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# LAND REFORM IN AFGHANISTAN (LARA)

## INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS UPGRADING HANDBOOK



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# LAND REFORM IN AFGHANISTAN (THE LARA PROJECT)

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS UPGRADING  
HANDBOOK

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## **DISCLAIMER**

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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# ACROYNMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGCHO	Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office
AKTC	Aga Khan Trust for Culture
MAIL/ARAZI	Afghanistan Land Authority
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CBDR	Community-based Dispute Resolution
CDC	Community Development Councils
CRA	Cooperation for Reconstruction of Afghanistan
DUDA	Department of Urban Development Affairs
GIRoA	Government Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GDMA	General Directorate of Municipal Affairs
KM	Kabul Municipality
KURP	Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
LARA	Land Reform in Afghanistan
LTERA	Land Tenure and Economic Restructuring in Afghanistan
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MUDA	Ministry of Urban Development Affairs
NGA	National Geospatial Agency
PIA	Public Information Awareness
SUPPORT	Services under Program and Project Offices for Results Tracking
USG	United States Government
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

# PREFACE

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Land Reform in Afghanistan Project (LARA Project) is managed by Tetra Tech ARD under USAID Contract No. 306-C-00-11-00514-00, with implementation assistance from its partners Tetra Tech DPK, International Land Systems (ILS), Development & Training Services Inc (dTS), and Landesa (formerly the Rural Development Institute).

LARA project's primary government partners are MAIL/MAIL/Arazi (formerly the Afghan Land Agency), the Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA), the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), as well as the Supreme Court and selected local municipalities.

The purpose of the LARA project is to develop a robust, enduring, and Afghan-owned and-managed land market frame work that encourages investment and productivity growth, resolves/mitigates land-based conflict, and builds confidence in government's legitimacy, thereby enhancing stability in Afghan society.

The Project continues USAID/Afghanistan's support for land reform and land rights strengthening that began through the earlier LTERA Project. The LARA project currently comprises an 18-month Base Period and an 18-month Option Period, with a contract amount of \$41.8 million. The LARA project is designed to contribute to USAID's AO and Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Three influences will help shape The LARA project's contributions to this Objective: (1) the foundations provided by the former USAID Land Tenure and Economic Restructuring in Afghanistan (LTERA) project that provides a starting point and methods that can be adapted; (2) USAID/Afghanistan management objectives including Afghanization and conflict mitigation; and (3) the following major LARA project objectives:

- Improve property rights delivery (land administration and formalization);
- Enable all citizens (women, minorities, and vulnerable populations) to exercise their rights through public information awareness (PIA);
- Strengthen land dispute resolution processes to reduce conflict and promote peace and stability;
- Promote economic development through clear and enforceable property rights, PIA, land rights delivery, and land dispute resolution; and
- Strengthen institutional, policy, and legal reform to secure property rights for Afghan citizens;
- Provide assistance in the cross cutting areas of gender, training, PIA, and private sector development.

These objectives are supported by three components that provide the over-arching structure for Programming activities and tasks in the work-plan areas follows:

1. **“Informal Settlements & Formalization”**- Support MUDA, AGCHO, IDLG, and the Municipality of Jalalabad with informal settlements upgrading, formalization, cadastral mapping, laws for urban planning and land use regulation, and training in planning and enforcement. Also, this

project strengthens tenure security by supporting the Supreme Court and communities with rights formalization and informal dispute resolution.

2. **“Legal Framework”**- Provide limited assistance to MAIL/MAIL/Arazi to identify, manage, lease, and obtain revenue from Afghan government lands and provide targeted technical assistance.

3. **"Capacity Building"** - Build capacity of public (AGCHO, MAIL/MAIL/Arazi, IDLG, MUDA, Supreme Court) and private sector land service providers to improve and streamline land tenure processes to Afghan private and public sectors.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to World Bank and UNDP statistics, Afghanistan may well be the most rapidly urbanizing country in Asia. Despite the lack of basic services, poor access and in most cases uncertainty of tenure, cities have extensively outgrown the boundaries of the Master plans drafted in the 1970s. Accelerating urbanization pressure and ineffective land use development control are today amongst the most serious challenges faced by the local authorities, frustrated by their inability to guide urban expansion, protect fertile agricultural areas, plan appropriate infrastructure investments, provide affordable housing and ultimately encourage equitable economic growth. Planning efforts are being systematically undermined by the enduring presence of significant areas within official municipal districts whose land ownership and occupation status are either uncertain or in breach of the law, and the unchecked growth of unplanned settlements and speculative development outside municipal boundaries on both private and governmental land. Government authorities consider the non-compliance of informal settlements with the plans a reason to refuse the provision of services to those areas and a basis for a possible eviction – but above all officials are reluctant to condone illegality that would stimulate further squatting and land grabbing.

As mentioned above, one of the main challenges for Afghan urban authorities is how to devise effective and sustainable strategies for supplying low-income households settled in informal settlements with basic urban services. Informal settlements usually pose technical challenges from the point of view of infrastructure upgrading because of their location at the margins of the city, their unplanned layout and disputed land claims. A typical upgrading package will comprise of a mix of initiatives to improve where possible the layout of the settlement and the delivery of basic services and network infrastructure aimed at improving the physical and socio-economic conditions of local residents and business community, in parallel to providing them a degree of security of tenure. Arguably this should be accomplished by strengthening their capacity to take part to the positive transformation of the areas where they live and work; as well as by enhancing municipal capacity in upgrading and maintenance of infrastructure and basic services.

While different solutions are required for different settlements, with upgrading packages tailored to suit local conditions and needs, most donors concur that the formal recognition of the settlement needs to be a prerequisite for investments – often in contrast with the local authorities who tend to perceive physical upgrading and land readjustment as precondition for regularization. Indeed, international experience indicates that security of tenure should not be intended as the necessary precursor of incremental improvements to services and infrastructures, but – to a large extent – as a result of physical upgrading<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, donors and engineering teams need reassurance that their investments will not be contested or wasted.

Informal settlements usually pose technical challenges from the point of view of infrastructure upgrading because of their location at the margins of the city, their unplanned layout and disputed land claims. A typical upgrading package will comprise of a mix of initiatives to improve where possible the layout of the settlement and the delivery of basic services and network infrastructure aimed at improving the physical and socio-economic conditions of local residents and business community, in parallel to providing them a degree of security of tenure. Arguably this should be

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<sup>1</sup> UN-Habitat 2009, p. 64

accomplished by strengthening their capacity to take part to the positive transformation of the areas where they live and work; as well as by enhancing municipal capacity in upgrading and maintenance of infrastructure and basic services.

The four main groups of stakeholders include: line ministries and government agencies with responsibilities for urban development and municipal governance; Municipal authorities and *nahia* officials, residents, community organizations and area representatives; and international agencies supporting urban development.

Lessons learned in field and at the decision-making level appear to lay emphasis on the following critical issues that need to be addressed while undertaking an upgrading project:

- Consultation and coordination amongst stakeholders: ensuring a sustained and constructive interaction with the different stakeholders, including community leaders and local authorities, as well as other donor or NGO-led projects.
- Community involvement: developing a sense of responsibility and partnership by people
- Policy, planning, negotiation and endorsement: fostering sufficient political confidence by local and national authorities to accept *de-facto* occupancy of land in selected settlements and move ahead with the process of planning, land adjustment and regularization of properties before or in parallel to physical investments.
- Resources and capacity: triggering through the private sector and communities the financial and human resources and technical capacity required to scale up upgrading efforts in Afghanistan.
- Settlement selection criteria: helping to justify choices and prioritize upgrading investments within a long-term time frame.
- Modalities of implementation of works: developing projects that embrace flexibility, for example how to interweave conventional competitive sub-contracting processes and development-oriented community-led implementation initiatives.
- Environmental challenges: addressing challenges related to solid waste collection and safe disposal where cities do not dispose of a landfill site or a treatment plant.

Given the challenges posed by upgrading existing settlements, where needs are great and urban management is at best weak, all parties share crucial responsibilities. The Handbook suggests that the public or private agency formulating an upgrading project should take into account most – if not all – of the following steps.

- Mobilization & Preparation
- Consultation & Interaction with Urban Authorities
- Consultation and Interaction with Relevant Utilities Departments
- Mobilization and preparatory steps
- Consultation & interaction with urban authorities
- Consultation and interaction with relevant utilities departments
- Interaction with the community
- Assessment of the general urban context
- Involvement of key stakeholders in participatory mapping
- Selection of target settlement(s)

- Assessment of the physical, socio-economic and environmental context of selected settlement(s)
- Community consultations
- Digitization of the area from a satellite image
- Participatory area needs assessment
- Identification of opportunities for improvements
- Development of community action plans
- Endorsement of planning efforts & upgrading investments and agreement on future actions
- Design of upgrading works
- Enhancement of the role of gender in slum upgrading
- Public information awareness (PIA) initiatives and campaigns
- Implementation of street paving and channels
- Upgrading or extensions of piped water systems
- Monitoring & evaluation
- Post-implementation issues
- Evaluation of process aspects
- Evaluation of upgrading works

The basic objective of this Handbook is to facilitate the planning and design of upgrading interventions in a manner that takes account of the specific issues raised when working in informal settlements. This document attempts to draw upon the extensive experience gathered up to date by a range of upgrading initiatives undertaken in Afghanistan in the last 20 years or so and offer a sequence of practical recommendations on how to proceed with the physical upgrading of informal settlements in this context. It refers extensively to LARA’s consultation, negotiation, planning and upgrading efforts carried out in two selected settlements in Jalalabad between 2012 and 2013.

This document does not aspire to provide strict procedures for upgrading nor technical norms and specifications for physical works. The Author believes that all upgrading projects should aim to respond to the local context and be designed in negotiation with the stakeholders. While over the past two decades an Afghan participatory ‘best practice model’ has been gradually established, it should be accepted that “no size can fit all”. There will always be different parameters and challenges to be taken into consideration.

The Informal Settlements Upgrading Handbook attempts to provide a commonsense and flexible step-by-step sequence of preparatory and implementation activities intertwined with practical observations and recommendations for urban practitioners and officials alike. ■

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The experts that drafted the 2012 *Infrastructure Development Cluster: Urban Management Support Program (UMSP)* estimated that in the six main cities of Afghanistan some 2.3 million people reside in informal settlements. Notwithstanding the scale of the problem, and its political, socio-economic and environmental impact, past efforts in this domain have yet to produce an appropriate policy and regulatory framework to guide government action, private sector investments and donor initiatives. Having acknowledged this gap and in line with the priority objectives and planned outputs spelled out in the NPP on Urban Management, USAID’s LARA project has committed to assist MUDA, IDLG/GDMA in the drafting of a “package” of key documents, which include a *National Urban Upgrading Policy*, the “Criteria for the Selection of Informal Settlements for Inclusion in Upgrading and Regularization Programs”; and “Urban Development Guidelines for Informal Settlements”; “Land Rights Regularization Model Manual”; “Standards and Procedural Manual to Guide the tender of Afghan Contractors Engaged in Surveying and Mapping of Urban Settlements”, and the present “Informal Settlements Upgrading Handbook”.

## 1.1. Objective of the Handbook

The basic objective of this Handbook is to facilitate the planning and design of upgrading interventions in a manner that takes account of the specific issues raised when working in informal settlements. This document attempts to draw upon the extensive experience gathered up to date by a range of upgrading initiatives undertaken in Afghanistan in the last 20 years or so and offer a sequence of practical recommendations on how to proceed with the physical upgrading of informal settlements in this context. It refers extensively to LARA’s consultation, negotiation, planning and upgrading efforts carried out in two selected settlements in Jalalabad between 2012 and 2013.

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The following pages attempt to provide a commonsense step-by-step sequence of preparatory and implementation activities intertwined with practical observations and recommendations for urban practitioners and officials alike.

## 2. BACKGROUND

According to World Bank and UNDP statistics, Afghanistan may well be the most rapidly urbanizing country in Asia. Despite the lack of basic services, poor access and in most cases uncertainty of tenure, cities have extensively outgrown the boundaries of the Master plans drafted in the 1970s. Accelerating urbanization pressure and ineffective land use development control are today amongst the most serious challenges faced by the local authorities, frustrated by their inability to guide urban expansion, protect fertile agricultural areas, plan appropriate infrastructure investments, provide affordable housing and ultimately encourage equitable economic growth. Planning efforts are being systematically undermined by the enduring presence of significant areas within official municipal districts whose land ownership and occupation status are either uncertain or in breach of the law, and the unchecked growth of unplanned settlements and speculative development outside municipal boundaries on both private and governmental land. The inappropriateness of top-down urban planning procedures and the backlog of allocations to those applying for plots are strongly contributing to tenure insecurity since people have no other option than to seek affordable land in informal areas. Government authorities consider the non-compliance of informal settlements with the plans a reason to refuse the provision of services to those areas and a basis for a possible eviction – but above all officials are reluctant to condone illegality that would stimulate further squatting and land grabbing.

### 1.2. Objectives and Conditionalities of Physical Upgrading

As mentioned above, one of the main challenges for Afghan urban authorities is how to devise effective and sustainable strategies for supplying low-income households settled in informal settlements with basic urban services. Informal settlements usually pose technical challenges from the point of view of infrastructure upgrading because of their location at the margins of the city, their unplanned layout and disputed land claims. A typical upgrading package will comprise of a mix of initiatives to improve where possible the layout of the settlement and the delivery of basic services and network infrastructure aimed at improving the physical and socio-economic conditions of local residents and business community, in parallel to providing them a degree of security of tenure. Arguably this should be accomplished by strengthening their capacity to take part to the positive transformation of the areas where they live and work; as well as by enhancing municipal capacity in upgrading and maintenance of infrastructure and basic services.

