 19, 2011	34
					0.32	WorldView-3	October 17, 2014	
Sar-i-Pul	SAR	Sar-i-Pul	SRP	Sar-i-Pul Municipality	0.53	WorldView-2	February 28, 2014	35
Takhar	TAK	Taluqan	TQN	Taluqan Municipality	0.53	WorldView-2	July 23, 2014	108
					0.54	WorldView-2	November 9, 2013	
Uruzgan	URU	Tarinkot	TRK	Tarinkot Municipality	0.43	Geo-eye-1	November 11, 2014	49
Zabul	ZAB	Qalat	QAL	Qalat Municipality	0.62	Quickbird	November 10, 2014	49

TABLE A.2: SOAC LAND USE CLASSIFICATION

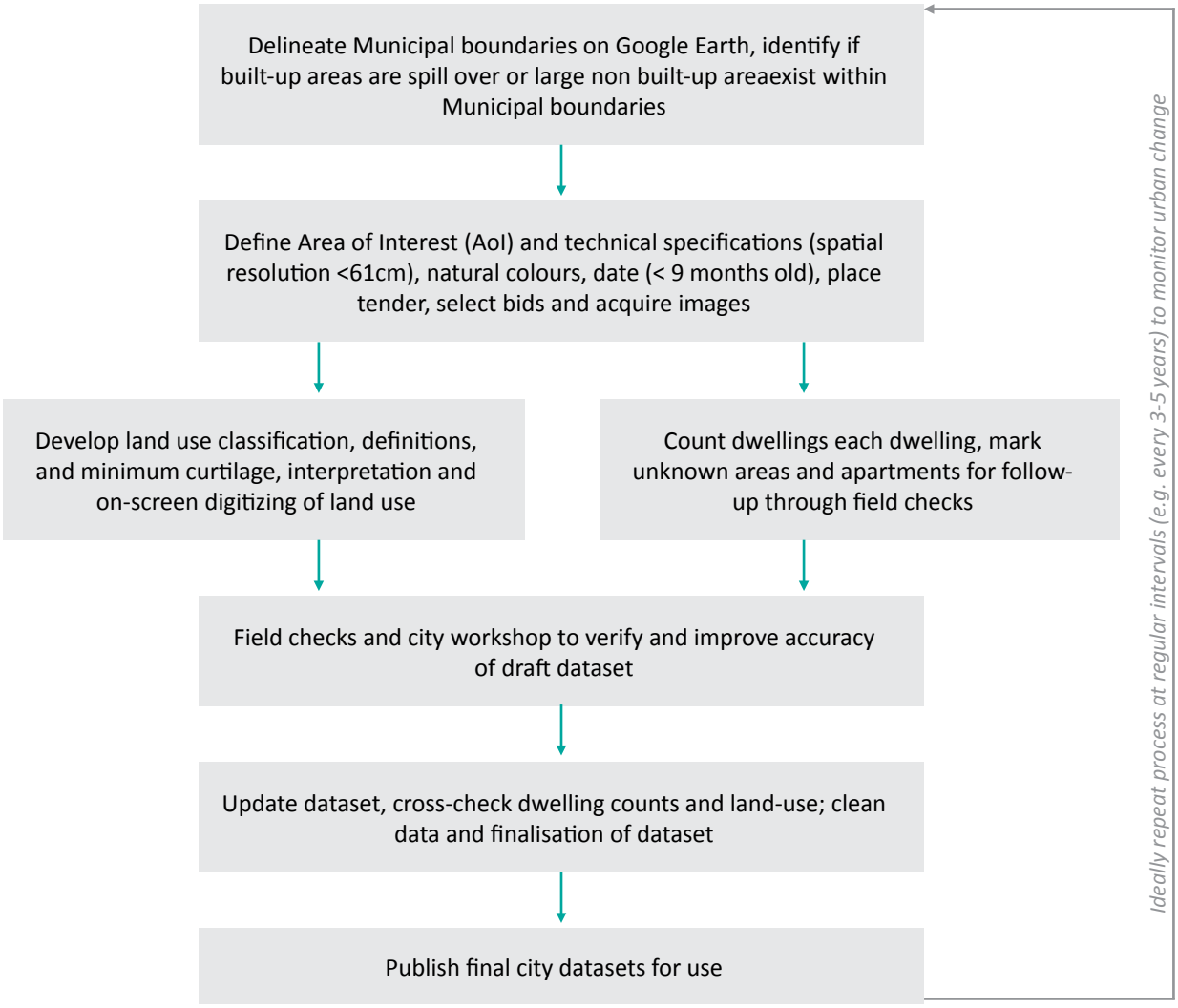
Land Use		Sub- Classes	Satellite Image Example
Built-Up Area	Residential	House Regular Layout	
		House Irregular Layout	
		House Hillsides	
		Apartments	
		Apartments Mixed-Used	
		IDP Camps/Kuchi/Others	
	Commercial		
	Institutional	Shrine/Heritage Area	
		Cemetery	
		Education	
		Health	
		Sport Ground	
		Park	
		Other	
	Industrial		
	Transport		
	Roads/Streets		
	Vacant Plots		
	Building Under Construction		
Non Built-Up Area	Agriculture		
	Green Areas		
	Forest		
	Water		
	Barren Land		

