

Justus-Liebig Universität Gießen

Fachbereich 07: Mathematik und Informatik, Physik, Geographie

Institut für Geographie

Challenges of Urban Management in a Post-conflict

Situation: The Case of Kabul, Afghanistan

Sayed Maqbool Sayed

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Giessen
for the degree of Dr. rer. nat.**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my wife Maryam, my son Soroush and my daughter Mitra who stood by and supported me in various ways, and tolerated difficulties and hard times during the entire period of my studies.

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List of Abbreviations

ACF	Action Contre la Fame
ACKU	Afghanistan Center Kabul University
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AKTC	Agha Khan Trust for Culture
AUWSSC	Afghanistan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Company
CBD	Central Business District
CBO	Community Based Organization
CRIDA	Capital Region Independent Development Authority
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DABS	Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat
DCDA	Dehsabz-Barikab City Development Authority
DPK	Development Plan for Kabul
FMIS	Financial Management Information System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoIRA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
ICT	Intercontinental Consultants and Technocrats
IDA	International Development Association
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KCI	Kabul City Initiative
KCMP	Kabul City Master Plan
KM	Kabul Municipality
KMDP	Kabul Municipality Development Program
KSP	Kabul Solidarity Program
KURP	Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project
LCD	Liter per Capita per Day
MCM	Million Cubic Meter
MKNC	Master Plan for Kabul New City

MOF	Ministry of Finance
MUDA	Ministry of Urban Development Affairs
MW	Mega Watt
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PDPA	People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PMU	Project Management Unit
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
TİKA	Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı
TISA	Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan
TMF	Turquoise Mountain Foundation
TSU	Technical Support Unit
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USGS	United States Geological Survey
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

Abstract

The planning system of Kabul City was strongly influenced by the Soviet master planning attempts, which started in the 1960s and continued to prevail until the end of the twentieth century. Despite the Soviet master plans were not fully implemented, their strong impact is still evident in the planning system of Afghanistan.

An important event which had an immense negative impact on the development Kabul was the civil war of 1992 -1996, in which, the majority of the city's infrastructure was destroyed and the social fabric of the city was torn apart. This was followed by the five-year rule of the Taliban, which prevented any reconstruction effort.

The fall of the Taliban Regime in Afghanistan and establishment of the new government was an important milestone for the development of Kabul City. The relative stability of the post-Taliban Kabul paved the way for vast reconstruction efforts. Meanwhile, the massive return of the refugees and internally displaced people to major cities, especially Kabul, resulted in the emergence of many new challenges. Over seventy percent of the Kabul City area was occupied by informal settlements with no or limited access to basic services and infrastructure. The new situation was involved with conflict of planning ideas for the future of Kabul City. The ideas varied from reviving of the Soviet master plans to new planning solutions for the existing city and as well as the proposal for a new city in the north of the existing Kabul City.

The major urban planning and management efforts for post-conflict Kabul includes the preparation of the Development Plan for Kabul in 2008, which was funded by the World Bank and carried out by ICT, an Indian company; revision of ICT plan by JICA team in 2011; and preparation of the Master Plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz by JICA in 2009. Moreover, several independent construction and reconstruction projects were implemented in Kabul City, which was not part of any of the mentioned large-scale city development plans.

The large-scale master plans for Kabul City and Kabul New City were influenced by utopian concepts, which in many cases did not fit to the socio-economic context of Afghanistan. The study and assessment of the various planning and management attempt for post-Taliban Kabul indicate the fact that none of the large-scale master plans did make their way to implementation stages. Therefore, it was concluded that the large-scale top-down city level master plans, despite of consuming large amounts of resources and time, were not able to address the fundamental problems and issues of urban planning and management of post-Taliban Kabul.

Nevertheless, feasibility and applicability of smaller scale project have been more than the large-scale utopian concepts. The independent projects have been more efficient and have tangible results. Although, in some cases, the lack of coordination among various city-level projects resulted in the inefficient implementation of some projects and waste of the resources. Therefore, substitution of the prevailing large-scale top-down planning system with a bottom-up system of city planning, based on the coordination of various city-level projects, was suggested and recommended.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The fall of Taliban¹ regime in 2001 was a significant event in the recent history of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, it was considered as an end to an era of 23 years of depression and conflict; however, it also opened up a new spectrum to different challenges and issues. The Bonn Accord² and the political consensus on a series of events, which were supposed to pave the path to the establishment of a stable government based on democratic values, created strong hope for the future among the majority of Afghanistan's population.

The establishment of the interim government in 2002 and then transition administration from 2002 to 2004, the enactment of a new constitution in 2003, the presidential elections of 2004, and the parliamentary election of 2005 were seemingly the successful achievements that the Bonn Accord had envisioned for Afghanistan.

Afghanistan was the focus of international community's attention and as a result, billions of aid money was promised for the reconstruction and development of the country. However, there were obstacles to the state-building in Afghanistan which had the potential to jeopardize the achievement of the Bonn process (YAMAGUCHI 2006: 13). Moreover, donor conditions, lack of cooperation and coordination in decision making in prioritizing the needs in the identification of development projects, and the existence of parallel organizations resulted in irresponsible spending and wastage of aid money.

According to the United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), as of April 31, 2016, approximately 130 billion USD had been appropriated for Afghanistan relief and reconstruction since 2002 (SIGAR 2016) Considering the inflation rates, this amount is far more than the United States aid money to Europe after Second World War in the Marshall Plan (BBC-PERSIAN 2014). A preliminary assessment can easily show that the

1 The Taliban was a cross-border movement led by Afghan Pashtuns trained in religious madrasas in Pakistan, which formed in 1994 and ruled over most parts of Afghanistan until 2001 (BARFIELD 2010: 255).

2 The Bonn Accord was a United Nations initiated conference in November 2001 in Königswinter near Bonn, Germany to hammer out the structure of a provisional government and leadership roles in post-Taliban Afghanistan (BARFIELD 2010: 283).

amount of donated aid to Afghanistan is much higher than the work has been done on the ground.

Despite the political roadmap for the establishment of a new political system was being on track, the extent of physical and social damages due to decades of conflict and unrest overweighed the capacity of the inexperienced staff of the newly established government to handle it. The institutions in Afghanistan were the legacy of the last communist regime which had gone through a process of degradation during the chaotic era of Mujahidin and Taliban rule. The institutions of the newly established government were a mixture of existing institutions with returnees from Western countries installed in leadership and management positions. Conflict of authorities due to gap or overlap in functions of organizations is a common feature of the current institutions of Afghanistan. Corruption and dominance of a conflict economy can be evidenced in many development projects. Decision-making on large-scale development projects is often subject to the political or ethnic conflicts, which in many cases have led to infeasible decisions and a waste of resources. Kabul, as the capital city and a flagship for modernization and development of Afghanistan, suffers from the reflection of these post-conflict deficiencies more than any other city in the country.



Map 1: Location of Afghanistan in south-central Asia
Draft by SAYED based on Google Maps

1.2 Cities and Conflict

Cities are systems which represent the most complicated form of human settlement. They consist of various parts, subsystems, and functions. As a city is a dynamic entity and changes within the time. The balance and stability of a city depend on functionality, coordination, and efficiency of all parts and subsystems in a dynamic manner. Urban management is the art and science of maintaining this balance and stability in a sustainable way.

Urban management deals with the policies, plans, programs, and practices used in order to ensure that the accessibility of basic infrastructure, shelter, and employment is sufficient and efficient to the growing population in a city (DAVEY 1993).

Urban management is a continuous process and involves various actors including public/private institutions as well as citizens. Any disruption in the continuity of this process can result in disorder, for which reorganization will be a very challenging issue.

Throughout the history, many of the city systems have been disrupted by various factors. These factors could be natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, landslides, and tsunami or could be human-caused disasters such as wars and conflicts.

War and conflict have affected cities through history and have shaped and reshaped urban life. Cities have not only been major centers of power for kings and emperors and have been used as safe havens, but also in some cases, they have been the center of major conflicts. Despite the fact that conflicts and wars have been devastating forces that have destructive effects on urban centers, according to 'military theories' of urban geography, conflicts are considered at least one of the original causes for the growth of the cities as well. The origin of cities in some cases can be the result of people getting together in a certain place in need of protection against an external threat. As a result, large population agglomeration in a place forms an urban center and then further urban expansion takes place (PACIONE 2009: 39).

Conflicts have tangible and intangible impacts on a city system. Tangible impacts of war and conflict on a city can be a breakdown of infrastructure, displacement of population and demolition of physical structures. On the other hand, intangible impacts can be a loss of the sense of ownership, the vanishing of cultural values, the collapse of social networks, and

above all interruption in the continuity of the urban development process. Reconstruction of visible damages by war is not the most challenging issue in a post-conflict situation. It is rather the social and institutional structures which cannot be easily rehabilitated. It may take several decades to revive collapsed institutions and to reestablish a new urban management system. The structures of pre-conflict institutions may not fit the requirements of new post-conflict situations.

Conflicts not only cause damage to the tangible and intangible structures of a city. they also disrupt the evolution process of planning conceptions.

Most historic cities were characterized by their immense fortifications, constructed in order to protect their inhabitants from external threat. Ancient cities such as Troy have had the strength to stand and resist a conflict for several years. Without that stratagem and treason which served well than engines of assault in Troy for gaining entrance into the city, the great ancient cities such as Troy might have remained invulnerable (MUMFORD 1961: 66).

In the modern context, however, the complexity of urban texture from one side and the immense technological advancement in the production of destructive weapons in last century have made the cities more vulnerable to war and armed conflicts than ever before.

1.3 Problem Statement and Case-study Area

The selected case study area is Kabul, the capital and largest city of Afghanistan. It is the center for employment and education and access to better facilities within the country.

Kabul is a city with a long history. It has witnessed various political regimes from absolute monarchy to democratically elected government and from radical non-religious communist leaders to extreme Islamic fundamentalist rulers. Kabul has been a place for several wars and armed conflicts. However, the most severe of them in the recent history was the civil war of 1992-1996 on streets of Kabul, which resulted in the destruction of two-third of the city structures and death and displacement of thousands of its residents. The war-torn city was under the rule of Taliban from 1996 until 2001.

After the fall of Taliban and establishment of interim government in Afghanistan in 2002, about two million refugees returned back to Afghanistan. Their number exceeded by four million in 2004 (UNHCR 2007: 230). Though most of those refugees were rural settlers at the

time they left Afghanistan, the majority of them were attracted to live in Kabul due to its magnetism for a better life and job opportunities.

This happened while Kabul was suffering from a lack of efficient technical and administrative capacity to regulate the massive influx of returnees, provide an appropriate direction for the city's growth and establish a comprehensive development agenda. As a result, most of the undeveloped sites in Kabul city including previous Soviet army bases and hillsides were either squatted by returnees or in some cases a whole area was grabbed by warlords and distributed (sold) to their followers and people from their own ethnic group.

Demand for housing and shelter was so high that many of the returnees and internally displaced people (IDPs) built informal settlements with no access to infrastructure and basic services. Some of them even occupied ruined buildings of the war-torn areas to overcome their need for shelter.

Despite the fact that Kabul was the largest urban center in the country before the mentioned conflicts, its population had not exceeded two million until 2002. Due to the return of millions of refugees and IDPs to Kabul, there was a rapid increase of population within a short period of time. The population of the city reached to over four million in 2005, which was beyond the capacity of authorities in the newly established post-Taliban government to manage it.

In the first few years after the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the focus of the international community and local political actors was on formation new state institutions at large scale such as enactment of the new constitution, presidential and parliamentary elections, and the establishment of ministries. The importance of institutional development and governance reform at city level was neglected. The assumption was that the existing organizations would be capable of managing the urban growth. The emphasis was on managing the city's growth and dealing with urban issues through existing institutional structures, whereas the first priority should be given to the restructuring and capacity building of these institutions in order that they performed better. The government expected the fragile and corrupted institutions to overcome the problems of Kabul, while these institutions were in extreme need having their problems examined first.

Today, about 80 percent of Kabul's residents are living in informal settlements with no or limited access to water, sanitation, electricity, education and health facilities (WORLD BANK

2005: 1). The city's traffic system functions very poorly. Traffic jams in peak hours of the day sometimes take several hours. Most of the roads are still muddy with no asphalt which almost makes them impossible to access during winter and rainy seasons. Despite the efforts by Kabul Municipality, the refuse collection system does not function efficiently.

Air pollution and lack of measures for environmental protection are other major issues in Kabul city. Over 600,000 cases of Respiratory diseases due to air pollution among Kabul citizen have been reported and annually over 2000 people lose their lives in Kabul due to these diseases (HAKIMI 2013).

The initial response to solve the problems of Kabul from the government of Afghanistan and international donors were not conducted in a coordinated manner. Besides small and scattered efforts for post-war reconstruction of Kabul by many organizations, there were two major planning efforts which went parallel to each other without any initial significant coordination and cooperation. The first was mainly proposed and financially supported by the World Bank through the Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA), which suggested a focus on reconstruction and upgrading of various neighborhoods in order to improve the living quality of the population along with the preparation of development plan for the future of Kabul city. The second was proposed by a group of Afghan technocrats and political elites, which suggested planning for a new city in Dehsabz in the northern areas of present Kabul. Both plans are underway with ambiguity regarding their efficiency and responsiveness. There is an obvious need to study the management system of Kabul, to identify its deficiencies and to find out appropriate solutions. This study will evaluate to what extent those planning efforts would be able to effectively respond to the issues and challenges of Kabul.

1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on the above-mentioned issues, certain questions need to be answered to reach to the depth of the challenges and issues:

- What is the historical trend of urbanization in Afghanistan?
- How have the city planning and management concepts in Afghanistan emerged and evolved?

- What is the impact of conflict on different aspects of urban life? How are the city system and urban development process in post-conflict situation affected by the legacy of conflict?
- What is the role and responsibility of public/private institutions in overcoming the post-conflict urban management issues in Kabul?
- Why are concerned agencies not capable of controlling illegal, irregular and haphazard growth in Kabul?
- Why have various development plans for Kabul not been successfully implemented?
- To what extent will the prevalent planning concepts for the future development of Kabul respond to the needs of the population and overcome the urban problems?

The following hypotheses were developed:

- I. Although many of the current urban management issues in Kabul are due to the legacy of conflict, the roots of some of these issues are related back to the cultural and historical trend of urbanization and the nature of planning concepts in Afghanistan.
- II. The causes of the inefficiency of urban management system in Kabul City can be the result of the following factors:
 - The centralized, undemocratic and scattered urban governance system in Afghanistan.
 - A fragile and incompetent civil society.
 - Lack of a clear and efficient legal framework and urban legislation.
 - The scarcity of professional capacity in urban planning and management.
 - Dependency on foreign capacity and usage of imported urban planning and management methodologies without adapting them to the local (economic and social) context of Afghanistan. As a result, there has always been a vast gap between government initiations for urban development and the people's will.
- III. Instability of political situation and continuous unrest in Afghanistan has prevented any efficient and unified urban governance system to emerge and evolve in Kabul City.

IV. There are inconsistencies in planning conceptions of Kabul at the decision-making level; thus, some planning approaches may respond to the urban problems and needs while some others may create new problems.

1.5 Aim, Objectives, and Methodology

The aim of this study is to undertake an evaluation of the problems and challenges that the planning and management of Kabul have faced since the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, with a special focus on planning efforts that have taken place during the post-Taliban era.

The study consists of the following objectives:

- To evaluate the effects of conflict on urban life and culture.
- To study the trends of urbanization in Afghanistan with attention paid to the specific case of Kabul and to explore how the conflict has interrupted the urban development process.
- To identify the roles and responsibilities of different institutions and stakeholders in managing Kabul.
- To evaluate the prevalent planning efforts for Kabul and analyze their efficiency and responsiveness.
- To analyze and identify challenges and deficiencies in the urban management system of Kabul, and recommend possible efficient solutions to overcome those challenges.

There are two relevant approaches in urban geography to the study of a city. The first focuses on the spatial distribution of towns and cities and linkages between them: the study of the system of cities. The second focuses on the internal structure of urban places: the study of the city as a system (PACIONE 2009: 18). The methodology of this study suggests the need for the second approach in which Kabul City is studied as a system.

To focus on identifying the challenges of urban management in Kabul, a qualitative research approach was adopted. The case study strategy for the inquiry was used in this study. The method intends to explore in depth the plans, programs, and strategies undertaken by various agencies to rehabilitate and respond to urban management issues in post-Taliban Kabul. Inquiry

methods rely on literature review, review of plans and programs used for management and planning of Kabul, expert interviews, stakeholder's interviews, and field observation.

Review of Literature: The first step in this study is the review of available literature about the field of urban planning and management and its relevance in the context of Afghanistan with the specific case of Kabul. For this purpose, a list of relevant literature was prepared for study. Resources and books available in the library of Justus Liebig University Giessen, the Kabul University Library and specifically valuable material available in Afghanistan Center of Kabul University (ACKU) were used to build up the literature structure of the research. Online resources such as journal articles and related topics from various internet sources were also used to enhance the study.

Review of various development plans for Kabul: In order to have a better understanding of the challenges and issues in post-conflict Kabul, the first step was to identify issues and deficiencies of management and planning approaches in Kabul prior to its destruction during the civil war of the 1990s. This will enable the author to distinguish between challenges that were an inherent part of urban management system in Kabul prior to its destruction, with those caused by the civil war. For this purpose, various development approaches for the development of Kabul before 1992, including Soviet master plans, were reviewed and evaluated. The second step was review and evaluation of planning approaches that took place after the establishment of new government in Afghanistan in 2002. Besides various scattered approaches for reconstruction and rehabilitation of Kabul, two major planning approaches were identified as the most significant in post-Taliban Kabul. The Development Plan for Kabul, which focused on planning and revitalization of existing Kabul, and the Master Plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz, which focused on planning a new city at the north of present Kabul City. To get access to the contents of these plans, contacts were made with involved organizations that were responsible for preparation of these plans. The Indian company was known as Intercontinental Consultants and Technocrats Pvt Ltd (ICT), which prepared the Development Plan for Kabul (DPK), were contacted, and they provided the material related to DPK. Kabul Municipality was also visited for inquiry about the progress in the implementation of DPK. Dehsabz-Barikab City Development Authority (DCDA) which is responsible for preparation of Master Plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz was also visited to get required information about the contents of their plan and the progress of its implementation.

Expert Interviews: A group of experts from the field of urban planning and management who are familiar with the case study was identified and interviewed during the research. This was to explore the perceptions, experience, and understanding of a group of experts who have some experience in common with regards to the city planning issues of Kabul.

Stakeholder's Interview: A group of representatives from authorities who represent the stakeholder organizations involved in the planning of Kabul were identified and interviewed during the research. In this case, Kabul Municipality is the dominant agency involved in the planning system of Kabul. MUDA, Kabul City Traffic Department, and National Environmental Protection Agency are some other stakeholder agencies which were visited and interviewed.

Field work and observation: The purpose of the field work is finding the information that is not available in the literature. It is thus required to get to this information directly from primary sources in the field. Prior to this, identification of required information is an important step. This helps in understanding the empirical aspects of urban management and to identify the existent problems of a post-conflict city in a unique situation and to produce firsthand information. Several neighborhoods of Kabul were visited during the research to get a firsthand impression of the living conditions of the population there.

Preparation of drawings and maps was also an important part of this study. Maximum effort has been put to reproduce the maps required for this study in order to get high-quality drawings. In cases where the reproduction of some of the maps could possibly change the purpose they were supposed to serve, the original maps were also used with acknowledgment of their respective sources.

The combined analysis of the information was expected to lead to the identification of challenges. Based on the findings of the analysis, a comprehensive evaluation of existing challenges of urban planning and management in Kabul was undertaken.

1.6 Outline of the Study

The study is structured in six chapters. Following the current introduction part, chapter two focuses on concepts and theoretical framework for the study including an overview of urbanization, concepts of urban management and planning, post-conflict development and it

its relation to post-conflict urban management, the chapter concludes with a theoretical framework for analyzing the challenges of urban management in a post-conflict situation. Chapter three gives an overview of case study area and describes the evolution of urban planning and management in Kabul up until the fall of Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Chapter four concentrates on the urban development aspects in post-Taliban Kabul with specific emphasis on planning approaches in response to the prevailing urban issues of Kabul. Chapter five is allocated to the analysis of planning approaches for Kabul New City in Dehsabz. And finally, Chapter Six covers the final findings and discussions followed by conclusions and recommendations.

1.7 Definition of terms

- **Post-conflict:** Post-conflict situation refers to the immediate period after the end of an armed conflict. There are controversies in defining a post-conflict situation; especially in countries such as Afghanistan, where the conflict has inherently been part of its history and existence (JUNNE and VERKOREN 2005: 1). In the context of this research, the term post-conflict refers to the period after the collapse of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, when a relatively peaceful situation emerged and paved the way for new development efforts in various sectors of the society.
- **Urban Management:** urban management deals with the policies, plans, programs, and practices in order to ensure that the accessibility of basic infrastructure, shelter, and employment is sufficient and efficient to the growing population in a city (DAVEY 1993).
- **Urban Planning:** Urban planning is a technical and political process of decision-making related to the development of cities. Its technical aspects are concerned with land-use, the design of infrastructure and urban services; and its political dimensions are related to decision makings and policy issues (PACIONE 2009). Urban planning is not distinct from urban management; rather it is considered one of the functions of urban management (CHAKRABARTY 2001).
- **Kabul:** Kabul in this study refers to Kabul City the capital of Afghanistan, which is different from Kabul Province. Wherever the purpose is the province, it is mentioned as Kabul Province.
- **Communist Regime:** the pro-Soviet Union political regimes in Afghanistan from 1978 to 1992, which was governed by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Study of a post-conflict situation by itself involves various theoretical concepts deepening on the nature and context of the conflict. Conflicts may have ideological base related to social and political theories. For example, the rise of socio-political system influenced by Marxist ideologies that spread through the former Soviet Union to other countries such as Afghanistan shaped a political system that had an impact on all aspects of the society. Enforcement of command economy and the highly centralized political system was the main character of these societies. Many of the countries that supported socialist ideologies were under the strong domination of the former Soviet Union. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a trend of shifting towards liberal political systems and the market economy began almost in all of those countries. As a result, some of the countries entered a period of transition from conservative political system to liberal systems and from a command economy to market economy, while some others were trapped in conflict over what would replace their political and economic system.

Afghanistan was one of those countries that suffered for more than a decade from a civil war and internal conflict, which prevented any positive political or economic transition from occurring. Only the new circumstances after the fall of Taliban paved the way towards the transition from a conservative political system to a relatively open one. However, there are varieties of constraints that challenge a positive transition. These challenges affect all aspects of post-conflict development in the country, including urban development and management of cities.

The study of the urban development involves a variety of theories that have emerged and shaped the concepts related to management and planning of cities. The theories, concepts, methods, approaches, and policies related to the development of cities are directly dependent on the types of political systems and their attitude. As urban management is an interdisciplinary field, the study of it requires a deep understanding of theoretical bases of various related fields.

Urban planning and management theories: Various planning theories are studied in order to gain a deep understanding of the past trend of urban planning and currently prevalent procedures which are undertaken in Kabul. These include the theories and concepts that

entered into Afghanistan urban planning and management system through the influence of the former Soviet Union. This will help to evaluate the efficiencies or deficiencies those planning procedures. One of the major theories in urban planning shaping the foundation of planning methods in Kabul was the ‘physicalist’ view of planning in the form of a ‘master plan’. It was the dominant planning system in the western world after the Second World War, which was highly criticized in the 1960s. The planning authorities of Afghanistan adopted the methods based on these theories through foreign consultants, especially Russians. Due to continuous conflicts in last decades in Afghanistan, the authorities did not get the opportunity to update, develop or adapt/adopt new concepts of planning suitable for the context of Afghanistan. Despite the fact that the new government urges market-based policies and the use of planning approaches inclined with the principles of the free market; the rigid physicalist top-down view of planning is still dominant among professionals in the planning authorities of Afghanistan. A need for a paradigm shift in the planning theories and concepts in Afghanistan is evident.

Post-conflict development theory: Study of mere planning and management theories and concepts in the context of Kabul could not alone give a clear understanding of the situation. Therefore, some theories and concepts related to the post-conflict development are studied in order to get a better understanding of the complexity of the problems in Kabul as a post-conflict city.

2 Concepts in Urban Geography and Challenges of Post-Conflict Urban Development

2.1 Overview of Urbanization and Challenges of Cities

It is more than ten millennia that human beings have been living in permanent settlements. The form of these settlements, however, has varied through history from simple to very complex. Cities, in terms of diversity of economic activities as well as the concentration of larger numbers of the population, are the most complicated form of human settlements. According to Weber, what makes a city economically distinct from a rural settlement is that the city inhabitants live primarily of trade and commerce rather than agriculture. To differentiate the trade and commerce activities from those that can happen in rural settlements, such as selling of agricultural products and hereditary trade in villages, Weber emphasizes on economic versatility, which can be established by the presence of a feudal state or a market (WEBER 1969: 23-24).

This diversity of economic activities and complexity makes cities places where there are greater possibilities for accessing better services and opportunities than compared to rural settlements. This makes cities more attractive than villages, which causes a rush of the population from rural to urban areas in search of better employment and improved life prospects. The dynamic forces that draw the population from villages to the cities are referred to as 'pull factors'. This process leads to an increase in the population of urban areas which is known as urbanization. Urbanization is a process in which the population growth rate in urban areas is relatively higher compared to the growth rate at the national level. Theory suggests that all nations evolving from agrarian to industrial societies go through this process (PACIONE 2009: 78).

The factors causing urbanization are not limited to the fact that cities are more attractive to the population because of availability of a variety of services. Nevertheless, the 'push factor' that drives the population from rural areas plays a more important role in the urbanization process. According to HAGGETT (1983: 333), three important factors push the population away from rural areas. First is the carrying capacity of agricultural land in rural areas, which has a limit and can only provide enough subsistence for a limited amount of population. Thus, an increase in population would create overcrowding that could lead to poverty due to the limitation of available resources. The second factor is an advancement in agricultural technology and

mechanical progress, which increases the productivity of the crops to a certain level and reduces the need for agricultural labor. Finally, the third factor that pushes population off the rural areas is the 'taste' or personal preference. Evidence has shown that with the rise of the living standards among the population of a certain place, the proportion of income spent on food would decline. As a result, the prices of agricultural products have dropped which discourages farmers and has made agricultural activity a less attractive occupation. The first factor is stronger in developing countries while in highly developed countries the third factor is more significant. However, there have been situations in the world where mass migrations into cities or out of them have happened due to unusual conditions such as armed conflict, natural disaster and political changes, which can cause unusual increases or decreases in the urban population. This will be discussed in the coming chapters with relation to Kabul, where the political changes and security situations played a significant role in the urbanization trend.

The industrial revolution in the 18th century is considered as a significant milestone in human history. It was the 'second wave' after the agricultural revolution, which its giant tidal force collided with all the institutions of the past and transformed our lifestyle forever. The industrial revolution caused an explosion that sent concussive shock waves racing across the earth, demolishing ancient societies and creating a wholly new civilization (TOFFLER 1980). The boom in city growth after the industrial revolution in 18th century Europe is a strong indication that there is a distinct relationship between urbanization and industrialization. Further clear evidence for this lies in the regional differences in rates of urbanization throughout the world, where the most industrialized regions of the world are the most urbanized ones. At the end of the nineteenth century, only three percent of the world population was living in urban areas and urbanization at the global level was limited to the most industrialized countries of Western Europe and the United States. The process of urbanization was enormously enhanced since the second half of the twentieth century. As a consequence of this trend, the way of life of most of the population of the world has been influenced and changed from economic and social points of view (PACIONE 2009). The new reforms and expansion of economy provided opportunities for mobility, occupationally and geographically. The public health and housing improvements led to strong population growth. Cities expanded outwards aided by new forms of relatively cheap transportation making the cities transform from the concentrated to the more dispersed forms (THORNS 2002: 18).

As mentioned above, the net migration from rural regions to urban areas, beside the natural growth of urban population, significantly contributes to increasing of the population in cities. The consequence of this process is a decline in the population of villages and an increase in population in towns. The natural population growth and in-migration into the cities reinforce each other with relatively varied importance (PACIONE 2009: 71). According to DEVAS and RAKODI (1993), the significance of migration as an attribute of the rapid growth of population in urban areas has decreased in recent years. Although migration is still an effective factor in the growth of urban populations in developing countries, nevertheless, the share of the natural growth of existing urban populations is comparatively larger than the share of rural-urban migration. Despite the fact that migration of mostly young generations to urban areas contributes significantly to the natural growth rate of urban population, the growth of cities can no longer be regarded as a 'problem of migration' (DEVAS and RAKODI 1993: 22-24).

As per the UNITED-NATIONS (2012), the average growth rate of urban populations in the world is about 3.5 percent per annum, while the rural population grows at a rate of less than one percent per annum. This has caused the urban population of the world to exceed its rural counterpart. The world population is expected to increase from 7.0 billion in 2011 to 9.3 billion in 2050, while populations living in urban areas are projected to increase from 3.6 billion in 2011 to 6.3 billion by 2050. This indicates that the urban areas of the world are expected to absorb not only all the population growth expected in the world over the next four decades but also will accommodate some of the population from rural areas. As a result, by 2050, the rural areas of the world will have fewer inhabitants than today. In addition, towns and cities in the less developed regions of the world are expected to have the highest population growth rates. Thus in near future, the term population growth will refer to a phenomenon mostly happening in the urban areas of developing countries (UNITED-NATIONS 2012).

The distribution of urban populations varies in different countries based on various factors. According to PACIONE (2009), the trigger factors which effect the transformation of settlements are the economy, politics, demography, technology, society, culture and the environment. Every city is as unique as every human being is. However, there are certain characteristics which are common to all urban areas which make it easier to study the geography of them. Cities are considered as engines of economic development. However, in some cases, cities also represent some common problems which, at least for some of their inhabitants, make them a hard place to live. Inadequate housing, poverty, economic decline, traffic congestion, environmental

pollution and health issues are common concerns of the inhabitants of many urban areas of the world (PACIONE 2009: 4-7).

2.1.1 Settlement Pattern and Urbanization in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is one of the most rural dominant countries in its regional context. Unlike the industrial nations, Afghanistan remained almost unaffected by waves of industrialization and urbanization until the beginning of the twentieth century, when urban population constituted less than ten percent of country’s total population. The rural-dominant population was characterized mostly by uneducated subsistence farmers or herders who were scattered far from cities in hard to access valleys around the country.

Nevertheless, according to GHUBAR (1989a: 150), the major cities of present day Afghanistan such as Balkh and Herat were at the peak of their glory until the thirteenth century CE and each one of them had a population of over one hundred thousand people before being invaded and devastated by Genghis Khan. However, due to loss of their political and economic importance within recent centuries, they could never rise again to their former glory.

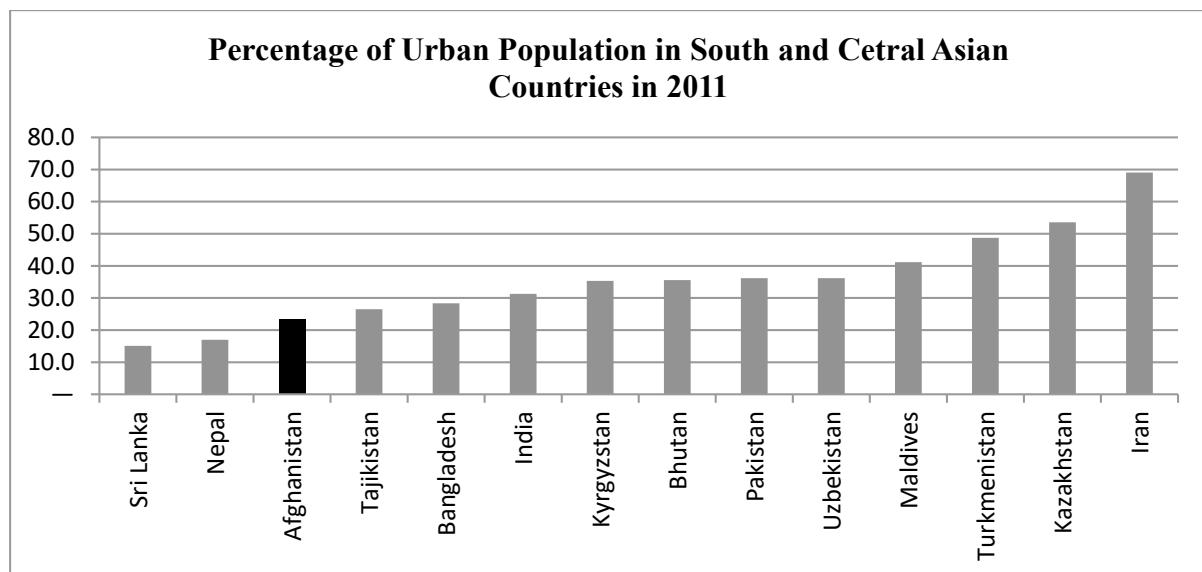


Figure 1: Percentage of urban population in South and Central Asian countries in 2011
Source of data: (UNITED-NATIONS 2012)

The population distribution pattern in Afghanistan is characterized by the physical-geographical structure of the country and the political development in the late 19th century. The Hindu Kush mountain range divides Afghanistan into mainly northern and southern regions.

