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Kabul's New Citizen Information Center: One Step Forward to Improve Transparency and Accountability



A view of the newly established Citizen Information Center

"I learned about public relations, conflict resolution and how to communicate with clients during the training course for CIC. It was a useful course and I am ready to take over my responsibility at CIC. I am now thinking of the next step which is raising people's awareness on what CIC does" says Hamed Rahmani one of the CIC staff members.

The Kabul Municipality (KM) inaugurated its first Citizen Information Center (CIC) on October 23 with the support of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Kabul City Initiative (KCI) project. The CIC will significantly improve the delivery of services to the public by providing them with a centrally located physical and electronic access point for interacting with the Municipality. The CIC will be a "one stop shop" for inquiries, requests for city service delivery, guidance on regulations, and, suggestions and complaints.

More than a quarter of Afghanistan's population resides in Kabul and looks to the Kabul Municipality for the provision of basic city services. The Municipality has more daily interaction with citizens than most government institutions in Afghanistan. Shopkeepers and small business owners who need to renew their business licenses, and citizens who want to expand their houses, pay their tax or obtain a work permit all come to the Kabul Municipality.

Specialized locally designed software has been installed in the CIC's ICT system to track citizen's concerns and ensure they are addressed by the appropriate municipal department. This "work order system" will decrease the processing time for most paperwork from one week to an average of two days.

The large number of clients, a shortage of professional staff and a lack of clarity about the proper department to address has made interaction with the Municipality difficult for its residents. Now with the opening of the CIC, Kabul's citizens can make only one stop at Kabul Municipality.

This advancement in Kabul Municipality's capacity to efficiently provide services will minimize confusion, save time, and reduce costs; it should also increase public satisfaction with the Municipal government. The CIC, developed, designed, and constructed by KCI and staffed with newly trained Municipal employees is the latest in a series of improvements implemented by KCI in partnership with the KM to help create a more transparent and accountable Municipality for Kabul's citizens.

Telling Our Story

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