Institutional land use was sub-classified into seven sub-classes (Table A.2). However, there are limitations to the number of land use sub-classes that can be accurately indentified through visual interpretation of satellite images without complete verification in the field. Small structures used for health or education purposes cannot be accurately identified and can be easily interpreted as a dwelling. Therefore, a compromise is needed between land use details and interpretation time. As the accuracy of the institutional sub-classes cannot be guaranteed within the 10% margin of error, the report only presents the main class 'Institutional', not sub-classes.

All dwellings in the residential land-use areas have been digitized and as such for each of the 34 Municipalities the numbers of dwellings identified. Dwellings were categorized into the sub-classes as listed in Table A.2, and therefore 'dwelling' refers to a range of housing typologies, including detached houses, apartments and IDP/Kuchi houses. The typical compound structures, high walls, large apartment buildings and dense IDP camps mostly of tents, made identification of dwellings relatively clear from the satellite image. Apartment units were counted during the field checks, and household-level data on IDP camps (e.g. Kabul Informal Settlements) were based on KIS Taskforce household databases.

What is not clear from the image is the number of occupants, and therefore population estimates. While SoAC is not a census, population estimates can be made using the number of dwellings as a basis.

FIGURE A.1: FLOWCHART OF THE METHODOLOGY USED TO OBTAIN LAND USE AND DWELLING DATA



SoAC has chosen to present population estimates as a range, from a low estimate (7.5 people per dwelling) to a high estimate (9 per dwelling). These are based on the following sources (Table A.3) and assumptions:

- Each dwelling is occupied by one 'household'. One household consists of one or more families.
- The NRVA 2011/12 identifies that the average urban household size is 7.5. Therefore, for every occupied dwelling it can be assumed that there are, on average, at least 7.5 people living in it.
- UN-Habitat's databases of household surveys, undertaken as part of its technical support to municipal-led urban upgrading/'solidarity' programmes over the past decade, confirm the prevalence of multi-family households. Based on a survey of over 120,000 households (1.13 million people) (seven times the total sampling frame for the national-scale NRVA 2011/12), the average family size is 6.5, and average household size is 9.3 persons. This equates to an average of 1.3 families per household (dwelling).
- This aligns with a recent (2014) large-scale household survey in the five major cities (Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar, and Jalalabad). Based on over 5,400 surveys the average household size was found to be 8.0 persons.

Clearly there is insufficient reliable data, especially for cities beyond the large five cities, to make exact population estimates, hence why it is more appropriate to present a range in this report, from 7.5 to 9 persons per dwelling. While not ideal, it is a significant improvement on current population estimates for urban areas, particularly because they reflect the new municipal boundaries, and the dwelling data is spatially attributed across the cities, which helps with urban planning, service delivery, land management, etc.