The northern regions consist of various valley settlements, which are fed by the rivers from the highlands of central Afghanistan and the Hindu Kush. This results in striking compartmentalization of preferred habitat, which in turn fostered a geographical fragmentation of settlements around the country. The areas of the central Afghanistan, the high mountains of the Hindu Kush and the desert-like areas of the southern Afghanistan lacked any urban settlement until the beginning the of the 20th century (GRÖTZBACH 1979).

According to L. DUPREE (1975), the settlement pattern for the sedentary population of Afghanistan embraces the regional village-town-city complex, with two sedentary patterns of linear and nuclear. The linear occur along river valleys and the nuclear type dominates in mountainous and semi-desert areas where several villages cluster about a town and several towns cluster around major cities. The nucleated pattern is dominant in Afghanistan (L. DUPREE 1975: 399).

Afghanistan may be one of the few countries in the world, which has a non-sedentary population in the twenty-first century. The non-sedentary population consists of semi-sedentary, seminomadic and nomadic elements. According to (CSO 2016a), the nomad population in Afghanistan is estimated to be 1.5 million in 2015. There has been a long-term conflict between the sedentary population of villages and nomads over the use of pasture land near villages. This conflict has an ethnic root as well because the vast majority of nomadic groups consist of Pashtuns from the southern regions who move to Hazara and Tajik dominant areas central and northern regions to get access to better pastures. Sometimes the conflict gets violent especially among Pashtun nomads and Hazara villagers. The roots of this conflict date back to the late nineteenth century when Amir Abdurrahman Khan forcibly moved some nomad groups to the northern regions. Amir and his successive governments until 1953 supported the nomads against the villagers (L. DUPREE 1975: 402).

The UNITED NATIONS (2012) estimated the urban population of Afghanistan in 2011 to be 7.613 million which makes 23.5 percent of the country's total population. Despite the fact that the urban population exceeded the rural population in 2011 at the global level, in Afghanistan, the rural population will be dominant until the second half of the 21st century. It is estimated that by 2050 the urban population of Afghanistan will reach to about thirty-three million which will constitute only forty-three percent of the country's total population (UNITED-NATIONS 2012).

An inconsistency in the distribution of the urban population in Afghanistan is clearly apparent. Over 90 percent of total urban dwellers of Afghanistan live in five major cities such as Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad, and Kandahar. Kabul with a population of 4.6 million in 2015 (UN-HABITAT 2012: 128) accommodates over 65 percent of the total urban population of Afghanistan and over 20 percent of Afghanistan’s total population³. This is a clear evidence of ‘overurbanization’ in Kabul, as over 80 percent of its inhabitants live in informal settlements.

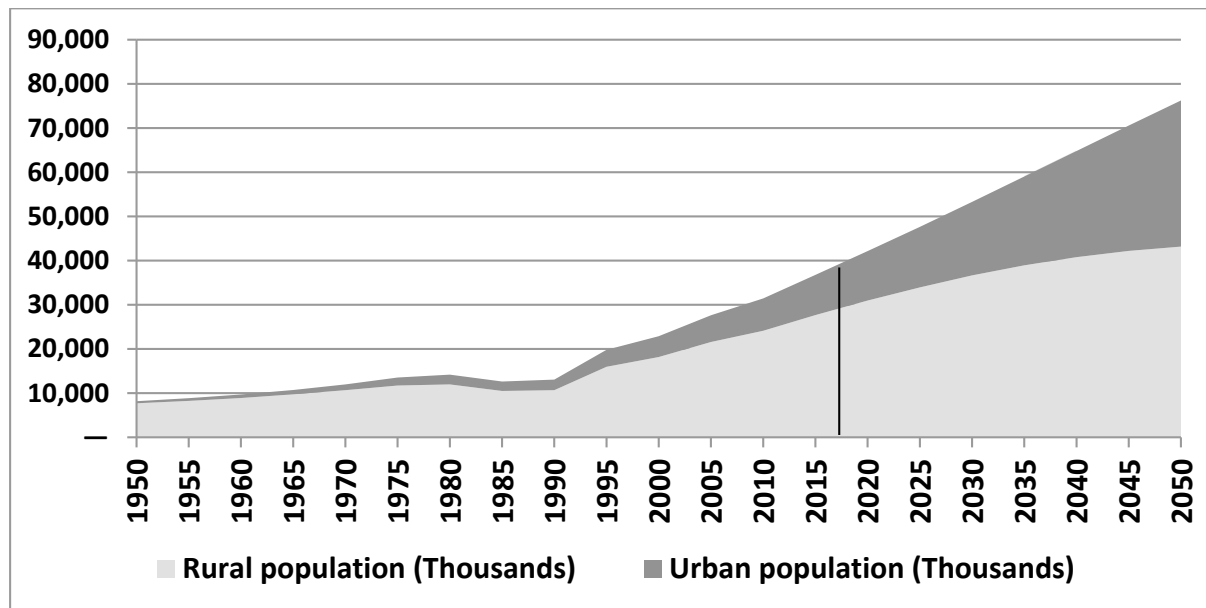
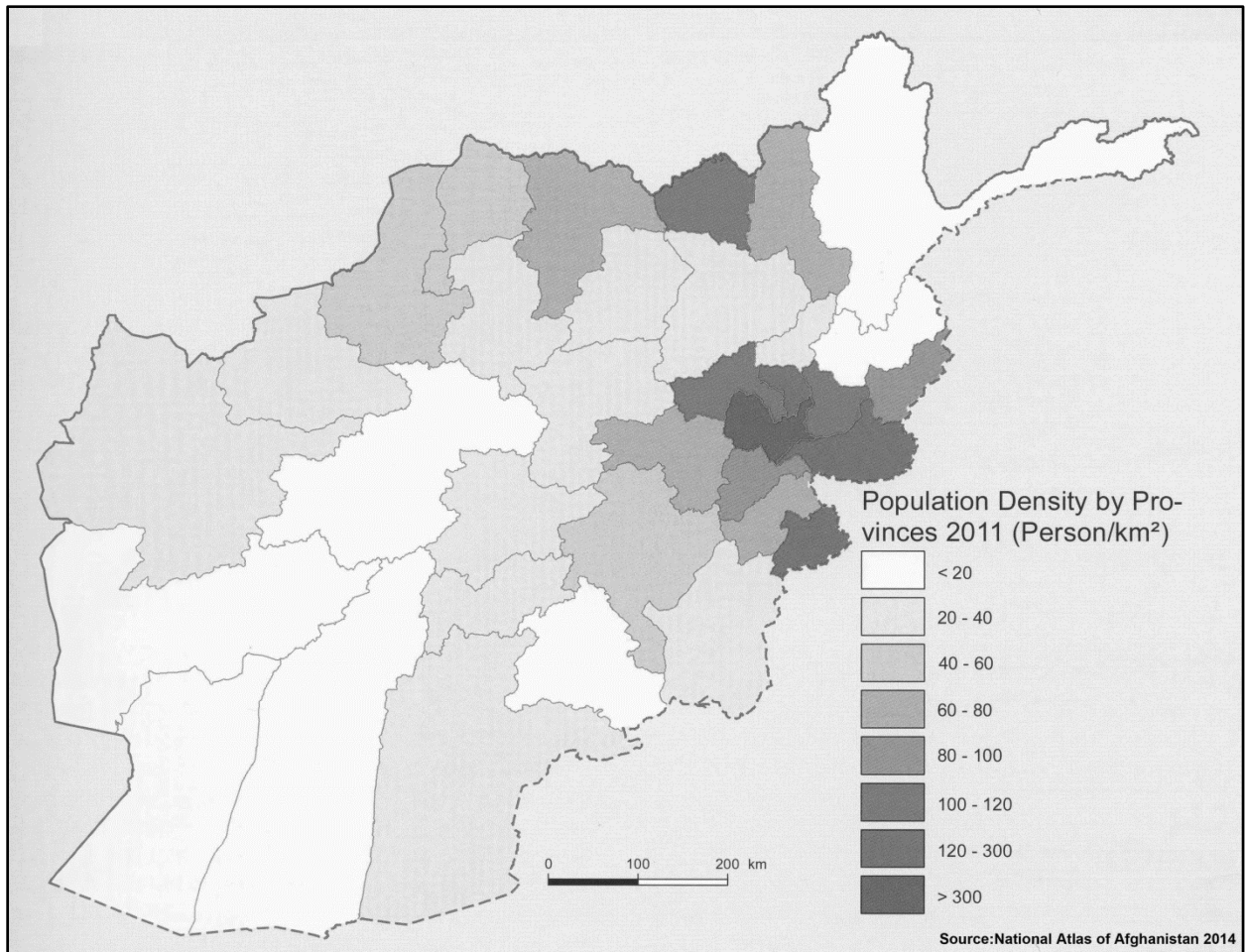


Figure 2: Project of urban-rural population growth in Afghanistan
 Source of data: (UNITED-NATIONS 2012)

There are many small towns around the country. The majority of these towns are located in the center of the provinces or districts. Besides being administrative centers for the provinces or districts, they mainly function as central bazaars, which cater goods to the more remote areas. In recent years, some of these bazaar-towns have been growing very fast; along with the expansion of their areas, their functions are also becoming more complex.

³ Population of Afghanistan was estimated to be 30,552,000 in 2013 (UNITED-NATIONS 2013: 51).



Map 2: Population density of provinces in Afghanistan
 Source: (S. M. KOHISTANI 2014)

2.2 Governance, Management, and Planning of Cities

Cities are arenas of interaction between various population groups. These interactions occur in the form of non-stop activities that make the cities inhabitable. Different interest groups compete and at the same time cooperate with each other to keep the city systems running uninterruptedly. However, certain public urban institutions are required to manage the city system in order to work efficiently and maintain a balance between the interests of various population groups. Different countries around the world have different systems for managing their cities. The functions of these systems are strongly influenced by the political, economic, social and cultural structure of those societies. The existence of an urban governance system is a prerequisite to management and planning of cities. Urban governance determines the rules, regulations, and procedures that shape the administrative structure of city government and its management and planning system.

2.2.1 The Concept of Urban Governance

Governance is defined as the exercise of authority, control, management and power of government or the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development (WORLD BANK 1992) Urban governance is a process of blending and coordinating public and private interests. It is a process through which the local authorities enhance collective goals in collaboration with private interests. The political, economic and social values that legitimize the urban regime shape urban governance process. The collaborative strategies, on the one hand, strengthen the governing capacity of local authorities. On the other hand, they position these authorities under political pressure from private business and civil society. In order to have a better understanding of urban governance, it is necessary to have an understanding of local government organizations (PIERRE 1999).

It needs to be clarified that governance is distinct from government. "Governance refers to the relationship between civil society and the state, between rulers and the ruled, and the government and the governed" (McCARNEY, HALFANI & RODRIGUEZ 1995: 95-96 cited in LANGE 2009), whereas, government refers to the state authority. The urban government is a form of local government which concerns the power to make decisions. Power in local governments can be attained through bottom-up or top-down processes. In bottom-up processes, the power vested in people who are selected or appointed by socially approved procedures such as democratic elections, which is regarded as legitimate and often is referred to as the authority. In top-down processes, power may be exercised through social pressure or persuasion or by use of economic or even physical force. The system of urban governance is determined by the outcome of power struggles (PACIONE 2009: 418).

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without the presence of good governance. In the existence of sound economic policies, good governance can create a suitable environment to foster strong and equitable development. The role of governments is critical in the provision of public goods and services. The level of efficiency or deficiency of the markets strongly depends on the rules that governments establish. The success or failure of markets is subject to those rules. In order for the governments to play their roles, they need revenues and a system of revenue collection in order to provide the public goods and services. To achieve this, there is a

need for systems of accountability, adequate and reliable information, and efficiency in resource management and the delivery of public services (WORLD BANK 1992).

Good urban governance also involves participatory decision making, referring the complex set of values, norms, processes and institutions by which cities are managed. Whereas, good urban management refers to the process of executing those decisions and policies through delivering the services and enforcing of regulations (DIJK 2006: 7).

The main activities of local governments include the provision of public services, formulation of policies and plans, representing locality, resolving conflicts between competing local interests, and regulating private-sector activities (DAVEY 1993: 19).

There are various models of urban governance depending on the systems of values, norms, beliefs, and practice in different places. The different urban policy choices are the outcome of these value systems. The urban governance dominated by private business interests would generate a different policy outcome from those that the other constituencies play a dominating role. The formal and effective organization of urban governance reflects values and interests typical to the local community. Also, the national politics play a very strong role in the shaping of the various aspects of urban politics (PIERRE 1999: 375).

PIERRE (1999) describes four different models of urban governance: the managerial, corporatist, pro-growth, and welfare models. These four models are not necessarily the empirically precise version of urban governance in different places; rather they should be seen as ideal types. Nevertheless, urban governance systems in the real world would resemble more than one of the four types as cities are an arena of conflict among various interest groups that support different models of governance. Therefore, over time, along with the changes in the national or urban regimes, cities could move from one model of urban governance to another.

2.2.1.1 Managerial governance

The managerial governance model emphasizes the role of 'local government as a public organization resolving collective needs and interests through service production and delivery' (PIERRE 1999). This is alongside the other dimension of local government which is the representation of population and participatory objectives as an instrument to address political conflict. There have been debates in many countries as to which dimension of the local

government should be given priority in reform. In recent years, the managerial dimension, in many countries dominates over the participatory aspects of local government, which is driven by the fiscal crisis at national, state and local levels. The extensive orientation away from collective political involvement towards the pursuit of individual interest, in local authorities and urban politics of most countries, has led to the emergence of different market-based concepts and approaches mostly known as the “new public management”. The new public management gives importance to public choice in the selection of the service producer in a free market like exchange. It gives the consumers the freedom to choose from among various private sector producers and service providers. The elected officials in this process have less involvement. The managerial governance focuses on costs, efficiency, demand, and professional management, which in most countries due to the rapid expansion of urban services; the local authorities are not capable of managing without the support of professional service providers from the private sector (PIERRE 1999).

The aim of managerial governance is to improve the efficiency of public service production and delivery, as well as to offer the customers the choice of selecting from among a variety of products and providers. Managerial governance uses different instruments in order to achieve efficiency in the provision of services and to acquire more confidence in the public sector through offering a customer oriented diversified services. These instruments include “contracts with for-profit organizations for providing selected public services, new strategies of recruitment to managerial positions in the public sector, increased discretion to these positions, internal markets and other forms of competition both within the public sector and between public and private providers, and a redefinition of the role of elected officials”. The main participants of managerial governance are professionals or economic elites rather than political elites. They are the managers of organizations which actively take part in production and delivery of public services. Customers also play a significant role as participants of managerial governance, as their satisfaction is a key criterion for the service producer/providers (PIERRE 1999: 380).

2.2.1.2 Corporatist Governance

‘The corporatist model of urban governance is typical of the small, industrial, advanced democracies of Western Europe’. It is a form of governance which intends inclusion of social groups and organized interests through a political and democratic system in the urban political

process. The main purpose of this model of urban governance is to maintain the idea of participatory local democracy. The role of the local government is to create consensus and concerted public-private actions (PIERRE 1999).

2.2.1.3 Pro-growth Governance

The pro-growth governance is a model of urban governance that emphasizes the role of cities as a booster of economic growth. This requires a strong relationship between the political elite and the economic actors in the city level, which will have influence over the political decisions. The pro-growth governance creates a set of arrangements to facilitate an accommodation between political and economic powers. This puts the private sector in a position of advantaged in the urban politics. Thus, the pro-growth governance is characterized by a close interaction of public-private sector to boost the local economy. As the main objective of the pro-growth governance is long-term and sustainable local economic development, the instruments to achieve its objective include urban planning, mobilization of resources from regional and national government, infrastructure development and institutionalized public-private partnership (PIERRE 1999).

2.2.1.4 Welfare Governance

Welfare governance refers to the governance of urban and political settings in cities that are characterized by a stagnant local economy mostly known as welfare cities. These cities have very limited growth in the local economy and mainly depend on the welfare system that flows from the state or central government. Many of these cities in developed countries are former industrial cities that suffer from high rates of unemployment and have often been abandoned by private capital. These cities frustrated with corporate strategies are heavily dependent on government spending and the urban political leadership puts great reliance on the state or central government on providing compensatory programs to the city. Welfare governance has an unreceptive orientation towards private businesses and tends to detach the city from the local economy. This repels the potential private investor, which in turn limits the local government's access to tax and local income sources, which leads the local government to be more dependent on the state or national government (PIERRE 1999).

2.2.2 The Concept of Urban Planning and Design

Planning is setting strategy to meet some specific objectives (BRACKEN 2007: 9). The intention of planning is intervention with the purpose of changing the course of events. Urban planning is the most significant function of urban management. Cities grow like living organisms with or without deliberate human intervention to give direction to this growth. The purpose of urban planning is to foresee and guide the growth of the cities towards welfare and desirable quality of life. Time and legitimacy of planning intervention are the main issues of planning theory (CAMPBELL and FAIRSTEIN 2003: 6).

Urban planning has both technical and political dimensions which strongly influence each other. The technical dimension is concerned with land uses, the design of infrastructure, transportation, and other distribution networks. The political dimension is related to decision-making and policy issues. For urban planning to exist, there must be a political consensus that the problems affecting cities can be best tackled through government intervention. This, in turn, requires a willingness by individuals to relinquish some of the rights to property which they enjoy in a free market and to accept the principle that land use should be centrally controlled for the public good (PACIONE 2009: 164-165). Any decision on how the land should be used in a way to maintain the public interest and satisfy different groups in the society will involve some kind of political decision (TAYLOR 1998: 7).

The planning of cities, in practice, is directly related to the problems of cities which are the consequences of economic, social and political conditions of cities which are embedded in the entire socio-economic-political-cultural life of the time (HALL 1996: 6).

Throughout history, it has been part of human instinct and nature to strive and dream of an ideal place to live in. As a result, attempts at the construction of cities with a higher level of comfort and social welfare for the citizens, on the one hand, and the creation of imaginary ideal cities, on the other, have been part of the human and parcel of human aspirations for many generations.

For much of the historical period, the development of many cities around the world occurred without any preplanning or obvious intentional spatial direction to their growth. With the exception of various forms of 'planted settlements' such as Greek colonial towns or medieval

planned new towns, urban development has continued in an unregulated organic manner free of any form of public accountability (PACIONE 2009).

The first concepts of modern urban planning emerged in industrial societies of Europe and especially in the United Kingdom as a consequence of reactions to the problems of industrial cities. The concern over the health of the urban population due to an increase in industrial waste, the deficiency of public facilities such as clean water supplies and adequate sewerage systems required government intervention. The extent of the sanitary problems faced serious reactions when people began to be really affected by them. The situation became more intolerable, especially when the cholera epidemics were widespread after 1830. This led the emergence of the first measure to the establishment of basic levels of sanitary provisions and building standards. Studies indicated that there were multiple numbers of causes involved in the sanitary condition. Accordingly, there would have to be a variety of preventive measure, however, in a coordinated manner. Thus, the emergence of modern town-planning legislation was initiated by the sanitary legislation. Utopian socialists of that time believed that designing new communities offered a means of escape from those problems (BENEVOLO 1967: 89; PACIONE 2009: 165).

Thus, social reaction to the prevailing problems emerged within various levels of society in order to move towards a better quality of life in cities. There were two types of reactions. The first was a radical and revolutionary reaction influenced by the ideas of Marx and Engels, which believed that the social and political system was responsible for creating the polarized social conditions, and it needs to be overthrown. The second was a conservative reaction, which accepted the urban industrial system but recommended certain interventions by the state to improve the system. The conservative views dominated and led to the factory and sanitary reforms and reinforcement of a number of early housing and new town schemes that paved the way for the emergence of modern urban planning (PACIONE 2009: 165-166).

According to HALL (1996: 3), many of the early visions of the planning movements stemmed from the anarchist movement, which flourished in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth. The demand was not only a different physical built form but also an alternative society, based on voluntary cooperation among people living in small self-governing commonwealths.

The proposal of a utopian temperance community of 10,000 inhabitants named Victoria in the United Kingdom by social reformer and architect James Silk Buckingham (1849), with segregation of land uses and almost all the requirements of a modern life, was one of the first planning concepts which strongly influenced the modern planning. Victoria was never built but the ideas were later used by other urban reformers such as Ebenezer Howard in his design of Garden cities. Howard was strongly critical of living conditions in large cities such as London and was motivated to design an alternative self-sufficient garden city with a smaller population size (32000), enough job opportunities for all inhabitants, diversity of activities, a green belt, and public ownership of land in order to integrate the positive aspect of cities and villages into a single community. In 1899, Howard's idea led to the founding of the Garden City Association, which built two garden cities, at Letchworth (1901) and Welwyn (1920), and was a major stimulus to the formation in 1914 of the Town Planning Institute (PACIONE 2009).

The City Beautiful movement in the United States after 1893, which urged for the planned unity of the city as a work of art supported by a master plan for land use and comprehensive zoning ordinance to maintain the plan was the first step towards modern urban planning. Parallel to this, development of ambitious alternative urban form in Europe influenced by the ideas of Italian futurist movement. The key idea was the concept of a new, comprehensively planned city with high-rise buildings, elevated roadways, land-use segregation and the use of mass production techniques and new materials such as glass and concrete (PACIONE 2009: 166-170).

Until the second half of the twentieth century, urban planning was viewed as an art form within a traditional design context. Its purpose was seen mainly as the promotion of new development that was aesthetically pleasing and complying with certain standards of the layout (BRACKEN 2007: 11). There was no clear distinction between urban planning, urban design, and architecture. The general assumption was that urban planning was essentially a natural extension of architecture and to some extent civil engineering. The task of urban planning was carried out mainly by architects in the literal sense of designing whole groups of buildings and spaces rather than the design of individual buildings and their immediate sites. Also, there was a sense that architecture too was an exercise in physical planning and design of human settlement (TAYLOR 1998: 4-8). Physical land-use plans in a variety of forms were used to provide guidance to the growth of new developments. It was broadly believed that efficient and pleasant environment could be created through control over the physical layout. The general

approach to achieving this was the development of a set of standards to be used as suitable guidelines for the layout (BRACKEN 2007: 11).

In the 1960s, the prevailing urban planning approach was vastly criticized for focusing only on physical aspects and ignoring social realities. The planning theories were criticized at two levels. The first was on the concentration of planning approaches on the physical environment at the expense of ignoring the social environment. On another level, the planners who did consider the social environment in their plans were criticized for assuming that the shape of physical environment determined the social environment (TAYLOR 1998: 42).

As a result, the planning pursuit moved gradually into a more general concern for amenities and provision of service in the public interest. In fact, the function of planning moved towards attempts to ensure that certain individuals, groups, or social sectors minimally imposed their own agendas at the expense of the interest of others in the society. Thus, urban planning became a process to resolve the conflict over control of the resources and actions between members of society. As urban planning became more comprehensive, a further pursuit emerged, which was a search for urban efficiency through considering the city as a whole system. This was linked with the concern about the efficient use of resources, particularly land (BRACKEN 2007: 11).

With a deeper understanding of the complexity and dynamic nature of urban issues, more rational and flexible planning conceptions emerged. Today many of the cities around the world have some sort of planning system which manages their growth patterns and directions towards social welfare and beneficial goals.

2.2.3 The Concept of Urban Management

Historically, most of the cities in the world have had a certain system to manage and maintain the order and balance of the daily life of their inhabitants, which has mostly been through traditional ways developed by locals based on their needs. On the other hand, with the acceleration in the trend of urbanization in 20th century and increase in population and complexity of cities a relatively new discipline emerged in urban studies known as urban management. Urban management started at the end of the 1980s in developing countries and the purpose was to deal with the important issues of the cities (DIJK 2006: 52).

There are various definitions of urban management. DIJK (2006: 7) defines it as ‘the effort to co-ordinate and integrate public as well as private actions to tackle the major problems the inhabitants of a city are facing and to make more competitive, equitable and sustainable city.

According to DAVEY (1993: ix), urban management deals with the policies, plans, programs, and practices in order to ensure that the accessibility of basic infrastructure, shelter, and employment is sufficient and efficient for the growing population in a city.

CHAKRABARTY (2001) defines a concept of integrated urban management, based on management theory with five managerial functions as planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling and he argues that many principles of traditional management, such as the principles of productivity, social responsiveness, and flexibility, are equally applicable to urban management. In this context, urban planning should be viewed as one of the five urban managerial functions to achieve the goals of resource efficiency and equity. TRIBILLON (1985) has a simpler definition of urban management as ‘putting planning into practice’ (cited in DIJK 2006: 50).

As a city is a dynamic entity and changes within the time. The balance and stability of a city depend on functionality, coordination, and efficiency of all parts and subsystems in a dynamic manner. The author defines the urban management as the art and science of maintaining this balance and stability in a sustainable way.

Urban management requires an active role of the political system at the neighborhood, city and regional level (DIJK 2006: 52). In fact, the existence of functional urban governance system is a prerequisite to urban management in order to achieve its tasks. Historically, the term *urban government* has been synonymous with that of municipal administration; however, in recent years, provision or management of urban services by the private sector for the purpose of releasing pressure on public resources and as well as achieving greater efficiency, is encouraged by some governments and donor policies (DAVEY 1993: 1) .

2.2.4 Management and Planning of Cities in Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, the modern concept of urban planning emerged in the 1920s during the reign of Amanullah (1919 – 1929) when he declared full independence from the British Empire and opened a door to western influence. Unlike Europe, the modern urban planning system in

Afghanistan did not emerge as a result of any social movement; rather it was mostly the consequence of King's ambition and desire for modernization of the country. The focus was on the construction of new towns following European models, particularly in and around the capital city of Kabul, by means of planned subdivisions. Yet at the end of the 1920s, most of the cities in Afghanistan were dominated by traditional buildings, functions, and structures, but were subject to quite slow change. Until around the 1930s, many of Afghanistan's cities were missing almost any impetus of modern development. The so-called cities were often small settlements or only market towns and administrative centers dominated by the agricultural activity of the city population with a poorly developed urban structure. A systematic and nationwide modernization of cities began only after the end civil war 1928-29, which was amplified in the 1930s. Within a single decade, the structure of urban centers around Afghanistan enormously changed. The increasing prevalence of automobile traffic, which required a change in the structure of the fabric of the old settlements, was a strong motive for urban renewal activities of the government. Another reason was probably the notion that an effective national development was not possible without modernization of cities. Nevertheless, it is evident that the conception of modern town planning in Afghanistan has not been determined by population growth; rather it has been decreed by government initiatives (GRÖTZBACH 1979: 22).

As the modernization process in Afghanistan was a top-down process and did not emerge from the roots of the society, modern town planning in the country has always been faced by three major challenges; social, economic and technical.

The social challenge is related to the perception of modernization by the society. Since the beginning of the vast modernization attempts by Amanullah during the 1920s, his reforms did not attract social acceptance, rather many opposed the process. As the process of modernization came alongside reforms which touched some socially sensitive issues such as the style of clothing and encouraging and forcing women to appear in public without a veil; thus, the majority viewed the whole process of modernization as something against their traditional values and some even considered it as an anti-Islamic movement. Since then, this perception has continued to remain among people, which has affected the later development attempts until the present day.

Economic challenges are related to affordability for the government of the implementation of urban development plans. It is evident that the modernization process of the 1920s was out of sync with the economic conditions of Afghanistan. Heavy expenditure on the construction of government palaces, cutting military and defense budget and imposing heavy taxes on people, paved the way for the fall of Amanullah's modernist government. Since the independence of Afghanistan in 1919, except for small-scale urban development plans, all of the ambitious city plans in Afghanistan have been prepared in such a way that the governments were not able to independently finance their implementation. There has often been the assumption of receiving financial support from a foreign country to implement those plans.

The technical challenges are related to the capability of Afghanistan's professional staff in the preparation and implementation of urban development plans. Dependency on foreign assistance in urban planning has been a principal deficiency felt by planning authorities since the beginning of modernization attempts in Afghanistan. German architects and planners for the first time introduced modern planning methods in Afghanistan in the 1920s. Until 1960s town planning activities were carried out by a small department within the Ministry of Public Works. The planning methods inherited from German planners used to prevail until the Russian influence in the 1960s.

The establishment of the Central Housing and Town Planning Authority in Kabul in 1964 was an important milestone in the evolution of town planning concepts in Afghanistan⁴ (BRESHNA 1970). Nevertheless, the 'physicalist' approach of urban planning and use of rigid master plan for city development flourished in Afghanistan. Despite these methods being highly criticized in developed countries because of their rigidity, concentration on physical aspects and ignoring social values. Thus, with some variations and misconceptions, they were institutionalized in Afghanistan's town planning organizations. However, because of decades of continuous conflicts, they were never evaluated, reviewed or revised for their efficiency in the urban context of Afghanistan.

⁴ Later, this organization, in various steps, was promoted to the current Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA).

2.3 The Concept of Post-Conflict Development

The definition of a post-conflict situation is contested; especially in countries such as Afghanistan, where the conflict has inherently been part of its history and existence. As (JUNNE and VERKOREN 2005: 1) put it, there are few truly post-conflict situations in the world. Where in other cases conflicts become more or less violent, more or less manifest or latent, but they seldom stop altogether. In the context of this research, the term post-conflict refers to the period after the collapse of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, when a relatively peaceful situation emerged and paved the way for new development efforts in various sectors of the society.

Development can be defined as an enhancement in both quality and quantity. To be more specific development refers to more than economic growth. It is about improving the living standard of people in a diverse manner which should include all areas such as health, education, environment and political participation (JUNNE and VERKOREN 2005: 3).

Development activities can prevent war; conversely, war can hinder development activities. As a consequence, countries which succeed with development undertakings become progressively safer from violent conflict and a favorable context for further development emerges. On the other hand, failure of development process increases the risk of becoming caught in a conflict trap in which the economy is affected by war and the grounds for the risk of further war is paved (COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOEFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS 2003: 1).

There are two approaches regarding the timing of reconstruction and development activities in a conflict or post-conflict situation. The first emphasizes on peace as a precondition for development activities. The second approach suggests the initiation of reconstruction and development activities as a strong incentive for peace building and stability (BARAKAT 2004: 8).

These two views create a competition between development organizations and peacebuilding groups in attracting more policy and financial support. Organizations involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding argue for giving priority to conflict prevention rather than development projects. According to them, a relatively small effort invested in avoiding conflict could save large investments in development and prevent larger expenses of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and alleviation of humanitarian problems that result from large-scale violent

conflict. Involvement of organizations that offer humanitarian aid in emergency results in three different types of organizations with different objectives, different priorities, and different experience to compete with each other and their involvement implies specific risks (JUNNE and VERKOREN 2005): conflict prevention and *peacebuilding* organizations, *Humanitarian* and aid organizations, and organizations for *development* projects.

It can also be the case that due to overlapping activities of the different organizations, some may give up competing with each other over certain post-conflict issues and thus neglect the larger goals of post-conflict development. For example, conflict prevention and peacebuilding organizations may find it too early to get involved with a highly affected and distressed population. Development organizations may see the situation as too unstable to start their long-term development projects. Only the humanitarian organization may rush to provide emergency help for the population, getting involved in neither the causes of conflict and peacebuilding process nor in long term development (JUNNE and VERKOREN 2005: 1-6).

Post-conflict development can only be a successful process when the activities of above the three groups complement each other, are integrated and the perspectives of each type of organization are considered and reflected in other group's policies. Peacebuilding efforts need to be involved with economic and development activities. Emergency aid should contribute to peacebuilding instead of prolonging conflicts, and it should not stand in the way of long-term development efforts. Furthermore, future development planning has to consider the realities of an affected society and formulate its development strategies in such a way as to help to heal the existing social wounds caused by conflict and to prevent future cleavages and social conflicts. Economic development is a strong incentive to create new prospects for the different group of people to work together. Employment opportunities generate a good alternative to armed fighters to give up their past and focus on their future with a possible new professional identity. As a result, this can prevent the renewal and reoccurrence of conflict (JUNNE and VERKOREN 2005: 1-6). It can also happen that the economic opportunities create new conflicts as if it favors a certain group more than its rivals. Thus, it is significant for the economic development to provide equal opportunities for all the rival groups to prevent further conflict.

2.3.1 Impact of Conflict on Urban Systems

Cities, as major centers of power, have been faced with the threat of being attacked and destroyed by rival groups to get the control of them throughout history. Therefore, most of the historic cities were characterized by their immense fortifications, in order to protect their inhabitants from external threat. Ancient cities had the strength to stand and resist a conflict for several years. However, in the modern context, the complexity of urban texture on the one hand, and the immense technological advancement in the production of destructive weapons in last century, on the other, have made the cities more vulnerable to war and armed conflicts than ever.

In today's world, the violent conflicts and civil wars may not last long, but the damages continue to affect the population beyond the end of the conflict. Capital flight and emigration due to conflict situation can continue even when the conflict is over. In a post-conflict situation, a country may need several years of peace to recover its economy and heal the social damages to revert to its pre-conflict situation. It is a challenge for planners and decision makers to consider that in many cases most of the costs of a conflict occur only in the following post-conflict period.

One of the impacts of conflict on a society is the diversion of its resources from productive activities to destructive. As a consequence, there is a twofold damage: damage due to the loss of resources which previously contributed to the development process, and the larger damage that occurs when these resources are used as a destructive force in violence (COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS 2003: 3).