While different solutions are required for different settlements, with upgrading packages tailored to suit local conditions and needs, most donors concur that the formal recognition of the settlement needs to be a prerequisite for investments – often in contrast with the local authorities who tend to perceive physical upgrading and land readjustment as precondition for regularization. Indeed, international experience indicates that security of tenure should not be intended as the necessary precursor of incremental improvements to services and infrastructures, but – to a large extent – as a result of physical upgrading<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, donors and engineering teams need reassurance that their investments will not be contested or wasted.

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<sup>2</sup> UN-Habitat 2009, p. 64

Improvements to the housing stock in informal settlements are among the expected results from upgrading programs – an aspect that is strongly supported by donors who see this, and functioning real estate markets, as essential contributions to economic development. The incremental process is associated to the mobilization of resources from households and communities<sup>3</sup>, as prime stakeholders in upgrading initiatives. The problem appears to be how to harness investments in an institutional context that does not yet fully embrace the potential of the private sector. This seems particularly true in Kabul, where “informal settlements represent an enormous private sector investment in housing. The value of Kabul’s 2004 informal housing stock (not including land value) was estimated around US\$ 2.5 billion, a fixed capital unimaginable by many world cities with a similar number of informal settlers”<sup>4</sup>.

### 1.3. Key Stakeholders Involved in the Urban Upgrading Process

The four main groups of stakeholders include:

#### Line ministries and government agencies with responsibilities for urban development and municipal governance;

The very first selection of target cities where a number of settlements are deemed appropriate for upgrading should be a cooperative effort which involves national government agencies. These include MUDA, IDLG/GDMA, MAIL/Arazi and DUDA at the provincial level. The issue of compliance with existing planning instruments calls for the full participation of MUDA’s planning staff in the identification of informal settlements in each city. The recently setup Upgrading Department has been tasked to produce the required *Plan-e Tasfili* (Detailed Plans) for informal settlements. Unfortunately, while most City Plans produced by MUDA provide the location and boundaries of informal settlements, there is little indication of their ownership status or suitability for upgrading. In this sense, IDLG/GDMA’s role in municipal governance processes places it in a critical position to negotiate with municipalities the inclusion of informal settlements in upgrading projects, especially for the most controversial sites<sup>5</sup>. Once decisions have been taken, MAIL/Arazi’s authority will be essential in the release of a *tasfya* (land clearance) for clarification of land ownership and any decisions about land transfer, exchange, lease and settlement.

Because of the investments implications and advance notice required, also the public utilities departments under the different ministries have an important role and need to be consulted from the very start.

#### Municipal Authorities and *Nahia* Officials

The Municipal authorities are not only the ultimate decision-makers, but are responsible for the oversight and/or implementation of upgrading projects. They have a leading role in selecting areas to upgrade since they are familiar with the specific urban conditions of each settlement, their particular history, status ownership and criteria and can weigh those against the specific needs of a city. In particular, the municipalities can rely upon their *nahia* officials to connect with their constituencies at the district level. On the other end of the spectrum, the municipality, in coordination with national

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<sup>3</sup> Turkstra 2010

<sup>4</sup> SASEI/World Bank 2006, p. 2

<sup>5</sup> This was the case of the LARA project in Jalalabad with reference to areas outside the municipal boundaries initially deemed “not acceptable” for inclusion by the municipality

development agencies, can also – for instance – provide inputs on the directions of the city expansion which are decisive in the actual selection of settlements to be upgraded<sup>6</sup>. Likewise, municipalities can guide investments planned by the utilities departments – such as AUWSCC and Breshna Sherkat<sup>7</sup> – so that informal settlements can be connected with city-wide service networks.

## Residents, community organizations and area representatives

The “Afghan upgrading experience” teaches us that the local community must be fully involved, from planning through to implementation, to ensure that the proposals reflect local needs and aspirations, and that the local community buys in to the upgrading process. Approaches that combine “*community-based and municipal-led planning*”<sup>8</sup> have proved appropriate to the context of Afghan cities and ultimately contribute to the sustainability of the whole project. The presence of well-established *shuras*, CDCs and recognized leaders – notably the *wakil-e-gozars* and the *malek* – is essential to chart physical and socio-economic vulnerabilities, local needs, issues related to the lack of urban infrastructure services and people’s aspirations.<sup>9</sup> Capacity-building may be required, but usually skillful and influential community representatives can act as very successful brokers on behalf of the community they represent.

Experience shows that effective *in-situ* upgrading requires the skills of social intermediaries, i.e. experts who can facilitate negotiations between households, city officials and service providers. While these kinds of professionals cannot be found within MUDA or Municipalities because of their more technical line of work, they abound within local communities, where *shura* negotiation and mediation are very common.

## International Agencies Supporting Urban Development

In the past 20 years or so, a range of donor organizations, multi-lateral agencies, international private service providers and NGOs have supplied technical assistance and financial support to urban upgrading at various levels, through a diverse set of programs and projects.

Because of the diversity in scope, resources and internal governance mechanisms, coordination between simultaneous projects may be sometimes a challenge – especially for the institutions. The recognition by international agencies of the importance of coordination with communities, municipalities and government agencies is critical to the success of the urban programs they support, particularly in the realm of institutional capacity-building. Upgrading initiatives by international organizations should not wastefully duplicate each other or compete with municipal redevelopment plans.

### 1.4. Upgrading Initiatives to Date

**UN-HABITAT**, engaged in Afghanistan for two decades, has contributed to the implementation of the National Solidarity Program by supporting the overall design, and implementation in five provinces, of the government’s flagship community development program. Key investments have

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<sup>6</sup> In USAID’S Land Reform in Afghanistan work in Jalalabad it emerged that the municipality was more amenable to the inclusion of settlements lying along the city southward growth route, even though they were located outside the municipal boundaries.

<sup>7</sup> Water for domestic uses is provided in the cities by the Afghan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation, while Breshna Sherkat is in charge of electricity supply: both are state-owned entities.

<sup>8</sup> MUDA Urban Development Working Group 2009, p.34

<sup>9</sup> Extensive information on this subject can be found in: (KURP/IDA 2008)

included sanitation and Solid Waste Management in four cities; Shelter and Water Supply projects in three cities; Emergency Municipal Public Works Program in six cities; and reconstruction of shelters for widows in the Shomali Plains. Property recording efforts and urban upgrading investments have been undertaken in several cities, including Kandahar, Lashkar Gah and Kabul.

**Land Titling and Economic Restructuring in Afghanistan (LTERA)**, funded by USAID between 2004 and 2009, focused on improving the management of property records, formalization of land tenure, and implementation of modern land mapping and surveying methodologies. LTERA also worked on the policy level to improve the legal and regulatory framework for property rights, registration, and economic restructuring. Its physical upgrading and property recording efforts focused on Districts 7 and 13 in Kabul.

**Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project (KURP)**, funded by the World Bank and implemented through MUDA, has provided a significant contribution to the physical upgrading of 19 *gozars* in central Kabul between 2005 and 2011. A 2<sup>nd</sup> phase is being implemented starting in 2013 through Kabul Municipality.

**Turquoise Mountain Foundation (TMF)** has undertaken between 2006 and 2009 a range of upgrading works in Murad Khane, an historic area to the north of the River Kabul, which has included streets upgrading, investments in the restoration of housing and water supply and sanitation improvements.

**Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) – Afghanistan**, conducted between 2003 and 2009 an extensive urban rehabilitation program in the southern section of District 1 (the Old City, south of the River Kabul) and District 7 (mainly the areas of Gozar Gah and on the steep hillside behind Baghe Babur), which included access, sanitation and environmental upgrading.

**Kabul Area Shelter and Settlement (KASS) Project** in Kabul, funded by USAID/OFDA and implemented by CARE International, provided over 3,770 complete or partial shelter construction support in seven districts of Kabul, including safe water supplies, sanitation, roads graveling, ditch drainage, health education, hazard preparedness and mitigation training, and support of local governance activities. The signing of a MoU with the Kabul Municipality provided the first steps in recognizing land tenure and providing stability for the inhabitants.

## 1.5. Summary of Critical Issues

Lessons learned in field<sup>10</sup> and at the decision-making level appear to lay emphasis on the following critical issues that need to be addressed while undertaking an upgrading project:

- Consultation and coordination amongst stakeholders: ensuring a sustained and constructive interaction with the different stakeholders, including community leaders and local authorities, as well as other donor or NGO-led projects.
- Community involvement: developing a sense of responsibility and partnership by people
- Policy, planning, negotiation and endorsement: fostering sufficient political confidence by local and national authorities to accept *de-facto* occupancy of land in selected settlements and

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<sup>10</sup> This paper draws upon the experience of several projects, including USAID's LARA planning, negotiation and upgrading efforts conducted in Jalalabad between 2012 and 2013; but above all the report drafted by AKTC for the World Bank to guide KURP works in the Old City of Kabul (AKTC, 2008).

move ahead with the process of planning, land adjustment and regularization of properties before or in parallel to physical investments.

- Resources and capacity: triggering through the private sector and communities the financial and human resources and technical capacity required to scale up upgrading efforts in Afghanistan.
- Settlement selection criteria: helping to justify choices and prioritize upgrading investments within a long-term time frame.
- Modalities of implementation of works: developing projects that embrace flexibility, for example how to interweave conventional competitive sub-contracting processes and development-oriented community-led implementation initiatives.
- Environmental challenges: addressing challenges related to solid waste collection and safe disposal where cities do not dispose of a landfill site or a treatment plant.

# 2. PROCEDURES FOR UPGRADING INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Given the challenges posed by upgrading existing settlements, where needs are great and urban management is at best weak, all parties share crucial responsibilities. The public or private agency formulating an upgrading project should take into account the following preparatory steps.

## 2.1. Mobilization and Preparatory Steps

At the outset, the project team will have to define the necessary institutional arrangements and clarify reciprocal roles and responsibilities for donor, implementing agency, contractor/s and authorities with regard to the issuance of a MoU<sup>11</sup>, the clarification of financial commitments and timeframes, coordination and reporting mechanisms, operating procedures, decision-making and endorsement processes, on-the-job training / capacity-building opportunities for the public sector, liabilities etc. Once obtained the official endorsement upon goals and objectives of the project, the project team will have to start to negotiate and prioritize the *criteria* for intervention vis-à-vis actual needs, age of the settlement, geographical locations in relation to development “corridors”<sup>12</sup>, population densities, living conditions, proximity to trunk infrastructure occupancy status, land tenure and environmental hazards. Key indicators might include:

- Location in regards to the city
- Numbers of beneficiaries (households and/or plots)
- Geographical extent of intervention (area/number of *gozars*)
- Physical cost/benefit analysis (area surface/population vs. scale of investments)
- Housing conditions and real estate trends
- Levels of access to basic services (primary roads, water, electricity & sanitation)
- Access to public facilities (mosques, clinics, schools)
- Access (vehicular and pedestrian)
- Environmental conditions and hazards
- Level of community aggregation, cohesion and organization

The project leadership will have to ensure consistency of the planned intervention with prevailing policies that are relevant to urban areas, including the 2007 draft *Land Policy* and the *National Policy for Informal Settlement Upgrading* (currently being drafted by MUDA and GDMA with LARA’s technical assistance). Plans will have to be drawn in conformity with planning frameworks and physical plans formulated by MUDA and Municipalities.

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<sup>11</sup> or Letter of Agreement (LA) or Project Implementation Letter (PIL) – depending on the setup of the project

<sup>12</sup> Whether defined by major infrastructure projects or the extraction of regional resources; see (MOF 2012-2013)

## 2.2. Consultation & Interaction with Urban Authorities

The absence of a coherent urban policy and ambiguities about official responsibilities means that authorizations obtained from one authority might be disputed by another. While physical upgrading may be today less controversial than in the past, the implications of a *de facto* recognition of occupancy rights through upgrading still stirs controversy and risks deterring such projects. Recognition should precede investments. Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration is the lack of motivation among some civil servants, who feel undervalued and under-resourced. This and strong hierarchy structures within local institutions affects mid-level staff's willingness to take initiatives or take decisions that may be criticized by their superiors, particularly on issues that might have a political repercussion.

On the other hand, lack of basic information and documentation on the living conditions and actual ownership status of occupants of informal settlements limits the ability of the authorities to take decisions and guide future investments in these areas.