TABLE A.3: KEY HOUSEHOLD-LEVEL SOURCES FOR URBAN POPULATION ESTIMATES USED IN SOAC

Source	Date	Sampling scope and limitations	Average urban family size	Average urban household size (per dwelling)
National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA), conducted by the Central Statistics Organization (CSO).	2011/12	20,828 households covered (159,224 persons) across the country. However, municipal boundaries have since changed (been expanded) hence the new, and wider, 'urban' sampling frame of SoAC.	Not provided	7.5
Urban Poverty Report, Samuel Hall, People in Need (PIN), and Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	2014	5,410 households surveyed across five major cities. "This sample size gives us representative data at the city level with a statistical rigor of 5% of margin of error and 95% confidence level."	Not provided	8.0
Kabul migration surveys, by UNHCR and NRC	2014	5,775 families (34,188 people) surveyed in PDs 5 (983), 7 (1,227), 8 (452), 13 (3,112) of Kabul City.	5.9	Not provided
Urban household survey database of UN-Habitat	2010-2015	122,000 households surveyed (over 1.13 million people, 551 CDCs), across nine cities (Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Charikar, LashkarGah, Farah and Bamyan).	6.5	9.3
State of Afghan Cities 2014/15 - low estimate				**7.5 persons per dwelling**
State of Afghan Cities 2014/15 - high estimate				**9 persons per dwelling**

A1.2 Field surveys and verification

After the draft dataset had been obtained from interpretation of satellite images, field checks and verification were undertaken in most cities (Table A.4). In Kabul, a field survey of all Districts was undertaken before the GIS analysis to help improve accuracy.

The field survey involved teams of surveyors first-hand (i) cross-checking the accuracy of land–use and house counts; (ii) ascertaining the land-use of unknown areas; plus (iii) counting apartments (the satellite image shows the apartment blocks, but not how many apartments in each, which is required). The collected field data was subsequently incorporated into the GIS files to arrive at a final city datasets.

Field survey was undertaken in 24 cities, along with City Workshops (Table A.4). Ideally all cities would have had field checks however security restrictions, time, and resource constraints limited this possibility. Nevertheless, 91% of the total municipal land area in the 34 cities under study was covered by field surveys.

TABLE A.4: OVERVIEW OF FIELD CHECKS AND CITY WORKSHOPS

City	Field checks	City workshops				% Total land area of 34 cities	% Built-up land area of 34 cities	% Total dwellings
		Date	Location	Number of participants				
				M	F			
Mazar-i-Sharif	Nov-14	1-Nov-14	Municipality Hall	64	18	2%	6%	8%
Kandahar	Jan-15	21-Jan-15	Municipality Hall	80		7%	9%	6%
Charikar	Feb-15	1-Feb-15	Municipality Hall	87	13	1%	1%	1%
Farah	Feb-15	2-Feb-15	UN-Habitat office	36	4	1%	2%	1%
Herat	Feb-15	3-Feb-15	Municipality Hall	80	10	5%	8%	9%
Jalalabad	Feb-15	11-Feb-15	Municipality Hall	80	10	3%	5%	4%
Kunduz	Mar-15	15-Mar-15	Municipality Hall	62	3	3%	3%	3%
Metherthlam	Apr-15	26-Apr-15	Governor Palace Hall	41	2	0%	1%	0%
Maimana	May-15	5-May-15	Governor Palace Hall	38	4	1%	1%	2%
Sheberghan	May-15	7-May-15	Municipality Hall	24	10	2%	3%	2%
Maiden Shahr	May-15	13-May-15	Municipality Hall	45	2	1%	1%	0%
Lashkar Gah	May-15	13-May-15	Municipality Hall	49	3	10%	5%	3%
Bamyan	May-15	18-May-15	UN-Habitat office	31	3	1%	1%	0%
Nili	May-15	20-May-15	Municipality Hall	28	7	3%	0%	0%
Mahmood Raqi	May-15	17-May-15	Municipality Hall	32	3	1%	0%	1%
Pul-i-Alam	Jun-15	8-Jun-15	Municipality Hall	25	5	1%	1%	0%
Taluqan	Jun-15	9-Jun-15	Municipality Hall	57	4	3%	2%	3%
Bazarak	Jun-15	9-Jun-15	Municipality Hall	29	2	2%	0%	0%
Faiz Abad	Jun-15	10-Jun-15	Municipality Hall	34	3	4%	1%	1%
Asad Abad	Jun-15	11-Jun-15	Municipality Hall	62	3	2%	1%	1%
Pul-i-Khumri	Jun-15	23-Jun-15	Governor Palace Hall	43	2	5%	4%	3%
Gardez	Jun-15	23-Jun-15	Municipality Hall	30	1	2%	2%	1%
Aybak	Jun-15	24-Jun-15	Municipality Hall	27	3	1%	1%	1%
Khost	Jun-15	25-Jun-15	Governor Palace Hall	48	0	2%	2%	1%
Kabul	Feb-15					28%	33%	41%
Total				**1132**	**115**	**91%**	**91%**	**93%**
				1247				

A1.3 Workshops with national and local stakeholders

City Workshops were undertaken in 24 cities (Table A.4). These reflect the fact that local residents and officials know a lot about their city and therefore significant knowledge on city-level conditions rests with city residents and sub-national institutions.

