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SNAPSHOT

Reduce Risks, Improve Public Service Delivery Kabul Municipality Increases Staff Safety

USAID's Kabul City Initiative (KCI) helps Kabul Municipality improve the safety of its employees



Sanitation workers received personal protection equipment to use at work

"I used pictures and simple language to teach workers how to protect themselves as most are illiterate. We hope to see significant reductions in injuries and deaths as workers are now aware of risks and wear safety equipment," said Abdulmatin Izadyar, KCI trainer.

For the first time, Kabul Municipality's frontline workers are receiving job safety training. The training program was developed in response to requests from employees that the Municipality take steps to improve worker safety.

"On its face, work done by Kabul employees is the same as work done by workers in a US city—removing garbage, planting trees or paving roads," said Brad Baxter, KCI's Deputy Chief of Party and a former Public Works Director, "but workers in Kabul have far less protection, and encounter far more dangers than their American counterparts. There is no legal or regulatory protection and few workers are provided basic safety wear. At the same time, it is much more likely that a worker will encounter hazardous waste such as batteries or medical waste when picking up trash or that a street worker will be put in jeopardy by an unmarked worksite and an unskilled driver."

In response to this critical need for improved safety, over 1,000 staff working in high risk areas in the departments of Sanitation (500), Parks and Greenery (200), Street Maintenance (250) and the Macrorayon Maintenance Department (50) received training on workplace safety. Topics included how to safely collect chemical and medical waste, precautions for working in areas with high electrical voltage, how to reinforce trench walls while digging, and how to mark a construction site.

Trainees were provided standard safety equipment including steel-toed boots, hard-hats, work gloves, safety glasses, ear protection, and a reflective vest.

For Kabul Municipality, the risks are not just hypothetical. "We have had some of our workers killed on the job. Just a few months ago two men repairing streets were killed by a driver. We knew that we had to improve safety measures to reduce risks, and we are grateful to USAID for providing this training," said Mayor Younus Nowandish.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
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A translated copy of a television newscast about this effort is available at the KCI supported Mayor's Facebook page. Go to:
<http://www.facebook.com/mayormohammadyunus.nawandish?sk=wall>