According to the (COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS 2003: 14), an average developing country⁵ during peace time spends about 2.8 percent of its GDP on the military, while during the civil war, on average, it increases to 5 percent. This is not only an increase of expenditure on the means of destruction but also a decrease in expenditures on infrastructure and health sector.

⁵ An average developing country is defined as a country with less than 3,000 USD per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 1995 (COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS 2003: 14).

The very obvious and tangible impact of armed conflict is due to direct destruction of infrastructure. Obviously, cities, because of their complexity of infrastructure and networks, are more venerable in comparison to villages. During war time, fighters intentionally target the physical infrastructure as part of their strategy to disrupt the enemy's communication systems and support lines. Also, in some cases, the fighters loot and destroy infrastructure and building facilities. For example, during the 1992-1996 civil war in Kabul, alongside the destruction of the buildings and infrastructure due to the use of heavy weapons, fighters looted doors, windows, and furniture from many of partly ruined buildings to use them as fuel for warming purpose during winter. Governmental and public assets were stolen and electricity cables were looted and sold in neighboring countries.

Violence generates fear among the civilians and makes them flee from their homes. This leads to the loss of assets and their belongings in the process. Violence and the displacement of population during it, have a negative impact on family and community links and also weaken the constraints on opportunistic and criminal behavior (COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS 2003: 15).

According to COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS (2003), after a typical civil war of about seven years long, the income level falls 15 percent lower than in peacetime and the poverty level increases up to 30 percent. The cumulative loss of income during the war would be equal to around 60 percent of a year's GDP. It should be mentioned that the loss due to income decline and its impact on GDP is more than the direct waste of resources on government military expenditures. Thus, the cost of war due to adverse effects of violence is larger than the waste of resources.

Alongside causing severe population losses, displacement, and destruction of productive and social infrastructure, violent conflicts, and military operations can also cause extensive damage to the environment and natural resources. Environmental effects of conflict can be identified long after the end of the conflict. Military operations can physically damage the ecosystem due to bombardments, movement of tanks and military vehicles, contamination caused by scattered ammunition, or pollution due to the destruction of industrial sites.

In some cases, the conflict parties, as part of their military strategy, may intentionally destroy environmental and natural resources. Deliberately or not, the environmental effects of conflict

are extensive and can be considered as one of the major challenges of post-conflict development. For example, the environmental damages of war on the forest of South Vietnam have been estimated to take at least seventy years to recover (BIJLSMA 2005: 166-167). Also, it can happen that the local populations who are trapped in a conflict area exploit the environmental resources for their survival, e.g. cutting trees and using it as fuel for heating and cooking etc.

Another very severe impact of violent conflict is the proliferation of antipersonnel land mines and unexploded ammunitions. An estimated 65 million antipersonnel mines currently threaten both population and wildlife in 56 countries around the world (BIJLSMA 2005: 167). Afghanistan with an estimated 10 million land mines is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world.

The conflict also causes the emergence of leaders and organizations that possess skills and equipment that are only useful for violence. Unlike the majority of the population in a country which suffers from the conflict, these leaders and organizations make a living out of it. Thus, while the continuation of violence distresses the majority of civilians in a country affected by armed conflict, there are certain groups that try to trigger the continuation of violence in order to personally benefit from it (COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS 2003: 4). For example, during the second decade of the war, Afghanistan became a transport and marketing corridor for a flourishing illicit economy based upon opium and smuggled consumer goods. Economic agendas have become increasingly important and incentive systems have developed in which warlords and profiteers have a vested interest in the continuation of violent conflict (GOODHAND 2004: 38).

The behavioral change due to psychological impacts of conflict on people often decreases their respect for the rule of law. This effect remains for years after the conflict among the general population and will become a significant constraint in planning and management of cities in post-conflict societies. It is a major challenge to city managers in post-conflict cities to deal with the affected behavior of populations who disregard enforcement of regulations and maintenance of order in urban life. The consequences of this situation can be reflected in behavior of population in the form of land grabs of small or large scale depending on the level of power and authority, frequent violation of traffic regulations, disposal of garbage anywhere

without consideration of sanitation and municipal order, and overall a sense of carelessness for society and surrounding environment.

2.3.2 Challenges of Managing Cities in Post-Conflict Situations

Dealing with the management of a post-conflict city is a very challenging issue. However, the nature of those challenges may vary in relation to the social, economic, cultural and political context of the affected society. It also depends on the extent of damage caused by war and conflict on the city. For example, the city of Hiroshima after the atomic bombing in August of 1945 was one of the most damaged cities of Japan. The physical impact of the war in Hiroshima was huge and more visible than other impacts. The atom bomb destroyed an area of the city in a two-kilometer radius. Right after the end of the war, the possible space to act for the revival of the damaged cities became a reality. The government of Japan's immediate approach was to establish a War Damage Reconstruction Institute in November 1945 to promote the reconstruction of cities destroyed during World War II. An area of 1322.5 hectares of land within affected area was designated to be reconstructed under the War Damage Reconstruction Plan. The program successfully took a city that had been reduced to ashes and laid the foundation for progress by making a blueprint for a more workable, efficient city (TOWN PLANNING IN HIROSHIMA 2004). Whereas, in a different context such as Kabul after the civil war of 1992-96, the nature of the conflict was so atrocious and seemed never-ending as the city was seized by Taliban and the political environment was not suitable for any reconstruction effort. Thus, the city ruins remained untouched for several years even after the fall of Taliban.

An overall assessment of the situation is needed prior to any action. This can help to organize and prepare for the type of response the humanitarian and reconstruction organizations could possibly provide. However, lack of data and information is a major constraint. Extraction of accurate information from the population affected by the conflict is a challenging issue. Severe poverty during conflict creates a sort of dependency to aid agencies among lower income groups of society. Any type of survey is perceived by many of war affected households as kind of evaluation of their socio-economic status to determine their eligibility for humanitarian aid. As a result, it is possible that researcher gets falsified or exaggerated information from the household survey. This needs to be considered in research methodology in a post-conflict situation. 'Researching in conflict areas presents such special challenges that it is difficult or

impossible to apply rigorous methodological norms expected of social science research under these conditions' (BARAKAT, CHARD, JACOBY, and LUME 2004: 191).

The immediate response to a post-conflict city and its affected population has to be based on prioritization of their needs. However, the establishment of efficient institutions to manage this response itself is a required priority. Otherwise, the resources would be wasted without responding to the necessary needs. In most cases, the response to a post-conflict situation comes from external sources and international institutions such as organizations related to the United Nations (UNHCR, WFP, UN-Habitat, IOM, WB, and UNDP), international NGOs, and other humanitarian aid and development agencies. All these international actors need a local partner for implementation of their programs and projects. The local actors can be governmental organizations or NGOs. The experience in countries such as Afghanistan indicates that the government organizations in a post-conflict situation are possibly at their lowest level of capacity and efficiency. Thus, the NGOs take over the task of local partners for the international aid and development organizations. This situation paves the way for opportunistic groups to establish local NGOs in order to get involved in the implementation of humanitarian or development projects to make a profit out of it. As a result, the funds for post-conflict programs and projects become subject to abuse and waste by corrupt NGOs and local partners. That is one of the reasons why costs of the most of the public projects in post-conflict situations are incredibly higher as compared to similar private projects.

Basic human needs are physiological needs that are attached to survival and those can include the need for food, clothing, and shelter (MASLOW 2013). Provision of food and clothing to returnees of displaced populations is one of the priority responses that often come from humanitarian and aid organizations. However, provision of shelter is directly related to the reconstruction of war-affected areas or allocation of new land within the city, which is an urban planning and management issue. The mass movement of the population due to conflict from the city and returning back after the end of conflict creates a critical situation, which many of the city organizations are not capable of managing it. Especially, during long-term conflicts, relevant urban management institutions are broken apart and the returnee population is greater than what the city can accommodate. It is not easy to revive broken institutions timeously in order to respond to the population influx, as the required capacity and resources would not be available.

The reconstruction of a strong local government system is as crucial as the establishment of a legitimate central government in the post-conflict situation. Local government plays a crucial role in establishing a system that is within reach of the population and can overcome the problematic issues of post-conflict reconstruction (HOHE 2005: 70). In the case of the cities, the revival of municipal governments and urban institutions that serve the population at the grassroots level is as significant as the establishment of national institutions.

The urban governance system in a post-conflict situation would most probably resemble the welfare governance that was explained earlier in this chapter. In this case, the municipal government financially depends on funds from the national government or from other donor sources to operate. It needs a transitional period until the city's economic system reestablishes itself and begins to generate revenue and to reach a level of self-sufficiency.

Public representation is another important factor in the formation and establishment of municipal government. It needs to be pointed out that the democracy and representation have various layers to be considered. Conducting presidential and parliamentary elections at national level alone, as happened in Afghanistan, does not necessarily represent all dimensions of a democratic society. Representation in municipal level legitimizes the authority of local government and strengthens its decision-making power.

The process of post-conflict development is a long-term recovery process which is related to economic, social and psychological readjustment. Thus, a full range of integrated activities and processes are required to reactivate the development process that was disrupted by the conflict. Besides restoration of physical infrastructure and enabling the government functions to service the population in need, mid and long-term considerations for the revival of the institutional capacity need to be planned (BARAKAT 2004: 9).

To prevent waste of resources on the restoration of possibly inefficient systems, it is important to have a clear understanding of the level of efficiency of urban institutions, management and planning systems, physical infrastructure and urban services before the conflict. It is better to invest in new systems rather than in the restoration of incompetent previous systems. The same needs to be applied in the revival of urban institutions. In cases where it is ascertained that certain institutions were not functioning well before the conflict, the post-conflict situation is a good opportunity to restructure them.

In some societies such as Afghanistan, conflict is rooted in the historical process of state formation and the crisis in identity and capacity of state (GOODHAND 2004: 38). Religion and ethnicity can be strong cause for the politicization of conflict. So, a major challenge in management and planning of cities in societies where there is a possibility of conflict is to balance the distribution of resources, especially land, in such a way as to satisfy different ethnic or religious groups in order to prevent further conflict.

2.3.3 Conflict, Political Transition, and Urban Transformation

Conflicts may have different causes. Some conflicts may have ideological or political bases. A common cause of political conflicts can be the grievance of a social or political group which has the impression that their rights have been violated. In the more democratic societies, where the legitimacy of political power is through the people's will, the probability of conflicts occurring is low. This is because people are the real source of legitimate power. They are capable of changing the political system if it does not respond to their needs. Democratic governments value the individuals and refer to their choices before making important decisions. However, (FEARON 2004) rejects any systematic relationship between the democratic measures and the duration of civil wars. The argument is if a civil war happens in a democracy, there are possibilities for the emergence of obdurate rebel groups. This can be true in the societies where the democratic values have not been deeply institutionalized. For instance, the Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Taliban, Al-Qaida, and IS (ISIS) clearly oppose democratic systems. They are the types of rebel groups for which their struggle is not only to obtain their own rights but to impose their ideology on the rest of the world

In most of human history, the source of the government's legitimacy often lies in the use of force. This still prevails in many autocratic systems or the less democratic societies of today. In these societies, the ruling authority can abuse its power. As the people's will is not the source of legitimacy of the rulers, so they rarely value the rights of the individuals or certain social groups. These systems are often corrupt as the rulers do not provide any scope for public accountability. They make decisions without valuing people's point of views, which can lead to individual frustration or social grievance. As a result, political opposition groups emerge that want to change the system by force, as there is no room for democratic transitions. This process often leads to an armed conflict between the ruling powers and the oppositions.

It needs to be mentioned that in not all the cases the political opposition would emerge against the autocratic governments. Experience in countries such as North Korea shows that despite the extreme authoritarianism, injustice and social grievance that may exist there, the government's repressive policies have not allowed any significant opposition groups to emerge. Alternatively, in Saudi Arabia despite the authoritarian regime, the level of welfare and economic satisfaction of population due to government subsidy on the one hand, and ideological and cultural alignment of its people with government policies, on the other, have prevented any social grievance.

In contrast, the geopolitical location of Afghanistan and the conflict of interest among its neighbors have always aided the emergence of opposition groups. The conflict has been an effective tool for a political transition in the country, as in most of the cases seizing of political power has only happened through the use of force. As a result, the conflict has become an inherent part of Afghanistan's history and politics.

Since fall of the monarchy in Afghanistan in 1973, the country has witnessed several changes of political regimes, from the extreme pro-Soviet government with the support of the Soviet Union to the rule of Islamic extremist groups such as Taliban. Every change in political system has had a direct influence on development agendas including planning and management of cities.

Cities, on the one hand, reflect the dominant political ideology of their societies. On the other hand, they represent the socio-economic characteristics of their inhabitants. Therefore, the study of urban management in the post-conflict situation is not only closely tied to the shift and transition of the political systems and theories related to them; it is also strongly related to urban socio-economic transformation, which is the consequence of those political transitions.

In Afghanistan, the Islamic ideology has had a very deep root in the society and its impact is evident in people's lifestyle. The traditional urban texture in the Afghan cities embraces ideologies and values that are based on principles of Islam mixed with local cultures. The inward orientation of houses for privacy, the presence of mosques within every locality and, above all, the male domination of public spaces such as bazaars and mosques shape the traditional urban texture of cities in Afghanistan.

The informal planning is a continuation of traditional housing construction, which significantly contributes to the urbanization of cities in Afghanistan. The use of mud and wood as principle materials for construction of houses represent the economic condition of the majority of people in Afghanistan, as these two are the most easily accessible and affordable construction materials for the majority. Unlike formal planning, which has experienced radical transformations during the various stages of political transitions; informal planning has gone through a steady and smooth transformation. More stable and spacious houses due to use of new construction materials such as concrete, steel and baked bricks, wider roads and rights-of-ways due to understanding of the need for vehicular access, and an alteration of orientation of houses due to a better education and change in the perception of privacy and also a better understanding of the significance of sunlight are some of the positive transformations that informal planning has gone through.

Nevertheless, the formal planning and management of cities were strongly influenced by the imported and adapted concepts and approaches. Since its emergence in the 1920s until the 1960s, the methods learned from German architects and planners prevailed in the planning institutions of Afghanistan prior to the beginning of Soviet influence. Moreover, the concepts and theories of socialist city planning of the former Soviet Union shaped the formal planning approach in Afghanistan for over four decades. Most of the previous master plans for Kabul and other cities of Afghanistan were prepared under the strong influence of Marxist-Leninist principles of Soviet planners. Those principles include the following aspects (BATER 1980: 5):

1. Nationalization of all resources (including land).
2. Planned rather than market-determined land use.
3. The substitution of collectivism for privatism, most apparent in terms of the absence of residential segregation, the dominant role of public transport, and the conscious limitation and dispersal of retail functions.
4. Planned industrialization as the major factor in city growth.
5. The perceived role of the city as the agent of directed social and economic change in backward and frontier regions alike.
6. Cradle-to-grave security in return for some restrictions on personal choice of place of residence and freedom to migrate.
7. Directed urbanization and the planned development of cities according to principles of equality and hygiene rather than the ability to pay.

Despite the fact that the socialist principles, in general, were based on theories that were in contrast to the traditional and religious values of societies such as Afghanistan. There were, nevertheless, some common ground and similarities in the actions of the monarch government of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. These similarities included autocracy in the political system, centralized control of the resources and government control of markets. Thus, these similarities paved the way for the smooth influence of the Soviet city planning system into the formal planning institutions of Afghanistan. Later, when the pro-Soviet People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized the government power in Afghanistan in 1978, the party intended to change the government system and regulations in according to the Marxist-Leninist principles. Some of the initially changed regulations during this era included those related to land ownership and urban development. The intention was to ensure the control of government over all the resources, especially land, and to prevent private ownership of resources as much as possible.

Since the 1960s, when the ideological influence of the Soviet Union entered into Afghanistan's political system, until the fall of the pro-Soviet government in 1992, hundreds of Afghans studied in the Soviet Union, socialist countries of Eastern Europe, or Soviet-supported higher education institutions within Afghanistan. The consequence of this process was the Sovietization of the majority of Afghan professionals and institutionalization of the adopted principles of governance and management in the whole government system. In the area of urban development, the planning theories and principles embraced from the Soviet system has become an integral part of the urban development process in Afghanistan. According to (MUJTABA 2006), the transition towards a market-based economy and privatization efforts in post-communist countries have faced with a variety of challenges and constraints.

After fall of the pro-Soviet regime in 1992, the Mujahideen and later the Taliban intended to change the government system, laws, and regulations in according to the principles of Islamic Sharia law, which in so many aspects were different from the previous system. However, they did not oppose the Soviet master plans. Moreover, the period of Mujahideen and Taliban rule (1992 – 2001) was the peak of civil war and armed conflicts in Afghanistan, which did not leave any opportunity for implementation of those laws on development aspects such as city plans.

After the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, the newly established government with the support of international community took its first steps towards democracy and intended to position its political and economic system towards a relatively open market-based system. Democratically elected government and a market economy were exactly the opposite of what was prevailing in Afghanistan for several decades. For a period of two years (2002 – 2004), the government of Afghanistan was called the Transition Islamic State of Afghanistan. This period was considered to pave the way for preparation and enactment of a new constitution based on democratic values, an elected government and an economic system based on a market economy. The new Constitution of Afghanistan states:

“The state shall encourage, protect as well as ensure the safety of capital investment and private enterprises in accordance with the provisions of the law and market economy”
(CONSTITUTION OF AFGHANISTAN 2004: Article 10).

Nevertheless, the institutionalization of democratic values along with principles of market economy in a conservative society such as Afghanistan, which autarchy and authoritarianism have been an inherent part of its history, is a long way to go. This requires a multidimensional transformation in all aspects of the society. There are strong resistance forces that struggle to prevent this transformation. Kabul is the arena for a socio-political conflict between the agents of change and forces of resistance against it. Thus, improvement of urban management system in Afghanistan is not just about the recovery of damaged physical or institutional structures, the most significant aspect of it is, rather, the management of transformation and change.

There are various constraints that prevent or resist not only the urban transformation but also the overall development process in Afghanistan. These constraints can be categorized into two groups. The first category includes inherent issues and deficiencies that prevailed in Afghanistan’s socio-economic-political-cultural system prior to its demise into a phase of conflict and unrest. They include administrative and financial deficiencies and scarcity of professional capacity. The second category refers to challenges which are the outcome of decades of conflict and instability. They are insecurity, corruption, conflict economy and weak rule of law. It needs to be mentioned that conflict and instability have had a strong effect in enhancing the inherent issues as well.

The post-conflict recovery of the urban development system in Afghanistan requires a transformation at various levels including governance, management, and planning of cities along with social and economic development. At the governance level, the transformation involves democratization of municipalities and increasing the level of public representation at the community and municipal level. It also urges for measures to increase the revenue of municipalities in order to escalate the level of financial and political autonomy of the municipal governments. It also involves the amendment of rules and regulation in accordance to the principles of the market economy, defining a clear role for private sector and non-governmental organization (NGOs) in the urban regime, and taking measures to ensure that the governance system will effectively address the problems and issues of all sectors of society.

At the urban management level, steps need to be taken towards decentralization of power and delegation of authority and responsibility at various organizational levels. It is also related to the adaptation of new principles that allow the private sector to actively take part in the provision of urban services in order to increase efficiency. The principles of new public management, which emphasizes on the autonomy of urban institutions, accountability to the public, customer orientation and market orientation of urban utilities and services, are in accordance with requirements of the market economy.

In the planning of cities, the transformation includes shifting from a socialist influenced rigid planning attitude which intended to foster social and spatial equity in collective consumption with high priority to construction of large-scale public housing, to a demand-supply based market-driven planning system. Despite the fact that the pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan claimed for the establishment of a system based on social equity influenced by Marxist-Leninist principle imported from the Soviet Union, the planning approaches with the use of long-term rigid master plans mostly emphasized the physical aspects and lacked any public consultation. On the other hand, this mode of formal planning failed to keep pace with the rapid growth of population due to in-migrations from rural areas to major cities, especially the capital city of Kabul. As a consequence, the informal mode of planning took over the tasks of the provision of housing and shelter for the exceeding population. In this way, the informal approach was more successful than formal planning attempts. However, the formal planning approach often did not recognize it as a valid mode of urban growth. Indeed, the informal approach has severe deficiencies such as lack of legal deed and no provision for infrastructure and public services. Thus it cannot be a substitute for the formal planning attempts. However, there needs to be a

fundamental change in the attitude towards the informal settlements. The informal mode of planning needs to be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat. The urban managers and planning authorities need to work on a framework to reduce the gap between formal and informal approaches through legalizing the informal settlement and involvement of communities in the improvement of infrastructure and services within their localities.

3 Foundations of Urban Development in Kabul

3.1 Kabul at a Glance

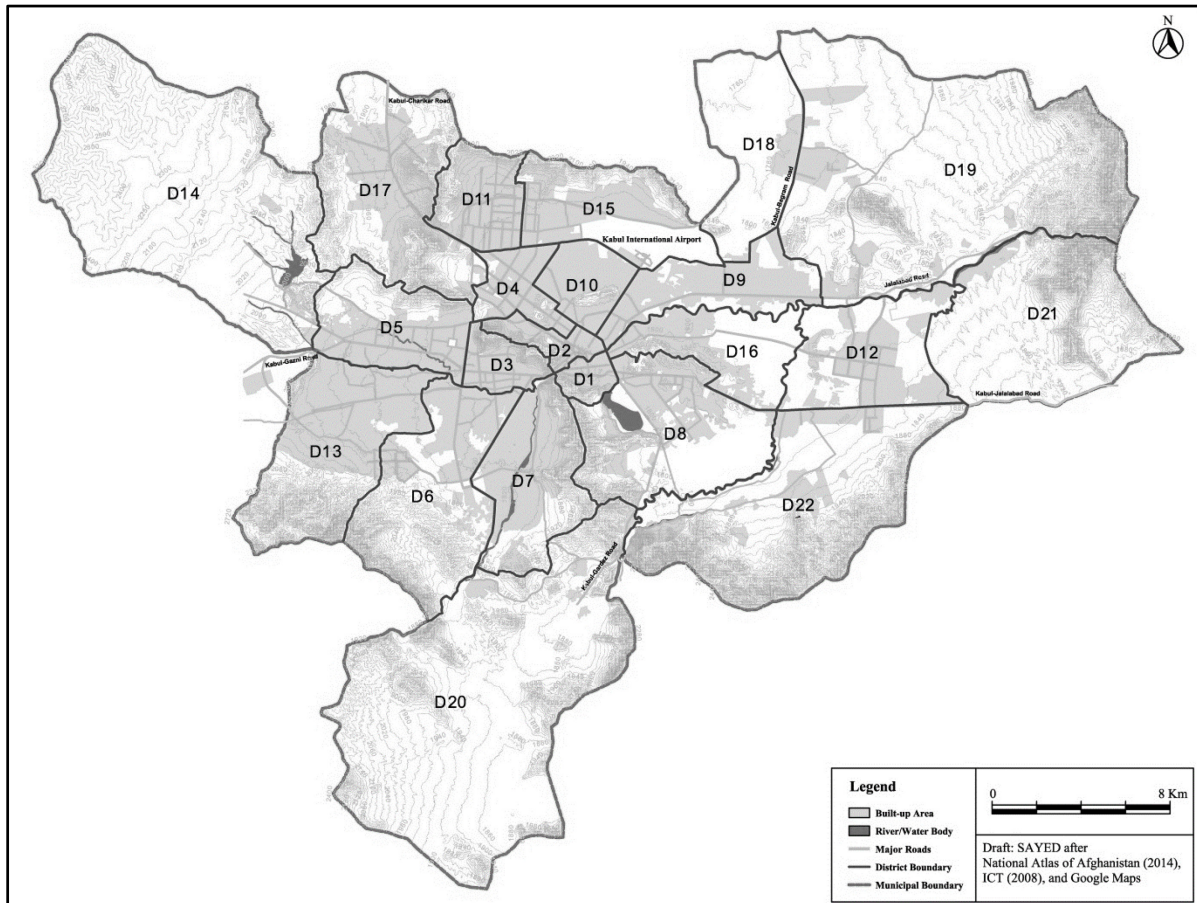
Kabul is the capital and largest city of Afghanistan and Kabul Province. It is located in the eastern part of Afghanistan at the coordinates of 34° 51' north and 69° 14' east and at an average altitude of 1800 meters above the sea level (HAHN 1964: 10).

The Kabul basin consists of various small basins such as Logar, Chardeh, Wazirabad, and Dehsabz basins, are separated from each other by natural hills and mountains. The Kabul River also plays an important role in shaping the city's layout. The human settlements in Kabul have originated in an area between Sher-Darwaza (2,219 m) and Asmai (2,104 m) hills and gradually expanded to other parts. These two major hills along with several small hills and the Kabul River divide the city into various clusters of settlements (GRÖTZBACH 1979). Its location in a remarkable terrain with the existence of various mountain ranges gives Kabul a distinct natural characteristic. The Paghman Mountain, at the southwest of Kabul with a mean height of about 4000 m which is often covered with snow, gives a pleasant view to the city.

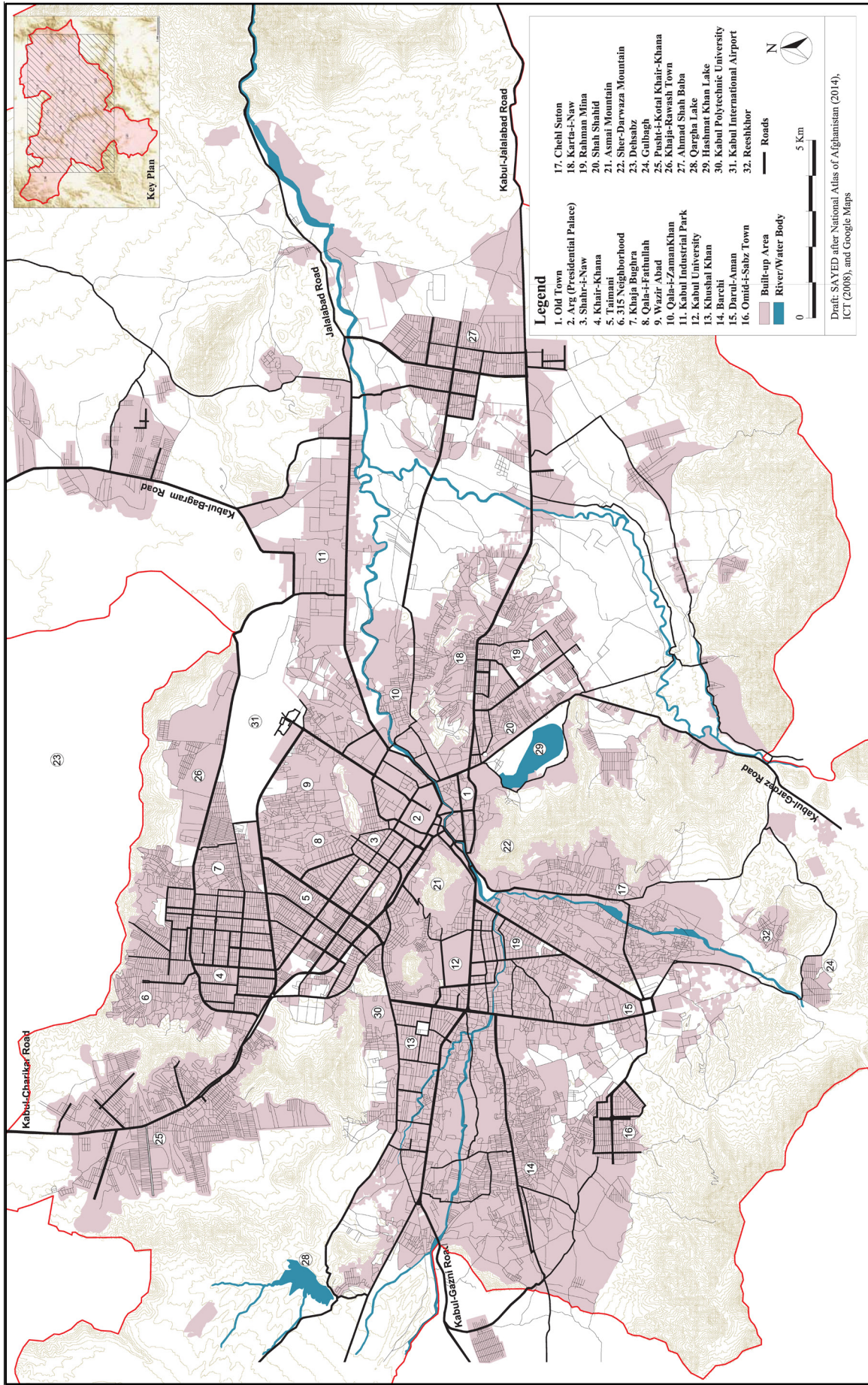
The current jurisdiction of Kabul Municipality covers an area of about 1,022 km². There is no exact estimation of the total population of Kabul as there has not been any comprehensive population survey for the city since 2000. Different sources estimate the city's population at different numbers. The population estimated for Kabul Province by the Central Statistics Office of Afghanistan is 4,227,261 for the year 2014 out of which 3,565,037 is urban and 662,224 is rural (CSO 2015).

The climate of Kabul is cold semi-arid with cold winter and hot dry summer days and relatively cool summer nights due to the downward flowing of the wind from the mountains. The Seasons are distinct. The main precipitation period happens in spring, followed by a generally pleasant early summer, which merges with a relatively short, hot summer. The midday temperature in months of June, July and August often exceeds 30° C. The average temperature in Kabul is affected by the fact of the difference between day and night temperatures. It can be extreme as the midday temperature in the summer can rise up to 40° and the night temperature in winters may drop to below -20° (HAHN 1964).

The development of Kabul and the evolution of its urban geography have happened in various stages. The significant milestones for the development of Kabul can be explained as its historic organic growth from the pre-Islamic era until the 1920s, early planned development from the 1920s to 1960s, the master planning era under the influence of the former Soviet Union from the 1960s to 1990s, the civil war and destruction of the city in 1990s, and the post-Taliban Kabul from 2001 up to the present day.



Map 3: Administrative division of the Kabul Municipality districts



Map 4: Kabul City built-up area

3.2 Historical Development

The origins of urban settlements in Kabul date back to the dawn of history, some of which is interwoven with myths. Its location on a major ancient crossroad of trade and culture has made it attractive to many kings and emperors throughout history. Kabul has been a significant location for the confluence of various cultures and civilizations such as the Persians, Indians, Chinese, and Moghuls. It has also witnessed changes in ruling powers, severe conflicts and destructions through its existence.

Ancient Greeks used the name of *Paropanisades* to indicate the plains that stretch immediately southeast of the mountains, around the present Kabul (VOGELSANG 2002: 1). Ptolemy mentioned *Paropanisades* as a province with various villages and towns which are bound on the west by the eastern side of *Aria* (present-day Herat), on the north by a part of *Bactria* (present-day Balkh region), on the east by India and on the south, it is bordered with northern borders of *Arachosia*⁶. The inhabitants of this region consisted of various groups namely *Bolitae*, *Aristophyli*, *Parsii*, *Parsietae* and *Ambatae*. (PTOLEMY 2011: 147).

According to some Afghan historians, *Paropanisades* mentioned in Ptolemy's Geography refers to southern Hindu Kush region with the present Kabul valley consisting of a large part of it. *Bolitae* refers to the people of Kabul, and *Cabura* or *Ortospana* denotes to the city of Kabul (KOHZAD 1942: 81); (GHUBAR 1989b: 29); (M. Osman SIDQI 1975: 79); (HABIBI 2003: 349). Nevertheless, it is hard to find evidence to clarify the relationship between above historic names with the present Kabul or its inhabitants.

In the fourth century BCE, Alexander of Macedonia invaded Persia. He reached present-day Afghanistan in the year 330 BCE. Marching through the west, south, and southeast of the country, he arrived in Kabul valley in the winter of 330/329 BCE. Soon he crossed the Hindu-Kush Mountain to the north and made himself master of the Bactrian north (VOGELSANG 2002: 115). Later this led to the rise of the Graeco-Bactrian rule which dominated most of the areas of present-day Afghanistan.

6 Southern regions of Afghanistan around present-day Kandahar

By the end of fourth century BCE, a new dynasty has emerged in India known as the Mauryan dynasty. In year 303 BCE, the Greeks signed an agreement with Chandragupta Maurya the king and founder of Mauryan dynasty, which stipulated that the lands of *Gandahara*, the *Parapanisadae* (Kabul valley), *Arachosia* and *Gedrosia* were ceded to the Mauryans, in return for 500 elephants (VOGELSANG 2002: 124). In the early second century BCE, the Graeco-Bactrians extended their domination to the south and southeast across the Hindu Kush. This was when the power of Mauryans had collapsed and the local Indian successors were not matched for the Greeks. By the middle of the second century BCE, much of what is now Afghanistan had thus become a melting pot of Greek, Indian and Iranian influences (VOGELSANG 2002: 133-134).

During this era, Kabul became important as a node for mixture and exchange of Greek, Persian, Hindu, and Buddhist cultures. It also became an important commercial hub for merchants traveling from Europe and Central Asia to China and India. Findings of archaeological excavations by a French team of archeologist during 1923-1925 revealed the traces of last Greek king Hermaeus who ruled in the Kabul region during first century CE (GHUBAR 1989b: 30).