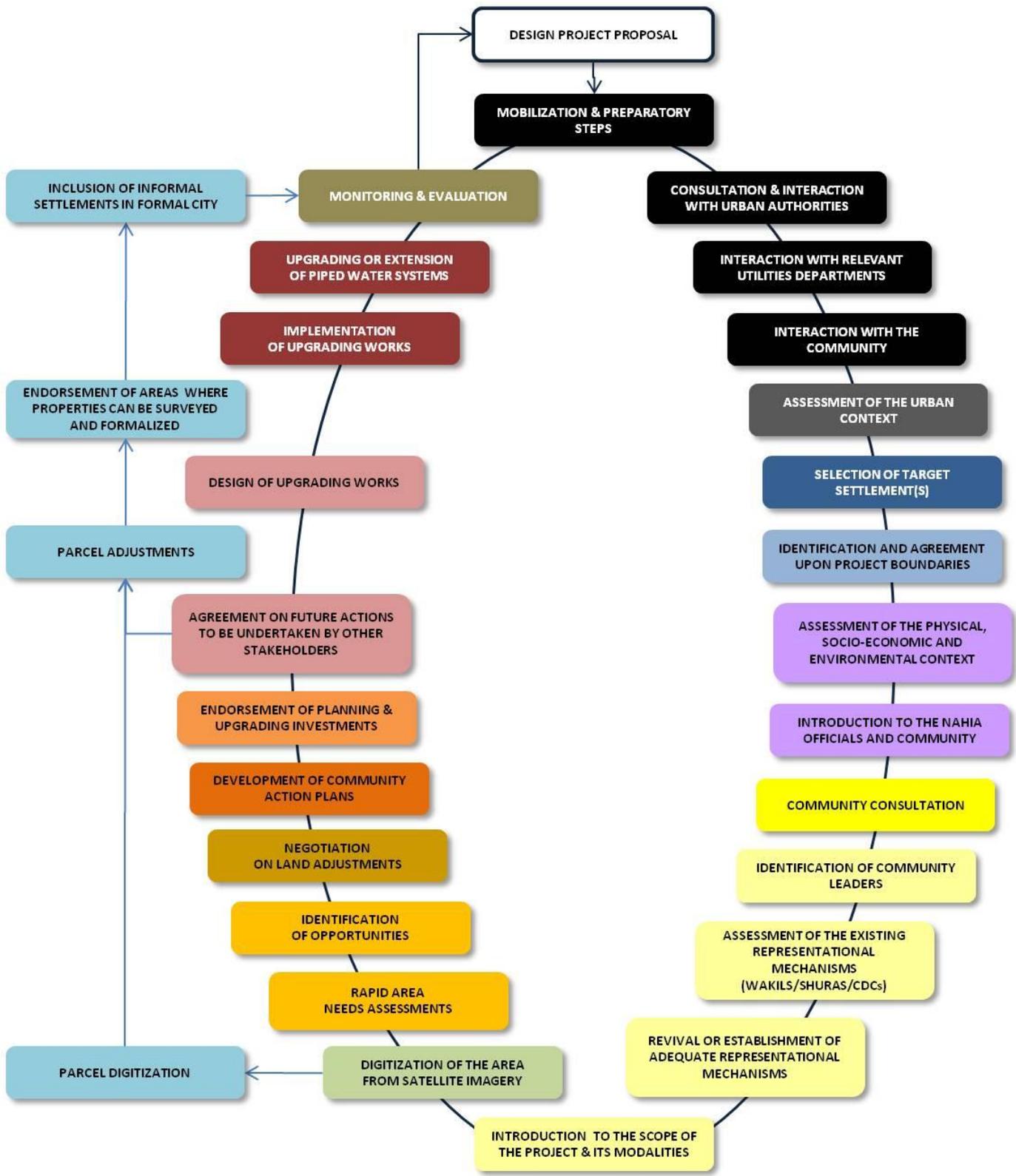
### Recommendations

- **Identify and engage specific interlocutors within the relevant national institutions mandated to facilitate urban upgrading in Afghanistan (MUDA and IDLG/GDMA) willing to champion the project**

The project leadership and donor should seek the endorsement of the national institutions of MUDA and IDLG/GDMA by sharing the scope and objectives of the proposed intervention, anticipated outcomes and its implementation strategy. This may be formalized in a MoU or Letter of Intent/Agreement. This should be followed by the identification of a focal point within MUDA's City Planning and the Upgrading Departments with whom to define arrangements for coordination and reporting. At this point, the team should secure the support required to ensure the buy-in and endorsement of the project by the target municipal leadership who might be reluctant to endorse upgrading initiatives in areas whose ownership status is unclear and/or perceived as controversial. A first attempt at weighing the criteria for the selection of the settlement(s) should be made at this point.

- **Identify and engage interlocutors within the target Municipality(ies) that are mandated to endorse and oversee upgrading projects being designed and implemented within their jurisdiction**

Prior to any further step, the team should secure the endorsement of the provincial and municipal leadership concerning the scope and modalities of intervention and the strategy for implementation of the project that will take place under their jurisdiction. A copy of the MoU or Letter of Intent/Agreement signed with the central authorities should be provided as a basis for discussion and to reassure the municipal authorities of the endorsement of their superiors.



**Figure 1: Recommended Step-by-Step Activities for Upgrading Informal Settlements**

Once obtained a good level of official buy-in, the team will identify a focal point within Municipality, with whom to define coordination and reporting arrangements. A relationship will have to be developed with staff of the Engineering and Sanitation Departments who will need to be informed and consulted for all technical aspects of the project. In the process, the project team should explore opportunities to develop the technical and managerial capacity of these Departments into the project design.

Experience shows how important are these initial steps of involvement and coordination with local institutions in the process of establishing any project, especially if it can be perceived as a relationship that benefits both parties – for example in the exchange of mapping and documentation resources. A crucial aspect is to manage expectations – something that if not done from an early stage risks jeopardizing the project later.

- **Consult and engage members of the Municipal Advisory Board**

Recently, GDMA has supported the creation of a “Municipal Advisory Board” (which is being piloted in Charikar – as of March 2013) to ensure a wide representation of residential and business communities, professionals, academics and other stakeholders. The earlier “Citizen Forum” appears to have worked well but, according to a senior GDMA official, since it was not a legal entity it will be most probably discontinued. The planning and liaison teams should attempt to arrange a project presentation to the Board.

- **Identify and engage interlocutors at the level of the *nahia***

Through the municipal focal point, the project team will proceed to present the project to the target *Nahia* (district) officers and secure their authorization to proceed with surveys, community consultations, needs assessments and physical works. The team will involve the director of the district office and technical staff, as appropriate, in processes of needs assessment, negotiation and design of upgrading interventions. Involvement can include the supervision of upgrading works, in order to strengthen technical and managerial skills, and facilitate future operations & maintenance.

The project team will have to provide regular updates on project activities to the Head of the *Nahia* office. These may be conducted during site visits – which may also be the ideal occasion for the joint identification of areas where private or public property might be affected, and the consideration of possible ways of arbitration and resolution.

The *Nahia* officials will introduce the team to the *wakil-i gozars*, heads of *shura* and elders and provide the required legitimacy to the project. This will be an important step towards the recognition of the settlement and its occupancy.

### **2.3. Consultation and Interaction with Relevant Utilities Departments**

Team engineers will liaise with relevant service-providers, such as Afghan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation (AUWSSC) and Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS)<sup>13</sup>, to inform them

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<sup>13</sup> Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) is an independent and autonomous company established under The Corporations and Limited Liabilities Law of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IROA). DABS is a limited liability company with all its equity shares owned by the Government of Afghanistan (GoA). The company was incorporated on 4th May 2008 (15 Saur 1387) and replaces Da Afghanistan Breshna Moassassa (DABM) as the national power utility. DABS operates and manages electric power generation, import, transmission, and distribution throughout Afghanistan on a commercial basis [Source: <http://www.dabs.af/en/>]

about planned interventions that might affect networks and distribution of water and power. The team will have to meet technical staff to obtain any relevant information on the state of existing infrastructure and arising issues that might serve the project's design, such as designs, layouts, leakages, health hazards, and planned extensions and improvements if any. Their endorsement to the intervention should be sought at the earliest stage possible. At this stage it will also be possible to establish systems of review and oversight, including site visits.

Coordination and sharing of information is particularly important in order to avoid duplication of efforts or damage of recently-implemented works – especially when surfacing of alleys or roads, excavating streets for network infrastructure etc. The team will have to obtain any available information on proposed extensions in the network and maintenance costs, as applicable.

Technical staff of each Utilities Department can be involved in the processes of needs assessment, negotiation and design of upgrading intervention/s. Their technical capacity may vary depending on their set up and efficiency. Upgrading of utilities should conform to official standards and specifications, where applicable. Technical staff may be consulted for the design technical specifications where necessary.

Broadly, investments can be prioritized according to different perspectives: a) *what people need* (but people may also express misinformed or misguided needs); b) *what donors want* (depending on their agenda, timeframe and commitments); c) *what the plans say* (as determined by city-level or regional or national choices); d) *where are these needs located* – in relation to trunk infrastructure (determined by the vicinity to existing or planned networks); e) *what is actually doable* (according to needs and capacity). The team will initiate a discussion on acceptable standards and possible as well as affordable “packages” of infrastructure investments.

Service providers are likely to have limited capacity to respond to expressed needs of the target community and/or any increase in demand as a result of upgrading. This aspect needs to be foreseen at an early stage of the planning process so that appropriate resources may be found and budgeted, or over-ambitious projects may be phased accordingly.

- **Adopt the notion of *incremental* upgrading of infrastructure that will allow to factor in required resources, affordability and network capacity**

In order to go beyond the present upgrading impasse, the team will advocate for the adoption of acceptable “minimum” infrastructure standards. This does not necessarily translate in lesser standards, but it introduces the notion of flexibility to increase efficiency. This mind shift applies also to accepting “incremental” improvements projects, since it is unrealistic to expect that informal settlements can be instantly upgraded to the standards of the planned areas.

With the current emphasis on full cost-recovery for public services, utilities departments will introduce meters, user and consumption fees for end users, but it is vital that the issue of affordability is considered at an early stage, especially among more vulnerable households.

Similarly, Utilities Departments will have to carefully consider maintenance and operations costs. Jointly, the team and the staff of the utilities department will have to assess the implications of investments, the capacity of networks to meet additional demand, installation, consumption and maintenance costs related to the proposed intervention, as appropriate.

- **Clarify scope and limitations of network infrastructure upgrading**

As well as adopting the notion of “incremental upgrading” suggested above, it would be important to explore ‘local solutions’ that might be more in line with investment capacity. For some time, for example, it might be more realistic to install hand pumps and reservoirs, rather than sophisticated and unaffordable piping schemes. This approach may initially be deemed objectionable by the utilities departments and/or municipality.

Another issue that may arise soon into the project is the impossibility for some agencies to work on electricity and water supply improvements if not in compliance with rigorous environmental, health and safety provisions<sup>14</sup>. The same applies to investments in landfill sites for which in-depth feasibility studies are required and might hinder any investment – however crucial – in this field. This should be clear to all involved parties from the inception of the project in order to avoid raising false expectations.

- **Assess possible downstream and upstream impacts of the project**

Consideration needs to be given at an early stage to the ‘downstream’ and ‘upstream’ consequences of upgrading – i.e. improvements in water pipes whose success depends on the actual availability of water and may in turn require corresponding investments in a functioning drainage system for the evacuation of additional waste water.

- **Ensure that all technical drawings and data are shared**

Lack of technical drawings and layouts of networks installed by donor projects can also represent a severe hindrance to any planned improvement to what may be existing but defective networks. As a case in point, the LARA project quickly discovered that in an informal settlement located in the central district of Jalalabad an earlier project laid down the pipes but ran out of funds before it was able to install the connection to the city network and the required elbow and ‘T’ connectors. The lack of drawings made it very difficult to ascertain the layout of the faulty network underground and where were the missing items.

## **2.4. Interaction with the Community**

Soon into the project, the team needs to identify existing community structures that shall be involved in the proposed intervention. These range from customary structures which deal with a range of issues and arbitrate disputes such as *shuras* or councils of elders, to the more official community representatives such as the *wakil-i gozars* and street representatives. While their effectiveness, responsiveness and degree of representation might vary, they are an important component link in the chain of urban governance. Given the credibility of particular individuals within these structures, they often prove to be more effective than official structures. Typically, the *wakils* from neighboring *gozars* will meet on a regular basis to discuss common interests – particularly if there is a new project or problem that affects their area. On particular issues, the head of the *wakils* or a small delegation of *wakils* will then report to the *Nahia* (municipal district) officer who responds to the Municipality.

Even in the presence of well-established Community Development Councils (CDCs), it is vital to tap into the potential of the system of *wakil-e gozar* or neighborhood leaders, who provide an accepted and formal interface between the community and the municipal district office. Experience suggests

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<sup>14</sup> In the case of USAID-funded project, to comply with USAID’s Environmental Procedures (22 CFR 216.3(3)) agencies have to draft a comprehensive *Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan* (EMMP) that will be applied during implementation.

that project-specific structures such as the CDCs may be successful, but often struggle to survive beyond the cycle of a project intervention.

The involvement of the community should be not only aimed at enhancing community support for the upgrading project, but also at attempting to build upon their representational structures for an effective participation in planning, implementation and maintenance of project. To this end, any team initiating a participative upgrading project should consult the documents produced by MUDA/KURP which provide extensive details on community consultation processes.<sup>15</sup>

Communities are rarely united or uniform, and a diversity of interests (owners vs. tenants, long-term residents vs. migrants, owners of commercial property vs. residents) will need to be reconciled at the negotiation/planning stage. Where many property owners are not resident, it may prove difficult to reach a consensus at the planning stage.

Experience suggests that contributions of labor and resources for waste collection, tertiary pipe connections, cleaning of drains, paving of sidewalks, street lighting and upkeep of greenery and trees, may be successful in many settlements and – depending on the project setup – should be negotiated where feasible.

- **Determine the appropriate levels of consultations**

The team should try to arrange consultations with as many members of community group/s as feasible, to discuss possible upgrading interventions. In the event that new community groups emerge, consideration should be given to their role and mode of operation beyond the project cycle, along with their capacity to sustain themselves (through applications for external funding, development of management or accounting skills etc).

Larger-scale interventions, such as roads, will require the consultation a wider range of stakeholders and the endorsement of the municipal authorities. Smaller-scale interventions, for example the paving of alleyways, may involve only residents on a cluster-by-cluster or street-by-street basis. The LARA experience has shown that Municipal engineers are eager to take part to these consultations and express their opinions.