The SoAC city workshops were one-day events held under the leadership of IDLG/GDMA and the respective municipalities, attended by between 30 and 100 local stakeholders including Governors, Provincial Council members, Mayors, Municipal Advisory Board (MAB) members, municipal department staff, District (Nahia) managers, line departments, Wakili Gozars, Community Development Council leaders, and civil society. The draft district (Nahia) land use maps were presented and participants systematically review these in working groups and updated and changed where required.

As with the field checks, it was not possible to conduct city workshops in all cities, however 25 cities were covered representing 91% of total land area in these cities and 93% of dwelings.

Thematic workshops were also held at the national level in an effort to engage stakeholders and institutions in report and indicator development, data collection/sharing, and review of draft findings. An Urban Environment workshop was held on the 10th of December 2014 in IDLG, attended by 30 people (21 men and 9 women). A Land and Housing workshop was held on the 3rd of June 2015 in MUDA, attended by 21 men. An Urban Economy workshop was held on the 5th August attended by 14 people (12 men and 2 women).

A1.4 Secondary data

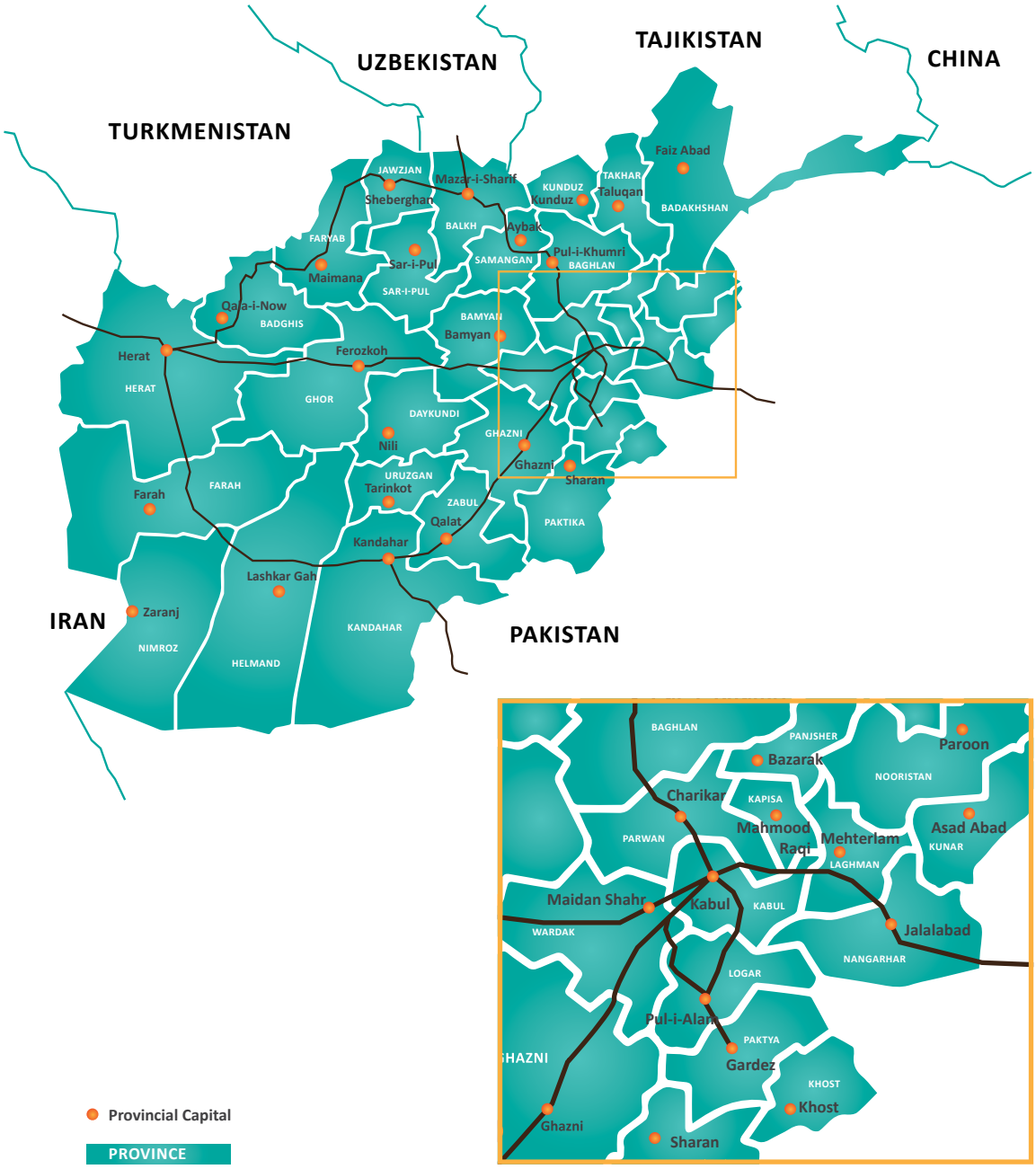
Beyond the collection of primary data, as described above, the production of the SoAC Report reviewed and utilised a range of secondary data to produce Volume One, including:

