

German Cooperation with Afghanistan

# Improving Recreation Amenities and Creating Job Opportunities in the Heart of Kabul



## Context

Decades of violent conflict in Afghanistan have largely destroyed the livelihoods of the Afghan population, as well as structural installations, including Qasr-e Chihilsitoon (Chihilsitoon palace) and its 12-hectare park in the capital Kabul. All that was left were ruins, while the surrounding green spaces fell into disrepair over time. However, for the estimated 4.5 million residents of this ever-expanding metropolis, there are only a few spaces for recreation and communal activities. The situation is particularly precarious in the informal settlements, which are tolerated but not supported by the city administration. The Chihilsitoon park borders on one such settlement known as Char Deh.

## Objective

The green spaces, gardens and sports facilities in the newly refurbished and modernised Chihilsitoon park offer Kabul's urban population recreational opportunities and space for cultural events. The green spaces have a positive impact on the city's climate. Training courses run on the park's premises improve job prospects.

## Measures & Results

Restoration work is being carried out on the park in cooperation with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in order to provide recreational amenities and leisure activities to the local population. The park's renovation directly benefits the 350,000 or so residents of the surrounding Char Deh district. For women and children in particular, the restoration of the historic park creates opportunities to go for walks and play outside.



**350.000** residents of the Char Deh district are benefiting from the Chihilsitoon park

| Overview                   |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Programme                  | Revitalisation of the Chihilsitoon Park in Kabul   |
| Commissioned by            | German Federal Foreign Office  |
| Partner                    | Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)  |
| Implementing organisations | KfW<br>Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)   |
| Province                   | Kabul  |
| Programme objective        | Improve recreational amenities for the population in Char Deh (Kabul) by installing green spaces, gardens and sports facilities and providing space for cultural events in the Chihilsitoon park |

As well as offering recreational and leisure opportunities, the upgrading of the park is also improving air quality in the city. Local residents and public administration were involved in the planning and implementation of the entire project.

### Needs analysis

As with other informal settlements, there are no development plans in place for Char Deh. Consequently, the first step involved conducting a socio-economic study and taking an inventory of the existing infrastructure, such as roads, mosques and schools. The data was entered in a geo-information system to produce a satellite image. This information provides the basis for working with the population of the park's neighbouring district to

identify, plan and implement the most urgent basic infrastructural works. Priority measures in this context include improving access to Char Deh via the main road, developing a sanitation system and installing street lighting. In this way, repair work on the park is embedded in a more comprehensive neighbourhood strategy.



### Training and employment prospects

In order to improve employment prospects for Char Deh's residents, the project has provided six-month training programmes in tailoring, embroidery, carpet weaving, joinery and gardening/landscaping to over 150 women and 100 men since 2015. At the end of this training, participants were supplied with the equipment needed to pursue their profession.



The neighbouring Char Deh district was taken into account throughout planning the park | Foto: GIZ



Chihilsiton Park's new amphitheatre | © KfW

### New conference and meeting centre

The boundaries of the park, with an auditorium, amphitheatre and future conference and meeting centre, have been identified and marked off. Reconstruction and restoration works on the buildings are now under way. While the project is not due for completion until the end of 2017, the park is already being used by the population.

Implemented by:  
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