Community group/s should be involved, as appropriate, in the establishment of project procedures, definition of objectives and responsibilities, so as to strengthen technical and organizational capacity. Sharing details on cost implications of service options (e.g. maintenance of covered drains, cleaning of paved areas, evacuation of septic tanks etc) would enable residents to make informed choices.

Project managers must keep in mind that community consultation can be time consuming and intensive and should make adequate provision in the work plan, recruitment plan and budget.

- **Try to avoid ‘community consultation fatigue’**

While it is important to ensure the active participation of community representatives in the project planning process, through convening of regular consultations, it is also important to keep in mind what can be called “community consultation fatigue” – whereby if over-consulted, people may lose interest and actually resist the project. Consultation fatigue can occur when particular groups in a community are consulted on a multitude of issues over time. This can become burdensome and

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<sup>15</sup> KURP/IDA 2008

frustrating – especially when stakeholders provide inputs in decision-making but feel that these have not been taken into account when designing the project. The team should make sure that community representatives are informed of why some inputs may have not been considered and what alternatives are in place.

- **Identify and engage female community groups or establish project-specific female councils**

For consultations related to upgrading, a case should be always made for engaging women’s groups to address any lack of gender balance in customary structures. Information collected by and from women can prove invaluable in planning previous upgrading interventions. See also section “The Role of Gender in Slum Upgrading”.

- **Ensure a wide spectrum of participation**

The levels of representation, modes of consultation and decision-making of existing structures are commonly influenced by the age of the settlement and the stability of its residents. Many newcomers and displaced citizens seeking for affordable accommodation are drawn to informal settlements. As a result, many residents are tenants and/or new arrivals. These groups may be less vocal or influential than long-term residents, but their views should be taken into account.

- **Establish effective systems of liaison between project staff and representatives assigned by the community group**

At the very start of the community consultation, the project team should establish clear modes of interaction with recognized figures from the community members, not only to facilitate the implementation of the project but also to provide any relevant information that is required throughout the project cycle. Because municipal structures can rarely afford to recruit community mobilizers and social workers – beyond the figures of the *wakil* – external projects can build their capacity by offering their services of community liaison to the municipal engineering teams.

## **2.5. Assessment of the General Urban Context**

At the initial stage of the project, the team will collate available baseline information from local authorities and NGOs. The lack of reliable data and coherent mapping information is well-known, nevertheless some valuable information may be drawn from the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) for its population data, the Afghanistan Research & Evaluation Unit (AREU) for its research on urban governance, the Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS), UNDP, Asia Foundation, Action contre la Faim (ACF), CARE-International, BRAC, ICRC etc. Reliable population figures are particularly hard to find.

The team will identify gaps in information and design a work plan for any further surveys and/or assessments that may be required, with details of scope, timeframe (for collection, data entry and analysis) and the human resources required (allowing for training of surveyors). It will define the operational modalities by which surveys might be conducted, i.e. whether by outsourced through a sub-contract or conducted internally by project staff; the scope and technical demands; and the likely costs. The team will consider any previous survey that has been undertaken in the same target areas and the methodologies used to take into account ‘survey fatigue’ among residents.

The SOW written for the survey will provide systems of oversight to ensure that all survey activities – whether in-project or outsourced – are conducted professionally, with respect to local customs (i.e. by female surveyors, where required) and in a manner that does not unduly raise expectations within the community.

- **Attempt to triangulate data**

Researchers and planners need to be wary of the fact that anecdotal information on any specific urban area in Afghanistan that is repeated sufficient times tends to become a “fact”. Ground research and data verifications are essential. Experience shows that it is important to share survey findings with all stakeholders – in particular with community groups and municipal district officers who have facilitated the process. These occasions will provide an essential feedback on the survey findings.

- **Collect information on physical/economic conditions to enable the design of effective upgrading interventions that address actual needs**

Prepare basic survey question lists that will permit the planning team to formulate its first area assessments and assumptions. Confine questions to what the team really needs to know. Bear in mind that questions raise expectations.

- **Design further surveys as necessary**

As the project proceeds, the team will identify further areas that need to be investigated and will need to make provisions for small but recurring survey initiatives – in line with the adage: “the more you learn, the less you know”.



**Figure 2: LARA/PHO Surveyor team in Jalalabad, 2011**

## 2.6. Involvement of Key Stakeholders in Participatory Mapping

Having undertaken a first assessment of the available written information on the city, the project team should organize a series of public consultations that involved Engineers from the Municipal Engineering Department, Heads of the Nahia (District) Offices, Head and Deputy of Provincial Department of Urban Development Affairs and engineers from the utilities departments. In Jalalabad, the LARA team successfully engaged also a pair of young engineers from MUDA whose involvement gave its fruits in terms of cross-fertilization of planning processes. Over and above institutional participants, the project team should consider involving also representatives of ISAF, UN-HABITAT and any other project active in urban areas. In LARA's experience, the Heads of Districts proved to be key informants in regards to what is going on in the city.

The main objective of the consultation workshops is to provide an opportunity for the participatory exchange and sharing of information between governmental institutions that are responsible for urban planning, city management and the utilities departments and implementing agencies that are investing in the city. By bringing together stakeholders to work side by side on city maps contributes to improve everybody's knowledge base and helps all participants to capture key urban development trends of the city. The team should seek balance between activities held at the Municipality and in the regional office of MUDA to ensure that both institutions feel engaged and taken in appropriate



**Figure 3: Participatory mapping initiative conducted in Jalalabad in September 2011**

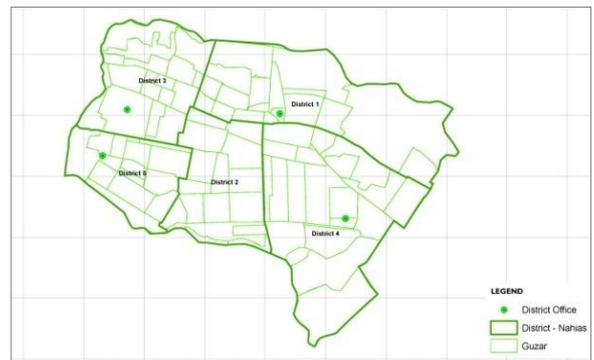
consideration. The project team members should alternate to facilitate the discussions, elicit clarifications from participants, and take notes and pictures of the proceedings.

The main activities consists of gathering all participants around a series of plotted aerial maps of the city to draw by hand the location of all known projects and activities, delineate the boundaries of Community Development Councils (CDCs), and write up names of landmarks and main roads. The Workshop outputs are a series of illustrated maps whose hand-drawn inputs can be quickly mapped in ArcGIS and shared with the authorities with the aim to build their information base. This type of workshop can be a real success both in terms of the wealth of information gathered and the enthusiastic participation of stakeholders.

While not strictly a training exercise, the participatory approach of such exercises constitutes an important contribution to the capacity development of the municipal engineers and particularly that of the MUDA engineers that the project may invite from Kabul. These kinds of initiatives help to prove that participatory urban planning is not only *doable* but also the most *efficient* way to gather information from different stakeholders and better understand city development trends.

- **Break the ice by mapping *nahia* and *gozar* boundaries**

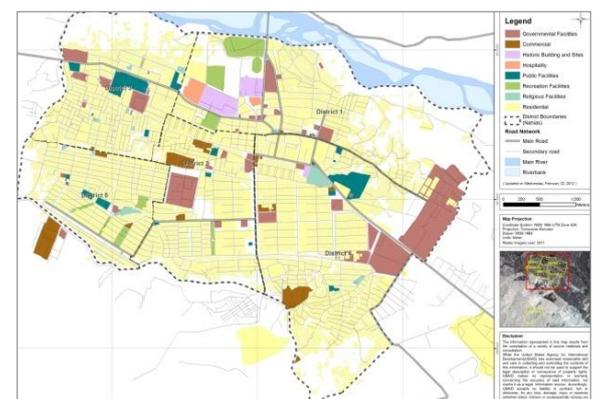
Participants are to be divided in small groups and provided a series of large aerial maps, one for each district. Heads of the Municipal District Offices (*Nahias*), municipal engineers and MUDA officials can work side by side to discuss and collectively determine the boundaries of each *Nahia*. During LARA’s earlier visits, the team had not been able to find any evidence of such a map being available to District officers or municipal engineers. This shortcoming has led to obvious inefficiencies in city management processes. As some participants acknowledged, the exercise marked in itself a significant step forward from the present information vacuum.



**Figure 4: Map of Nahia and gozar boundaries, 2011**

- **Gather stakeholders to map “who is doing what where”, i.e. recent and on-going projects in the city**

With the aim of improving the project’s understanding of what is going in the city, the team should organize a mapping workshop titled “Who is doing What Where” with relevant NGOs and implementing agencies, whereby recent, on-going and future project can be quickly mapped on a large-scale aerial photograph of the area in question.



**Figure 5: Land Use Map of Jalalabad, 2011**

The annotated map will depict useful information about activities, project sites, timeframes, impact, and even problems – improving information-sharing and coordination of governmental and donor-driven initiatives.

- **Ask stakeholders and other informants to map known land uses**

Participants are asked to identify known landmarks and then proceed to locate all known functions and land uses. These will be grouped in broad categories such as: residential, commercial, administrative, religious, educational, health, industrial, greenery, and water ways.

Additional land use categories and details can be added later in the process. Land Use Maps need to be regularly updated since they become obsolete the moment they are drafted. Additional sources of land use information are the tax mapping surveys conducted by donors and the municipality.

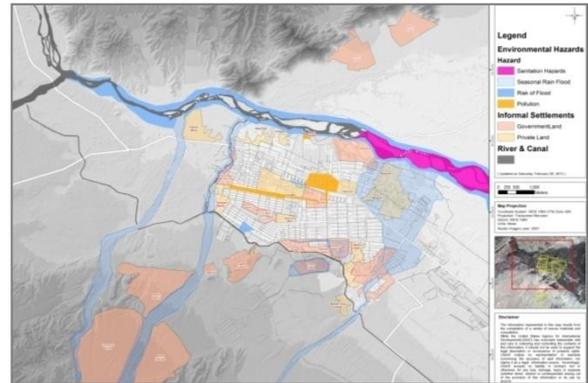
- **Map environmental hazards**

Despite their limited outreach resources, the Afghan National Disaster Management Agency (ANDMA) proved to be an invaluable source of information for the LARA project on recurring environmental threats, seasonal flood hazards, and pollution affecting the city of Jalalabad.

The resulting map can be overlapped with a map of the informal settlements to verify what kind of hazards concern which settlement. Hazards are one of the key criteria for the selection of informal settlements deemed appropriate for upgrading. The map will inform the selection process.

- **Map water and electricity infrastructure**

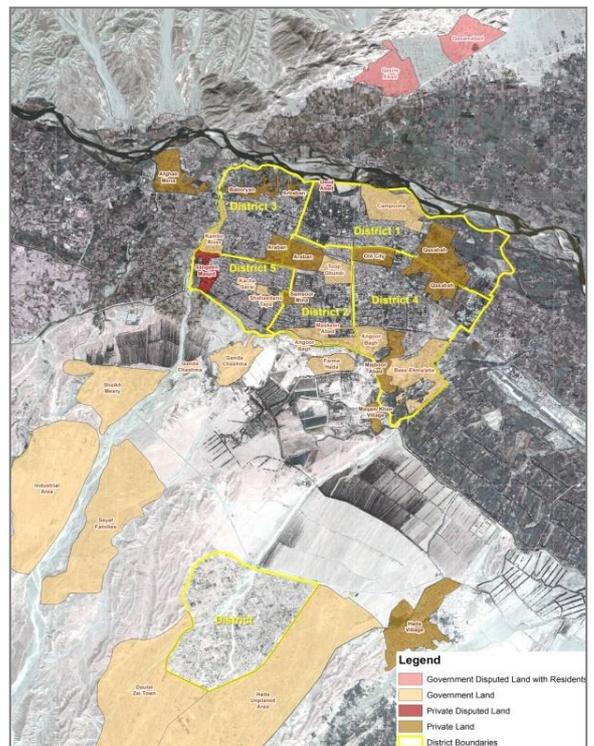
Once mapped the infrastructure, it is important to superpose its findings with a map depicting all known informal settlements. It can be surprising to find out how blurred is the distinction, in terms of infrastructure and services, between formal and informal areas. Many informal areas have in fact received “emergency” investments by a variety of donor-funded projects and NGOs. Also, depending on the social connections that residents have, they might have been able to successfully lobby for interventions by the utilities departments.



**Figure 6: Map of Environmental Hazards in Jalalabad, 2012**



**Figure 7: Map of water supply network in Jalalabad, 2011**



**Figure 8: Map of informal settlements in Jalalabad, categorized according to their known land ownership status, 2011**

- **Identify informal settlements and their occupancy status**

Having “broken the ice” and developed a degree of trust with local stakeholders, the next steps is to address a more controversial topic: the identification of informal settlements and their land tenure status. Mapping may need to be followed up by site visits, consultation with *nahia* officials and GPS verifications. Categories include government and private land – with appropriate identification of disputed areas. Conflicting opinions about property and history of the settlements are bound to emerge – revealing how subjective this matter can be.

This map will allow the team to enter one of the most crucial phases of the project: the selection of the settlement(s) that will be object of the upgrading efforts.