- Official and programme databases, notably (i) GDMA's 2013 survey of municipalities, which focused on a municipal capacity assessment in the 34 provincial capitals; (ii) GDMA's database of municipal finance for the 34 cities; Kabul Municipality's data for staffing and municipal finance; (iii) The database of household surveys from the 2014 Urban Poverty Study by Samuel Hall/PIN/DRC; (iv) IDP databases from the Kabul Informal Settlement (KIS) Taskforce; (v) UN-Habitat's household-level database of over 60,000 households.
- Secondary literature such as (i) academic articles and reports; (ii) programme reports and evaluations (e.g. from UN-Habitat US-Aid, UNDP, the Urban Poverty Report, etc.); (iii) government reports (e.g. NRVA 2011/12; MUDA's 2005 Urban Assessments); sector and city-level studies (e.g. Jalalabad City Profile).

It should be highlighted that the aim was not to undertake a comprehensive review of all literature. Rather, it was to broadly review and use the above sources to explain and 'put into context' the findings from the primary data.

Participants at the Charikar City Workshop reviewing the draft land use map

ANNEX 2 - STATISTICAL ANNEX



ANNEX 2: STATISTICAL ANNEX

All land areas in hectares (ha) *Dwelling counts in units*			Asad Abad	Aybak	Bamyan	Bazarak	Charikar	Farah	Faiz Abad	Ferozkoh	Gardez
Total land area			**9245.1**	**3174.8**	**3539.4**	**9121.7**	**3025.1**	**2949.0**	**15932.6**	**2614.1**	**6173.8**
Built-Up Area	Residential	Houses Regular	4.5	199.2	26.0	0.0	306.1	344.5	222.4	170.7	241.8
		Houses Irregular	352.4	234.0	167.3	88.1	172.2	0.8	404.2	138.6	557.0
		Houses Hillside	67.2	0.0	73.6	4.4	0.0	10.8	91.9	0.0	0.0
		Apartments	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		Apart. Mixed-use	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		IDP camps/Kuchi/Other	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	2.3	111.6
		Total residential	**424.1**	**433.2**	**267.9**	**92.5**	**478.3**	**356.3**	**718.5**	**311.5**	**910.4**
	Commercial		29.4	20.8	24.1	2.0	39.2	38.3	17.7	18.4	81.8
	Institutional		90.8	127.9	99.1	47.0	116.8	197.2	159.0	94.8	194.8
	Industrial		0.0	7.6	6.6	1.3	9.6	53.0	17.1	4.4	20.2
	Transport		0.0	0.5	23.6	2.3	1.4	79.3	105.1	49.6	66.9
	Roads/streets		53.3	96.0	72.2	20.7	244.4	385.3	213.2	108.0	204.3
	Vacant plots		97.4	101.4	141.3	2.2	414.2	721.1	254.7	82.0	302.4
	Buildings under construction		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	14.9
	Total Built-up		**694.9**	**787.3**	**634.8**	**168.3**	**1303.9**	**1830.8**	**1485.3**	**668.8**	**1795.5**
Non Built Up-Area	Agriculture		2193.2	1261.5	1906.1	832.6	610.5	63.3	2202.4	500.6	2383.9
	Green areas		61.5	0.5	4.2	22.2	117.9	0.0	25.2	2.2	19.0
	Forest		922.8	0.0	0.0	96.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Water		712.5	12.2	39.2	373.1	36.0	19.6	442.7	112.6	104.0
	Barren land		4660.2	1113.3	955.1	7629.1	956.8	1035.3	11777.1	1329.9	1871.3
	Total non-built up		**8550.2**	**2387.5**	**2904.6**	**8953.4**	**1721.2**	**1118.2**	**14447.3**	**1945.3**	**4378.3**