In the first century CE, a new powerful dynasty known as the Kushans rose in the north of present-day Afghanistan. They subsequently spread from *Bactria*, across the Hindu Kush towards the Kabul Valley and *Gandahara*. Eventually, they dominated the greater part of northern India as well as parts of South-central Asia (VOGELSANG 2002: 133-144).

The cultural prosperity and urban magnitude of Kabul amplified under the Kushan kings, especially when King Kajula Kadphises⁷ decided to make Kabul the center of his kingdom. This dynasty continued to rule in Kabul until the fifth century CE (MURADI 2000: 35). During the reign of Kushan Empire, Kabul became more significant as a religious city for Buddhists and had a strong connection with other Buddhist cities of that time such as Balkh, Bamyan, and Hada⁸ (GHUBAR 1931: 47). In the 1930s a Buddhist monastery and stupa were found in Kabul on a spur of the Shir-Darwaza Mountain which indicated the existence of settlements that would date back to the pre-Islamic period. By the fourth century CE, Sasanian (Persian)

7 Probably great-grand father of the most famous Kushan king, Kanishka (VOGELSANG 2002: 146)

8 Near present-day Jalalabad city

control in Northern Afghanistan and the Kabul valley and beyond was considerably strengthened. Archeological evidence of urban settlements from the Kushans and Sasanian era were found in the Tap-i-Maranjan, Chaman-i-Huzoory and Balahesar areas of Kabul. An important hoard of Sasanian coins was found at Tap-i-Maranjan, near the Old City of Kabul (VOGELSANG 2002: 154-163); (MURADI 2000: 80).

In the seventh century CE with the rise and expansion of Islam, the Arab Muslims conquered many countries of that time. During this era, Kabul was governed by a local dynasty known as the Kabul-Shahan (Kings of Kabul) (Mohammad Osman SIDQI 1978: 26). During their rule, Kabul valley was the main center of resistance against the rising tide of Islam in Eastern Afghanistan (VOGELSANG 2002: 182).

In the year 663 CE, Arab Muslims invaded Kabul and were faced with a very violent resistance by the city residents. Abdurrahman Ibn Samara led the Arab Army. Kabul was under siege for over one month and finally, the Arabs broke the city's fortifications using a catapult and penetrated into the city. Lastly, the residents agreed to pay tax to save their lives and their religious beliefs (IBN-ATHIR 2003: 2057).

Kabul was under the rule of the Kabul Kings until 879 CE, when it was invaded again by Yaqub Layth Saffar⁹ (840-879) (Mohammad Osman SIDQI 1978: 16). From this time Kabul became a part of the Islamic World. The city lost its previous political importance. However, it was the center of a province and still an important commercial crossroad during several dynasties such as those of the Ghaznavids, Ghorids, and Timurids, which had their own capital cities in Ghazni, Ghor, and Herat respectively.

In 1604 CE Zahiruddin Mohammad Babur (1483-1530) the founder of Mughal dynasty in India seized Kabul (HABIBI 1972: 10-11). The pleasant climate of Kabul fascinated Babur as he mentioned in his memoirs (BABUR 2002: 154): 'The climate is excellent. In fact, no place in the world is known to have such a pleasing climate as Kabul.' As a result, he decided to make Kabul his capital city, but soon his descendants established the capital of their empire in India, and Kabul gradually lost its importance.

9 He was a Persian Muslim and the founder of the Saffarid dynasty (861-1003) in Sistan, with its capital at Zaranj (Nimroz province of present-day Afghanistan).

Kabul remained under the rule of Mughal dynasty of India until the 18th century. The city was invaded and captured by Nadir Shah Afshar, the ruler of Persia in 1738. After the establishment of Pashtun Durani dynasty in Kandahar in 1747, Kabul came under the rule of Durani kings. Due to tribal rivalry among the rulers of Durani dynasty, King Timor Shah decided to move the capital city away from the influence of Pashtun tribal leaders. Thus, Kabul with its mainly Tajik population who were loyal to the king was a suitable place for his decision. The moving of Timor Shah's residence from Kandahar to Kabul accorded with a series of political and military activities from 1773 to 1776. Since 1776 Kabul is the capital city for various dynasties and political regimes that ruled Afghanistan.

During Timor Shah's rule, many of the high-rank government officials and army commanders moved from Kandahar to Kabul. The king distributed some areas of the present day the Old City of Kabul to his high-rank government officials to build their own residences. The neighborhoods in the city were named after those government officials. Today, some of those neighborhood names are still in use, such as Diwan Bigi near Bala Hisar, Sardar Jahan Khan near Maiwand square, Qazi Faizullah Khan, Ali Reza Khan, Ghuzar-i-Achakzayi ha, and Murad Khani after Sardar Murad Khan. In the following decades, Kabul formed one of the most important trading centers in the intra-Asian trade caravan, until the destruction of the bazaar in the first Anglo-Afghan War (1842) put an end to its prosperity (GRÖTZBACH 1979: 36);(KOHZAD 2008: 260-265); (POPALZAEI 1955: 57-62).

An important event in the development of Kabul was Amir Sher Ali Khan's¹⁰ plan of Sherpur city. In 1870 as part of his reforms, Amir decided to plan a new city with an army cantonment in the northern part of old city of Kabul at Bibi-Mahru hill. This was the place which was planned thirty years earlier by the British army to build their cantonment, but due to the occurrence of first Anglo-Afghan war, their plan failed. Sher Ali Khan named the new city after himself as Sherpur. Over six thousand workers including about one thousand masons and carpenters worked for a period of five years to build Sherpur city. The city area was 2000 Jereb¹¹ (about 400 Hectares) and was surrounded by seven-meter high city walls. Before

10 Sher Ali Khan (1825 -1879) was Amir of Afghanistan from 1863 to 1866 and from 1868 until his death in 1879.

11 Jereb is a unit of area used in Afghanistan customary systems, which is equivalent to 2000 square meter.

completion of construction, Kabul fell into another unrest which finally led to the second Anglo-Afghan war (GHUBAR 1989a: 594).

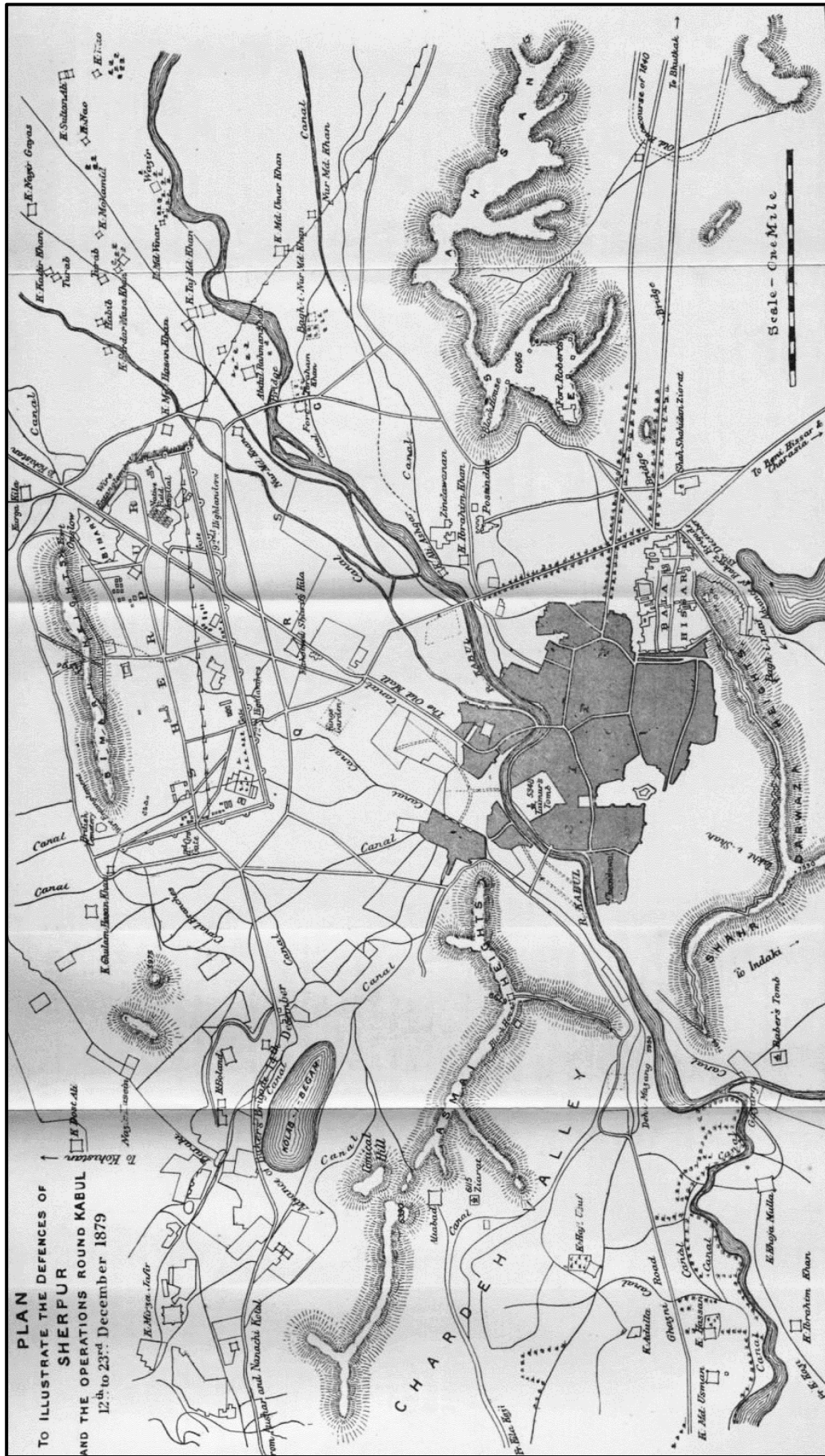
Kabul was once again severely damaged during the second Anglo-Afghan war in 1879-1880. Most of the structures in the city including Bala Hisar (the ancient fortress and palace) were destroyed. By the end of the war in 1880, Amir Abdurrahman Khan¹² succeeded the throne of Kabul. This was the moment that Afghanistan emerged as a nation-state with its current geographical boundaries.

Even though that Abdurrahman centralized political power in Afghanistan and imposed heavier taxes on people, nonetheless the country's economy still remained based on subsistence agriculture and its people culturally insular. Except for few government factories in Kabul, little distinguished the Afghanistan of 1800 from that of 1900 in terms of transport, communications, industry, or education (BARFIELD 2010: 165).



Figure 3: Amir Abdurrahman Khan's mausoleum in Park-i-Zarnigar, Kabul
Photo: SAYED 2014

¹² Amir Abdurrahman Khan was ruler of Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901.



Map 5: A plan of the Old Kabul City with its surrounding area including the Sherpur area and its fortifications in the 19th century
Source: ROBERTS (1898)



Figure 4: Sherpur area and its surrounding walls in the 19th century
Photo: BURKE (1879)

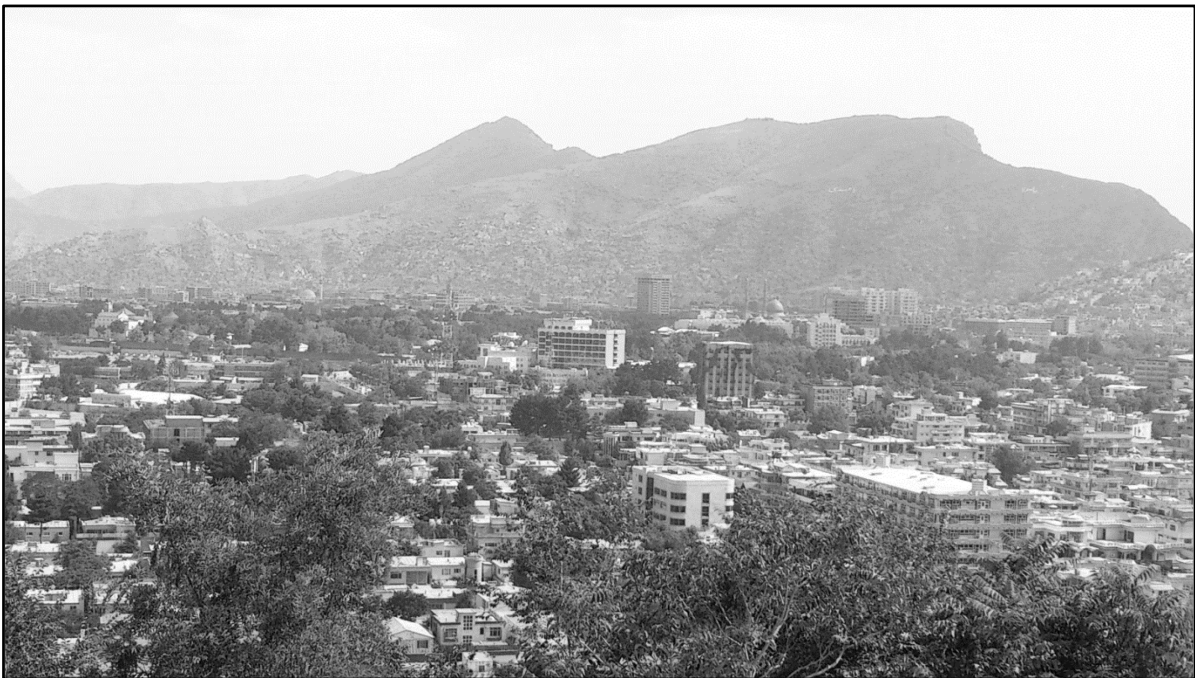


Figure 5: The extent of construction and urban growth in Sherpur area and its surrounding in a period of over a century.
Photo: SAYED 2015

Despite the political repression and environment of terror, he had created, Abdurrahman Khan planned some reforms and reconstruction activities in Kabul and other cities of Afghanistan. During his reign, he tried to change the face of Kabul with the construction of several buildings

and structures, which exist up to present day, including the presidential palace, Bustan-Sara,¹³ Gulistan-Sara¹⁴, Shahr-Ara Tower, Haram-Sarai building in Babur's garden, Eid-Gah Mosque, Shahi mosque, Pul-i-Kheshti mosque, and Bagh-i-Bala palace. Some other buildings of that era were demolished during courses of events (GHUBAR 1989a: 650).

After Amir Abdurrahman's death, his son Amir Habibullah succeeded the throne in 1901. He had significant achievements during his reign. He laid the foundation of the modern education system in Afghanistan with establishment Habibia high school in Kabul in 1903.

During his reign, the roads which connected Kabul to other cities such as Jalalabad, Ghazni, and Jabal-Saraj were renewed and made suitable for the use of motorized vehicles, and modern concrete and steel bridges were built over the rivers along those roads. Habibullah was keen to build new palaces as well. The Delgushah, the Stor and the Ain-ul-emara palaces in Kabul, and some palaces in other cities are memorials of his era.

His further actions were the construction of the Jabal-u-Saraj hydropower plant in 1907, which later in 1919 supplied electricity to Kabul. For the first time in 1909, he imported Daimler motor vehicles from India. Later, he sent 75 technicians from Kabul to Bombay to learn the technics of motor vehicle repair. The extension of telephone lines in Kabul and other cities during 1909-1910, the launch of a leather production factory in 1909, the founding of an orphanage in Kabul in 1910, the establishment of Kabul City Hospital in 1911, and the establishment of wool factory in Kabul in 1913, were the other achievements of Amir Habibullah (GHUBAR 1989a: 706). Moreover, during this era, the traditional, introverted courtyard architecture of residential houses in Kabul was gradually replaced by European-style villas in the midst of walled gardens(SCHADL 2004).

3.3 Early Planned Urban Development of Kabul

King Amanullah was the first Afghan ruler who attempted to a vast process of modernization in Afghanistan after he declared full independence from Great Britain in 1919. He established

13 Now used as office building by Kabul municipality.

14 Now it is Amir Abdurrahman Khan's mausoleum in Park-i-Zarnigar.

political relations with various countries and signed strategic and economic agreements with Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, Poland, and Liberia (GHUBAR 1989a: 789).

The first written constitution of Afghanistan was enacted in 1923, which was clearly inspired by the ideas of Mahmood Tarzi¹⁵ and it tried to turn Afghanistan into a modern nation-state, without however officially breaking its links with Islam (VOGELSANG 2002: 278).

Several other laws and regulations, as subordinates to the constitution, were decreed during this period. The first municipal law was legislated in March 1924 in nine chapters and 111 articles (LAW OF MUNICIPALITY 1924). However, Kabul municipality known as *Baladia* was already established as a public institution in 1919 with limited functions (KABUL MUNICIPALITY 2014). This was a very significant achievement that laid the foundation of the first modern urban governance system in Afghanistan.

According to the municipal law, it was required for the large cities and the center of every province to have a municipal body. The municipal body consisted of administrative personnel and a council with elected members. The criteria for nomination of council members were: to be literate, a resident of the same city, be over 20 years of age, and a taxpayer to the government of Afghanistan. The head of municipal body was elected by the members of municipal council from among the nobility and experienced people (LAW OF MUNICIPALITY 1924: 1-3). However, the budget and municipal expenses of Kabul Municipality, which was generally lower than its public income, required the approval of the Prime Minister. This situation formally undermined the financial independence of Kabul Municipality from other government institutions (ESSER 2009).

The main functions of the municipal body were to the control prices and markets, provision of public health, sanitation, garbage collection, water supply, electricity supply, street lighting and construction of roads (ALI KHAN 1927: 89-90).

15 Mahmood Khan Tarzi (1865-1933), father-in-law of Amanullah and father of Queen Surayya, was one of the most influential individuals of Afghanistan who was educated in Turkey and was fond of modernization and promotion of reforms. His ideas for modernization and reform were directly reflected in Amanullah's plans.

As part of his modernization strategies, Amanullah decided on the development of the first planned city in Chahar-Deh area about six kilometers to the southwest of the old city of Kabul. Similar to Sher Ali Khan, Amanullah wished the city to be called after his name Dar-ul-Aman which means the City of Aman or literally the safe city.

Few months after enactment of the municipal law in 1924, the code for construction of Darulaman City with 38 articles was also issued. This was the first ever modern building code for Kabul. It stated that the government of Afghanistan is required to plan for a capital city with modern streets, parks, water supply, sewerage system and electricity accessible to every household. It included criteria for distribution of land, eligibility for the acquisition of land, the price for each square meter of land, design and construction requirements such as sizes of plots, the orientation of buildings, setbacks, building heights, open and green spaces, and types of construction materials (DARULAMAN CONSTRUCTION CODE 1924).

Amanullah was well aware that the technical capacity and experience required to plan and construct his dream modern city was scarce among local architects and masons who had no official education in the field and usually followed traditional construction systems. Therefore, he sought the assistance of European experts for this purpose. He hired and assigned German architects and planners for design and construction of the new city. Walter Harten, a German architect/urban planner, was the chief architect for the planning of Darulaman, and Professor Dr. Ing. H. C. Prix from the Technical University of Berlin¹⁶ had the responsibility of designing and drafting of drawings for new constructions (ASADI SCHARK 1928). Unlike Sher Ali Khan's plan, Darulaman was an open city without a wall and the first structure in Amanullah's new city was the King's palace. Walter HARTEN (1928) chief architect of the Royal Government of Afghanistan during the reign of King Amanullah explained the construction process:

‘On Amania hill, the personal palace of the king will be emblazoned in with a shining copper-covered roof. The surrounding extensive hill garden is so far developed that it promises to give to the beautiful classic palace a worthy setting. On the Government Palace, which is to offer space to all ministries later, part of the roof is also stocked and ready with cement tiles.’

16 Die Technischen Hochschule in Berlin

The new palace was built in a European style and was equipped with the modern piping system and heating facilities.



Figure 6: The Darulaman Place before its destruction
Source: ENCYCLOPEDIA ARIANA (2011)

Amanullah undertook his plans in various phases; the first phase was from 1919 to 1924 and included mostly the provision of laws and restructuring of the government system, which was miserably backward. He was very successful in the implementation of his first phase of the plan. However, he faced difficulties in the second phase. As he accelerated his reforms and modernization plans in 1927, many of tribal leaders opposed him and declared his reforms anti-Islamic.

In 1928, Amanullah traveled to Europe, he was fascinated by the progress in European cities. In order to advance his further plans, he needed to have Afghan professionals. Afghanistan did not have any university or institute for professional higher education until that period. The young king decided to establish a technical university with the support of German professionals. Thus, he invited some more German experts to come and assist him in the establishment of a technical school. But, he could not succeed in his further plans due to the tribal unrest, which finally led to his overthrow in 1929.

Albert Speer¹⁷ was one of the young German architects who was invited by King Amanullah in 1928, but the King was already removed from power before Speer moved to Afghanistan, as he has mentioned in his memoirs (SPEER 1970: 13).

“I very nearly became an official court architect as early as 1928. Aman Ullah, ruler of the Afghans, wanted to reform his country and was hiring young German technicians with that end in view. Joseph Brix, Professor of Urban Architecture and Road Building, organized the group. It was proposed that I would serve as city planner and architect and in addition as a teacher of architecture at a technical school which was to be founded in Kabul. My wife and I pored over all available books on remote Afghanistan. We considered how a style natural to the country could be developed out of the simple existing structures, and the pictures of wild mountains filled us with dreams of ski tours. Favorable contractual conditions were worked out. But no sooner was everything virtually settled - the King had just been received with great honors by President Hindenburg - than the Afghans overthrew their ruler in a coup d'état.”

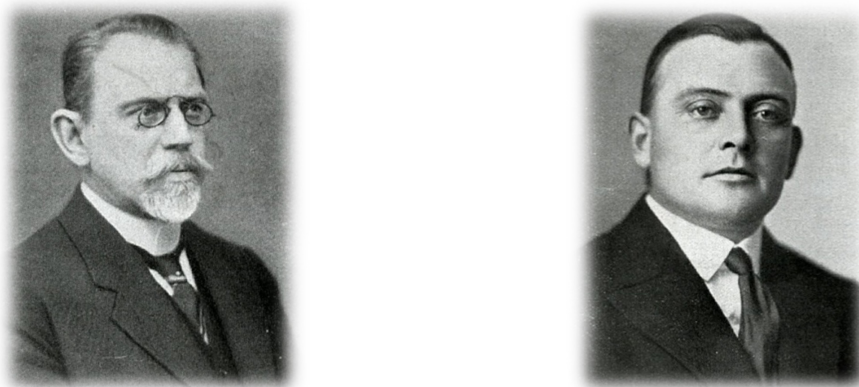


Figure 7: Professor Brix (Left) and Walter Harten (Right)
Source: ASADI SCHARK (1928)

King Amanullah’s reforms and modernization efforts were challenged by the tribal leaders who perceived them as a threat against their religious and customary traditions. According to KOHISTANI (2011: 144), the top-down approach to reform of laws without involving people and

17 Albert Speer (1905-1981) was a German architect who worked as Adolf Hitler's chief architect and for a part of World War II, Minister of Armaments and War Production for the Third Reich.

ignoring the values and requirements of the society resulted in the failure of the whole modernization process and thus the collapse of the Amanullah's government.

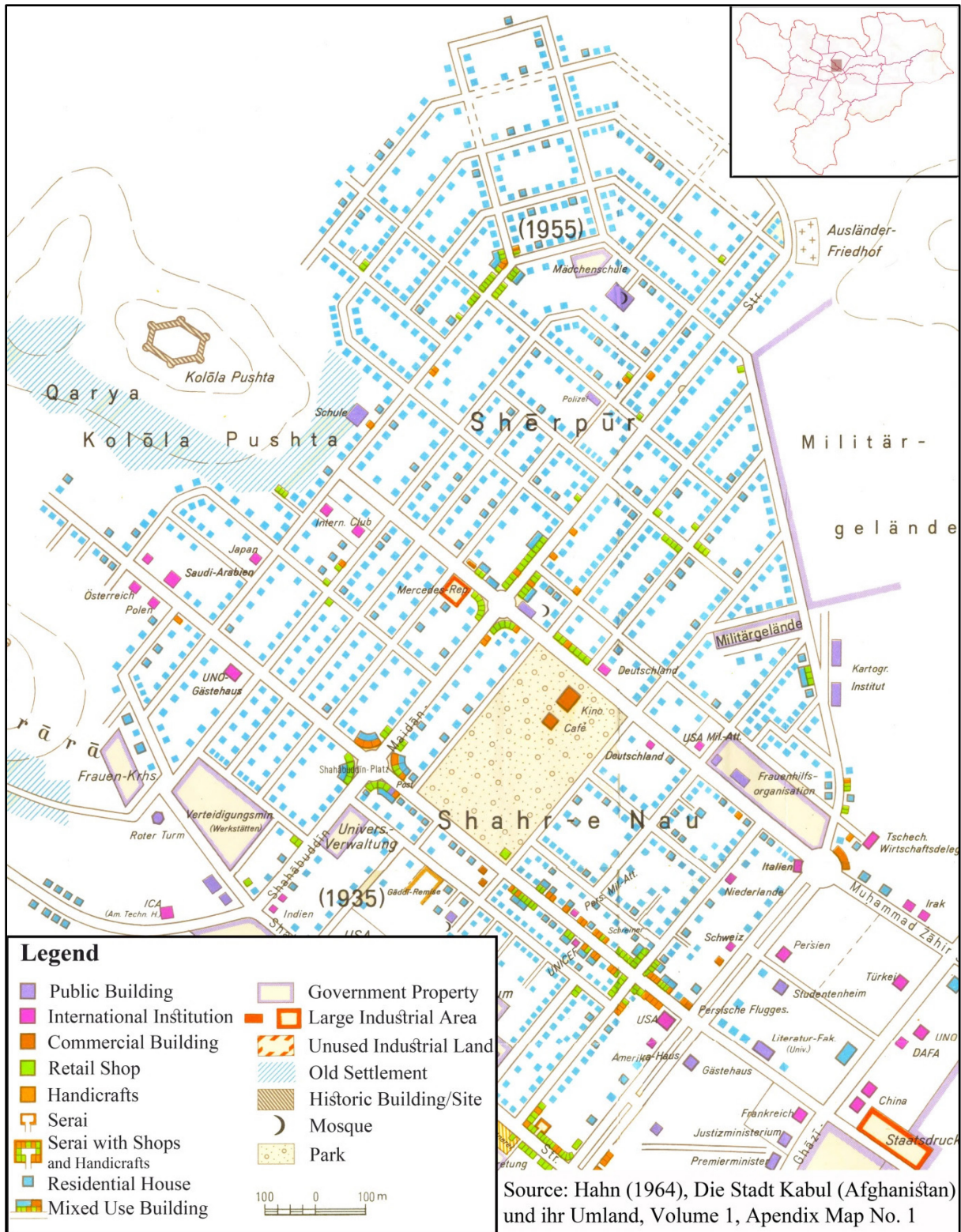
After Amanullah, Habibullah Kalakani declared himself as ruler of Afghanistan in 1929. During his nine months reign, due to the situation of unrest almost all development and modernization activities were stopped. Soon he was removed from power by Nadir Shah. The constitution of 1931 confirmed the situation that had arisen after the events of 1929. Many outward measures taken or announced by Amanullah were canceled (VOGELSANG 2002: 286).

After Nadir Shah's assassination in 1933 his son, Zahir Shah succeeded the throne. During this era, for the Afghan Monarchy, nothing was more important than preserving the internal stability of Afghanistan, which they defined as maintaining their own rule over the country. Based on the experience from Amanullah's era, they had a long-term vision about how to structure the relationship between state and society to avoid conservative rebellions while still modernizing the country. Unlike Amanullah, they had a strategy of limited and gradual social change accompanied by economic development. Their focus was to start a steady change process from Kabul and expand it outward in a soft manner without imposing it (BARFIELD 2010: 198).

Development of Kabul took place through a piece-by-piece planning approach by adding and building new quarters on the previously agricultural lands north and west of the city. The preparation of city plans was carried out by the 'department of city planning' which was part of the Ministry of Public Works (MUDA 2014).

In 1935 Shahr-i-Naw (the New City), a new residential district with spacious houses and gardens was developed north-east of the royal palace (Arg) to accommodate mostly local elites and foreigners. Following this in 1942 Karta-i-Chahar was developed in the area between Darulaman Street and the Kabul University campus in the west of the city. The relatively large plots of houses indicate that this district was also dedicated to mostly upper-class families and some foreigners. From 1950 onwards many new residential areas in the West, East, and North of the city were developed, of which many of them were traditional family houses with gardens. The expansion of Kabul had rapidly accelerated during the 1960s and 1970s (GRÖTZBACH 1979: 37-38).

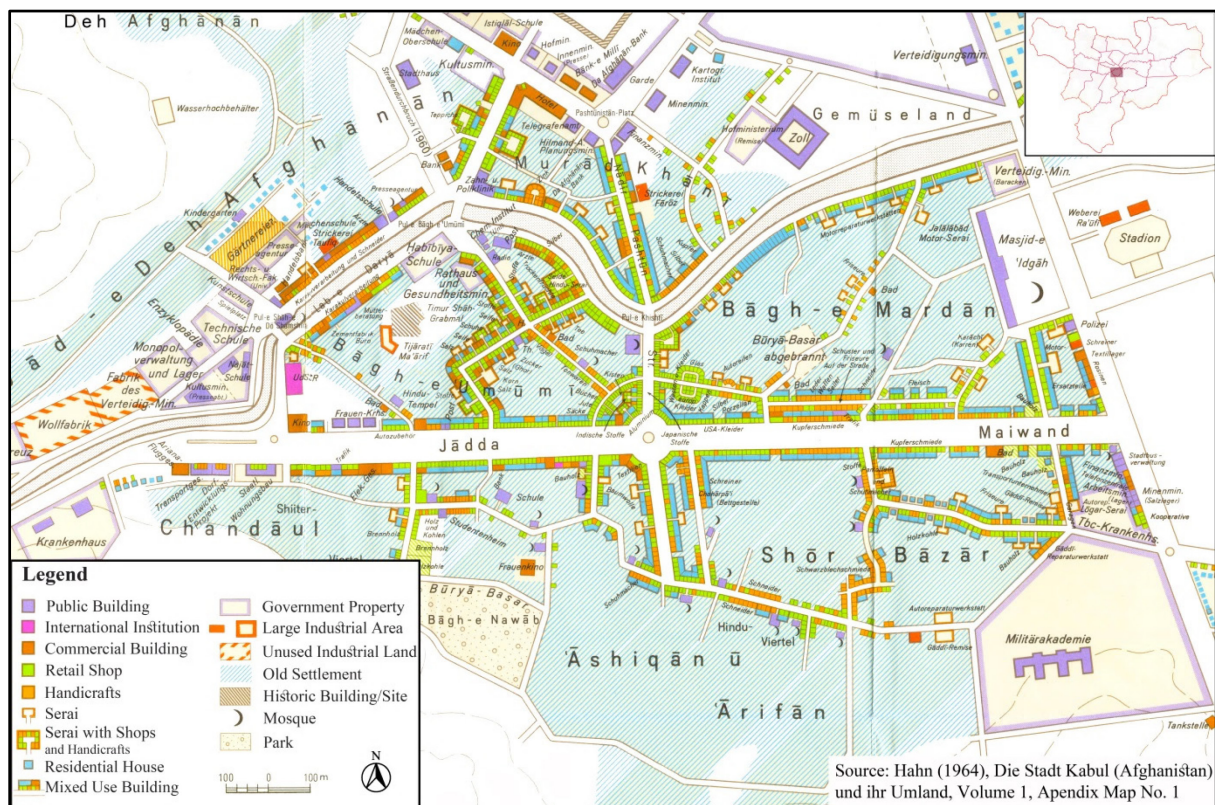
The Kabul city administration was successively extended and the Kabul Municipality was administered by mayors who were appointed by the government. In 1948, the government decided to establish a modern municipality for Kabul with an elected mayor and city council members (JOYA 1948). Ghulam Mohammad Farhad was the first elected Mayor of Kabul from 1948 to 1953. The construction of Jada-i-Maiwand, a 40m wide and 2.5km long boulevard tearing the historic fabric of the Kabul Old City apart, was one of the major activities of this first elected mayor. The construction of Jada-i-Maiwand was at the cost of demolishing historic gardens, traditional industries and crafts workshops, historic bazaar, public paths, and over 1500 traditional houses in the Old City (AREZ and DITTMANN 2008: 52-72).



Map 6: Shahr-i-Naw, a planned urban neighborhood for elites, developed in 1935

It should be mentioned that during this period town planning in Afghanistan was never recognized as a distinct profession. Rather, like many other parts of the world, it was regarded as an ‘extension’ of architectural design and to a lesser extent civil engineering. The job of city

planner was not just to design individual buildings; rather it was to design whole groups of buildings and spaces in an integrated form. Architects, together with civil engineers and surveyors, were considered the most qualified for the town planning profession, as architecture was seen to be an exercise in the physical design of built form (TAYLOR 1998: 8). Most of the professional employees of city planning department in Kabul Municipality hardly had a degree either in architecture or civil engineering.