## **2.7. Selection of Target Settlement(s)**

Finding ways to accommodate informal settlements into the mainstream “planned” city has been acknowledged as an essential part of the process of urban reconstruction. The recognition of land rights, the recommended relaxation of zoning prescriptions and codes, and finally the suggested simplification of procedures can help to overturn the present situation. However, a bigger challenge lies ahead: how to actually define where to start from. Reaching a consensus on which should be the most appropriate criteria for the selection of settlements deemed appropriate for upgrading has represented a challenge that has seemingly barred all decision-making and well-meaning scaling-up initiatives – if we ignore for a moment the issue of resources.

Having acknowledged that expropriation is unrealistic and socially undesirable, and the provision of social housing to all informal dwellers is unaffordable (apart from questionable), then it is evident that all existing informal areas will have to be considered for integration in the city. Even the worst cases, including the highly contentious settlements on grabbed land, will be at some point absorbed by the growing city. Only some remote and ill-advised land partition developed for speculative purposes might never see the light of day – all the others will continue to attract dwellers seeking affordable housing and gradually consolidate themselves.<sup>16</sup>

In selecting areas for informal or unplanned upgrading, priority should be given to areas that are deemed appropriate according to a set of conditions agreed upon by the key stakeholders. The members of the Technical Working Group tasked by the leadership of MUDA and GDMA to draft a *National upgrading Policy for Informal Settlements* in 2012 discussed the applicability of criteria. It was agreed that while the selection and prioritization should be uniform across the country, urban contexts differ, as well as the availability of data required for a criterion to become operational; and the respective relevance of the criteria varies accordingly. These can only be ranked locally.

It is also important to recognize that a narrow focus on the costs of extending the service infrastructure to settlements in poorly accessible or relatively hazardous sites may introduce exclusionary mechanisms that discriminate against the poor. While tools from Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) are applicable, it is challenging to attribute monetary values to benefits associated for example with the reduction of environmental hazards or the protection of the urban landscape. This also calls for a determination of which would be the appropriate scale for CBA; whether settlement, city, province or country. Alternatives to upgrading (e.g. relocation) have costs too, for the region, the city

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<sup>16</sup> Soave, 2013

and the household. In a prioritization process those costs should be considered and integrated with an analysis of city-level spills over – both monetary and non – from upgrading investments.<sup>17</sup>

Also, when considering lack of services, the level of investments in service infrastructure may not reflect actual *access* to service by vulnerable residents in a settlement. Thus, actual access to essential service at the settlement and household level appears a viable indicator of relative vulnerability.

- **Adopt clear and fair criteria for the selection of informal settlements deemed appropriate for upgrading**

The criteria according to which the authorities will select and prioritize settlements that deserve government support for upgrading and regularization should focus on the following aspects – some of which makes the settlements more “deserving”, others make upgrading and regularization comparatively more straightforward:

- **Prominent age of the settlement** (the older, the more justifiable; but the younger, the more planning adjustments can be made)
- **Settlements with comparatively higher degree of compliance with applicable land-use regulations** (which makes the planning approval process more expedite);
- **Proximity to trunk infrastructure** (thus reducing urbanization costs);
- **Settlements with undeveloped connection to urban infrastructure networks and inadequate social services** (making dwellers more deserving of assistance);
- **Settlements on flat uncomplicated areas** (it must be noted that this may encourage low-density unchecked urban sprawl);
- **Settlements safe from natural hazards and in locations where occupancy does not constitute an environmental threat** (floods, landslides etc) that cannot be solved by the application of technology or appropriate investments;
- **Better established settlement and more integrated with the city** (even if there will be less land adjustment opportunities, as opposed to a settlement “in the making”)
- **Settlements whose upgrading has positive impact on growth and development of the whole city** (namely along the so-called “development corridors” identified by the City Plans);
- **Settlements whose upgrading preserves Afghanistan’s historical and cultural heritage;**
- **Low-income urban settlements with limited access to livelihoods opportunities in the city** (excluding emergency camps, which often require relocation to a viable alternative site);
- **Settlements with well-established community organizations and social networks** (which will facilitate consultations and negotiations);
- **Settlements where municipal governance dynamics support successful upgrading initiatives.**

In the context of upgrading activities that support land rights regularization activities, further prioritization criteria can be added. These include:

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<sup>17</sup> LARA, 2012

- **Settlements where recognition of occupancy rights is relatively simpler and more expedite**, with a higher percentage of legal deeds or customary titles (“low-hanging fruit”);
  - **Community support towards the regularization process;**
  - **Settlement with reasonable physical access** (for survey purposes);
  - **Settlement with a sufficient level of security** to permit the peaceful and expeditious collection of data, as well as carrying out the registration of properties.
- **Identify and agree upon project boundaries**

Project boundaries should be identified at an early stage through meetings with institutional stakeholders and the *nahia* authorities. Informal settlements may comprise of one or more gozars, with different land ownership characteristics, planning standards and level of services. Clear project boundaries will avoid future misunderstandings and disappointment.

## **2.8. Assessment of the Physical, Socio-Economic and Environmental Context of Selected Settlement(s)**

Through its counterparts, the team will assess the existence of any relevant baseline data, documentation and evaluations related to living conditions within the target area, after which it will identify appropriate survey sample on the basis of the population of the target settlement.

- **Conduct a Baseline Socio-Economic and Housing Survey**

In order to measure the results of mapping and upgrading activities, it is recommended that a baseline, Household Socio-economic Survey be undertaken in the Target Areas. The general focus of such baselines may cover the following:

- Household profile and structure
- Household history (migrations and movements)
- Property arrangements
- Land use and value
- Housing status & conditions:
- Infrastructure & services
- Housing and property rights
- Economic profile
- Basic health of the household
- Access to and sources of information
- Issues & concerns affecting the household
- Future plans

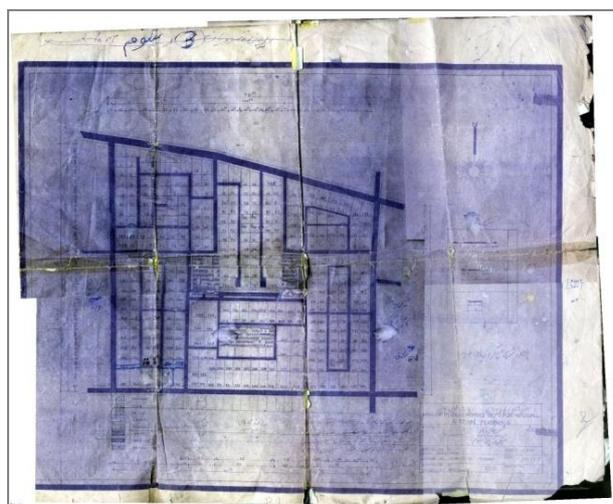
By measuring the results of the baseline before upgrading activities another (or others) after these activities, a picture of project impacts can be developed which can be used to refine future upgrading and mapping activities as well as alert government and other actors of potential interventions in the Target Area or other areas.

- **Identify and digitize any detailed plans that have been produced in the past for the target area**

The team will have to work with the Engineering department in the Municipality, as well as with the Regional office of MUDA to find any plans that may have been drafted in earlier years.

## 2.9. Community Consultations

Extensive guidance on this topic is provided by the Community Consultation Manual developed in 2008 by MUDA/KURP<sup>18</sup>. Essentially the planning team and community mobilizers will assess the existing representational mechanisms (*wakils*, *shuras*, *maleks* and CDCs) and conduct a series of meetings to introduce the scope of the project and its modalities for planning, design and implementation, followed by intensive consultations aimed at identifying the key problems and priority needs.



**Figure 9: Plan-e Tasfili of Araban, Jalalabad (1967)**

Regarding whether to rely upon *wakils* and existing *shuras* or setting up a new CDC via project-supported elections, one should bear in mind that if existing community structure may not always be representative, those set up specifically for a project might not enjoy the authority needed and/or might dissolve naturally when the project is concluded.

- **Identify community leaders and revive or establish adequate representational structures and mechanisms**

Regarding whether to rely upon *wakils* and existing *shuras* or setting up a new CDC via project-supported elections, one should bear in mind that if existing community structure may not always be representative, those set up specifically for a project might not enjoy the authority needed and/or might dissolve naturally when the project is concluded.

- **Manage expectations**

During the consultations, the team needs to be very clear about the scope of the project. This will determine what priorities can be addressed within its established objectives without raising false expectations. In this context, it is often useful to be just as clear about what cannot be done by project implementers. This reduces the risk of misunderstandings leading to raised expectations that cannot be met.

- **Identify problems and priority needs**

Community members are usually very vocal about their problems; the difficulty lies in jointly unpacking a problem so that it can be properly addressed. Discussing issues over a map is usually the most effective way to reach an adequate understanding of the problems and their root causes. It is important that needs and opinions from a representative cross-section of the community are heard – including women, teenagers and the elderly. During the consultation that LARA conducted in Jalalabad, complaints usually converged towards three/four priorities: solid waste, street conditions, water supply and sanitation.

- **Negotiate level of upgrading and services to be provided**

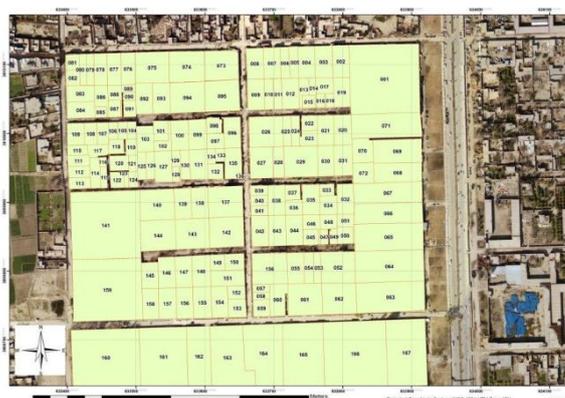
<sup>18</sup> KURP/IDA 2008

The upgrading team shall jointly prioritize works based on a realistic assessment of technical issues (i.e. cost/benefit of specific service runs) and socio-economic priorities (such as for example poor living conditions in particular areas).

In projects that allow them from a contractual point of view, identify alternative strategies for financing of upgrading, including grants, loans or subsidies to the community.

## 2.10. Digitization of the Area from a Satellite Image

Following on from the preliminary activities noted above, prior to the upgrading phase, the team will have to develop a base map that will serve for planning and in situ upgrading. It will do so by digitizing aerial imagery (Google Earth may be a useful starting point). This base map will provide a very good idea of cluster layouts and parcel numbers – bearing in mind that a margin of error of 25% needs to be factored in to allow for any property subdivisions or merges that are not visible with the naked eye.



**Figure 10: Digitization of ASGP's maps of Raig-e-Shah Mard Khan, Jalalabad, 2012**

This first cut map will provide the following base data:

- Number of parcels per cluster
  - Pattern of roads, streets and alleys
  - Land use
  - Average size / median size of parcels
  - Location of public facilities
  - Number of plots that do not have direct access to street or road – other than through other parcels or narrow alleys
- **Analyse the maps to identify properties and buildings that might be affected by upcoming planning improvements and upgrading works**

Based on the information collected, the planning team can map properties that are likely to be affected by interventions such as street widening, removal of bottlenecks or laying of drains.

There are specific cases, where expropriation and relocation are necessary in the name of public interest. Through more in-depth consultations, the team will have to try to identify the whereabouts of absentee owners that might need to be reached. The team will have to ensure that the community group arbitrates on behalf of absentees owners with whom contact cannot be made, and that a deadline is set by which such owners should come forward, before the group acts on their behalf (with endorsement of municipal district staff.<sup>19</sup> In any case, the team will have to ensure contingencies for cases where absentees might re-appear during the course of upgrading and request design changes.

<sup>19</sup> In accordance to the 'Land Expropriation Law' (Official Gazette No. 794): Article 20: (1) The owner or user of the land subject to expropriation, or their legal representative shall be notified three months in advance concerning land expropriation and the

The planning team will estimate how many properties would be affected and will start discuss the availability of a pool of plots in an alternative location that can be assigned to those who may have to be relocated (experience shows that this might range from 2% to 15% of properties – depending on the layout of the settlement).

In any case, the team will have to delegate to the Municipality the provision for a transparent and equitable system of compensation in cases where property might be affected by upgrading. All cases of compulsory purchase will have to be documented and registered with the municipal district office and KM department of Expropriation.

### **2.11. Participatory Area Needs Assessment**

The team will conduct a series of community workshops to solicit a participatory diagnostic (“Planning Clinics”) of the problems and concerns of the community. The team will use large aerial maps printed for the occasion. When encountering particular problems, the team will proceed to engage residents in site visits and spot verifications of problems. The results will be shared with both the community and the municipal authorities.

### **2.12. Identification of Opportunities for Improvements**

On the basis of the aerial imagery, the team can easily identify those clusters where access is a challenge – particularly in terms of accessing properties at the heart of a densely-built cluster. Municipal engineers and the community will improve the road reserves by identifying where street widening would have a lesser impact on plots and buildings. It will have to done on a street-by-street basis with an aerial map and site visits conducted jointly with community representatives. Site visits can follow to determine whether there are opportunities for street widening or private settlements between neighbors to demolish protruding structures, such as toilets, garages, shops etc. Community consultations organized with street residents will establish if neighbors living along that particular street are willing to demolish their boundary walls or might affect an inhabited building.

While it is widely accepted that a contribution of a band of land that is less than 1,5m deep does not require compensation, there appears to be nothing in writing about this. The authorities will have to establish a reasonable depth and/or plot percentage under which no compensation is required. Clearly, smaller plots – most often occupied by the poorest – are at disadvantage if compared to their neighbors. This will have to be adequately taken into account.