Dwelling Counts	**Total Dwelling Count**		**6,350**	**6,983**	**4,435**	**2,747**	**10,671**	**5,299**	**10,605**	**3,474**	**7,849**
	Houses regular		49	3,408	507	0.0	7,131	5,164	3,198	1,804	2,864
	Houses irregular		5,004	3,575	2,420	2,650	3,540	10	5,446	1,670	4,417
	Houses hillsides		1,297	0.0	1,480	97	0.0	107	1,961	0.0	0.0
	Apartments		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Apartments mixed-use		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	IDP camps/Kuchi/Other		0	0	28	0	0	18	0	0	568

ANNEX 2: (CONT.)

All land areas in hectares (ha) *Dwelling counts in units*			Ghazni	Herat	Jalalabad	Kabul	Kandahar	Khost	Kunduz	Lashkar Gah	Mahmood Raqi
Total land area			**5662.0**	**18277.5**	**12796.2**	**103049.2**	**27337.4**	**7138.9**	**11205.9**	**38444.0**	**3969.9**
Built-Up Area	**Residential**	Houses Regular	124.5	1221.2	873.9	4579.5	1675.8	125.7	228.7	846.6	0.0
		Houses Irregular	915.0	1915.5	1348.4	9088.1	2017.7	835.6	1249.6	1641.1	370.9
		Houses Hillside	0.0	0.0	0.0	3138.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		Apartments	0.4	40.5	0.1	275.9	81.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
		Apart. Mixed-use	1.7	6.7	1.8	79.7	8.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		IDP camps/Kuchi/Other	6.4	77.0	20.8	173.8	81.9	81.6	0.7	10.3	0.0
		Total residential	**1048.0**	**3260.8**	**2244.9**	**17335.0**	**3864.9**	**1043.3**	**1478.9**	**2497.9**	**370.8**
	Commercial		202.6	226.8	147.7	1005.8	663.0	125.8	66.0	90.0	22.4
	Institutional		409.8	644.0	531.4	6479.6	1200.6	244.8	548.3	463.7	57.9
	Industrial		43.4	44.9	113.9	1893.3	187.7	58.2	62.5	99.2	0.2
	Transport		32.4	429.7	204.4	867.8	24.8	108.8	171.2	212.5	0.0
	Roads/streets		511.1	1075.2	718.9	2956.8	1305.5	165.2	264.5	612.1	49.3
	Vacant plots		1086.4	3792.6	1512.3	9390.5	4023.0	123.4	467.6	2117.1	13.4
	Buildings under construction		0.8	2.5	7.4	213.7	21.6	0.0	0.0	29.1	0.0
	Total Built-up		**3334.5**	**9476.5**	**5481.0**	**40142.6**	**11291.2**	**1869.5**	**3059.1**	**6121.8**	**514.1**
Non Built Up-Area	Agriculture		1586.4	6556.5	5570.8	19970.4	7015.4	2970.6	7369.9	23344.1	2876.9
	Green areas		0.0	47.2	41.6	122.9	11.6	41.3	4.7	313.8	29.8
	Forest		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Water		107.6	60.1	347.9	912.0	188.0	358.9	205.3	4939.7	77.2
	Barren land		633.4	2137.1	1354.9	41901.3	8831.2	1898.6	566.9	3724.5	471.9
	Total non-built up		**2327.5**	**8801.0**	**7315.2**	**62906.6**	**16046.2**	**5269.4**	**8146.8**	**32322.1**	**3455.8**
Dwelling Counts	**Total Dwelling Count**		**15,931**	**89,790**	**39,586**	**396,095**	**61,902**	**11,787**	**29,877**	**30,709**	**5,610**
	Houses regular		2,134	36,209	18,238	101,729	25,224	2,073	5,719	11,890	0
	Houses irregular		13,665	51,317	20,743	190,218	32,811	9,304	24,128	18,784	5,610
	Houses hillsides		0	0	0	64,622	0	0	0	0	0
	Apartments		18	519	32	22,818	2,605	0	0	0	0
	Apartments mixed-use		51	113	51	8,031	462	0	0	0	0
	IDP camps/Kuchi/Other		63	1,632	522	8,677	800	410	30	35	0