Map 7: Kabul Old City which was torn apart through construction of Jada-i-Maiwand

In 1956, the government of Afghanistan, under Prime Minister Mohammad Daud with the support of the United Nations, prepared the first five-year plan to guide the economic development of the country up to 1961. The plan generally urged for the development of various sectors such as agriculture and irrigation, transportation infrastructure, public services (health and education), banking and commerce, and mining and industry; with no specific provision for urban development (AFGHANISTAN YEARBOOK 1956: 68-76).

The significance of the urban development component as a distinct area was realized while preparation of the second five-year plan (1962 - 1966). This plan emphasized the empowerment of municipalities within the cities. It required the modification and

development of Kabul city systems including construction and expansion of city networks and housing projects. The plan also envisioned the establishment of a house construction authority to meet the rising demand for housing (AFGHANISTAN YEARBOOK 1961: 20).

3.4 The Influence of the Soviet Union in Planning of Kabul

The rise of the Berlin Wall and the increase in tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States and its allies in the 1960s, lead to an intensive rivalry between the world superpowers. Each of them sought to expand further their areas of influence. Afghanistan was easier to reach from the Soviet Union; however, the United States was already active in development projects such as building dams and highways. During the 1960s the Soviet Union intended to compete with its rival over funding development projects and expanding its influence in Afghanistan. Seeing it as an opportunity, in April 1962 the government of Afghanistan signed an agreement with the Soviet Union to receive technology and financial assistance from them. A Part of this agreement included technical and financial assistance in the preparation of master plans for Afghan cities, alongside the capacity building of Afghan planners. The Soviet assistance included preparation of a comprehensive master plan for Kabul to envision modern infrastructure, transportation, and other city systems, as lack of professional personnel with capacity and experience in city planning to prepare such as plan was a major challenge to Kabul Municipality. Thus, the Kabul Municipality sought support from the Soviet Union to provide technical advisory and professional personnel (AFGHANISTAN YEARBOOK 1963: 268). In the following years after World War II, the concept of 'master planning' was a dominant and prevailing urban planning mode in many countries of the world including the Soviet Union.

Based on the request of the Kabul Municipality, the first Kabul Master Plan was prepared in 1964 by Soviet experts. The Soviet planners conducted technical surveys in Kabul and then carried out the preparation of plans in Moscow (AFGHANISTAN YEARBOOK 1964: 248). Master Plan 1964 was envisioned for an increase of population to 800,000 in 1989 over an area of 23.780 hectares. The plan and technical documents were submitted to the government for approval. Meanwhile, for better implementation of the master plan the Central Housing and Town Planning Authority was established, also with the technical support of the former Soviet Union (MURADI 2000: 197).

The establishment of the Central Housing and Town Planning Authority in Kabul in 1964 was an important milestone in the evolution of urban planning concepts and methods in Afghanistan. The organization included five major sections: 1) the *Town Planning* section which included a surveying department, the social and economic department, and department of design; 2) the *Housing Section* including the department of building research and department of design; 3) the *Water Supply and Sewerage* section; 4) the *Prefabrication Plant*; and 5) the *Banayi Construction Unit* (BRESHNA 1970).

Since 1970 the Central City Planning Authority has prepared development plans for most of the urban centers around Afghanistan, including Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, the historic city of Balkh, the industrial towns of Kunduz and Pul-i-Khumri, Jalalabad and Ghazni. The Central Housing and Town Planning Authority was responsible for the planning of smaller towns and even village centers. Other responsibilities of the authority were the preparation of town planning and building laws and measures for land use control, preparation of regional development plans, construction, provision of low-cost housing and research in building techniques, and building materials to improve the traditional construction methods (BRESHNA 1970).

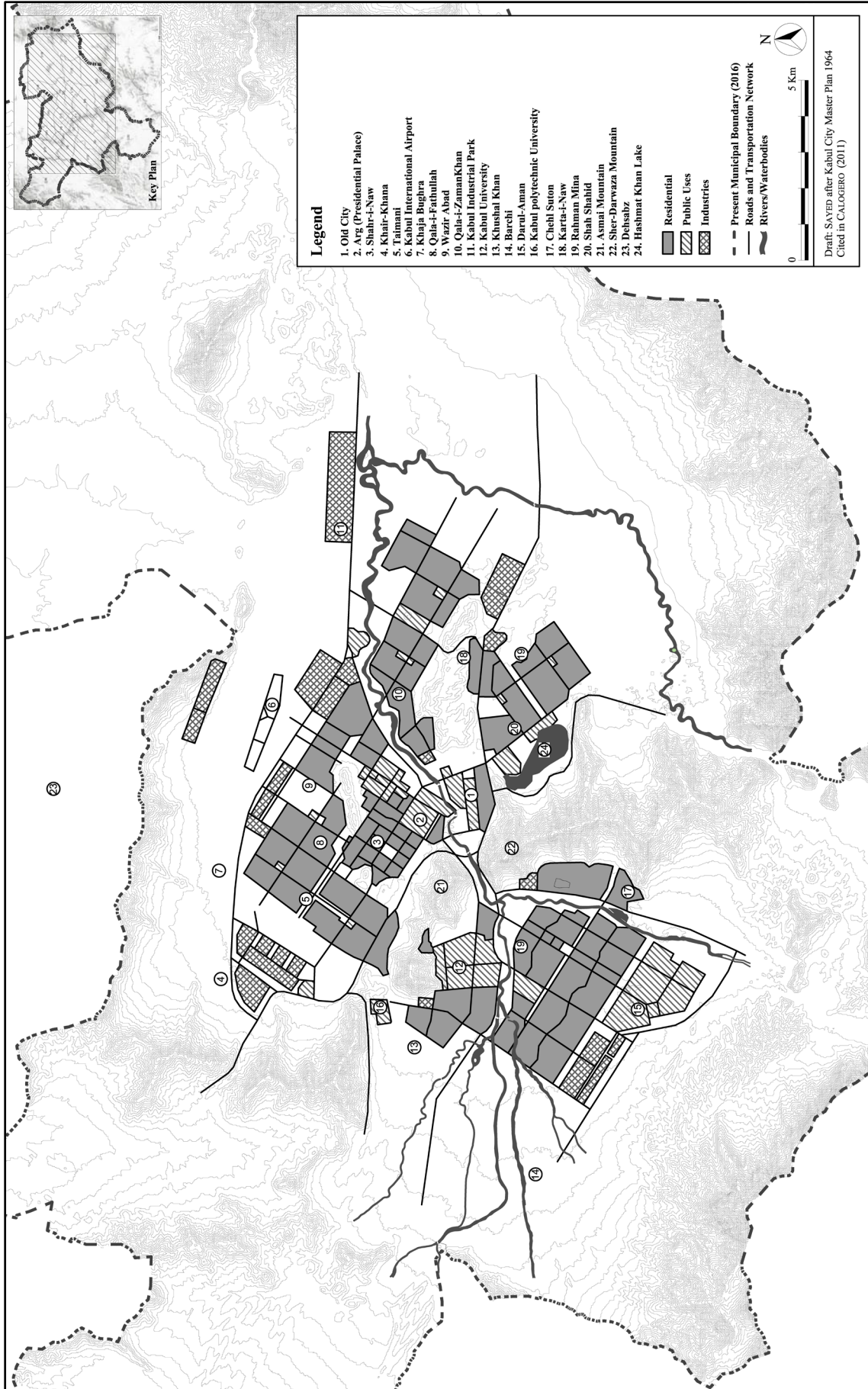
The 1964 Master Plan foresaw radical changes in the building structure of the city and proposed replacing most of the residential areas of the old town with commercial, cultural and recreational uses as well as multi-storey apartments, preserving only some areas such as the Arg (Presidential Palace), Shahr-e Naw, Kabul University, and Dar-ul-Aman Palace (CALOGERO 2011: 106; GRÖTZBACH 1979: 52).

The new plan required most of the existing city neighborhoods to be razed (N. H. DUPREE 1975) and replaced with series of new Microrayon apartment buildings. Therefore, from the moment the plan was approved and brought into force, there was a vast resistance against its implementation, not only by people but also by some government authorities. As housing policy was the core of the master plan, some of the government authorities, against the requirement of the proposed master plan, started to distribute plots of residential land to people in certain areas of Kabul such as Khair-Khana, Khushal Khan, Sayed Noor Muhammad Shah Mena, and Wazir Abad. At the same time, land grabs in the form of informal settlements housing and unauthorized construction activities interrupted the successful implementation of the 1964 Master Plan. This obliged the Kabul Municipality to revise the Master Plan in

according with the new circumstances and incorporate the changes into an amended new plan (MURADI 2000: 197).

Several public projects and complexes were constructed as implementations of this plan. These included the Central Silo project, the Kabul International Airport terminal, the housing and asphalt production industry, the first Microryon (Micro Region) residential apartments (4-5 storey prefabricated concrete modern structures), the Children's Hospital (later named after Indira Gandhi the former prime minister of India), a 400 bed hospital (now known as Sardar Daud Hospital), the technical factory of Jangalak (steel factory), and some buildings in Kabul University campus (KABUL MUNICIPALITY 1978).

Migration from the countryside had significantly added to the population of Kabul since the 1950s and had accelerated enormously in the 1960s. This rush of the population and difficulty in legally accessing of land due to its high price and its complicated bureaucratic procedures led to unprecedented growth of informal settlements in some areas of Kabul such as slopes of Koh-i-Asmai and Koh-i-Sherdarwaza. The Government often ignored these land grabs, as it was unable to provide affordable land to the growing populations, which were mainly low-income families in search informal jobs (BECHHOEFER 1977: 4). In the years 1964 to 1970, the government realized that some of the assumptions on which the Master Plan was based were unrealistic. To overcome this, in 1970 the Department of Urban Development and Housing revised the plan based on growth rate of 4 to 4.5 percent per annum which forecasted a population of 1,416,000 in 1995 on an area of 29,900 hectares of land (GRÖTZBACH 1979: 52; MURADI 2000: 198).



Map 8: Kabul Master Plan 1964

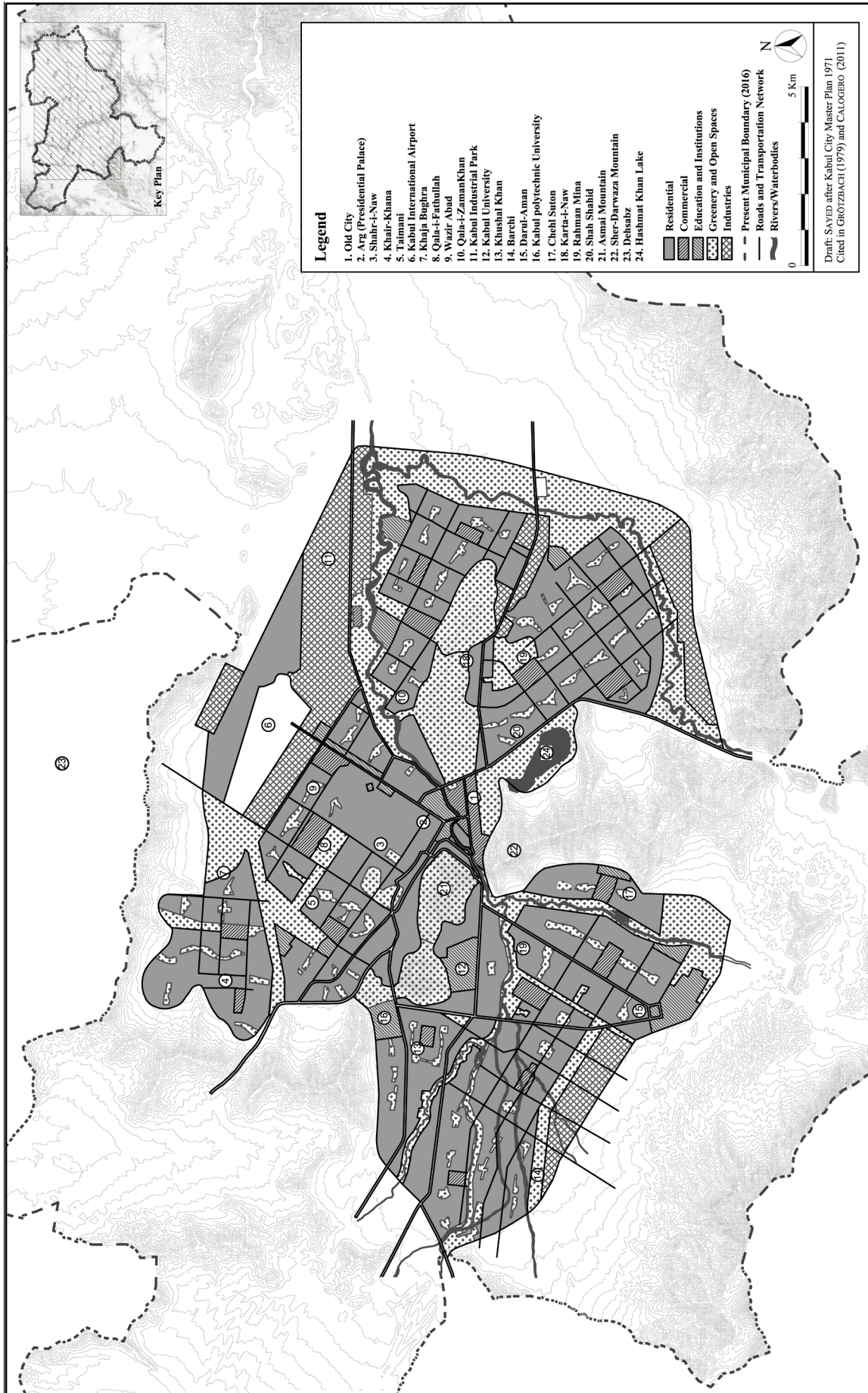
The high rate of population growth, which could introduce many serious urban problems, was a matter of concern for the authorities. The first concern was how to manage the further expansion of urban areas to avoid the lag in provision of infrastructure facilities, which existed in many newly developed districts of the Kabul.

The prevailing traditional way of living in Kabul was in family courtyard houses with private small gardens inside. This style required large plots of land for every individual family and could make the extension of infrastructure networks very expensive and unfeasible. To avoid this, the city planners and government authorities recommended a higher residential density to be achieved in the future in new development areas. As a measure to achieve this, the master plan proposed the accelerated construction of multi-family apartment houses in the following ratio:

- 10-15 percent of the buildings with 9 or more floors,
- 65-70 percent of the buildings with 4-5 floors and
- 20-25 percent of the buildings with 2-3 floors

As the share of single-family houses in the plan was proposed only about 15% (two storey buildings), the plan, therefore, provided that about 70% of the buildings in 1970 was supposed to be demolished by the year 1995, thus to achieve a net residential density of about 220 to 250 persons per hectare.

Another issue was related to the question of how the location, design, and functions of the center and sub-centers of the Kabul should be organized in the future. Thus, the master plan provided a hierarchical classification of the city into four main districts (North-West, North-East, South-East, and South-West) with sub-districts that each was to be divided into neighborhood units with a center accommodating retail and service shops, kindergartens, schools, mosques and other facilities. For each district, a district center with shops, restaurants, hotels, large cinemas, mosques, theater, concert hall, banks, offices and public parking, and as well as private industrial sites were proposed (GRÖTZBACH 1979: 52-54).

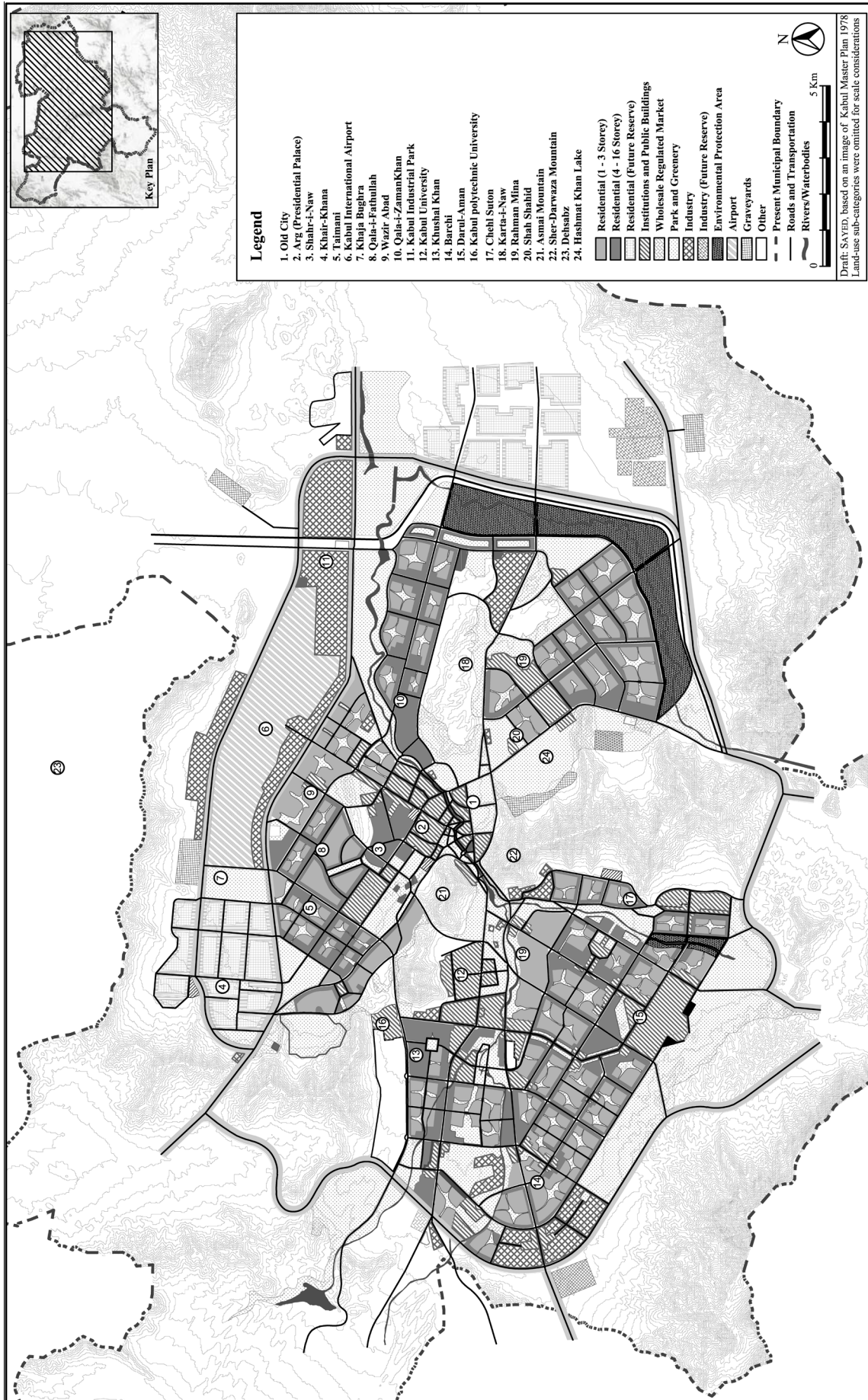


71 Map 9: Kabul Master Plan 1971

The growth of population and construction of squatter houses was far quicker than the stagnant implementation of the master plan. The Kabul Municipality comprehended that similar to the 1964 plan, the 1971 plan was also not able to respond to the ever-increasing economic, social and cultural requirements of the growing population and cannot pace with the rapid urban changes of Kabul. Meanwhile, the influence of the Soviet Union in the political system of Afghanistan was continuously increasing. In 1973, King Zahir Shah's cousin and the former Prime Minister Mohammad Daud seized the government power with the assistance of the military declaring the monarchy overthrown and proclaimed the new Republic of Afghanistan with himself as president and prime minister (DUPREE 1977: 71). Many of the army officers who supported Mohammad Daud were members of the pro-Soviet PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan), which later opposed him due to ideological clashes with his policies. Consequently, the PDPA leaders conducted another coup in 1978 with the support of the Soviet Union and established a pro-Soviet regime with communist attitudes in Afghanistan. The communist regime started radical reforms in the country which focused on three principles: strengthening the government power, land reform, and alleviation of illiteracy (TANIN 2005: 239). Soon after the establishment of the communist regime, the Kabul master plan was amended for the second time in 1978, again with the support of experts from the former Soviet Union.

The Master Plan 1978 estimated the population of Kabul to reach two million by the year 2003. For this purpose, the Master Plan allocated an area of 32,340 hectares of land to accommodate the future population. The plan was immediately approved by the authorities and was enacted as a legal framework for the future growth of Kabul. The land use divisions were more precise and diverse in the 1978 master plan which included specific areas for different sectors and activities such as economic, social, cultural, administrative, commercial, residential and educational uses. The plan also envisioned for a comprehensive modern transportation network, physical infrastructures, green spaces, and recreational areas. Thus, most of the deficiencies in the previous plans were overcome in it (MURADI 2000: 198).

Several projects, such as residential areas of Microrayon 2, 3, and 4, Hesa 2, 3, and 4 of Khair-Khana, the 500 family project in north of Kabul, Taimani, Sura Mina, and Tahiya Maskan residential neighborhoods and most of the current road networks of present day Kabul were constructed based on the provisions of Kabul Master Plan 1978.



Map 10: Kabul Master Plan 1978

3.5 Constraints in the Implementation of Kabul Master Plans

Overall, the master planning approach in Kabul was not a successful process, as none of the plans were fully and effectively implemented. Several reasons for the failure of the master planning process in Kabul can be mentioned. The nature of the master planning approach, which did not fit the socio-economic context of Afghanistan along with conflict and instability, can be two major constraints, which are explained and discussed below.

3.5.1 The Nature of the Master Planning Approach as a Constraint to Its Success

The concept of the *master plan* has been widely criticized around the world for its rigid nature which makes its implementation a challenging issue. Participation of citizens is one of the major aspects and a key to successful implementation of a city plan. This was mainly ignored in the physical planning of the cities. Consultation and involvement of citizens in the planning and decision-making process are the most significant step in the preparation of any urban development plan. The town planners need to have a clear understanding of the cultural and religious context of the city they plan for. Lack of awareness about people's values will challenge the successful implementation of the plan. This significant aspect of planning was ignored in various development plans, especially in the initial Soviet-influenced projects for Kabul. For instance, the mosque is an important component of urban fabric in the Islamic world. However, Microrayon One, the first housing project built with the support of the Soviet Union in the 1960s, did not include any mosque or religious building, which was often criticized by the people. The project with 51 blocks and 1702 apartments (N. H. DUPREE 1975) was provided with modern facilities including school, kindergarten, shops and local market, sports facilities, swimming pool, cinema hall, park, and a football field. When the Islamist Mujahideen groups captured Kabul in 1992, they restructured the cinema hall and turned it into a mosque. People built more mosques there afterward.

At the later stages, when the comprehensive master plans were introduced, they included many aspects, which raised more social grievances. For instance, the Kabul Master Plan required most of the residential areas of Kabul (including all areas of the Old City of Kabul) to be demolished (GRÖTZBACH 1979: 54), which was not welcomed by the majority of Kabul residents. It needs to be mentioned that this was a major character of the master planning system in many countries of the world during this era. The preparation of city plans from

decision-making stages up to implementation had a top- down nature without valuing the views of citizens. Many of the planners tended to assume that they knew best what sorts of physical environments were unfit for the people to live in, and based on that they did not even find it necessary to consult the inhabitants about their will and requirements (TAYLOR 1998: 43). Le Corbusier, one of most influential modernist architect/city planners, stated that ‘the design of cities was too important to be left to the citizens’. ‘We must build on a clear site!’ According to this view, the geometric design of cities was given too much importance: ‘the city of today is dying because it is not constructed geometrically’. The argument for the demolition of traditional structures in urban centers stressed the need for traffic access which also demanded demolition: ‘Statistics show us that business is conducted in the center. This means that wide avenues must be driven through the centers of our towns. *Therefore, the existing centers must come down.* To save itself, every great city must rebuild its center.’ (HALL 1996: 207-209)

The demolition of areas, where planners thought were not worthy of keeping in the city plan, was an accepted and agreed fact among physical planners. The physicalist concept of planning contained judgments about the interpretation of a good living environment that was thought to be uncontentious. Continually, the planners’ judgment and decision were considered sounder than the people’s wishes, and wherever there was a clash between these two points of views, the planners’ ideas were preferred based on assumptions that ordinary people do not know well about what is best for them. The lack of consultation with people and purely technical judgment about what was best for people has been widely criticized for failing to appreciate an elementary theoretical distinction between ‘matters of fact’ and ‘matters of value’ (TAYLOR 1998: 43).

The role of modern urban planning in the developed world, as mentioned before, gradually changed from merely drawing up an ideal image for the future of a city to a negotiation process involving urban and sometimes national interests. The absence of this process in the Afghan master planning approach was evident. The Kabul Master Plan intended to be a picture of the city as it should look in the future, and the expected output was a map or a blueprint of the final stage of city development as imagined by the planner, often ignoring the site realities, not a set of policies or strategies of giving clear guidance on how to proceed with the implementation stages through time (GIOVACCHINI 2011).

Influenced by the above concepts of planning, the Kabul planning authorities had focused on implementation of city plans in areas where there were already settlements. If the living condition of all the houses in a neighborhood were not perfect according to planners, at least, some of the houses were in good condition and with some basic renovation they could be perfectly fit for habitation, maintaining the traditional and cultural values that the people were used to for generations. This perception of planning existed in Kabul even before the Soviet influence. Evident of this was the construction of Jada-i-Maiwand which ripped the historical organic texture of the Old City of Kabul apart, to make a modern view of the area, ignoring the historical and cultural values of the old city. The other examples were the construction of Microrayon housing projects mostly in areas where there were already people living. This view of planning was one of the major constraints on the path to successful implementation of Kabul Master Plan.

According to GRÖTZBACH (1979), the focus of Kabul Master Plan was to achieve higher residential density through the construction of multi-storey apartment buildings, with little or no consideration of traditional family lifestyle. These traditional living styles in Kabul were embodied in family houses with gardens that allowed the desired discretion of family life. The assumption of the planners that the living habits of the Kabul population would radically change within 25 years was far from reality, especially as it was expected that newcomers from the countryside adapt to this new way of life. Meanwhile, it remained further unclear which part of the city population could financially live in relatively expensive modern apartments. Considering the low-income levels of the Afghan middle and lower classes, the preference for modern apartment building seemed inconsiderate. This could push the lower-income residents of the city even to more spatially and socially marginalized positions.

Another main problem, which was not addressed in the master plan, was the chances of implementation of the proposed urban development measures in economic, technical and financial terms. The capacity and organization of Afghan construction and cement industries at the time were not likely to be ready for the implementation of large construction projects in Kabul and other similar projects in the large provincial towns. The demolition of 70% of the existing building stock, which was envisioned in the Master Plan, was for an economic reason also difficult to justify in the capital of a poor country like Afghanistan. The construction of the multi-storey residential buildings as planned would require a capital outlay which was beyond

the capability of the government of Afghanistan as well as any private developer (Although none existed during that time) (GRÖTZBACH 1979: 54-56).

Another factor affecting implementation of Master Plan was a scarcity of local professional capacity. The Master Plan was a general document or a comprehensive future image of the city, which required an enormous amount of work to plan the details of its implementation. The job of preparing the detailed plans for different areas of the city was handed over to local planners, architects, and engineers. Additionally, the Master Plan lacked any strategy on how to proceed with the physical expansion of the city in parallel to the growth of population.

The local professionals in the department of planning and implementation were trained to prepare the detailed plans. However, the detailed plans they prepared lacked many basic aspects of town planning including the site terrain, infrastructure development, and a strategy for the provision of urban utilities and services. The detailed plans were usually a one sheet drawing showing the top view of the area with specific locations of multi-storey buildings and subdivision of land for plot development. The detailed plans specified the footprint of each building and determined their shape, height, and numbers of stories. In fact, the mass and shape of each building were precisely specified in the detailed plans. The job left for architects and engineers was to design the internal spaces of buildings within the mass model specified in the detailed plan. The regulations for the residential plots were even more rigid, as the buildings were already designed by the municipal architects and engineers for different standard plot sizes. When the municipality distributed land plots to people, it was required for the receiver of the land to buy the specific house design drawing from the municipality and implement it on his land. The orientation of building, setbacks, open spaces and types of building materials were specified in the given typical designs. Although, many households applied designs of their own choice instead, which were mainly ignored by the Municipality and in some cases involved bribing of officials to turn a blind eye to design choices.

It needs to be mentioned that despite the prices of the land plots distributed by the Kabul Municipality being relatively lower than the prevailing market prices of that time; they were not affordable for the low and middle-income households. According to the regulations, a household could apply only once to the Municipality for a residential land plot. Priority in distribution of municipal residential land was given respectively to the PDPA members, government officials, and then other people. The majority of the lower income people, who

applied for residential land, were not able to pay the cost of land to the Municipality. Thus, they sold their land (the processed documents) to richer people at a higher price before even acquiring the land, and with the money gained from the difference of the prices built houses in the informal settlements.

The development of infrastructure is another important aspect of urban development. Extension of access roads and infrastructure in residential areas needs to happen prior to construction of buildings. However, the majority of the formally planned areas of Kabul lacked asphalt roads, water supply and sewerage networks, and other urban services. This was because the government did not have clear estimates for the cost of infrastructure development as per the Master Plan. Expectations were that aid from the Soviet Union would cover costs. However, due to the intensity of conflict, aid, and attention of the Soviet Union were diverted from development projects to warfare.

To summarize, the master planning approach in Afghanistan was not efficiently responsive because of its rigid nature, social refusal, and economic and fiscal constraints. Moreover, the devastating war after the Soviet military invasion added to the above constraint leading to overall failure of the plans.

3.5.2 Conflict and Instability as a Force to Reverse the Development Process

One year after the preparation of Kabul Master Plan 1978, in December 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. This led to a severe decade-long war that resulted in the death of about one million people and the flight of over four million refugees to mainly Pakistan and Iran. It also caused many households to move to other parts of the country for their survival, creating a vast majority of IDPs in the cities (BARFIELD 2010: 234). Despite the fact that Kabul was relatively safe and secure during years of Soviet presence, the implementation of the master plan moved forward in a very slow manner as most of the government resources and aid from the Soviet Union were spent on war affairs. As a result, fewer resources were allocated to development.

As compared to previous wars and conflicts due to a foreign occupation which didn't last too long, the Soviet presence in Afghanistan lasted a decade. Moreover, the war caused by Soviet invasion continued for several years even after the Soviet withdrawal. The damage of war to the country and its people was enormous. As most of the war happened in villages and rural

areas around the country, the agricultural economy was severely disrupted, which caused the people to depend on imported food and aid. Damage to the agricultural production system on one hand and concentration of war in rural areas, on the other hand, forced people to leave their villages and move to safer places. Many people left Afghanistan and migrated to neighboring countries, while many others moved to cities within Afghanistan. As a result, the population and size of cities, especially Kabul, grew at an enormous rate that the country had never seen before. During years of Soviet occupation, the population of Kabul tripled (BARFIELD 2010: 242-243).

Despite the fact that government housing projects were relatively quick through the construction of prefabricated concrete multi-storey apartment buildings, they, by no means, were able to keep pace with the ever-growing demand for housing. Moreover, the first priority in the distribution of government built apartments was given to members of the ruling party (PDPA) and high-ranking government officials. The government also distributed land plots for its employees, but those were not affordable for lower income families. Occupation of vacant land, where there was less chance of implementation of government, was an alternative for poorer families and those who were not government employees. As a consequence, the growth of informal settlements in Kabul continued in parallel to the development of new formal settlements.

After a decade of destructive war, the Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, and consequently, the Soviet-supported communist regime collapsed in 1992, when the rebel *Mujahideen*¹⁸ forces took over. “After the collapse of the Communist regime, Afghanistan dissolved into hundreds of petty kingdoms that could hardly be delineated in spatial terms and which were ruled by a myriad of warlords and local rulers whose power was based on clientelistic networks and personal loyalties” (SCHETTER 2006: 25).

There were seven Mujahideen Sunni parties based in Pakistan and eight Shiite groups based in Iran. Their primary target during the Soviet occupation was resistance against the Soviet Union and its client government in Afghanistan. The main Sunni groups consisted to Islamic fundamentalists who received enormous amounts of funds and military support from the United

18 The Afghan *Mujahideen* consisted of various groups of anti-Soviet-occupation armed rebels with Islamic ideology.

States, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan during the years of Soviet occupation (HARTMAN 2002). Similarly, the Shiites groups, which later unified into one party known as Hezb-i Wahdat, received support from Iran. They all lacked any goal or clear agenda on how they would rule the country if they were in power. They also did not have any unified political platform. They were naturally opposed to any open system of government that might expose their unpopularity or narrow their base of support (BARFIELD 2010: 242). Each group had its own perception of a so-called Islamic State as something to substitute the communist regime in Kabul. Disagreement over the type of government system seemingly resulted in a power struggle among Mujahideen groups. Despite the religious rhetoric, ethnic conflicts seemed to be stronger than differences in religious perceptions among Mujahideen groups. This was more evident when the war among various Mujahideen groups in Kabul was accompanied by violent ethnic cleansing and massacres carried out with the aim of ethnically homogenizing whole areas of the city (SCHETTER 2005: 68).