Where possible, planners will favor the opening of new streets between property boundaries, to service two rows of properties and share the loss of expropriated land, rather than split a property, that would lower its (re)development value. Streets may be widened on both sides to equally share the burden of the improvement, but where a property owner (or a row of property owners) on one side should prefer to compensate the one(s) on the opposite side of the street to avoid loss of their

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price thereof. (...). (2) Where the person concerned or his legal representative did not appear in accordance with paragraph (1) of the present article to complete the expropriation process the property shall be valued in his absence and the price thereof shall be deposited with the bank in the interest trust account and the plan shall be implemented. (5) Regulation for better implementation of the present law can be adopted.

land/building, this can be mediated by the planners and the street may be widened accordingly, only one side.<sup>20</sup>

- **Repeat community negotiations sessions and do not underestimate the importance of setting successful upgrading examples for future replication**

The community negotiation workshops arranged by the LARA team to negotiate street widening, have had limited success also because not all home owners could attend the meetings and tenants cannot take decisions that affect properties. To ensure a certain degree of success, these consultation processes need to be repeated over time. *Wakils* present at the meetings pointed out that it would be easier to obtain people's buy-in once the project was on-going and they could see the benefits with their own eyes. Another helpful strategy is to arrange for site visits to projects other cities so that people can see what results can be achieved and what options are more successful.



**Figure 11: The *wakils* of Araban and municipal engineers of Jalalabad visiting the areas rehabilitated by the KURP project in Kabul (September 2012)**

- **Identify as soon as possible any vacant land in the area**

The team will rapidly identify any vacant governmental or private land that might be used to negotiate the construction of much-needed public facilities such as schools and clinics. The problem is that as soon as people are informed that there will be an upgrading project in the area, land values are bound to rise and property owners (or claimants) will immediately start to build on their properties. In no time there will be no vacant land in the area.

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<sup>20</sup> More details on the notion of flexible planning standards is discussed in: Soave, 2013

## 2.13. Development of Community Action Plans

The identification of improvement opportunities will be followed by the development of a Plan<sup>21</sup> that incorporates the information requirements of a conventional *Plan-e Tasfili* (Detailed Plan) and provides a justification for any variance from older plans that may still have legal validity<sup>22</sup>. A Detailed Plan will have to be endorsed by the Municipal Engineering Department and the regional Department of Urban Development Affairs (DUDA).

The next phase will have to address the challenges of preparing detailed plans for settlements that are already established – a practice that is rather uncommon even to this date. ‘Community Action Plans’ (CAPs) should be developed specifically with the local authorities in mind as the Client. It should thus present the information and drawings essential for effortless decision-making over the future of each settlement in a clear manner. The document will be concise and will reflect reality and realistic development options. LARA, for example, structured its ‘Community Action Plans’ (CAPs) document as follows:

- **Settlement Location & General Overview** (location within the city, coordinates and settlement map)
- **Gozar Map and information** (boundaries, contact names, estimated population, area, estimated population density, estimated parcels, estimated Households, No. of schools, No. of Clinics, No. of Mosques, No. of businesses)
- **Existing Land Use Map** (color-coded and depicting areas of residential, commercial, agriculture, vacant, public facilities, admin/Gov. Offices and religious use – total areas and percentage of the total)
- **Existing Access Map** (color-coded by main roads, vehicular streets, pedestrian streets/alleyways)
- **Proposed Land Use Plan** (color-coding as above, but indicating future land use considerations and recommendations)
- **Proposed Access Improvement Plan** (color-coded by main roads, vehicular streets, pedestrian streets/alleyways): depicting (1) what should be expected in 10 years time (i.e. end result); (2) what will be implemented by the project; (3) what is to be expected by the municipal authorities
- **Urban Development Guidelines:** General considerations, access, public facilities, buildings, (key concerns, key guiding principles, recommendations)
- **Community Action Plan** (table of prioritized activities, timeframe/phasing, location and institution/agency responsible for implementation)
- **Proposed Intervention** (by donor agency, NGO, institution)
- **Annexes:**
  - Settlement Background Information
  - Priority needs & Priorities for Action: Community Diagnosis of Key Problems,
  - Opportunities & Priorities for Action (land use & zoning, recognition of property occupancy, physical investments, Services & facilities)
  - Stakeholders

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<sup>21</sup> These may be named differently under each project (e.g. ‘Community Action Plan’, ‘Improvement Plan’, ‘Local Area Plan’, ‘Community Plan’), but the concept remains the same.

<sup>22</sup> In one of the target area in which the LARA project was working, an older plan from 1976 was identified – part of which was never implemented.

- **In liaison with the community group and municipal staff discuss the occupation of public domain where it affects common interest**

Having identified effective systems of inter-community negotiation, whether through customary structures, community councils, *nahia* officers and the municipality, the team will encourage the community to define the means to put pressure on specific community members whose property encroachments on public land affects the alignment of streets or network infrastructure. Experience shows that the municipal authorities feel often powerless and are unwilling to confront even the most blatant case of individuals who have encroached on the public domain because of their perceived influence. The team will act as a “broker” of interests (often conflicting) between the community and the municipal authorities.

- **Seek community support to address and resolve property disputes as they arise**

It may be necessary to work with the community representatives to define community dispute resolutions processes that might be applied in the event of disputes or compulsory purchase (i.e. validation of proof of ownership, arbitration on behalf of absentee owners, property readjustments etc). The team might also establish systems for joint (community-project) screening of property claims, where required, through verification of deeds, etc.

- **Build support by involving the authorities in each step of the planning process**

So as to avoid resistance or disagreements over the proposed interventions and planning recommendations, the planning team will need to involve the local authorities since the start of the process. Their technical staff may attend community consultations and take part to joint planning sessions.

- **Make use of the planning document to advocate for the application of planning standards relevant to informal settlements**

International experience and practice shows that planning standards drafted for new developments are inapplicable to existing settlements. Mainstream planning standards would imply:

- The demolition and compensation of significant private property, with negative implications on livelihoods and the urban economy;
- The distribution of new land to relocate residents – although land is unavailable at the scale required (over 50% of present Kabul and 30% of the area within Jalalabad municipal boundaries is considered informal)
- Investments in infrastructure that are way beyond the present capacity of urban sector institutions and Utilities Departments.

The document should thus illustrate how for example more flexible “zoning” would better reflect the need of the population – accepting alternative public facilities and lesser percentages of greenery in areas that have already been densely urbanized, and recognizing *de facto* land occupation and current land use. The Access and Infrastructure Plans should introduce the notions of acceptable and affordable “minimum” planning and infrastructure/utilities standards and “incremental” improvements.

## 2.14. Endorsement of Planning Efforts & Upgrading Investments and Agreement on Future Actions

A Plan endorsed by the local and national Authorities allows the donor agency / NGO / investor to proceed with its work. The endorsement may represent only a first step towards the improvement of the area in question. Depending on the scope of the proposed Action Plan and the recommendations, these might entail further actions – beyond the investments committed by the entity that submitted the Plan. The Action Plan will have to spell out which stakeholders would be responsible for which interventions and with what timeframe and resources. Future actions that may lie beyond the timeframe and the capacity of the project are for example the negotiation of significant street widening, the acquisition of land for public facilities or greenery, or the implementation of minimal land adjustment (or the negotiations of “planning gains”) with the owners of large plots.

## 2.15. Design of Upgrading Works

The team will have to take into account of community-implemented upgrading works (usually on surface drains) that have taken place in some areas, and integrate or upgrade, as appropriate. In some cases, the community may want to contribute to the cost of specific enhancements to the designed scheme.

For the design of the upgrading works, the team will have to conduct a detailed topographical survey – most probably through a specialized sub-contractor – of all roads, streets and alleyways.

When designing new drains, the engineers designing the surface drains will have to take into account of the constraints posed by alleyways and street levels which may be considerably higher than the courtyards that they serve. The condition of drains that lie downstream from the area will need to be assessed in advance, so as to ensure effective flow. To solve particular drainage problems in flat areas, the upgrading team may need to take into consideration installing additional septic tanks, soak-away facilities or upgrading of existing cesspools – bearing in mind that these will have to be maintained by the users. Any *hammam* or mosques in the area will also have to be carefully mapped. Because of the significant flow of waste water that users generate the project will need to ensure that they are well connected to drains and water channels.

Where possible rely on open drains, to reduce the risk of blockages and facilitate cleaning. Culverts may be used to cover drains for culverts. Where feasible, establish appropriate levels of community contributions for drainage upgrading, to foster a sense of ownership and ensure maintenance. Link waste collection schemes to drainage upgrading, in order to ensure that blockages can be minimized and dealt with by the community, where necessary with support from municipal sanitation department. Take account of ongoing increases in domestic water usage when designing drains. In open areas that permit this, the team can identify ways to dispose of waste water through transpiration channels or planting areas.

- **Rely upon relevant and context-specific expertise**

While many Afghan professionals have excellent expertise in road construction and drainage works, experience working in unplanned and densely-built urban areas is scarcer. In order not to re-invent the wheel, lessons should be learned from recent and on-going upgrading initiatives undertaken by UN-

Habitat, KURP, AKTC and KM. Project reports may reveal alternatives and approaches worth exploring during project design and implementation.

The project will have to define parameters for the pre-qualification for bidders, taking into account successful implementation of similar physical upgrading works, availability of skilled staff and appropriate equipment, sufficient working capital or lines of credit etc. The team will have to define the terms of a contract that specifies deliverables/outputs within an agreed timeframe, sets out relevant specifications and systems for supervision, and identify specific operational provisions (i.e. limits on use of mechanical equipment), liabilities (i.e. for damage to property) and contingencies.

- **Negotiate realistic standards and specifications**

Certain planning standards – especially for land use and road width – are largely inapplicable in well-established informal settlements without causing major disruption and loss of property. The concept of accepting minimum standards and incremental upgrading ought to be negotiated in advance. Depending on the scale of the project and budget availability, the engineering team might have to make choices that impact on “upgrading standards”, by adapting project specifications such as limiting the width of paved streets, type of drainage channels, negotiating community contributions towards – for example the paving of sidewalks.

In any case, technical standards and specifications for road and drainage channels will need to be endorsed by the Municipal Engineering Department. Efforts need to be made to advocate for the adoption of the notion of “incremental upgrading”.

- **Factor in physical and environmental constraints**

Costs of implementation of upgrading works are likely to be higher in closely-knit and irregular urban fabric, where for example, there may be limits on vehicular access for delivery and removal of materials, or manual excavation may be required in certain cases. Disruption of existing drains or closure of streets – even on a temporary basis – could have a negative impact on adjoining areas, where homes could be affected. Another difficulty is the storage of construction material in densely-built areas.

Many self-built homes and boundary walls in informal settlements may be in a precarious state of construction and repair. This makes them vulnerable to damage during the course of upgrading, particularly during excavations for drains along adjoining alleyways. With the possibility of damage to poorly built homes as a direct result of upgrading, it is vital that a workable strategy for emergency repair be in place, along with a contingency fund.

- **Identify appropriate scale of intervention for the project**

Depending on the infrastructure conditions of the selected settlements, the availability of funds and contextual-constraints (topography, living conditions/needs, planning status, overlap with other projects etc), a range of options can be considered – see Table 1 on the next page.

**Table 1: Options for upgrading in relation to the scale of the intervention**

SCALE OF UPGRADING INTERVENTION	POSSIBLE OPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS		
		COSTS	TIME	COOPERATION / SYNERGIES
MAJOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Primary and secondary roads surfacing (20-60m) (grading, gravelling, partitioning, asphaltting)</li> <li>▪ Primary water supply network</li> <li>▪ Sewage network</li> <li>▪ Primary power supply network</li> <li>▪ Municipal landfill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Very substantive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lengthy design</li> <li>▪ Complicated endorsement process by local authorities</li> <li>▪ May imply displacement of people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NSP/MRRD</li> <li>▪ MUDA</li> <li>▪ Provincial Council</li> <li>▪ Municipality</li> <li>▪ Utilities Departments</li> <li>▪ Ministry of Public Works</li> </ul>
MODERATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Single/combination of:</li> <li>▪ Gabion walls and retaining walls (flood protection in flood-prone areas)</li> <li>▪ Storm water channels</li> <li>▪ Culverts at road intersections</li> <li>▪ Street grading or paving (RCC)</li> <li>▪ Repairs and extension to existing water networks</li> <li>▪ Repairs and extension of existing power supply network</li> <li>▪ Water wells</li> <li>▪ Surfacing of pedestrian walkways</li> <li>▪ Sanitation improvement</li> <li>▪ Garbage collection &amp; disposal</li> <li>▪ Steps &amp; staircases (where topography is an issue)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Variable depending on scale</li> <li>▪ Can be partially managed through Community Grants (useful lessons learned from UN-HABITAT)</li> <li>▪ Sustainability needs to be factored in – particularly in regards to garbage collection)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manageable but will need extensive efforts in engineering surveying, design and supervision</li> <li>▪ Requires negotiation with local authorities for endorsement</li> <li>▪ Based upon intensive consultation with local authorities and community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Municipal Engineering &amp; Sanitation Departments</li> <li>▪ Water Supply Authority</li> <li>▪ Electricity Department</li> <li>▪ UN-HABITAT, through its CDCs</li> <li>▪ USAID/SWSS for water supply and sanitation</li> <li>▪ USAID/RAMP-UP for roads, channels, culverts and garbage collection</li> <li>▪ MRRD/NSP for flood protection and wells</li> </ul>
MINOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hand pumps</li> <li>▪ Repairs to storm water channels</li> <li>▪ Improvement of street safety (speed bumps, pedestrian crossings, signage etc)</li> <li>▪ Introduction of garbage skips/dumpsters</li> <li>▪ Water, Sanitation &amp; Hygiene (WASH) outreach initiatives</li> <li>▪ Public information awareness (garbage, sanitation, road safety)</li> <li>▪ Greenery</li> <li>▪ Eliciting residents to install a light bulb at their gate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited (with equally limited impact)</li> <li>▪ Less engineering effort</li> <li>▪ Can be community-led and managed through Community Grants and/or Community Savings funds</li> <li>▪ May raise questions of sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires total community buy in and leadership</li> <li>▪ Limited timeframe but in some cases needs considerable of supervision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ USAID/SWSS for WASH project</li> <li>▪ RAMP-UP for info campaigns</li> <li>▪ Local NGOs</li> </ul>

KURP and UN-Habitat, for example, have developed component-based “packages” through local contractors and community groups<sup>23</sup>. These determine levels of intervention and services to be negotiated for each settlement.