ANNEX 2: (CONT.)

All land areas in hectares (ha) *Dwelling counts in units*			Maidan Shahr	Maimana	Mazar-i-Sharif	Mehterlam	Nili	Paroon	Pul-i-Alam	Pul-i-Khumri	Qala-i-Naw
Total land area			**3346.8**	**3461.0**	**8304.0**	**1397.4**	**9404.8**	**350.1**	**3752.0**	**18096.4**	**2777.3**
Built-Up Area	Residential	Houses Regular	91.3	381.0	1895.7	122.5	0.0	0.0	98.0	435.6	47.7
		Houses Irregular	10.2	588.2	1048.6	124.0	83.1	9.6	93.4	1373.6	407.7
		Houses Hillside	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	117.8	0.0
		Apartments	0.4	0.1	29.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.9	1.7
		Apart. Mixed-use	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		IDP camps/Kuchi/Other	3.0	0.0	11.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0
		Total residential	**104.8**	**969.3**	**2989.4**	**246.4**	**83.1**	**9.6**	**191.3**	**1931.9**	**461.0**
	Commercial		17.4	18.0	205.7	17.3	4.1	0.0	30.5	56.8	11.7
	Institutional		215.2	130.3	493.0	77.8	57.0	6.1	53.3	275.9	101.9
	Industrial		10.0	17.7	74.6	1.6	0.0	0.0	4.1	91.6	13.2
	Transport		3.2	48.1	15.2	1.1	7.1	0.0	1.1	4.2	44.2
	Roads/streets		102.5	146.4	1273.0	78.7	30.6	5.8	88.3	392.8	59.6
	Vacant plots		537.4	169.6	2495.4	285.3	56.5	3.5	339.8	1619.9	84.9
	Buildings under construction		0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.1
	Total Built-up		**990.7**	**1499.5**	**7546.2**	**710.0**	**238.6**	**25.0**	**710.3**	**4373.1**	**776.5**
Non Built-Up Area	Agriculture		**153.5**	**1637.6**	**715.2**	**38.2**	**1715.6**	**113.7**	**1847.7**	11800.9	502.6
	Green areas		**2.5**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**2.6**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	6.3	0.0
	Forest		**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**189.0**	**0.0**	0.0	0.0
	Water		**34.3**	**100.7**	**29.5**	**60.5**	**72.5**	**22.4**	**10.9**	743.0	141.8
	Barren land		**2165.9**	**223.2**	**13.1**	**586.0**	**7378.2**	**0.0**	**1183.1**	1173.1	1356.4
	Total non-built up		**2356.1**	**1961.4**	**757.8**	**687.3**	**9166.2**	**325.1**	**3041.7**	**13723.3**	**2000.8**
Dwelling Counts	**Total Dwelling Count**		**1,585**	**16,560**	**77,615**	**3,661**	**1,994**	**183**	**2,546**	**24,586**	**7,125**
	Houses regular		1,405	6,711	46,879	1,948	0	0	1,328	7,511	549
	Houses irregular		137	9,849	28,010	1,713	1,994	183	1,218	14,764	6,224
	Houses hillsides		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,063	161
	Apartments		0	0	2,251	0	0	0	0	248	152
	Apartments mixed-use		43	0	475	0	0	0	0	0	0
	IDP camps/Kuchi/Other		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39

ANNEX 2: (CONT.)