Any agreement on the distribution of power among Mujahideen groups failed. The appointed 'prime minister' Gulbuddin Hekmatyar¹⁹ (Pashtun) refused to enter Kabul and accept his position. Rather he remained with his armed forces in the hills south of Kabul from where he began shelling Kabul to defeat his opponent 'president' Rabbani²⁰ (Tajik). The war intensified in 1994 when three major rival forces of Hekmatyar, Dustom²¹, and Mazari²² formed a coalition against Rabbani government and his defense minister Massoud²³. Kabul, which was relatively safe during several years of war, became the center of devastating armed conflict and power struggle. The city was severely devastated and a large part of it turned to ruins. Many of

19 Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is founder and leader of the Hezb-e Islami a Pashtun dominant Mujahideen group against Soviet occupation. He is currently leading an armed group against the government of Afghanistan.

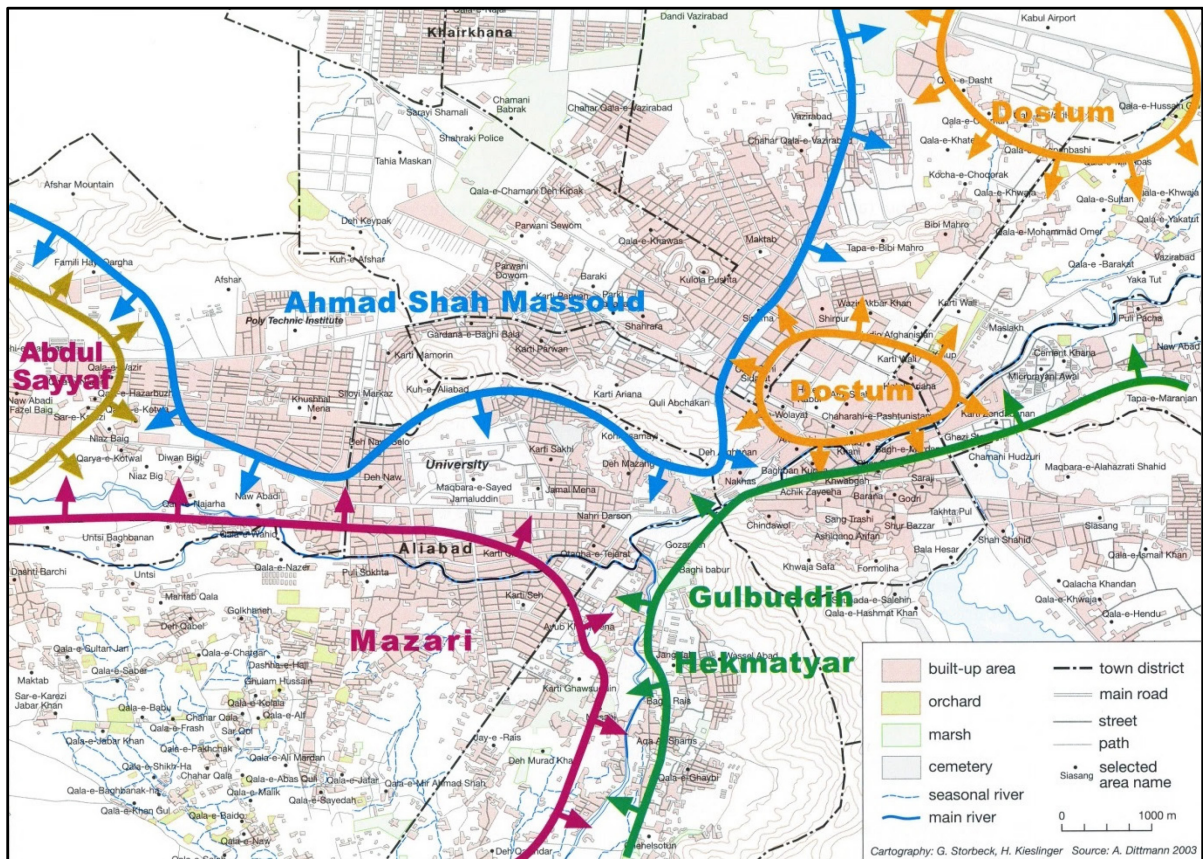
20 Burhanuddin Rabbani was leader of Tajik dominant Jamiat-e Islami party, and president of Afghanistan from 1992 to 1996 and head of Afghanistan's High Peace Council from 2010 to 2011. He was assassinated in 2011 by a Taliban representative during a peace talk.

21 Abdul Rashid Dostum is an ethnic Uzbek. He was army general in Soviet supported government who changed side in 1991 and established an Uzbek dominant Junbish-i Milli Islami Afghanistan party. Currently, he is the vice president of Afghanistan.

22 Abdul Ali Mazari was the political leader of Hezb-i Wahdat. He was an ethnic Hazara and was assassinated by the Taliban in 1995.

23 Ahmad Shah Massoud was a powerful military commander during the resistance against the Soviet occupation. He was one of the important figures in the recent history of Afghanistan. He was assassinated in 2001.

its residents fled the city and over twenty-five thousand people died as a result of fighting (BARFIELD 2010: 250-251).



Map 11: Conflict among Mujahideen groups over control of Kabul 1992 -1995
Source: (DITTMANN 2006: 7)

The devastating fight among Mujahideen groups continued without any of the groups willing to compromise or able to gain military hegemony or political legitimacy. As the sources of control and political power were too scattered around the country, the absence of a legitimate government and presence of political a vacuum made the country vulnerable and paved the way for the emergence opportunistic groups and ideologies. The Taliban emerged under these circumstances when Mujahideen groups were exhausted due to internal war among themselves. There was no powerful force left in the country to suppress or prevent the spread of Taliban. The Taliban took the control of Kandahar in 1994 and expanded their control over cities and villages around the south and southeast parts of Afghanistan. In 1995 they captured Herat, and finally, in October 1996, they took control of Kabul.



Figure 8: The Darulaman Palace, a King's dream of a modern city ultimately destroyed during the civil war of 1992-1996.

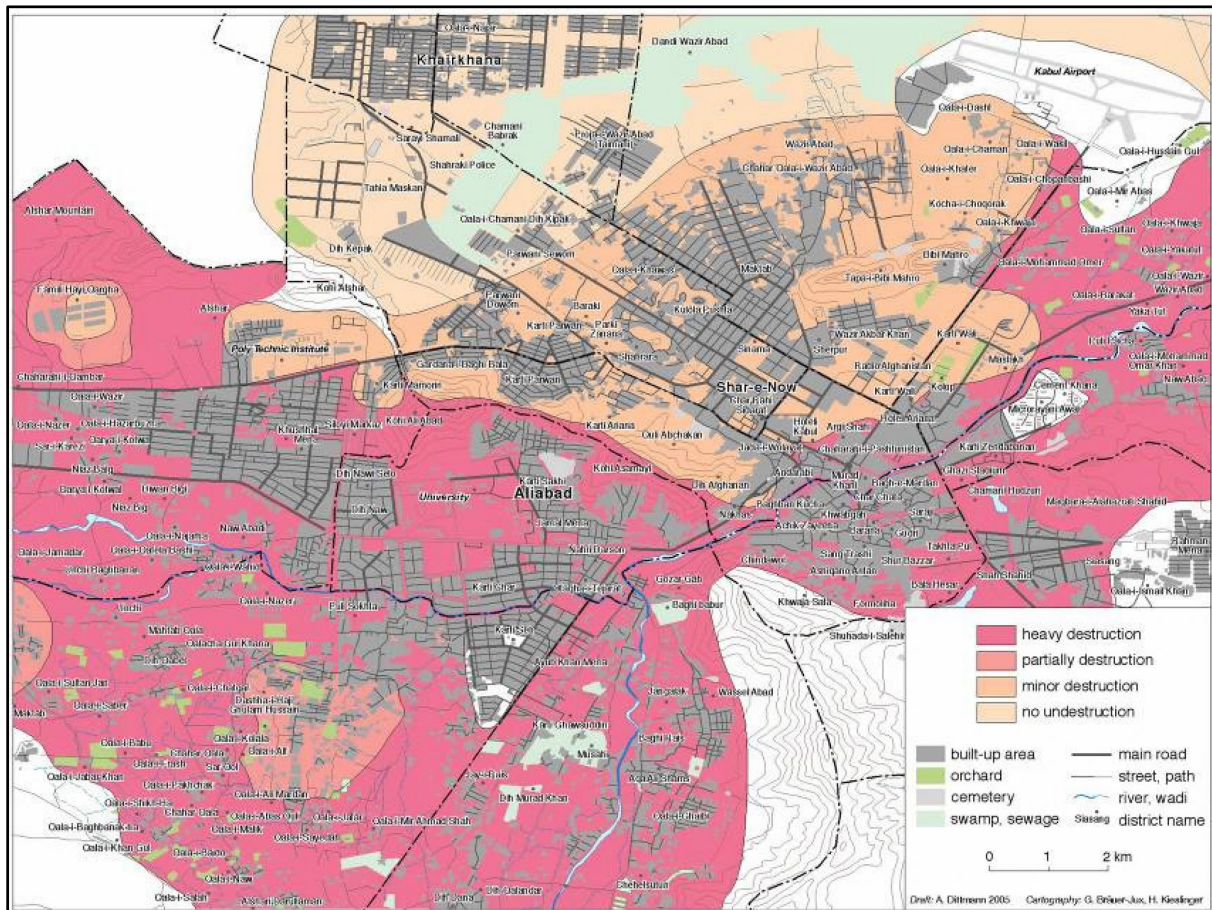
Photo: SAYED 2015

For Kabul, this was the end of an era of shocking armed conflict, as the geography of conflict changed and the catastrophic force of war moved to other parts of the country. Furthermore, the Taliban movement initially emerged with promises to end the war and bring peace to the regions they captured, but soon their suppressing social and religious policies, which were a crude mixture of Salafi Islam and Pashtunwali²⁴, exhausted the war affected the population of Kabul and other cities (BARFIELD 2010). As a consequence, despite the situation of relative peace in Kabul, none of the war-affected displaced populations of Kabul returned back to build their houses and live in Kabul. Also, the remaining population of the city sought a way to leave the country to be safe from being harmed by the oppressive rule of the Taliban.

The devastated areas of Kabul during 1992-1996 remained almost untouched during the rule of Taliban and even years after its fall in 2001. This was because on the one hand, the Taliban did not have any urban vision or reconstruction policy for Kabul, and on the other hand, during

²⁴ Pashtunwali is a non-written ethical code and traditional lifestyle which the indigenous Pashtun people follow.

their rule, there was no motivation and interest for the owners of destroyed houses in Kabul to return and renovate their houses and live under the oppressive rule of the Taliban. There were very little reconstruction and thus little need for urban planning during the reign of the Taliban (AREZ and DITTMANN 2005: 148). Taliban also downgraded the MUDA back to a small department which rarely took part in any activity.



Map 12: Level of destruction in different areas of Kabul during war of 1992 -1995
Source: DITTMANN (2007)

It needs to be mentioned that, despite the Taliban regime not showing any interest in physical reconstruction of war-torn Kabul, they never rejected the Soviet master plan (GIOVACCHINI 2011). In the last years of their rule, the Taliban intended to amend all the previous government laws and regulations in according with Islamic Sharia Law. One of the laws that they amended and enacted in the year 2000 was a new Municipal Law. Article 5 of the LAW OF MUNICIPALITIES (2000) is directly related to the preparation of master plan and its approval and implementation process:

1. Within the scope of their operations, the municipalities shall be in possession of their respective urban master plans.
2. The departments of Central Engineering and Urban Planning as well as their relevant branches shall prepare and modify master plans in cooperation and consultation with the municipalities and shall be implemented by the municipality after being confirmed by the Council of Ministers and approved by the head of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.
3. Responsibility to supervise the implementation of the master plan shall rest with the master plan designing department as well as with the concerned municipality.

According to this law, the Mayor of Kabul was supposed to be appointed directly by the head of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (MUNICIPAL LAW 2000: Article 6).

Afghanistan was isolated from the rest of the world during the reign of Taliban. Only three countries namely Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates recognized the Taliban regime. Moreover, they provided military and financial aid to the Taliban. The isolation of Afghanistan and the extreme religious ideology of the Taliban paved the way for international Islamist groups such as Al-Qaeda to build a close relationship with the Taliban leaders. The presence of the Al-Qaeda Leader, Osama Bin Laden, and his financial support to the Taliban in building military training camps for Jihadist fighters attracted many Islamist militants from all around the world to travel to Afghanistan.

Within five years of Taliban rule in Kabul, thousands of Islamist militants from various countries of the Middle East and North Africa gathered in Afghanistan. The country, which was already a collapsed state was changed also to a 'the terror state' (DITTMANN 2013). The Taliban gained the control of about 90 percent of Afghanistan with the support of the Al-Qaeda fighters. The former Mujahideen leaders involved in the war of 1992-1996, which now united against Taliban, had only control over 10 % of Afghanistan. The geography of war had moved from Kabul to the Northern provinces.

Despite various cautions by some Afghan political elites about the dangers of Al-Qaeda sanctuaries in Afghanistan to the world, the international community neglected what was going on in Afghanistan. The general perception at the international level about the situation in Afghanistan was that it was a civil war and there was no need for intervention. The three countries that supported the Taliban regime were also trying to convince the international

community to recognize the Taliban regime as the legitimate government of Afghanistan. It was believed that if the Taliban could take full control of Afghanistan, they would establish an Islamic government system similar to Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, which would not be harmful to the rest of the world.

A series of bomb blasts in the embassies of the United States in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, for which Al-Qaeda took its responsibility, changed perceptions about the Taliban. The United States reacted to it by firing a few cruise missiles to Afghanistan and Sudan which hardly had any effect on the Taliban or Al-Qaeda. On September 11, 2001, when Al-Qaeda members struck New York World Trade Center twin towers and the Pentagon in a series of airline suicide attacks, the world realized how catastrophic it can get if you neglect a terror state. The United State asked the Taliban to immediately expel Osama Bin Laden, and they refused.

In October 2001, Kabul once again experienced enormous bombing by the United States bomber planes. The bombing continued for about two months. At the beginning, the bombings were only during the night time to prevent civilian casualties. Later they continued it during the day time as well. Nevertheless, the precision of attacks on the targets caused very few damage to the city and to its civilian inhabitants. Finally, in November 2001 the Taliban fled Kabul and their regime ended along with an era of depression and suffering to the citizens of Kabul.

4 Post-Conflict Urban Development in Kabul, Challenges and Opportunities

After the fall of Taliban regime in Afghanistan, a new political system was established in 2002, which paved the way for new socio-economic horizons and opportunities. The rapid population growth triggered by the return of millions of internally displaced people and refugees from neighboring countries resulted in a vast urban expansion in various directions around Kabul. Occupation and land grabs of government land and public properties by the incoming population were on such a large scale, that the Kabul Municipality and existing planning authorities of Kabul - which were the corrupted legacy of Taliban rule - where, by no means capable of managing the growth of population or guiding urban expansion in a planned manner. With the support of the international community, it took several years for the urban management institutions of Kabul to reorganize their structures and improve their capacity. However, there are still deficiencies in urban governance system and the authorities are not capable of coping with the vast urban growth. The initial response to Kabul's problems, by the government of Afghanistan and international donors, did not take place in a coordinated manner. Along with small and scattered efforts towards the post-war reconstruction of Kabul by many organizations, there were two major formal planning efforts which were undertaken in parallel to each other without any considerable coordination and cooperation. The first was mainly proposed and financially supported by the World Bank through MUDA. It suggested a focus on reconstruction and upgrading of various neighborhoods in order to improve the living quality of the population, along with the preparation of a development plan for the future of Kabul. The second was proposed by a group of Afghan technocrats and political elites, which suggested planning for a new city in Dehsabz in the northern areas of present Kabul. Both plans are underway with ambiguity about their efficiency and responsiveness. Nevertheless, the informal expansion of the city is evidently the most dominant mode of urban growth in the post-Taliban Kabul.

This chapter focuses on the two models of urban growth in post-Taliban Kabul; formal and informal urban growth. This chapter evaluates the development plans for Kabul, their preparation process and contents, and the formal and informal modes of planning involved. The approach is to explain the background of the process which led to emergence development plans for Kabul. The objectives include analysis of the responsiveness of the

formal development plans to prevailing urban issues, as well as an evaluation of the interrelationship between formal and informal modes of urban growth and their role in the urban development process in Kabul. It needs to be mentioned that the formal planning approaches evaluated in this chapter are limited to the plans and programs for the existing city of Kabul. The planning for Kabul New City in Dehsabz will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.1 Post-Taliban Kabul, Influx of the Returnees and a Lack of Urban Vision

The new political developments in Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban, in addition to opening the way to the presence of United States-led armed forces to Afghanistan, attracted thousands of international aid organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), political representatives of foreign countries and workers of media from all around the world. Kabul, the city which was once abandoned like a haunted area by the international community, changed overnight to one the most focused on cities in the international media.

The Bonn Agreement of 2001 thought to have ended the twenty-three years of conflict in Afghanistan which started in 1978. For the first time after decades of conflict and instability, the new politically securer yet still unstable situation provided an opportunity for all Afghans to come forwards and participate in the state-building process (KOHISTANI 2006: 15). The presence of international community provided very good employment opportunities for the local population. Thousands of people, especially in large cities, were hired by international organizations based on their qualifications in professions such as doctors, engineers, administrative staff, translator, interpreter, and drivers. They received in local terms, very high wages. This optimistic situation attracted many of Afghanistan's refugees and internally displaced populations (IDPs) to return back to their homeland. As a consequence of this situation, in 2002, about two million refugees, mostly from the neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan returned back to Afghanistan. Over 750 thousand IDPs moved back to their homes. The aggregate number of returnees and IDPs exceeded five million in 2005 (UNHCR 2007: 230).

Most of the refugees and IDPs were originally rural dwellers that were dependent on their subsistence agriculture before they left their homeland. Nevertheless, years of living in refuge in cities of neighboring countries had changed their way of living and shifted their sources of

income from primary to secondary and tertiary sectors. Many of the returnees of younger generations who were not even born in Afghanistan, had acquired some education or skills, thus rural life was not something that they expected to return to. On the other hand, years of war and unrest had damaged the traditional agriculture system of the country so badly that it could hardly provide employment for the settled population, who did not go to a place of refuge. Therefore, the places targeted by most of the returnees were cities, especially large cities where due to the presence of international community, better employment opportunities were easily available.

Kabul, the capital and largest city of Afghanistan has accommodated the largest number of returnees as evidenced by the pattern of population growth in Kabul after the fall of the Taliban regime. The last population survey before the fall of Taliban regime was conducted in Kabul in 1999-2000 by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and Afghanistan Computer Center with the financial and technical support of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). This survey estimated the total population of Kabul to be 1,781,000 in the year 1999 (CSO 2000). According to (UN-HABITAT 2012) the population of Kabul showed an unusual growth rate of 8.44 % per annum during the years 2000 and 2005, which was more than double of its average rate of about 4 % growth per annum. This illustrates a strong relationship between the pattern of refugee and IDP returnees to Afghanistan and population growth in Kabul.

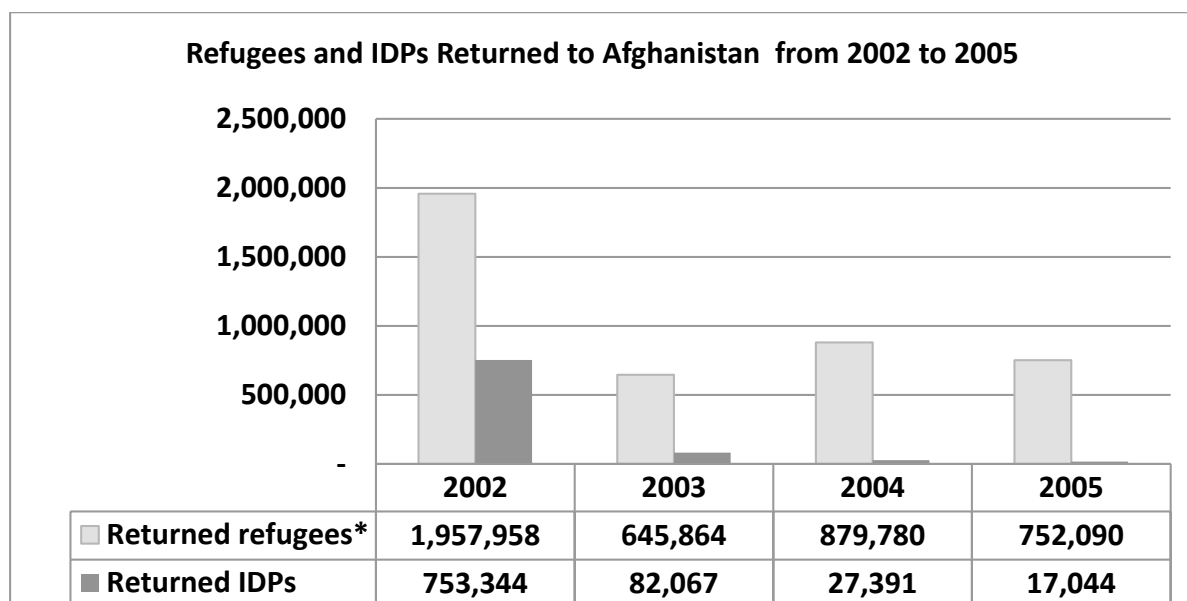


Figure 9: The pattern of refugees and IDPs returning to Afghanistan from 2002 to 2005
Source of data: UNHCR (2007)

An obvious fact was that the returnees were in extreme need of space and shelter, while the newly established government of Afghanistan, which consisted of inhomogeneous political fractions, was at its early stages of formation of government institutions and basic structures. The period from 2002 to 2004, which was the peak of returnee influx, was occurred at the same time as Afghanistan’s transitional government, which functioned to pave the way towards a democratic government system. The transitional government had no or very few provisions for urban development in its priorities, and even if it had, there was no institutional, financial and technical capacity to regulate the massive invasion of returnees and establish a quick impact urban development agenda.

On the other hand, the presence of international organizations and NGOs, mostly concentrated in Kabul, had an enormous effect on the price of land and house rentals, as many of those organizations were ready to pay very high rents for luxury houses in Kabul to use as their office buildings. As a result, most of the house owners in affluent districts of Kabul such as Wazir Akbar Khan and Shahr-i-Naw rented out their houses to international organizations at very high prices and they themselves moved to other parts of the city where the house rents were lower (DITTMANN 2007: 35).

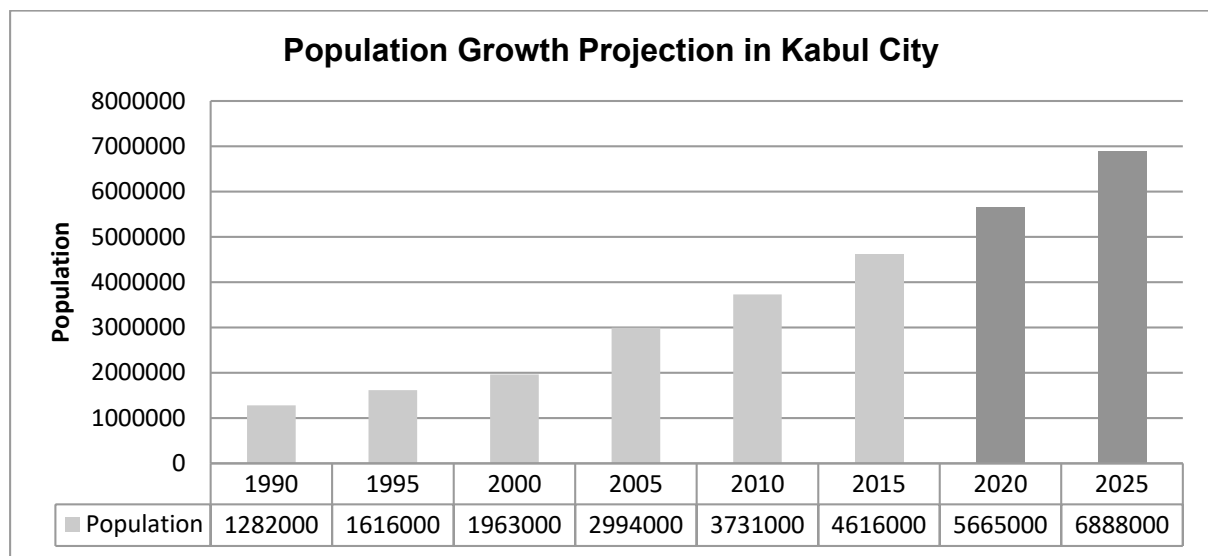


Figure 10: Growth of population in Kabul
Source of data: (UN-HABITAT 2012)

Demand for housing and shelter was so high that many of the returnees and IDPs built slums and settlements with no access to infrastructure and basic services. Some of them even occupied ruined buildings in war-torn areas to overcome their need for a shelter.

Despite the fact that Kabul was an important urban center before the civil war of the 1990s, nevertheless, its population never exceeded two million. The experience of managing a city with a population of around five million was unprecedented in Afghanistan. Thus, for the first time in its history, the Kabul Municipality, as the dominant agency in the management of Kabul, faced an overwhelming population influx and along with it a series of new challenges to cope with.

The urban administrations of Kabul including the Kabul Municipality were in severe need of reform, as they were the legacy of the previous regimes and not compatible with the new situation. Moreover, their capacity deteriorated during the years of civil war and the Taliban rule as most professionals left Afghanistan.



Figure 11: Returnees seeking shelter in ruined buildings of war affected areas in Kabul
Photo: SAYED (2003)

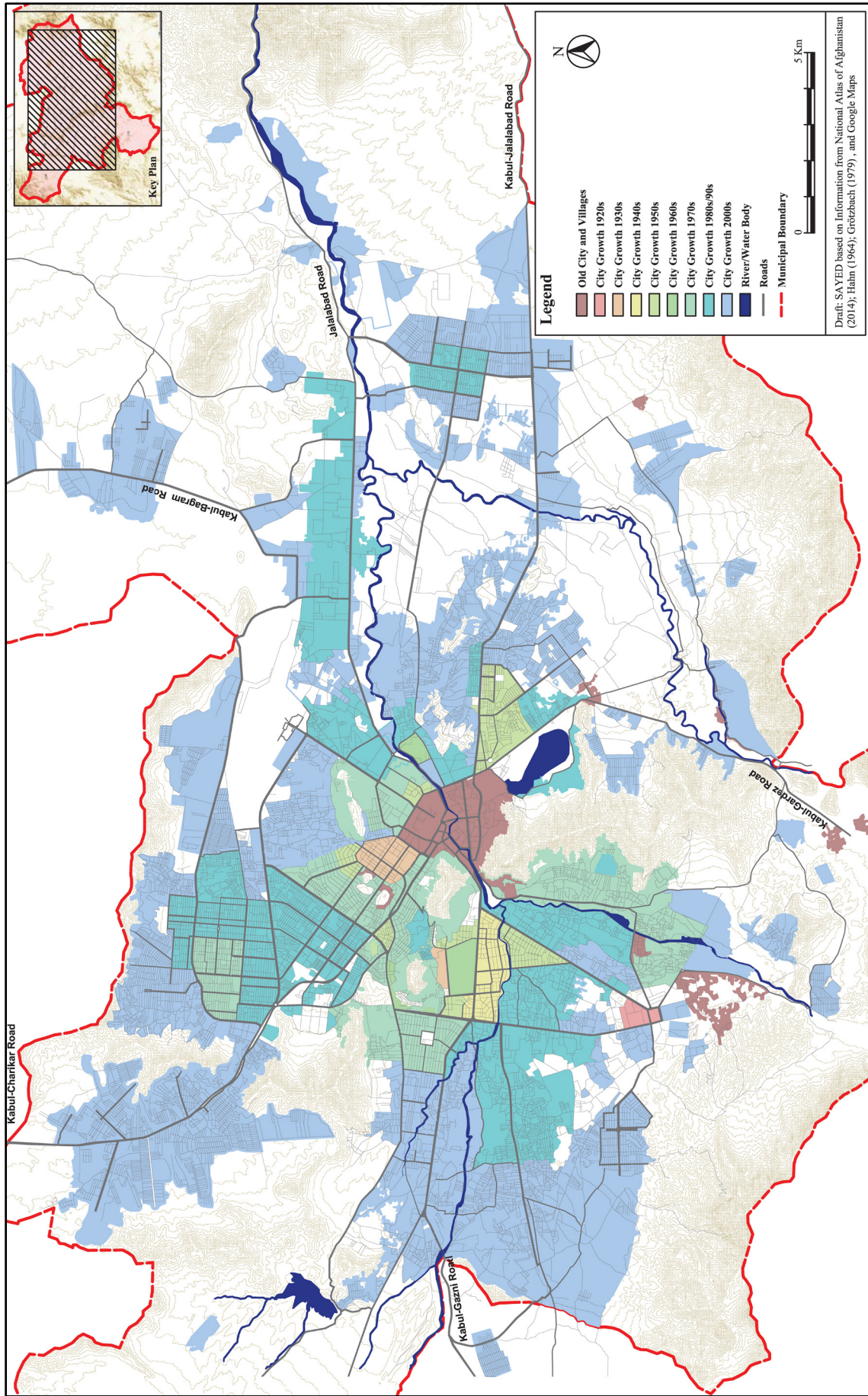
The establishment of a new government in Afghanistan in 2002 was not as a substitute for a functioning government; rather it involved a whole process of state building almost from scratch. It was a process to transform the country from a 'failed terror state' to a functioning democratic state, which should have its own sovereignty and a legitimate and respectable position in the international mosaic. The actors in this process including the president of Afghanistan were inexperienced politicians, who were away from Afghanistan for several years. On the other hand, the sequence of political events towards the formation of the new government system was very concentrated on the high-level activities including

the enactment of the new constitution and presidential and parliamentary elections. Institutional and administrative reform at the municipal level was not a priority in the process of post-Taliban state reformation. Somehow, the importance of administrative reform and institutional development at the municipal level was neglected. The emphasis has been on managing the city growth and dealing with urban issues through existing institutional structures, whereas the first priority must have been given to the restructuring and capacity building of these institutions in order to achieve a better performance. The government expected the fragile and corrupted institutions to overcome the problems of Kabul while these institutions were in extreme need of having their problems addressed first.



Figure 12: The ruined building of Kabul Traffic Department in 2003. The damaged buildings have been reconstructed, while the damaged institutions are still in need of rehabilitation.

Photo: SAYED 2003



Map 13: Physical expansion of Kabul urban areas through the time and the significant extent of post-Taliban urban growth.

4.2 The Economic Triggers of Post-Taliban Urban Growth in Kabul

Economic growth plays a significant role in the urbanization process. The rapid urbanization in post-Taliban Kabul was an evident result of the massive influx of refugees and IDPs. However, the dominant force that caused a flow of returnees towards Kabul rather than other destinations in the country was economic motives. The country's economic base was badly damaged during the decades of conflict and unrest. The fall of the Taliban regime and active presence of the international community with an enormous concentration in the capital city opened a variety of new economic opportunities. The economic forces that triggered the rapid refugee induced urbanization in the post-Taliban Kabul were very different from the ones that existed before the war.

One of the consequences of conflict and prolonged civil war is a change in the economic structures of a society. The economic life adapts to the war situation and takes on new forms (BALLENTINE and NITZSCHKE 2005). The conflict situation and lack of regular income among the population pave the way for the emergence of a 'conflict/war economy', which in return strengthens the fabric of structures that cause prolongation and perpetuation of the conflict itself. The conflict economy remains effective even when a war ends and a peace situation prevails. There are certain groups of people that profit from the conflict economy. They see their interest in the continuation of conflict and a lack of rule of law. Therefore, they endeavor to sustain a lawless environment and act as a strong obstacle in the way of post-conflict recovery. Sometimes the presence of foreign aid organizations, NGOs, and peacekeepers favor these groups with income opportunities, thus they may try to turn out the situation in a way to ensure their continued presence (KAMPHUIS 2005: 185).

Decades of war and unrest in Afghanistan had a severe effect on income sources of the population, government revenues and national income. Destruction of infrastructure, massive displacement of populations and capital flight, severe damages to public institutions, and the presence of armed conflict and violence for several decades, has disrupted the foundation of the economic system of the country. A consequence of the destruction of country's formal economy has been the creation of a conflict economy and more alternative sources of capital generation outside the formal economy.