<sup>23</sup> KURP Packages include: Water Supply, sanitation, Solid Waste Management, Access Roads, Hill-side steps, Drainage, Street Lighting (from: (Ahad 2007, 7-8)

- **Address settlement-specific problems in synergy with the wider urban context**

To complement the upgrading of individual informal settlements, citywide infrastructure and services need to be extended, upgraded or scaled-up. These include water and electricity networks, but also the availability of landfill sites for the disposal of higher volumes of solid waste. A high priority for new settlements located at a distance from the city center, is also investments in transport services and road and street infrastructure. Upgrading cannot happen in a “vacuum” – even the smallest investments need to fit within existing networks and planned city-scale development.

- **Apply “conditionalities” where possible**

International practice shows that investments in urban upgrading ought to be conditional on a high degree of participation and decision making by the settlement dwellers themselves, whose representational structures should be recognized as critical partners with local authorities.<sup>24</sup> Upgrading may also be triggered by conditional financial investments by the community.

As a case in point, Eng Akram Salam, Director of CRA, recommends putting forward the notion of “conditional upgrading” during any preliminary community meetings. If applicable, conditionalities could be adopted for example before starting the construction of road, whereby the community could be asked for example to manage solid waste collection and disposal system, or as per AKTC’s experience in the Old City of Kabul employing unskilled labor to level streets and dig drainage channels. In the case of the LARA project, the community mobilizers negotiated street widening.

- **Negotiate the prioritization of upgrading activities**

Upgrading activities will have to be prioritized in consultation with the community representatives and municipal engineers – in keeping with scope of the project and budget constraints. Criteria might include particular street conditions and how these affect residents, the severity of environmental hazards, proximity to public services, collective accord for street widening, proximity to main roads vs. distance, number of residents served etc. Prioritization efforts should embrace the notion of “incremental” upgrading and phasing of investments. Standards may be upgraded in the long-term as conditions improve, revenues can be successfully invested and community gradually organize themselves better.

- **Identify options for access improvements and street widening**

In densely-populated informal settlements, the issue of access is critical. Many homes are accessed on foot by means of narrow alleyways and sometimes only through rights of way. There is growing pressure for vehicular access to homes, where feasible. The team should hold specific community workshops to jointly identify appropriate options for upgrading of alleyways/streets that include street widening, re-alignments or removal of encroachments, building steps, and construction of retaining walls.

Understandably, the authorities see road-widening as one of the key condition to accepting the regularization of informal settlements. Outcomes depend on advocacy and careful negotiation. Despite goodwill, the reality is that, if given the choice, many residents – particularly those with

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<sup>24</sup> Millennium Project, “Urban development: promoting jobs, upgrading slums, and developing alternatives to new slum formation”; Excerpt on urban development from Chapter 5 (UN n.d., 2)

smaller plots – choose to put up with their narrow access rather than demolish their boundary walls, rebuild them at their own expenses and relinquish a section of their properties for a wider street in front of their homes.<sup>25</sup> There is also an understandable element of mistrust towards projects that might not fulfill their promises. So, if the project timeframe allows, the best way to persuade people is to demonstrate by example the advantages of (limited) street widening – starting from those property owners that accept the arrangement.

Where street widening negotiations proceed successfully, the team will have to assess the possible impact of vehicles in densely-knitted residential areas, including provisions for parking and vehicle U-turns. The planning team will have to determine specifications for pedestrian alleys and may explore ways of securing community contributions to these tertiary-level access interventions, especially for excavation and earth removal.

- **Address differences of levels between newly paved streets and properties**

Levels of alleyways are generally higher than the adjoining homes, due to the accumulation of waste and debris. This can cause problems of flooding of courtyards during the winter, and contribute to subsidence of the foundations of homes. On a street-by-street basis, the engineers will have to solve changes in levels by introducing steps and ramps to facilitate access for bicycles and wheelbarrows, and support for owners to adjust sills of (or add steps to) entrance doors.

- **Take steps to minimize clearances or compulsory purchase of property**

The planning team will have to map critical areas and plots that might be affected by re-alignments or other changes, and consult with owners and community group/s to assess viable options. The walking distance between the houses at the center of the clusters of properties and a vehicular street will have to be measured to ensure that it is acceptable for people and for the municipality.

If any demolition is necessary in the name of public interest, negotiations will have to be conducted in the presence of municipal representatives and community elders. The ultimate design will have to take into account the needs for emergency access, for fire engines ambulances, small garbage trucks etc but apply flexible planning and engineering standards to minimize the need for clearances (turning curves, standard road or sidewalk widths, sections of drains etc).

Where compulsory purchase of property for access upgrading is required, this should be handled by the municipal district office following the established legal procedures.

- **Document existing structural problems prior to the works**

Documentation is useful for the purposes of designing and estimating the costs of protective measures, and limiting the risks of any false claims by owners or contractors.

## **2.16. Enhancement of the Role of Gender in Slum Upgrading**

Settlement upgrading generally affects gender differently because women, men, children and the elderly tend to have different roles, responsibilities, needs and perceptions. Experience has shown that

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<sup>25</sup> It is generally accepted that owners are not entitled to compensation when asked to relinquish up an area of up to 10 m<sup>2</sup> of land, if in a strip no wider than 1,5 metre – but depending on the scale of the area, dwellers may be asked to relinquish more.

making a conscious effort to incorporate the gender dimensions of slum upgrading results in a more successful initiative.

Women play a vital role in urban upgrading, not only because many households are headed by women, but also because the lack of basic services such as water and electricity may impact them differently in terms of their ability to undertake household chores and home-based economic activities. Dependence from others, long distances from the city centre, social and safety upon restrictions to travel alone, limited access to public facilities, intermittent utilities supply and poor information all have an impact general wellness, nutrition, health and hygiene.

It is thus important to ensure that women have access to the participative assessments and negotiations that will shape the future of their communities. They also have an important role in conveying public information awareness among women's groups and neighbors. Another aspect to be kept into consideration is that women are most frequently the ones who save money within their households. These skills can be applied on a settlement-wide scale to run a community savings scheme to be utilized to fund small repairs, greenery, paving of side-walks, installation of cluster-based septic tanks or hand pumps, maintenance of project outcomes, door-to-door waste collection systems.

The broader issue of gender, and the resulting vulnerability, is also a factor. While both men and women living in impoverished urban areas face hardships, women – especially widows – are particularly vulnerable. They are more likely to be victims of marginalization, violence or subject to cultural norms that do not give them the same legal rights or status as a man.<sup>26</sup> Lack of information may make them feel insecure in dealing with bureaucratic procedures – especially in those more conservative contexts where public offices are dominated by male staff, such as for example the Jalalabad Municipality. This affects their ability to partake to decision-making within a community that will affect the future of their families. In addition, women are more vulnerable to poverty because they often have limited control over their properties and assets outside of marriage or within family ties. From a tenure perspective, even if a woman may have provided the resources to buy land or build a house, it is rare that the property is in her name on the property documents. Women's lack of information on available credit programs as well as limited collateral also affects their access to credit. Women-headed households with children may also encounter limitations in their ability to conduct self-help housing improvements or contribute to community work. These issues must be taken into consideration when planning or implementing an urban upgrading program – particularly if this implies a certain degree of relocation of households to other areas.

A last issue that needs to be taken into consideration is that settlements that have gone through upgrading usually experience a rise in property values. Higher prices of land and housing rental compared to the earning capacity of women may imply that women-headed households may not be able to benefit from processes of “gentrification” and may be forced to leave the settlement to seek more affordable shelter.

## Recommendations

- **Disaggregate survey data by gender**

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<sup>26</sup> Cities Alliance n.d.

In urban communities it is important to look separately at the impact of improvements on female-headed households. Property data should be also broken down by gender, including which names appear on property titles so that indicators can be set and impact appropriately measured.

- **Provide public outreach information**

Government agencies, donor projects and NGOs sponsoring improvement and upgrading programs should make special efforts to provide both men and women with easily understood information about the planned interventions. Experience demonstrates that women can be effectively involved in decision-making community councils tasked to discuss issues which affect the whole settlement and access to basic services. Meetings will need to be setup specifically for the purpose of reaching out to women and the elderly. Women's exposure may be strengthened through open discussions on shared concerns, dedicated television and radio programs and leafleting.

- **Encourage *in situ* upgrading and recognition of *de facto* occupancy as a more cost-beneficial and gender-sensitive solution than eviction, relocation and compensation.**

Land readjustment and/or relocation programs have the potential to shift distribution of resources within the households – either intentionally or unintentionally – depending on how property rights are allocated across husband and wife or between brothers and sisters. To compound the problem, there might be a “gender-neutral” legislation and programs designed in such a way that, because they ignore the normative and practical constraints that women face in obtaining land rights, are in fact biased against women. Although land readjustment or relocation programs may have no gendered requirements, and national laws uphold gender equality, the custom of titling only household heads effectively discriminates against women and may actually deprive them of customary access and other rights<sup>27</sup> - especially when new documents are to be issued.

- **Encourage the setup of community savings groups led by women**

NGOs and agencies are best placed to promote and support the formation of women's credit associations and saving groups. These can serve the purpose of collecting resources for cross-subsidies of small-scale improvements and self-help initiatives. Paperwork and other formalities required for the access to credit programs should be minimized – especially in contexts where illiteracy is high.

- **Beyond staff quotas: promote gender-sensitivity in public offices**

Local governance benefits from bringing people's concerns to political institutions – especially women's. Yet, imposing more gender-balanced quotas in public offices alone cannot address gender inequalities. So that women's work and opinions are valued in both public and private spheres, quotas need to be supplemented by other strategies. These include education, media campaigns and developing gender equality networks.<sup>28</sup> Implementation mechanisms include providing women, the elderly and the youth with accessible information and opportunity for legal advice and counseling, in the form for example of dedicated ‘one-stop-windows’ in the municipality staff by female staff.

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<sup>27</sup> Field and Kremer 2004, p. 29

<sup>28</sup> UNDP, 2007; p.68

## 2.17. Public Information Awareness (PIA) Initiatives and Campaigns

Community mobilizers will arrange a first community meeting with *nahia* officials, *wakils*, CDC members and community elders to discuss and ensure wide dissemination of information on upcoming works. Leaflets may be distributed for the occasion. Participants will be asked to discuss with residents from each cluster to ensure that all are informed.

Residents need to be aware of individual and/or collective obligations, such as ensuring rights of way, removal of any construction rubble in front of their homes, building materials and makeshift structures (temporary shops, shacks, latrines etc). There are at least two instances in the LARA project's target area where private homes have been built on and are blocking the public way. Community representatives have been made aware that until these are solved, the LARA project would not be able to pave those roads.

The next step is to identify the first group of urban clusters that will be upgraded and visit each individual house to discuss the issues described below. Leaflets may be distributed for the occasion to inform that roads will be impassable for a month or so. Crews of laborers will be working in front of people's homes. Residents will have to prepare for nuisance, noise, mud, dust, smell (when cleaning the drains and removing waste). The team should anticipate the need to negotiate temporary diversions for pedestrians or vehicles, closure of areas used for parking, temporary re-routing of drains or services during the course of upgrading works. The roads shall be blocked, so the house owners shall not be allowed to drive into their houses for a period.

During the construction of the drainage channels, people will have to organize themselves with wooden planks and iron sheets in front of their entrance gates. New paving and drainage channels will affect levels. Levels of alleyways are generally higher than the adjoining homes, due to the accumulation of waste and debris. Residents may want to take the necessary measures to improve the drainage of their courtyard.

At the inception of the works, the community mobilizers should visit each street and do house visits to inform residents of the exact date of commencement of the works, the kind of works that will be undertaken and the approximate timeframe. A small leaflet may be produced to provide people basic information on the project in Dari & Pashtu.

- **Clarify prospects and liabilities**

The LARA project conducted a series of cluster-by-cluster meetings on street widening, asking the residents living on alleyways for their voluntary contribution of land. The community mobilizer team made it clear that the project would not pay for the demolition or the reconstruction of boundary walls or any other affected structures. Despite the difficulty of living on narrow alleys, many residents appeared to be unwilling to sacrifice precious land for the sake of better access. People should be made aware that they cannot change their ideas after the completion of the works. Neighbors should decide if they are willing to realign their property walls *prior* to the start of the works.

Also, each household should be warned about the project's water network connection. All new water connection should be done *before* the upgrading works. Each household should confirm their decisions before upgrading the roads.