All land areas in hectares (ha) *Dwelling counts in units*			Qalat	Sar-i-Pul	Sheberghan	Sharan	Taluqan	Tarinkot	Zaranj	Total
Total land area			**4819.8**	**2989.8**	**7335.0**	**5892.7**	**10743.8**	**4065.6**	**4823.0**	**375215.9**
Built-Up Area	**Residential**	Houses Regular	149.9	26.8	404.8	2.4	356.0	337.5	226.5	15766.6
		Houses Irregular	194.2	468.4	1316.9	301.8	1679.0	242.1	709.4	30146.6
		Houses Hillside	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3503.7
		Apartments	0.0	0.0	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	440.0
		Apart. Mixed-use	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	101.9
		IDP camps/Kuchi/Other	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	1.4	0.0	587.9
		Total residential	**344.7**	**495.2**	**1726.0**	**304.3**	**2035.0**	**581.1**	**935.9**	**50546.7**
	Commercial		35.1	17.4	39.0	44.6	41.8	36.5	71.1	3468.8
	Institutional		306.6	43.0	248.4	810.5	205.7	78.8	49.2	14860.2
	Industrial		33.0	0.7	57.7	49.3	27.4	32.6	12.4	3049.4
	Transport		2.9	0.0	1.0	6.3	3.9	304.1	143.5	2966.2
	Roads/streets		108.0	87.7	333.1	109.4	232.5	91.5	286.8	12482.8
	Vacant plots		106.5	67.3	831.3	146.6	234.2	130.2	659.0	32410.6
	Buildings under construction		0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	295.9
	Total Built-up		**937.0**	**711.4**	**3236.5**	**1472.2**	**2780.5**	**1254.9**	**2158.0**	**120080.5**
Non Built Up-Area	Agriculture		832.2	2143.9	3684.2	2177.0	5853.4	1869.6	1759.3	126059.6
	Green areas		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.6	0.0	887.6
	Forest		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1208.3
	Water		195.1	53.6	43.8	116.4	751.5	199.4	134.1	11757.9
	Barren land		2855.5	80.9	370.5	2127.1	1358.5	731.2	771.5	115222.1
	Total non-built up		**3882.8**	**2278.4**	**4098.4**	**4420.5**	**7963.3**	**2810.7**	**2664.9**	**255135.4**
Dwelling Counts	**Total Dwelling Count**		**5,462**	**5,675**	**19,511**	**1,739**	**28,691**	**7,956**	**17,878**	**962,467**
	Houses regular		1,777	310	6,017	26	5,593	4,726	3,435	315,556
	Houses irregular		3,685	5,365	13,188	1,707	23,098	3,184	14,443	524,074
	Houses hillsides		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71,788
	Apartments		0	0	306	0	0	0	0	28,949
	Apartments mixed-use		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,226
	IDP camps/Kuchi/Other		0	0	0	6	0	46	0	12,874

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State of Afghan Cities 2015

Afghanistan's future is urban. The population of Afghan cities is expected to double within the next 15 years and by 2060, one in every two Afghans will be living in cities. In order to manage such a transition and harness it for economic and social development accurate data and information is essential.

The State of Afghan Cities report provides the first-ever assessment of the conditions in all of Afghanistan's 34 Provincial Capitals that are home to over 8 million people. It shows that Afghan cities are a driving force of social and economic development, state-building and peace-building, yet their full potential has been constrained by the absence of an effective urban policy and regulatory framework, insufficient and poorly coordinated investment, as well as weak municipal governance and land management. The report and associated data-set are an important first step for strategic planning and evidenced-based decision making to promote productive and inclusive urban growth in Afghanistan.

The report is divided into two volumes. Volume One is a narrative report highlighting key issues including municipal governance, the urban economy, access to land and housing and the urban environment. Volume Two contains maps and data for all 34 Provincial Capitals.

"This report is a pioneer step to analyse urban changes and emerging challenges in Afghanistan. A continuous and permanent investment in urbanization as a driver for growth and socio-economic development is essential for improved urban policies and economies. National urban policies, municipal governance and land management, some of the key challenges of the country in the last years, should be prioritized in the implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda that will be defined in Habitat III in 2016"

Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

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