According to KAMPHUIS (2005: 186), in a typical post-conflict situation, four different economies can be distinguished that coexist and are intertwined: the international aid economy, the criminal economy, the informal economy, and the remaining formal economy. The presence of the four mentioned economies is very evident in post-Taliban Afghanistan. The interrelationship between these four types of economies are shown in figure (13):

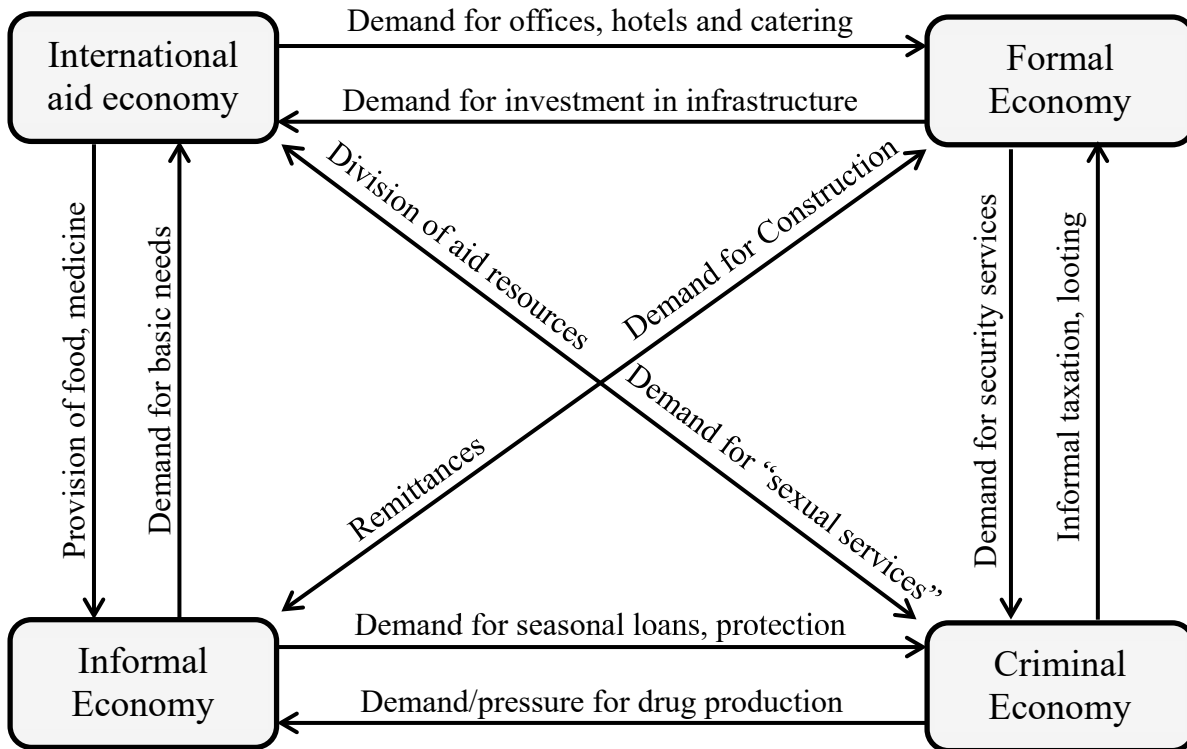


Figure 13: The four economies of the conflict economy
Source: KAMPHUIS (2005: 186).

4.2.1 The International Aid Economy

The international aid economy refers to the presence of international aid organizations and their experts, which increases the demand for office space, housing, luxury consumer goods, and services (KAMPHUIS 2005: 186). In the post-Taliban era, Kabul not only witnessed an influx of returned refugees and IDPs, but also an influx of hundreds of international aid organizations and NGOs. In 2005 there were already about 854 international, bilateral and non-governmental organizations present in Kabul (DITTMANN 2006: 4). The presence of international organizations and security forces provided new employment opportunities for many people, especially those with skills and knowledge of the English Language. It also increased the demand for office space, accommodation, and luxury and imported goods and services. This

situation was beneficial for certain groups of the population. Those who were involved in the business of provision of demanded spaces and services especially received the maximum benefits from the situation. However, for the majority of the inhabitants of Kabul, this invasion of international aid organizations did not have very beneficial consequences, as it caused an enormous increase in the cost of rented houses and real estate, as well as prices of goods and services (DITTMANN 2006: 4-6).

Moreover, the international aid agencies and security forces (such as ISAF) offered a variety of job opportunities for the local population. This might have been beneficial for certain groups of populations. Nonetheless, as KAMPHUIS (2005: 188) states, the new economic incentives were not necessarily beneficial for postconflict development. Most foreign agencies provided wages above local standards. In that way, they pulled qualified employees out of public employment, further reducing the human capital that could be deployed for nation building. For example, international agencies offered high standard salaries for architects, engineers, and planners, which were many folds higher than what the government paid to their qualified employees in KM or MUDA. This made many qualified professionals leave government jobs to work with international organizations. Only less qualified personnel remained in the government positions, many of whom could not carry out their job as well as those that had left. In some cases, this has led to an increase of corruption in government organizations.

Moreover, international aid contributes towards a considerable share of Afghanistan's formal economy. The formal sources of government revenues were almost nonfunctional and the newly established government was fully dependent on a donation from the international community, which continues up to present day.

4.2.2 The Criminal Economy

This type of economy consists of a broad range of criminal and para-criminal activities, from organized criminal acts such as those involved in the drug trade and looting to 'gray area' activities like the sale of state property, monopolized trade, and security services (KAMPHUIS 2005: 188).

The criminal economy in Afghanistan is related to several activities such as opium cultivation and trade, illegal exploitation of minerals and natural resources, and bulk grabs of government land. War-lords including some former Jihadi commanders and Taliban fighters, politicians,

and high-ranking government officials are the main actors of the criminal economy in Afghanistan. Due to a lack of law enforcement and political vacuum in the 1990s, the cultivation of poppy was a significant source of income for many farmers in Afghanistan. The production of opium during the rule of the Taliban increased to its peak level. In 1999, Afghanistan with the production of 4700 metric tons (MT) was the source of 75 percent of global illicit opium production, which declined to 74 MT in 2000 following a ban by the Taliban. After the fall of the Taliban, once again poppy cultivation increased tremendously. Between 2002 and 2004, opium production in Afghanistan rose from 3400 MT to 4200 MT, which counted for 60 percent of the country's GDP in 2003 (GOODHAND 2005).

Despite an official ban on opium cultivation and trade, the country is the largest producer of opium in the world. There is even a government Ministry of Counter Narcotics with specific functions and budget to prevent illicit drug cultivation. Nonetheless, there is very little sign of reduction in opium production. This is because the opium cultivation contributes enormously to the criminal and informal economy and their actors, using the weak rule of law and institutional corruption, have created a self-sustaining system to ensure its continuation. Moreover, existing of corruption in the various government levels and involvement of high-ranking government officials and political strongmen undermine the process of coping with cultivation and trafficking of opium and other narcotics. According to GALL (2012: 128), it was widely believed by foreign diplomats and officials in Kabul that Ahmad Wali Karzai²⁵, brother of President Karzai and chairman of Kandahar Provincial Council, was deeply involved in the business of opium and heroin smuggling. This can be an indicator of the depth of the problem and the extent of corruption within Afghanistan's government structure.

In 2015, the farm-gate value of opium production in Afghanistan was estimated at 570 million USD and the net value of opium economy was estimated to amount 1.49 billion USD, which is 7.1% of the country's GDP (UNODC 2016).

Illicit exploitation of natural resources and minerals is another major source of criminal and also the informal economy. Afghanistan is rich in resources with a variety of underground minerals, which is seen as having the potential to trigger the country's economic growth and reduce its dependency to international aid. However, there has been very little government

25 He was assassinated on 12 July 2011 by one of his relatives as a result of a tribal quarrel.

effort in the systematic and formal mining of underground resources. Instead, due to weak rule of law and inefficient institutions, the majority of mining resources are exploited locally and informally by various interest groups including warlords, local influential figures, and political leaders. The revenue from informal mining activities contributes not only to the informal economy but also, it is seen as a major funding source for criminal activities. The illicit mining fuels and prolongs the conflict and funds anti-government fighters including the Taliban. Sometimes control over rich underground minerals causes the emergence of new conflicts among the local strongmen. The mineral resources include high-value reserves most notably gemstones such as emerald, lapis lazuli, and rubies (BYRD 2012).

Moreover, along with the mineral resources, there are other sources of illicit revenue through the exploitation of natural resources such as an unlawful felling of trees and smuggling of timber, which contribute to the criminal economy of Afghanistan. These activities can have a direct impact on the deterioration of environmental resources.

4.2.3 The Informal Economy

The informal economy in Afghanistan includes a variety of unregistered economic activities carried out by subsistence farmers, street vendors, construction workers, informal mine workers, self-employees, and some industrial workers. There is a relationship between informal and criminal economies, as well as between the informal and international aid economies. The criminal economy, despite its negative aspects, provides a variety of income opportunities for poorer sections of the society through hiring them in mining activities and illicit production of drugs. For many, participation in the criminal economy is a strategy of resilience to poverty. Similarly, the international aid economy contributes significantly to the informal economy through provision of jobs and employment as well as the provision of food and medical services to poorer sections of the society.

4.2.4 The formal economy

The formal economy in Afghanistan was severely damaged during the war. Despite 15 years of intensive international assistance, the formal economy of Afghanistan is far from full recovery. It covers only a small fraction of the country's economy. Insecurity, corruption, weak rule of law, political unrest, and inefficient governance are major factors that affect the recovery

process of the formal economy. Moreover, the other three economies have somehow acted as constraints for improvement of the formal economy.

The above four economies have shaped post-Taliban urban growth in Kabul. The formal economy counts only for a small portion of the country's economic structure. A large share of government national budget depends solely on international donor grants. Government revenues counted only for 31% of the government's annual national budget in 2016 (MOF 2016). Thus, it is not surprising that informality dominates the urbanization trend in Kabul.

4.3 Urban Governance in Post-Taliban Kabul

Kabul Municipality is one of the oldest urban municipal government institutions in Afghanistan. The preliminary roots of this organization emerged in the 1870s during the reign of Amir Sher Ali Khan with the limited functions of cleaning of city streets and regulating the markets.

The functions of Kabul Municipality were extended further in 1919 as the core urban governance institution in Kabul. Since then it has gone through several structural changes alongside the city growth. At present, the KM has overall 6,900 employees organized into 16 Service Directorates and 22 District offices. The functions of KM have been divided into three divisions as Technical and Construction, Administrative and Finance, and City Services. Each of these functions is carried out by a Deputy Mayor under the direction of the Mayor. The Mayor has direct-line authority over 3 Deputy Mayors and 7 directorates (USAID 2011). The organizational structure of Kabul Municipality is shown in Figure 16. This structure has remained more or less the same since the fall of the Communist Regime in Afghanistan. The legacy and remnants of the previous political regimes are still evident in the structure and functions of the KM.

The Directorate of City Planning is the main department of Kabul Municipality which has the authority and responsibility for development and monitoring of city plans and their implementation. However, other aspects of urban development such as the acquisition of land for implementation of city plans, control of construction activities and maintenance, and operation of public utilities such as roads and sidewalks are carried out through separate departments. Development and maintenance of parks and recreational spaces are not under the authority of city planning department. Nonetheless, the city planning department is far smaller,

limited and far behind than the capacity needed to plan and manage for a large city such as Kabul.

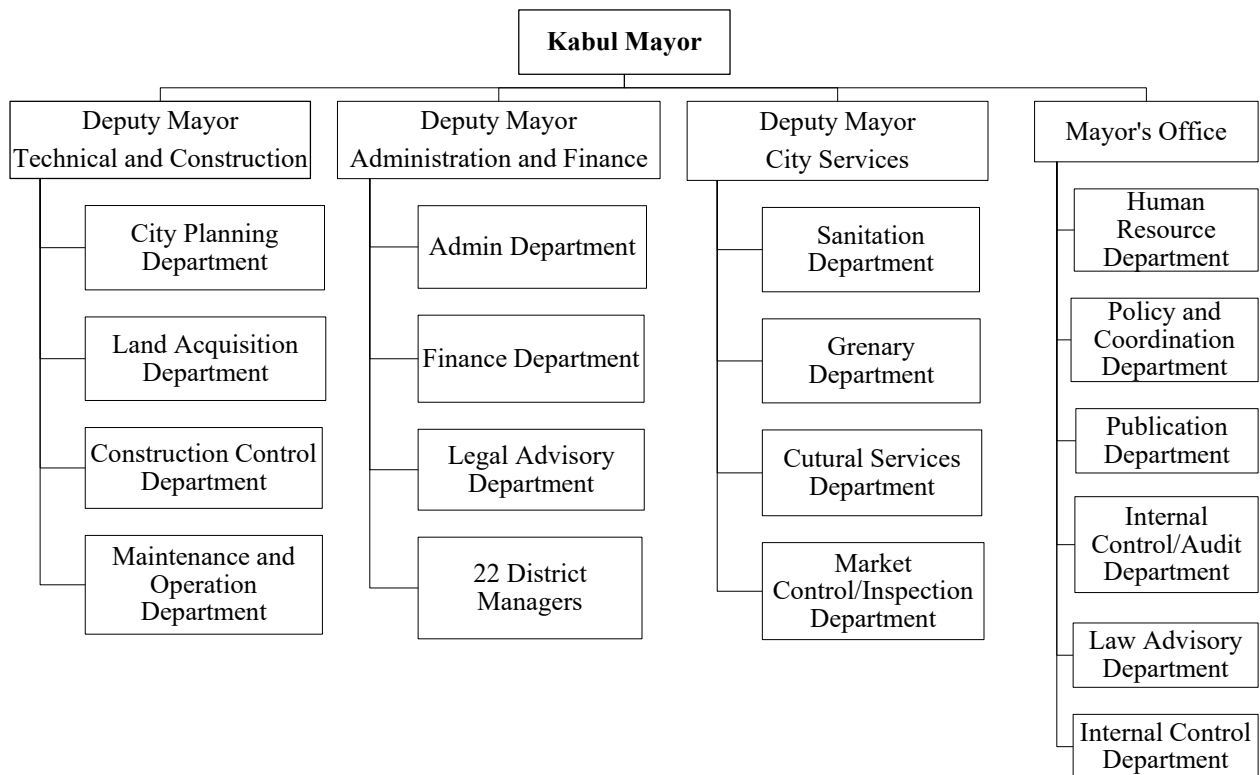


Figure 14: Administrative Structure of Kabul Municipality
Source: USAID (2011)

4.3.1 Public Representation in the Municipal Government in Kabul

Centralized government systems have dominated in Afghanistan for much of its history since its emergence as a nation-state in the late nineteenth century. Nevertheless, Afghanistan’s existence is indebted to the suppression of centrifugal forces that paved the way for its emergence as a state in its current geopolitical form. Therefore, despite various attempts at modernization and reform of government structures since the country’s independence, a tendency towards centralization of power and authority has always existed among the rulers of Afghanistan. This tendency has been expressed in the form of imposing full control of the central government over the power and authority of local governments. Decisions on the appointment of the provincial governors, mayors, and municipal authorities have often been taken in the presidential palace in Kabul.

Since the independence of Afghanistan in 1919, there have been 38 mayors governing Kabul, out of which only four were directly elected by Kabul citizens through democratic elections. It needs to be mentioned that during the early years after independence when the first municipal law was promulgated in 1924, the members of the municipal council were elected by citizens and the mayor of Kabul was elected from among the nobles by municipal council members.

The first direct municipal elections took place in Kabul in 1948 during the royal government of Zahir Shah and under the Prime Minister Shah Mahmood Khan. The Prime Minister issued a decree stating that the municipal bodies were national public organizations and should in a real way be public institutions, thus the mayor and council members would have to be directly elected by people (JOYA 1948). Ghulam Mohammad Farhad was the first elected Mayor of Kabul from 1948 to 1953, he was followed by three more rounds of elected Kabul Mayors from 1953 to 1958, 1958 to 1963, and 1963 to 1967 (HUSSAINI 2008: 10).

Since 1967 up to present day, there has not been any elected Kabul Mayor. There were indirectly elected mayors during the rule of Soviet-supported communist government in Afghanistan. The first mayor after the seizing of power by the PDPA was appointed by the party. Later the Communist Government followed the Soviet system of elected city council members who elected the Kabul Mayor. "In Russian, the word 'Soviet' means council or assembly and is essentially apolitical. The 'soviet' in fact was the basic building block of the government structure and was commonly understood to mean a council of delegates elected by groups of workers, soldiers or peasants" (BATER 1980: 32). The city council members in the municipal government in Kabul were elected by the district council members. The citizens only voted at the city district level to elect the members of their district council (LAW OF MUNICIPALITIES 1991); however, the PDPA had a strong influence on the screening and selection of candidates.

Two appointed mayors governed Kabul during the unstable rule of the Mujahideen in Kabul from 1992 to 1996 and four Mullahs were appointed as mayors of Kabul during the Taliban rule from 1996 to 2001 (HUSSAINI 2008: 17). Despite their anti-urban agenda, the Taliban amended the last Municipal Law of the Communist Regime, removing the articles about the election of district and city council member, and adding a section about the appointment of Kabul Mayor which was the authority of the Amir of Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (LAW OF MUNICIPALITIES 2000).

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, there have been six appointed mayors in Kabul, and since 2014 the Kabul Municipality has been managed by the acting mayors who have been appointed by the president.

It needs to be mentioned that the Taliban's Municipal Law (2000) has still not been amended or updated. This law is in clear contradiction with the present Constitution of Afghanistan as it rejects public representation and democratic values by not providing for the democratic election of mayor and municipal officials.

Moreover, the existence of departments such as market controls and inspection is a clear indication that the current administrative structure of Kabul Municipality is a legacy of the former political regimes such as the communist government, which the control of markets was part of its principals. This is also in contradiction to the new Constitution of Afghanistan (2004) which promotes free trade and competition through principals of the market economy.

After the fall of the Taliban, the new constitution legislated in 2004 was an attempt to set the ground for an open democracy in the country. Despite the hopes that the state building process after the fall of Taliban regime in Afghanistan was supposed to pave the way for the democratization of Afghanistan; the democratic measures were only applied at certain levels, ignoring other dimensions. The presidential and parliamentary elections were significant steps to value the people's voices and move the country towards its new democratic principles. However, the representation of people in municipalities and provincial district levels was ignored with excuses provided that the country was still not ready for such representation.

Despite clear indications by the constitution about elections of mayors and city council members in urban areas, and provincial district councils in all the provinces, the rulers of Afghanistan could not abandon apart their tendencies towards centralization of power and limiting of the authority of local governments. According to July (JOHNSON and LESLIE 2008: 15), investment in building more accountable local government could have been a better use of international assistance than spending on the ever-expanding strategies, and hiring more international advisors.

One of the factors that reinforce government's tendency towards centralization, even at the price of violating the constitution, is the level of people's awareness about the rule of law and their rights. Government accountability is linked to the level of awareness of people, which in

the case of Kabul it is very low. Additionally, civil society, which should offer a counter-force to this centralizing tendency, is weak in Afghanistan. This is despite the fact that there are various active organizations in Kabul which claim to represent civil society. The majority of them are NGOs established to use the chaos post-conflict circumstances as a mean to receive funds from international aid organizations and donor foreign countries for improvement of human rights and civil society in Afghanistan. In reality, engagement with civil society through NGOs can be a way of accumulating wealth for many opportunistic groups. As a result, there is no or very weak reaction from the civil society against violations of the constitution by the government.

The formation of strong local government system is as crucial to state-building as the establishment of a legitimate central government. A strong local governance system plays a significant role in overcoming many problematic issues in post-conflict development (HOHE 2005: 70) Democracy and the will of the people are strongly related to the legitimacy of the government, as well as to the overall stability and prosperity of a country. Empowerment of people at local level, which the rulers of Afghanistan have always been afraid of, will not only harm the stability of the government power system but also increases the loyalty of people towards the government.

According to ARNSTEIN (1969), people generally agree with the idea of citizen participation in principle, because it is generally considered a good thing. However, when it is defined as a redistribution of power and giving the right to decision-making to the lower levels of society and minorities, then it is perceived differently. ARNSTEIN (1969) has illustrated a typology of eight levels of citizen participation in the form of a ladder (figure 15).

The first two rungs from the bottom are *manipulation* and *therapy*. These are illusory forms of participation. However, in reality, they are forms of non-participation. Rungs (3) *Informing*, (4) *Consultation*, and (5) *Placating*, are referred as levels of “tokenism” which allows a certain level of participation. The upper levels of (6) *Partnership*, (7) *Delegated Power* and (8) *Citizen Control*, are referred as citizen power which indicates an increasing level of citizen participation in decision-making processes up to full managerial power. (ARNSTEIN 1969: 217).

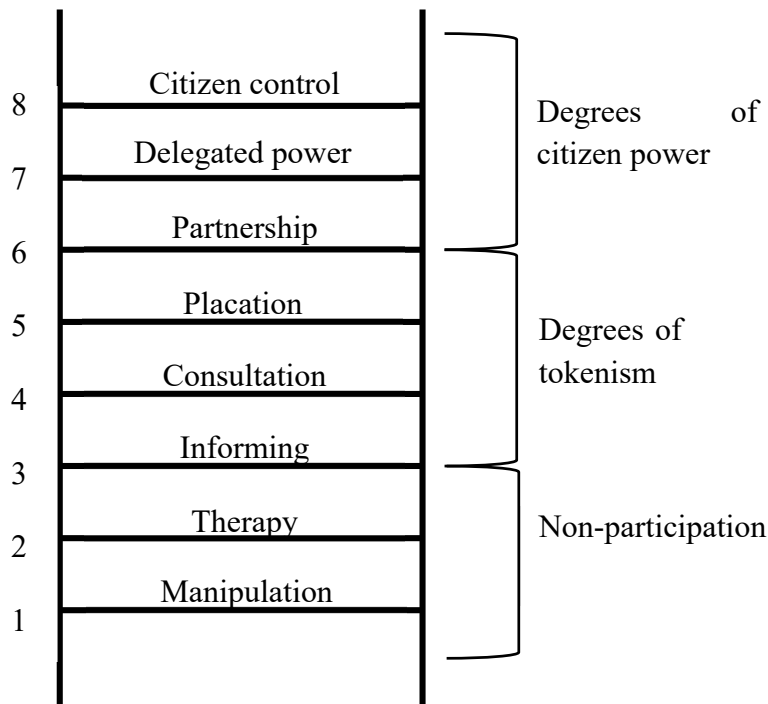


Figure 15: Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation
 Source: ARNSTEIN (1969: 217)

The following are detailed descriptions of different rungs of the ladder of citizen participation according to ARNSTEIN (1969):

1. *Manipulation* is when “in the name of citizen participation, people are placed on rubberstamp advisory committees or advisory boards for the express purpose of ‘educating’ them or engineering their support. Instead of genuine citizen participation, the bottom rung of the ladder signifies the distortion of participation into a public relations vehicle by power holders”. In this illusory level of participation, when the citizens are invited to an advisory meeting related to a development project in their area, the administrators tends to educate, advise and persuade citizens about the benefits of that certain project. The intention is to make people accept what those in power want; not to know what the people’s will.
2. *Therapy* refers to administrator’s assumptions that ‘powerlessness is synonymous with mental illness. On this assumption, under a masquerade of involving citizens in planning, the experts subject the citizens to clinical group therapy’. The expert’s solutions for problems that exclude minorities and lower sections of the society from the rest, does not concentrate on the roots of the problems. Rather, the focus is on changing minds of those excluded.
3. *Informing* citizens of their rights, responsibilities, and options can be the most important first step toward legitimate citizen participation. However, too frequently the emphasis is

placed on a one-way flow of information -from officials to citizens - with no channel provided for feedback and no power for negotiation. Under these conditions, particularly when information is provided at a late stage in planning, people have little opportunity to influence the program designed “for their benefit.” The most frequent tools used for such one-way communication are the news media, pamphlets, posters, and responses to inquiries.

4. *Consultation* refers to inviting citizens’ opinions. Similar to informing, it can be a legitimate step toward their full participation. But if consulting them is not combined with other modes of participation, this rung of the ladder is still a sham since it offers no assurance that citizen concerns and ideas will be taken into account. The most frequent methods used for consulting people are attitude surveys, neighborhood meetings, and public hearings.

When powerholders restrict the input of citizens’ ideas solely to this level, participation remains just a window-dressing ritual. People are primarily perceived as statistical abstractions, and participation is measured by how many come to meetings, take brochures home, or answer a questionnaire. What citizens achieve in all this activity is that they have “participated in participation.” And what powerholders achieve is the evidence that they have gone through the required motions of involving “those people”.

5. *Placation* is a level in which citizens begin to have some degree of influence, though tokenism is still apparent. An example of a placation strategy is to place a few handpicked “worthy” poor people on boards of Community Action Agencies or on public bodies like the board of education, police commission, or housing authority(ARNSTEIN 1969: 220). The role of minorities or lower sections of society in decision making is still under the shadow of traditional power holders as they acquire the majority of power positions.

6. *Partnership*: At this rung of the ladder, power is redistributed through negotiation between citizens and powerholders. They agree to share planning and decision-making responsibilities through such structures as joint policy boards, planning committees and mechanisms for resolving impasses. They are not subject to unilateral change after the ground rules have been established through some form of give-and-take.

Partnership can work most effectively when there is an organized power-base in the community to which city leaders are accountable; when the citizens’ groups have the financial resources to pay its leaders reasonable honoraria for their time-consuming efforts; and when the group has the resources to hire (and fire) its own technicians, lawyers, and

community organizers. With these ingredients, citizens have some genuine bargaining influence over the outcome of the plan.

7. *Delegated Power*: Negotiations between citizens and public officials can also result in citizens achieving dominant decision-making authority over a particular plan or program. At this level, the ladder has been scaled to the point where citizens hold the significant cards to assure accountability of the program to them. To resolve differences, powerholders need to start the bargaining process rather than respond to pressure from the other end.
8. *Citizen Control*: This is the highest level of citizen participation. It happens when the demand for community controlled services such as health, education and other aspects of community life increases; and the people want some degree of power and control, which guarantees them the right to govern a program or institution, to be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and to be able to negotiate the conditions under which “outsiders” may change them.

The level of citizen participation in the post-Taliban Afghanistan mostly resembles the first two bottom rungs of Arnstein’s ladder. There were some national level tokenistic participation mechanisms achieved through the Bonn Accord, such as symbolic participation of ethnic minorities and women in the parliament and provincial councils, as well as the distribution of government key positions and high ranks among different ethnic groups proportionate to their estimated percentage of the population. Nevertheless, the level of citizen participation in the municipal governments does not comply with any level higher than the second rung of the ladder.

There are various ‘Community Councils’ established in urban areas of Kabul which are involved in development projects in the city. However, the establishment of those councils did not emerge from the roots of those communities themselves. Rather, they were designed and formed by the planning organizations as part of their development projects. This was because the donor policy suggested that the projects must be designed and implemented through the involvement of community-based organizations (CBOs). Thus, with the lack of real CBOs, the planning authorities and consultants tended to produce CBOs within the communities to fulfill the requirements of their projects.

Moreover, conflicts tear apart the social bonds that can lead to the establishment of community-based institutions. The war-affected cities such as Kabul accommodate the majority of civil

war survivors who have lost family members, friends, livelihoods, and identity, or have spent a considerable amount of their lifetime in refugee camps and inconvenient living conditions. This situation has psychological consequences on the population. The majority of the war survivors suffer from a sense of hopelessness that increases their traumatic experience (COLLIER, ELLIOTT, HEGRE, HOFFLER, REYNAL-QUEROL, and SAMBANIS 2003: 30).

Furthermore, the civil war in Kabul was followed by the oppressing rule of the Taliban, which involved control of daily activities of citizens through policing and spying and imposing violent punishment for what they considered unlawful. This created a sense of mistrust among the citizens of Kabul. For example, if someone had a TV in his house, he would have to have kept it hidden and not reveal it even to his own neighbor, as there were chances that someone could inform the Taliban's Sharia Police. The citizens of Kabul still suffer the social wounds that were caused by the civil war and harassing rule of the Taliban. Those wounds still act as preventive forces against the formation of social bonds and community-based institutions.

The people's lack of awareness about their rights, as well as their inability to form strong social relations and define common interest within their communities has long helped the traditional powerholder to manipulate them and violate their legitimate basic rights.

The current structure of Kabul Municipality represents a form of manipulation of power and authority by a group of elites, who believe the citizens are not yet ready to be given more rights. There is a 'Council of Elites' instead of an elected municipal council which is required by the law. The 'Council of Elites' consists of cabinet ministers, high-ranking government officials, and parliament members (WAHID 2014). There are no meetings in KM allowing the general public to participate in or observe the decision-making process. The allocation of budget for development projects, and overall planning process lack any public participation or voice (USAID 2011: 35).

Lack of citizen representation in the municipal governance system is one of the important issues that can affect urban development plans and projects. As mentioned in Chapter 3, one of the significant causes of the failure of previous urban development plans was a lack of public involvement in the planning and management of the cities in Afghanistan.

4.3.2 Power and Authority in Kabul Municipality

The urban governance and the power structure in cities vary from country to country. In many countries of the world, municipalities are the center of political power in a city. A well-functioning urban governance system is the prerequisite for an efficient urban management system.

The power structure in Kabul Municipality is not clearly defined. There are various public and private organizations involved in the management of Kabul, which makes the structure of power and authority in the city very complex.

The fragmentation of power sources in the urban governance system in Kabul is very evident. There are many organizations involved in city management that the Kabul Municipality does not have any authority over. The management of the traffic system in the city is done through the Kabul Traffic Department which is part of the Ministry of Interior Affairs. The Water Supply and Sewerage system are managed by the Afghanistan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Company (AUWSSC), which operated under the Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA) in urban areas. The health and education sectors are managed through their respective ministries. MUDA is also actively developing new townships and housing projects in various parts of Kabul within jurisdictions of Kabul Municipality, over which the Kabul Municipality does not have any authority. The MUDA even carries out licensing processes for the private townships and housing projects within Kabul.

The fragmentation of authorities within Kabul becomes a major problem when there is very limited coordination among these organizations. The administrative system in almost all the organizations involved in the management of Kabul is old and outdated. There are computers in many administrative offices, but they are mostly used only as typewriter machines to type official letters. There is no e-governance system or official electronic communications among organizations.

Another challenge for Kabul Municipality is that the authority of the Kabul Mayor is limited in many aspects. For example, the Kabul Mayor does not have the authority to approve a city development plan. Any city development plan has to go through an approval process, firstly with the council of ministers and then signed by the president. Kabul is the capital city and its

development is a national priority. However, the time-consuming plan approval process causes serious delays in implementation of development plans.

Despite having control over its revenues, the Kabul Municipality is not a fully financially autonomous organization. It depends on funds from government and international aid agencies for its development projects.

There are very few written policies and procedure for finances, licensing and permitting human resources, and public information functions. There are thousands of pages of documents and records kept in various departments of Kabul Municipality. These are however understood by individuals who collected the data. There are no commonly understood procedures and standards among different departments (USAID 2011: 40).

Another major challenge in the improvement of the urban management system in Kabul is the existence of corruption in government organizations including the Kabul Municipality. Since the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan has been one of the most corrupt countries in the world (TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL 2015). According to a study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), corruption after insecurity is considered the second major issue that threatens the stability of Afghanistan. According to this study, officers of provincial districts and municipal authorities are the most involved in bribery in Afghanistan (UNODC 2012). Bribery and corruption at municipal levels mostly involve urban development aspects including the construction of unauthorized buildings.

The scarcity of professional personnel within Kabul Municipality is another factor affecting the efficiency of the urban governance system in Kabul (NABIZADA 2016). This is not because of lack of qualified professionals in Kabul as it was in the past. Rather, since the fall of the Taliban regime, many qualified professionals have graduated from universities within Afghanistan or have acquired their degrees from foreign countries. However, working in the Municipality is not very attractive for them. This is because the salary scale in the Municipality is very low compared to the market. This leaves a vast gap between the level of proficiency of Municipality personnel and those who work with the private sector. The low scale of salary in Municipality and overall governmental organizations is a significant factor that causes bribery and corruption among the municipality personnel.

Despite evident deficiencies in the urban governance system and specifically in Kabul Municipality, very little has been done to reform the system. More attention has been paid to planning and development of the city without reforming the involved organizations to make them capable of efficiently carrying out the job of managing the city in a sustainable manner. Thus, new planning attempts after the fall of the Taliban were carried out through organizations that were not ready for such a demanding job.

It needs to be mentioned that in 2016 the president of Afghanistan took radical steps towards reforming the Kabul Municipality. The reform was initiated with the appointment of a young university professor of civil engineering holding a master's degree from the United States, as the acting mayor of Kabul. This was followed by the recruitment of young professionals with at least a master's degree in their respective fields for the positions of deputy mayor and directorates of various departments of Kabul Municipality. The new team intends to apply fundamental reform to the urban governance system of Kabul. However, considering the significant number of challenges and constraints that the new team faces, the passage of time will show how successfully the reforms will be.

4.4 In Search of a New Urban Vision for Kabul

One of the first steps towards the rehabilitation of Kabul was an international conference titled "Kabul and the National Urban Vision" in September 2002 in Kabul. The conference was initiated by the MUDA in cooperation with and sponsored by Kabul Municipality, Kabul University, UN-Habitat, the Society of Afghan Engineers in the USA, and the Japan Society of Civil Engineers. Many of the experts in urban development including architects, engineers, planners, and geographers participated in the conference and each one came with their vision for the future development of Kabul. The topics of the conference comprehensively covered various aspects of urban development in Kabul including national and international perspectives, heritage conservation, urban transportation, urban management and planning, urban infrastructure and services, and housing and settlement development (BIGELOW 2011).

The proceedings of the conference reflect different ideas for Kabul ranging from the continuation of the master plan approach to more flexible approaches to city planning. A consensus over the future of Kabul did not emerge, rather there were a variety of ideas for rehabilitation and future planning of the city. Certain groups suggested the revision and

implementation of Kabul Master Plan 1978. Others were against it finding it too ideological and not implementable and suggesting that a new plan needs to be prepared. The dominant points of views suggested for a more flexible planning and reconstruction model for Kabul, one that responded to the changing components of the city. This model included renovation of existing public buildings, restoration, and rehabilitation of heritage buildings and monuments, as well as reconstruction and planning of entire neighborhoods (SABET 2002).