- **Help community members to prepare contingency plans**

All necessary measures will be put in place so as to minimize this risk, but the project staff must ensure that home owners and tenants are aware of the possibility of damage to their boundary walls and cracks in their homes due to the vibration produced by excavators, compacting/roller machinery and the passage of trucks. Residents might consider propping up poorly-built external walls or temporary structures that are deemed fragile or unstable.

Community representatives should assess whether to setup a contingency fund for compensation of those whose property has been affected. Options might include:

- standard ‘goodwill payments’ to owners of property which suffer minor damage (i.e. surface cracks) based on agreed criteria
- compensation to an owner of the equivalent of the replacement cost of a component or structure and any associated losses (i.e. household items or loss of livelihood due to damage) or
- repairs or reconstruction by the contractor through its on-site labor force, or
- grant for self-built repairs or reconstruction by the owner. or
- a mix of contractor and owner-built repair or reconstruction (which would apply to cases where the owner may wish to alter a structure during the course of restitution)

Residents should be advised to have at hand tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, planks and rope to be used in the event of a collapse of a boundary wall. In any case, the CDCs/wakils should maintain files with full documentation of cases where compensation is claimed or paid.

- **Document conditions prior to the works**

A good practice is to take photographs of streets at regular intervals to document state of boundary walls and other features that might be claimed as damaged by the works (this will also protect the project from false claims). The team should also discuss with community representatives whether a contingency fund should be set up to compensate very poor residents whose property might have incurred damage. CDCs should maintain files with full documentation of cases where compensation is claimed or paid. Ensure that CDC members oversee any compensation payments to claimants – not LARA staff.

- **Clarify cut-off dates after which decisions will be taken on behalf of absentee owners**

The team needs to make sure that that the community group arbitrates on behalf of absentees owners with whom contact cannot be made, and that a deadline is set by which such owners should come forward, before the group acts on their behalf (with endorsement of municipal district staff)

- **Define hazard prevention measures**

The engineers may want to recommend to the community specific hazard prevention measures such as for example the repositioning of electrical cables that are located too low. The community should also be made aware that the connection of toilets to the main drainage channel is not allowed because of evident health and safety issues.

Residents need to understand that there will be open ditches near their homes and that driving cars and walking about during the works will be challenging. In addition there will be waste material everywhere – children will have to be advised not to play near open channels.

Children are commonly attracted by construction works and material. Families need to be warned to keep their children safe from the excavators and other equipment operated by the sub-contractor. They should stay at a safe distance of at least 30m. We need the cooperation from the adults to keep the children away from the site. While our community mobilizers are not responsible for first aid, they should promote appropriate health & safety measures to limit any accident that might happen at the construction site. They should carry with them emergency contact numbers of nearby hospitals. A first aid kit might also be installed at the *wakil's* house.

- **Ensure safekeeping of construction material and equipment**

As in all construction works, the subcontractor will have to stock some material such as base course material on the site. People should be made aware that this will affect the works and raise the costs of the project – putting at risk the paving of all streets as planned. In consultation with the subcontractor and the CDC, a trustworthy person from the community should be made responsible for the safekeeping of this material.

- **Guarantee an open channel of communication between the community and the project during the works**

During the implementation of the works, the community mobilizers should conduct site visits on a daily basis to make sure that residents have an open channel of communication with the project. They should carry with them a block of forms for observations (date, name of residents, name of mobilize, home/shop address, object of complaint or positive feedback, signature). These will be compiled upon request, filed and follow-up as seen most appropriate.

- **Identify probably sources of nuisance caused by upcoming upgrading works**

The team will have to consult municipal district staff and the Utilities Departments to identify ongoing private or public construction activity in the target area. The team will have to disseminate information prior to upgrading works to make residents aware of individual and/or collective obligations, such as ensuring rights of way, removal of construction rubble, storage of building materials etc and anticipate the need to negotiate temporary diversions for pedestrians or vehicles, closure of areas used for parking, temporary re-routing of drains or services during the course of upgrading works.

## **2.18. Implementation of Street Paving and Drainage Channels**

In the case of the LARA upgrading project in Jalalabad, it was decided that the project would pave the streets, construct drainage channels and connect the water network, but that the community's contribution would be the paving of the sidewalks and caretaking of the existing greenery. Every property owners or occupant has been made responsible for the paving of sidewalks in front of their homes. Community representatives have been made responsible for a general oversight of individual works to ensure appropriate leveling of sidewalks and general health and safety measures for pedestrians (steps, rods/spikes, potholes, latrine doors etc). This not only represents a strategy for making people more aware and responsible for their environment, but also allows the project to utilize its budget more effectively and to cover a wider area.

Depending on the location of the works, the width of the roads/streets and local conditions, the team will have identify the most appropriate technical specifications. The engineering team will assess the existing sub-grades, agree with the municipal engineers the design life period of the roads, and determine the expected cumulative traffic volumes on the target areas, expected axle roads, pavement width, environmental conditions and a breakdown cost of intervention.<sup>29</sup>

Most settlement upgrading projects conducted in Kabul and secondary cities have employed ‘ready mix concrete’. The quantities shall be calculated based on proposed thickness and width and length, as well as type of road/street usage. In Jalalabad, the LARA project has asked its sub-contractors to use curing compound like BASF or SIKA products, finishing to be done by broom. Irregular, improper finishing would result in rejection.

The engineering team established procedures for implementation of drainage works, including temporary diversion of waste water, alternative means of access while trenches are open. In correspondence of each entrance, it is widely accepted in Afghanistan that the project will decide whether to install concrete slabs over the channels for vehicles and pedestrians access. Owners will be responsible for paving their own driveway. This is a good opportunity for the owners to check their door elevation and courtyard levels, to construct a proper driveway or walkway and/or reposition their entrance gate (height and location).

- **Agree upon the removal of debris and construction waste**

In consultation with the Sanitation Department and the *wakil-i gozars*, the team should develop an action plan for collection and appropriate disposal of construction debris produced during the course of upgrading works, taking into account access restrictions that may prevail in certain areas. Ideally, the community should identify ways to recycle and reuse construction debris within the project area (i.e. for backfilling of cesspools) in order to reduce transportation costs. Good practice suggests that the community representatives establish community-managed systems of monitoring, collection and disposal to deal with the issue of construction debris in the future.

Waste disposal represents a significant challenge in cities that do not have a landfill site – and even those that do may have problems in dealing with the debris, excess soil and solid waste generated by an upgrading project. Viable alternatives and compromises may need to be explored with the Sanitation Department staff.

- **Undertake domestic sanitation improvements**

Most households depend on traditional raised drop latrines, with a raised slab built over a stone chamber with an outlet that opens to the street to facilitate the removal of night soil. While in the past, the night-soil from latrines would have been used on market-gardens, this material is usually now dumped on open ground or in drains, a practice that impacts health of residents.

With limited supplies of water and no prospect of a proper sewerage system being laid in the short-medium term in secondary cities, the focus should be on improvements to the traditional latrines that are used in most homes. There is ample material on sanitation practices and previous interventions in Kabul, and this should be consulted. If the project includes a sanitation component, the team should conduct a survey of the various types and conditions of traditional latrines, as a basis on which to design possible improvements, set criteria for intervention and establish procedures for cost-sharing

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<sup>29</sup> KURP/IDA, 2008; p. 30

with owners or occupants. It will undertake (or subcontract to the community group) improvements on a house-by-house basis, installing squatting slabs, ventilation pipes, improving storage chambers etc. The team can exploit the opportunity provided by realignments or other upgrading to introduce improved sanitation in adjoining homes.

Jointly with the *wakil-i gozar*, the team may explore options for improvements in systems of collection and disposal of night-soil, and for measures to discourage disposal on open spaces or in drains.

- **Enhance permeability of surfaces where possible**

In areas where flooding or stagnant waste water from the houses are recurrent, the project team may consider utilizing materials that allow water to filtrate in the ground. Greenery should be encouraged along sidewalks. Trees should be planted where possible. Invite residents to create green areas within their homes and not to surface in concrete or tiles their entire courtyard.

## **2.19. Upgrading or Extensions of Piped Water Systems**

While some repairs and extensions are regularly being carried out, the pipe system is often reported to be prone to leakages. Given the contamination of the soil in many parts, and the fact that water is pumped intermittently, the water available to residents who have access to piped water, and those using standpipes, is often unsafe. As part of the program of repairs and extensions of the piped network, public standpipes are gradually being left out of maintenance programs in line with a strategy for cost-recovery. In some areas this has significantly reduced the coverage of the water system, as many households reportedly cannot afford the cost of meters or the connection fee. In some cases, they revert for their domestic supplies to shallow wells, many of which are contaminated.

- **Assess and identify viable options in consultation with water utility departments**

The team should be able to assess the overall extent of existing water supply network at the design stage, in order to assess the feasibility of network improvements – there may be little point in investing in extensions if the network cannot sustain additional demand. An assessment of the actual condition of water mains may be required in order to identify critical repairs that might need to be taken into account at the design stage.

Upgrading works are to be coordinated with other service-providers, so as to capitalize on excavations (when other services could be checked or repaired, for example) and avoid the vain destruction of newly paved roads.

- **Define realistic standards and cost recovery strategies**

Design standards will be determined based on official norms and community consultations, prior to costing the upgrading works. The team can explore options for cost-sharing with the community for different parts of water supply upgrading, whereby owners meet the costs of secondary branch pipes and/or house-connections. In particularly poor areas, the project team may want to define a phased strategy for cost-recovery that allows for the retention of public standpipes in critical places, including mosque courtyards and school yards, where consumption can be monitored. This should be accompanied, where feasible, with a system for distribution of the costs between consumers. This

should be considered as an alternative to the current policy of cutting off all un-metered communal supplies.

In consultation with the municipality and the water department, the community may want to put in place measures to address the issue of illegal connections to water mains, which has a negative impact on water quality.

- **Prepare a Maintenance Plan for local authorities and Utilities Departments**

The drafting and submission of a maintenance plan will offset the risk that the area may be disregarded in the drafting of the yearly Budget Plans of the Municipality, as well as the Utilities Departments. It will comprehend of all repairs and works that might be necessary on a regular basis, as well as their estimated costs and required resources. This has also become a requisite by GDMA and is being requested to all Implementing Partners.

# 3. MONITORING & EVALUATION

It is vital that adequate human and financial resources are set aside for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of upgrading interventions. This needs not only to assess (and measure, where feasible) the physical or economic impact of an intervention, but also evaluate the process of design, negotiation and implementation, and how, if at all, a contribution has been made to developing the technical and management capacity of partner institutions and community group/s. The following parameters are suggested as a guide for evaluation the upgrading works.

## 3.1. Post-Implementation Issues

As a result of upgrading and tenure regularization property values may increase significantly. The project design and implementation team will need to be aware that increased property values will lead to higher rents and sale prices. This in turn will cause the displacement of poor tenants and the arrival of wealthier tenants and home owners (a process also known as “gentrification”). While an enhanced and livelier property market might be one of the objectives of the project, one should be alert to the fact that people seeking cheaper land might be attracted by informal settlements that are even more deprived or distant from the city.

Experience also suggests that, in the absence of effective systems of control, existing homes will be demolished to make space for new villas and commercial buildings, particularly where investments render an area more desirable and therefore raises the value of property. The sheer pace of transformation in some areas poses a challenge to the ability of municipal and other authorities to enforce building controls.

There are also issues of traffic and road safety that need to be considered. The surfacing of previously-pedestrian streets can encourage vehicular traffic, which may pose a threat to citizens who lack safe spaces for pedestrians, particularly children. Traffic calming devices and pedestrian-only areas should be set in place in consultation with the community.

## 3.2. Evaluation of Process Aspects

A number of aspects should be assessed to help the evaluation of the process. These may include:

### Urban governance

- Responsiveness of relevant authorities to planning and design of upgrading works
- Understanding of roles and responsibilities of national/local stakeholders in the process of planning and implementation of upgrading works
- Degree of coordination between various official authorities, key service-providers, municipal district offices and community group/s

- Availability of relevant baseline data and documentation
- Enforcement of relevant planning and building controls in support of upgrading works

### Level of community consultation & participation

- Level of participation of community group/s and representatives
- Transparency in the process of consultation and prioritization
- Involvement of community representatives in the planning and design process
- Ability of residents to organize to plan and manage future upgrading works, and maintain them in the longer-term

## Evaluation of Upgrading Works

### Access and environmental conditions

- Improved vehicular access to designated zones
- Enhanced pedestrian access and increased use of public open spaces
- Reduction in diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections (measured by means of regular baseline surveys) due to improvements in the environment
- Investment in private property along upgraded streets

### Access to basic services

- Increased access to utilities, particularly piped water and electricity
- Improved family health and economic wellbeing
- More effective maintenance by service-providers or community group/s
- Raised public awareness about the importance of improved environmental health

### Living conditions

- Improvement in living conditions for a significant proportion of the resident population, either as a result of physical upgrading or through increases in household incomes, as a direct or indirect consequence of upgrading

### Cost-effectiveness

- Achievement of outcomes within a per capita cost and of a quality that is replicable for wider upgrading initiatives
- Significant cost-sharing by beneficiary communities
- Ability of the community to manage and meet the costs of maintenance of upgraded infrastructure

Upgrading interventions in Afghanistan should be continuously evaluated as a matter of course, and lessons learned should be incorporated into a series of ‘optimal operating procedures’ that might be used to guide future investments. Specifically, the social and economic impact of upgrading should be closely monitored, as it could affect the demographics of the areas in which investments are made. ■

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