The conflicts and disagreements over planning models were not limited to *how* the rehabilitation and planning for the future of Kabul should be, rather there was a heightened conflict regarding *who* has the authority to do it. This conflict of authority was between the Kabul Municipality and MUDA. The Kabul Municipality as the main and leading urban management administration expected the authority and power over all aspects of planning and decision making for Kabul. Meanwhile, the MUDA, as the leading organization in making policies and plans on urban development issues, reserved the power and authority over decision making and planning for all the cities of Afghanistan. MUDA's arguments were based on the centralized planning system that prevailed in Afghanistan for decades. According to the centralized planning system, which was a legacy former regimes that strengthened through the Soviet influence since the 1960s, the preparation of master plans for all the cities of Afghanistan was the duty of the MUDA and municipalities were only responsible for implementation of plans along with maintenance and delivery of services.

On the other hand, neither Kabul Municipality nor MUDA had the financial means and professional capacity to revise the old master plan or prepare a new plan for Kabul. The entire government system was highly dependent on international aid, as it is today. Moreover, while the experts in KM and MUDA were busy on the debate about the future of the capital city, the majority of the Kabul citizens had already started rebuilding their city (ISSA and KOHISTANI 2007: 62), without referring to any formal city plan.

One of the initial major projects funded by the international community in the urban sector was Afghanistan Urban Emergency Reconstruction Project. The project was initiated and funded by the World Bank in 2003. Its main objective was to improve urban management and delivery of urban services and shelter in Kabul Municipality, as well as improvement of water supply and primary road networks in some selected secondary towns. This project encouraged and supported the reconstruction and rehabilitation of urban services in some selected

neighborhoods of Kabul and their integration into the urban fabric of the city. Improvement of the managerial capacity of Kabul Municipality and MUDA was also part of the objectives of this project (WORLD BANK 2003).

The project consisted of two components; urban services improvement, and policy advice and other support. The first component included area upgrading in Kabul and secondary towns, housing reconstruction, repair and reconstruction of major roads and drains, repair and extension of water supply and sanitation systems, and engineering and management support. The second component covered policy and advice support in the urban institutional development, preparation of structure plan for Kabul, land tenure regularization in Kabul, future project preparation and studies, and management support (WORLD BANK 2003).

In 2004, an international conference was held in Berlin in order to seek the support of the international community in improving security and achieving political and economic stability in Afghanistan. The Berlin conference was a continuation of a first donor conference that was held in Japan in 2002 (BBC 2004). The Government of Afghanistan (TISA)²⁶ with support of international agencies such as Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the World Bank Group prepared a report titled ‘Securing Afghanistan’s Future, Accomplishments and the Strategic Path Forward’ and presented it to the international donors at the Berlin Conference.

The report covered a variety of proposals on various aspects including economic framework and prospects, building social and human capital, developing physical infrastructure and natural resources, public administration reform and economic management, enabling trade, investment in the private sector, improving security, and strengthening and accelerating implementation (TISA, ADB, UNAMA, UNDP, and WBG 2004).

As part of the section related to developing physical infrastructure and natural resources, there was a subcomponent proposal for improvement of urban services and coping with large and growing populations. The report explained the challenges and issues the urban sector was struggling with in Afghanistan due to rapid urban growth, deficiencies in the delivery of

26 From 2002 to 2004 Afghanistan was governed by Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan (TISA).

services, weak urban management, poor governance, property rights disputes, inefficient land management, and weak capacity of municipalities to generate revenue to fund the provision of local public services. Institutional fragmentation and unclear functional responsibilities and roles between the MUDA and municipalities were specially mentioned in the report (TISA, ADB, UNAMA, UNDP, and WBG 2004).

Considering the above issues an urban vision was developed and proposed at the Berlin Conference. The Government of Afghanistan's vision and focus on urban sector aimed at finding ways to have functional cities with efficient urban management systems through the involvement of citizen and residents, improvement of women's safety and free mobility and enhancement of their participation in public life and economic development. Expansion of urban infrastructure and services into new and informal areas and integrating them into the city system and ensuring citizens participation in the delivery of services and urban governance were intended. The role of communities was investments in private facilities and the responsibility of municipalities was provision, re/construction and maintenance of public infrastructures such as roads, sanitation, and public parks. The ultimate objective was that urban reconstruction and development activities to take place in a manner that improved the management and planning capacity of local planning institutions and lead to financial autonomy of municipalities (TISA, ADB, UNAMA, UNDP, and WBG 2004).

Specific objectives of the urban vision included (i) upgrading under-serviced planned and unplanned areas; (ii) rehabilitating and extending water supply and sewerage services; (iii) rehabilitating and extending roads and drains; (iv) improving solid waste collection and disposal; (v) creating new serviced land; (vi) undertaking land titling; (vii) implementing housing reconstruction; and (viii) improving urban planning and management, including municipal financial management, policy formulation, and institutional development. The ambitious vision set measurable targets including provision of basic services for major city populations by 2010, pavement of 59 percent of significant urban roads by 2010 and 100 percent by 2015, securing tenure for all informal settlements by 2010, and improvement of the Kabul water supply and sewer system and increase of its coverage from 20 percent in 2004 to 64 percent in 2010 and 80 percent in 2015. A total 1.8 billion USD was requested for financing urban services in Afghanistan for the period of seven years (TISA, ADB, UNAMA, UNDP, and WBG 2004).

4.5 The New Planning Approaches for Post-Taliban Kabul

The continuation of Afghanistan Urban Emergency Reconstruction Project, on the one hand, and response of the international community to the proposals of the Government of Afghanistan in Berlin Conference, on the other hand, led to the introduction of a new project known as Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project (hereinafter referred to as KURP) in 2004. KURP was funded by International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank, with a specific focus on Kabul. The primary attention of KURP was on the upgrading of city neighborhoods without consideration of their formal or informal status, which included the neighborhoods of the Old City of Kabul as well. The urban upgrading activities included improving basic infrastructures such as water supply, sanitation, access, drainage, solid waste management, and street lighting. Financing and support and improvement of managerial capacity in the MUDA and the Kabul Municipality through the implementation of urban plans and programs were part of KURP's objectives (WORLD BANK 2013b).

The proposed fund for KURP was to finance urgent reconstruction activities in the area under the jurisdiction of Kabul Municipality and to provide limited technical assistance for the MUDA.

KURP was incorporated into the administrative structure of the MUDA as one of the major projects. The organizational arrangement for KURP was proposed to be divided into two management units. The first was Project Management Unit (PMU) as the main body of the project, which consisted of technical and administrative staff accountable to the MUDA. The second was Technical Support Unit (TSU) an international private company that was to provide technical support to Project Management Unit and was to be accountable to the World Bank (WORLD BANK 2004).

The functions of KURP were structured in six parts.

1. Area upgrading in Kabul through improvement of basic infrastructure and services such as water supply, sanitation, access, drainage, solid waste management and street lighting, as well as appropriate re-planning and restructuring of the physical environment. It intended to cover selected neighborhoods, both formal and informal, with involvement and active participation of the community. The selection of the sites was based on their vulnerability and deficiency in the delivery of services. Household income levels and period of time that

families living in Kabul were considered as measurements of vulnerability, and access to water and sanitation and the type of means to access these services were considered as measurements for deficiency of services. The upgrading part was to be implemented in two phases. The first phase covered an area of 400 hectares with a target population of approximately 100,000 people in about 20 neighborhoods. The second phase covered 600 hectares of the area for an approximately 150,000 people in about 25 neighborhoods (WORLD BANK 2004).

Overall, nineteen neighborhoods in Darwaza Lahori, Deh Afghanan, Andrabi, Murad Khanne and Joy Sher areas of Kabul were upgraded as part of the above component, which covered a population of over 140,000 people (WORLD BANK 2013a).

2. **Land Tenure Regularization:** This component aimed to improve the capacity in land management and regularization of urban land tenure in Kabul through the development of an appropriate methodology and conducting of pilot projects in four selected neighborhoods in settlements identified for upgrading (WORLD BANK 2004).
3. **Engineering and Management Support;** with the aim of providing technical assistance as Technical Support Unit (TSU) to the MUDA through Project Management Unit (PMU). This also included the provision of a number of consultants to work at the community level in order to achieve community mobilization, identification of services to be provided through consultation with the community, planning, and design of the service elements and supervision of construction process (WORLD BANK 2004).
4. **Overall Capacity Building for Kabul Municipality:** This part aimed to improve the financial function of Kabul Municipality including revenue generation, financial management, asset management, budgeting and planning (WORLD BANK 2004).
5. **Structure Plans and Preparation of Future Urban Project:** This component was initially proposed to assist the MUDA and Municipalities with the preparation of physical development plans for five major cities including Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad. The objective was building capacity in planning in the MUDA and municipalities and preparing feasibility studies for future urban plans of the above-mentioned cities. This part was later limited to only preparation of development plan for Kabul. The Development Plan for Kabul which was prepared as part of this component will be discussed in detail in following pages.

6. **Main Roads, Drainages and Traffic Management in Kabul:** This component included construction of new roads and drains, reconstruction and repair of existing roads and drains, and improvement of overall traffic management in Kabul (WORLD BANK 2004).

Overall, 126 kilometers of secondary roads, 153 kilometers of drains in addition to 11 kilometers of trunk drainage, 103 kilometers of water distribution network and 7805 new water connections, 7230 latrines, over 10,000 street lights, and about 40 collection points for deistic solid waste were the services that Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project (KURP) has delivered through neighborhood upgrading programs. This covers 600 hectares of planned and unplanned areas with a direct benefit to over 100,000 people and indirect benefit to 275,000 people. Another major positive impact of this project was on institutional development and the altering of the attitude of planners and policymakers in Afghanistan on the unplanned or informal settlements from demolition to reconstruction and upgrading (WORLD BANK 2013a).

The KURP was later followed by similar projects such as Kabul City Initiative (KCI) funded by USAID, local road rehabilitation projects funded by JICA and implemented by UN-HABITAT, and Kabul Municipality Development Program (KMDP) funded by the World Bank. The latter was a continuation of KURP, however, within the structure of Kabul Municipality.

Kabul City Initiative (KCI) was a three-year project with three primary objectives to (1) increase the capacity of municipal officials in KM, (2) improve the equitable delivery of services to citizens in Kabul, and (3) increase the capacity of the municipality to generate and account for revenue. The initial budget of KCI was 119 million USD, which was reduced to 45 million USD in the second year of the project commencement significantly affecting the project design and implementation. The outcomes of KCI project included the training of municipality staff (USAID 2013), construction of 10 neighborhood parks and over 32 kilometers of city streets, renovation of 18 municipal district buildings, establishment of a new landfill composting facility, along with technical and managerial training for over 4800 permanent and contracted staff of KM; conducting of public education campaigns in schools for keeping the city clean and planting trees, gender equity campaigns within KM; drafting of 51 municipal policies, Standard Operating Procedures, and Department Terms of Reference for the municipal reforms, drafting of a five-year Capital Improvement Plan for KM; establishment of Citizen Information Center for KM; installation of an Afghan-developed computerized Financial

Management Information System (FMIS) (compatible with the system used by the Ministry of Finance); and training of budget staff in how to produce budgets and manage expenditures (USAID 2012).

KMDP was initiated and funded by the World Bank with four components: (1) infrastructure upgrade program, which was the largest component and supports upgrading of basic municipal infrastructure and service delivery support for Sanitation and Road Departments; (2) redesign KM's financial management system; (3) studies, which included household survey and data collection for service delivery, and drainage studies for preparation of a master plan for the storm water drainage system; and (4) project management, works and design supervision, which would finance the cost of KMDP senior consultants for the management of the project. The total budget for the KMDP project was 110 million USD for the duration of seven years from 2013 to 2019 (WORLD BANK 2014).

Meanwhile, a parallel stream with different urban vision emerged within the structure of Government of Afghanistan. This group, which consisted of political elites close to former President Hamid Karzai and a cluster of returnee technocrats from western countries, with the influence of some land owners, private investors and developers promulgated the idea of developing a totally new city from scratch in northern areas of Kabul. Later on, this led to the establishment of Dehsabz City Development Authority (DCDA) and planning for a new city in Dehsabz and Barikab area at the north of present Kabul, which will be discussed in next chapter.

4.5.1 Market-Based Planning Approaches within Socialist-influenced Institutions

Since the dawn of the modern town planning in Afghanistan until the establishment of post-Taliban government, only the government had the authority to prepare development plans for the cities of Afghanistan. The city planning system was highly centralized and master plans for all the cities of Afghanistan were prepared by a central authority in Kabul. The city master plans were considered confidential government documents, which only authorized personnel could access them. However, in the post-Taliban era, the new political environment favored market-based economic policies, which not only allowed privatization of urban services and development activities but also paved the way for the private sector to take part in the preparation of city development plans. The international community and main donor agencies such as the World Bank and USAID also had their default positions towards the market-based

economic policies in Afghanistan. These agencies favored active foreign investor access to kick-start the economy and to restart property taxation to recover the country's broken economy (WILY 2013: 37).

Preparation of a physical development plan for Kabul was one of the main objectives of KURP. However, the job of plan preparation intended to be handed over to a private company through an international bidding process. KURP was responsible for conducting the bidding and contract management. Prior to that, however, there was a whole administrative process for formation of the KURP office within the MUDA, which included recruitments and logistic requirements for establishment of Project Management Unit (PMU) and of procurement of international consultant as Technical Support Unit (TSU). It took over two years for the World Bank and the MUDA to have a functional office for KURP. Thus, KURP functioned as an attachment organization, which was not fully integrated into MUDA's administrative structure. KURP was distinct from the mainstream administrative system of the MUDA in many aspects. Firstly, KURP was accountable to the World Bank rather than MUDA. Secondly, the salaries of the KURP personnel were through funds from the World Bank, which were many folds higher than MUDA's local personnel. Thirdly, the market-based economic policies, which the government intended to pursue especially in urban development sector were naturally institutionalized in the functions of KURP, whereas, the conservative policies of previous regimes and tendency towards centralization of authority was still prevalent in MUDA.

The World Bank policies directly influenced the objectives of the development plan for Kabul, like many other internationally funded projects. The project demanded preparation of a new plan rather than reliance on the revision of the old master plan. It was also emphasized in the project terms of reference that the prevailing master planning framework was not able to respond to the rapid urban change and should be discarded as an outdated relic, because it was cumbersome, top-down, lacked flexibility, it did not instill a sense of ownership in people, it was time-consuming, and could not keep pace with the urban reality resulting in a poor implementation record. Instead, the new methods of planning with a focus on strategy and priorities as well the implementation of the plan through the identification of actions, projects, and required investments and human resources, was recommended (WORLD BANK 2005: 66).

It was also recommended that unlike the previous master plans for Kabul, the new development plan had to be prepared in a participatory manner to address the development needs of the

community, district and municipal levels. The development plan was to be an input and document of reference for other sectoral agencies such as public works, water, sewer, health, and education and was to fulfill for the planning departments of such agencies to project their own requirements within the plan (WORLD BANK 2005: 68).

The WORLD BANK (2005: 13-14) policy suggested that the urban strategy in Kabul be designed around three principles:

1. As most of the new housings built in Kabul are self-built and informal, infrastructure needs to be developed incrementally in those areas. Consideration needs to be paid to marking and preservation of the right-of-ways of primary and secondary roads and protecting them from encroachments. The priority in investment and development of infrastructure needs to be given to the existing communities and built houses which have no infrastructure. Thus, upgrading the infrastructure of the existing communities and legalizing the tenure security for the residents would be the suitable urban strategy to deal with informal settlements.
2. The Government needs to allocate its limited resources towards providing basic infrastructure and services to the existing population and towards a legal development framework to deal with future urban population growth.
3. The Government does not have the financial and human resources for large-scale housing projects.

The major outputs of the development plan of Kabul were expected to be a clear definition of central and local government objectives for urban development including defining the role of government and private sector in urban development, constant monitoring of building activities of formal and informal sector; developing indicators for real estate prices; zoning maps; land development regulations; and resource mobilization programs based on user fees, impact fees and property taxes (WORLD BANK 2005: 15-16).

The World Bank had developed a clear detailed methodology explained phases of planning and expected deliverables for the consultant firm to undertake preparation of development plan (WORLD BANK 2005: 71). Initially, the World Bank policy suggested a maximum period of 7 years for the development plan of Kabul, but later on, due to the intervention of Kabul Municipality and MUDA, the time frame of the plan was expanded to 15 years.

Based on the procurement procedures by the World Bank, KURP was supposed to hire a qualified firm through an international bidding process, to undertake the preparation of a new development plan for Kabul and four other regional cities. Several local and international companies participated in the bidding process. Finally, in 2007, a consortium of Indian companies leading by Intercontinental Consultants and Technocrats Pvt Ltd (hereafter ICT) in association with Housing and Urban Development Corporation Ltd (HUDCO) and AFIN Consultants were announced as the winner of the bidding for the preparation of Development Plan for Kabul. The ICT team mobilized in Kabul in 2007 and the project officially commenced. ICT had scheduled the project to be completed within a period of 30 months.

The requirements of this project asked for a complete diversion of the policies and planning methodologies that were prevailing since the beginning of the Soviet-influenced planning exercise in Afghanistan. It was not easy for the Kabul Municipality and MUDA to digest and apply any new planning conceptions other than socialist-influenced master plan approach which was deeply institutionalized in city planning authorities of Afghanistan. This was because according to the prevailing planning system, the built up areas outside or in contradiction to the map of master plan were considered informal and the only solution to make them formal was to demolish them with a bulldozer and implement what the master plan required.

On the other hand, community participation, the flexibility of the planning system, and concentration on strategy rather than preparation of physical drawings were new to the planning institutions in Kabul.

As a result, the engineers and planners and officials of Kabul Municipality and MUDA, discreetly and in some cases openly acted as constraints to the preparation of the plan and resisted some of the planning methodologies which were required for the project as per its terms of reference. For example, a high-ranking official in Kabul Municipality asked the ICT team to remove their social planner from the project, as he thought there was no need for a social planner to prepare an urban development plan. In another case, the ICT team was asked to change their population projection because the official believed “we don’t need these many people in Kabul”(KUMAR 2016).

The ICT team started its planning activities with the goal of making a dynamic, flexible and participatory plan in order to integrate physical, social and economic planning at all levels. The goals also included provision of affordable housing and solving issues of informal settlements; provision of an efficient urban transport system; environmental protection measures; dealing with informal sector economic activities; protection of historic, cultural and natural heritage; and overall measures to regulate planned development through improvement of the urban governance system, regulatory mechanisms and effective monitoring and review systems (ICT 2008).

The ICT team, based on the terms of the reference of the project and guidelines provided by the World Bank emphasized introducing an enabling rather than restrictive regulatory mechanism for the planning process. According to ICT (2008), the spatial development strategies were prepared after consultation with various stakeholder agencies and the public.

However, the level of public participation has not been inclusive and encompassing and there are little signs of a participatory mechanism for preparation of this plan. Many of the households visited were unaware of the development plan in their city.

As mentioned before, the final consensus among the stakeholder institutions was that the development plan had to span a period of fifteen years (2008 -2023). The ICT team formulated a framework for the preparation of the plan through conducting field surveys and consultation with stakeholders to get a realistic notion of the existing situation and level of services, in order to forecast housing demand, infrastructure and required city services for the projected population of Kabul in the year 2023.

The Development Plan for Kabul DPK was initially supposed to be implemented in three (five years) phases that would start from 2008 to 2023. MUDA had the responsibility for management of the planning process. ICT completed and submitted the DPK in 2009. At the same time the concept of planning a new city in Dehsabz had taken place, and Dehsabz City Development Authority (DCDA) with the support of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and experts from Japan prepared the Master Plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz²⁷ (MKNC) in 2009. As mentioned before, in the initial development plan by ICT, the growth of

27 The contents of the Master Plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz are explained in Chapter 5.

Kabul was limited to the boundaries of the KM jurisdiction, thus there was no consideration of new development activities beyond those boundaries. Therefore, the two plans were prepared with almost no coordination among the concerned planning agencies. The result was the generation of two different urban development plans in two different planning styles for two adjacent areas. The authorities realized that the prepared plans were not congruent, as the DPK was limited to a vast green belt, but the MKNC was supposed to be an extension of present Kabul with various connections to it. One of the plans was supposed to be modified in such a way as to match the other. As the political influence of DCDA was much stronger than KM, so it was ultimately able to change the concept of DPK in such a way to match with DCDA's plan. The job of changing the DPK was assigned to JICA, as ICT had already completed its contract and demobilized from Afghanistan.

DPK was finally revised during 2010 to 2011 with enormous changes in land use, transportation and policies, despite the fact that the ICT study was used as the base for the new revisions. After the revision, the JICA team changed the Development Plan for Kabul (DPK) to Kabul City Master Plan (KCMP). The KCMP was submitted to KM as a draft. The plan needed the presidents' approval before proceeding to its implementation stage. However, it was revealed during an interview with the acting mayor of Kabul in 2014 that the plan was still waiting for president's approval (WAHID 2014). With the events of 2014 presidential elections and inauguration of the new president, the KCMP was slipped down the priority list of the new government. In 2016, the newly recruited Director General of the City Planning and Implementation Department of the Kabul Municipality stated in an interview that the KCMP will go through another revision: "We have decided to review/revise the Master Plan according to the existing situation; as the master plan was finalized in 2012. Since then, the physical and social structure of the city has been changed as a result of rapid population growth and rapid growth of informal settlements. So the master plan can't meet today's requirements" (NABIZADA 2016).

4.5.2 Projection of Future Population and Urban Density

One of the main challenges in the planning approach in Kabul is to get a reliable estimation of the existing population of the city. There are various estimates available from different sources, which do not comply with each other. There has not been any recent comprehensive population survey to get a realistic population figure. The available figures are based on rough estimations

or population surveys with small samples. Also, there are no time series data to determine the accurate growth rate. On the other hand, the population growth in Kabul was affected by the in-migration rate and flow of returnees in recent years which did not have a regular pattern²⁸.

Due to the absence of data, the ICT team using demographic indicators and field consultation adopted a base population estimate of 4,532,703 for the year 2008. As per the team's findings, the annual population growth rate in Kabul between 2002 and 2008 was 4.5%. A growth rate of 2.5% was due to natural growth and 2.0% was due to in-migration. The team adopted three alternative growth rates as 4.5% (high growth rate assuming the growth rate to remain the same until the year 2023), 4.3% (medium growth rate assuming a decrease in the natural rate and in-migration rate in coming years) and 4.2% (low growth rate characterized by a reduction of 0.1% every year for the plan period constituted from reduction in natural growth and in-migration rates). In the year 2023, the population of Kabul was estimated to be 8.8 million in the case of a high growth rate, 7.98 million in the case of a medium growth rate, and 7.8 million in the case of a low growth rate. Finally, the team considered the medium annual growth rate of 4.3% and the projected population of 8 million in the year 2023 as a base for the preparation of development plan (ICT 2008).

The team worked out three scenarios to balance the distribution of projected population in Kabul. According to the first scenario, surrounding provincial towns such as Charikar, Bagram and Mahmood Raqi in the north, Pul-i-Alam in the south and Maidan Shahr in the west would accommodate about 2.3 million of the projected population. The remaining 5.7 million would reside in Kabul. The second scenario suggested that the development of New City in Dehsabz would accommodate 1.5 million, leaving 6.5 for Kabul. The third scenario envisaged that the entire population of 8 million would live in Kabul. As per the assessment of resources, the first two scenarios did not seem to be feasible in near future. On the other hand, the World Bank (2005: 15) policy recommended that the development of Kabul needs to be limited within the existing jurisdictions of Kabul Municipality and that expansion beyond these was not recommended. Thus the third development scenario was discussed with the main stakeholders and adopted (ICT 2008).

28 As per ICT (2008), the team received several population estimates for Kabul in year 2008 varying from 2.72 million by CSO to 4.5 million given by district directors of Kabul Municipality in 2007-08.

The area under municipality jurisdiction is anticipated to be 1022.7 km². This area covers 22 municipal districts. The gross population density in Kabul is estimated to be 4432 persons per km² or 44 persons per hectare. District 1 (the Old City of Kabul) has the highest density of 39,337 persons per km², and District 21 with a population density of 52 persons per km² has the lowest density. The development plan covered all 22 districts of Kabul Municipality to accommodate the projected population of 8 million in the year 2023, thus, the development plan proposed an average density of 170 persons per hectare for Kabul by 2023.

As per the study by ICT (2008), the existing developable area of Kabul has the potential to accommodate the projected population within the existing municipal boundary. The plan proposed that densification and redevelopment of existing urban neighborhoods (both formal and informal settlements), as well as utilization of existing vacant land, parts of the agricultural land, and suitable parts of the lower hilly terrain in future development would be sufficient to absorb the additional population.

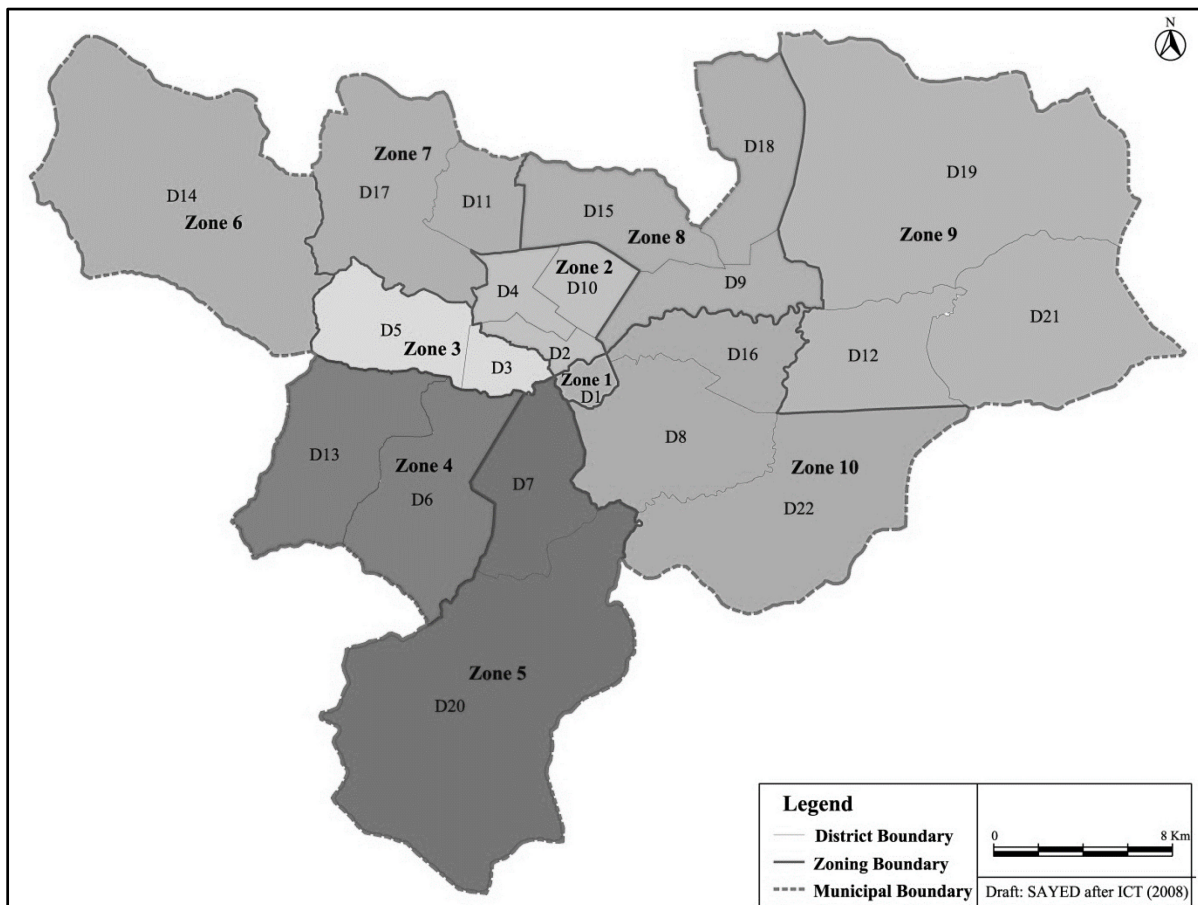
The JICA team changed the target year for KCMP from 2023 to 2025, with specifying key development milestones for years 2015 and 2020. The JICA study team had a different estimation of Kabul population which was much lower than that estimation by ICT. The JICA team estimated the population of Kabul in 2008 at 4.1 million. Based on that, the projected population for the year 2025 was estimated at 6.7 million for the metropolitan area, including 1.5 million for the new city in Dehsabz. As expected, unlike the ICT study, all aspects of JICA's planning approach for Kabul included consideration for a new city in Dehsabz, as the JICA team in its study had initially focused on it (JICA 2011a).

4.5.3 The Development Approach

The development approach in ICT's plan was to consider both low- and high-rise residential areas to accommodate medium and high density, through the extension of a plan to new urban areas, renewal and redevelopment of existing informal areas, and control of fringe development and decentralization of planning in planned units. A planning hierarchy for the city units was used to consider the required facilities based on the need of each unit at different levels in a decentralized manner. The smallest unit within this hierarchy was a cluster accommodating a population of about 5000, followed by a city neighborhood with 15,000, a sub-district with up

to 100,000, a district from 100,000 to 600,000, and a zone with up to 1.2 million. The last and largest unit was the city itself.

To apply the hierarchy in Kabul, the city's 22 districts were grouped into 10 planning zones based on the specific characteristic and population density of each district. For example district, 1 due to its historic nature and high density was considered as a separate planning zone while some other zones consisted of two or three districts (ICT 2008).



Map 14: Planning zones as per ICT Kabul Development Plan
Source: ICT (2008)

The JICA team also revised the special framework for Kabul in relation to its connection to the new city in Dehsabz. In fact, the development approach of KCMP is based on the concept of the Kabul Metropolitan Area which includes a vast area including Dehsabz and Barikab. Unlike the ICT plan, the special framework of the JICA Team includes objectives to link the two cities. It emphasizes on the provision of multiple traffic links between Kabul and Dehsabz with specific road hierarchies, and a complementary development approach for both cities. It also suggests the provision of multiple urban cores and centers for both cities.

4.5.4 Employment and Enterprise

The ICT plan included a section about employment and enterprise. In this section, based on the population projection of 8 million in 2023, the work force was forecasted to be 2,640,000 (33 percent of total Kabul's total population). Out of this one percent would be employed in primary sector activities, 10 percent in the secondary sector, and the remaining 89 percent in tertiary sector activities (ICT 2008).

Trade and commerce, with the allocation of 25 percent of the future workforce, is proposed to be the main economic base for Kabul. Besides being the national capital and administrative center of Afghanistan, Kabul is proposed to be the main trade and business center for the whole country. As there is no hierarchy of commercial activities in Kabul, the plan proposed an improvement of the existing CBD (central business district), development of decentralized commercial centers in each planning zone, relocating of wholesale markets from the center, and provision of service markets for each specific neighborhood of the city.

The significance of industrial activities in Kabul and their potential due to their strategic locations, regional linkages, and the administrative importance of the city was envisaged in the plan. According to the findings of the ICT team, about 928 hectares of land in Kabul was under industrial use, but the share of industrial employment compared to the existing potential was very low. There was no large-scale industry, and almost 90 percent of the existing industries were non-functional due to previous conflicts and/or non-attractiveness of the present situation for new investments. The plan proposed the existing potential to be utilized in developing local resource-based medium-sized industries in order to improve economic base of the city and create more job opportunities. The plan also emphasized allowing existing household industries to function in residential areas, provided that municipality develops a list of all permitted and prohibited household industries (ICT 2008).

The majority of the working population in Kabul make their livelihoods through informal economic activities ranging from on street vendors to informal shopkeepers. They account for about 80 percent of total employment in the city. The development plan proposed organizing these activities through the provision of informal markets at the district level, development of new areas for informal trade and standardizing the design of stalls, pushcarts, and mobile vans, along with the provision of common basic services like toilets and water points (ICT 2008).

With the absence of clear goals and development agendas within different institutions, the clumsy activities of various governmental agencies, and lack of coordination between public and private organizations, it seems a very challenging issue to coordinate the employment of the forecasted workforce within these sectors. On the other hand, the forecast is a merely based on a quantitative projection of the population. A qualitative assessment of capacity and capability of the projected workforce is missing from the plan. For example, the plan assigns 25 percent of the workforce to trade and commerce, 12 percent to the construction sector, and 20 percent in the transport sector. However, there is no assessment of the capacity of the employees and whether is it possible to have the required number of skilled and unskilled laborers for in order to meet the demand of the relevant sectors. Also, the basis for the assignment of particular percentages to each activity is not clear, and may not be feasible compared to the actual situation on the ground. For example, as mentioned earlier, at present informal sector economic activities account for over 80 percent of total employment in Kabul, without clear segregation of types of these activities. Diversion of specific types of employment into various sectors with specific percentages is a very challenging issue which may not be possible in reality.

4.5.5 Land-use Planning

One of the ultimate goals any urban development plan is an optimum use of land as a scarce resource. This can be reflected in the formulation of an efficient land use plan along with a well-organized connectivity of different land uses through transportation networks. In order to propose an efficient use for each parcel of land in the city, it is important to have a clear understanding of existing land uses. The ICT team carried out an assessment of existing land use in Kabul during a preliminary study for the preparation of a development plan for Kabul.

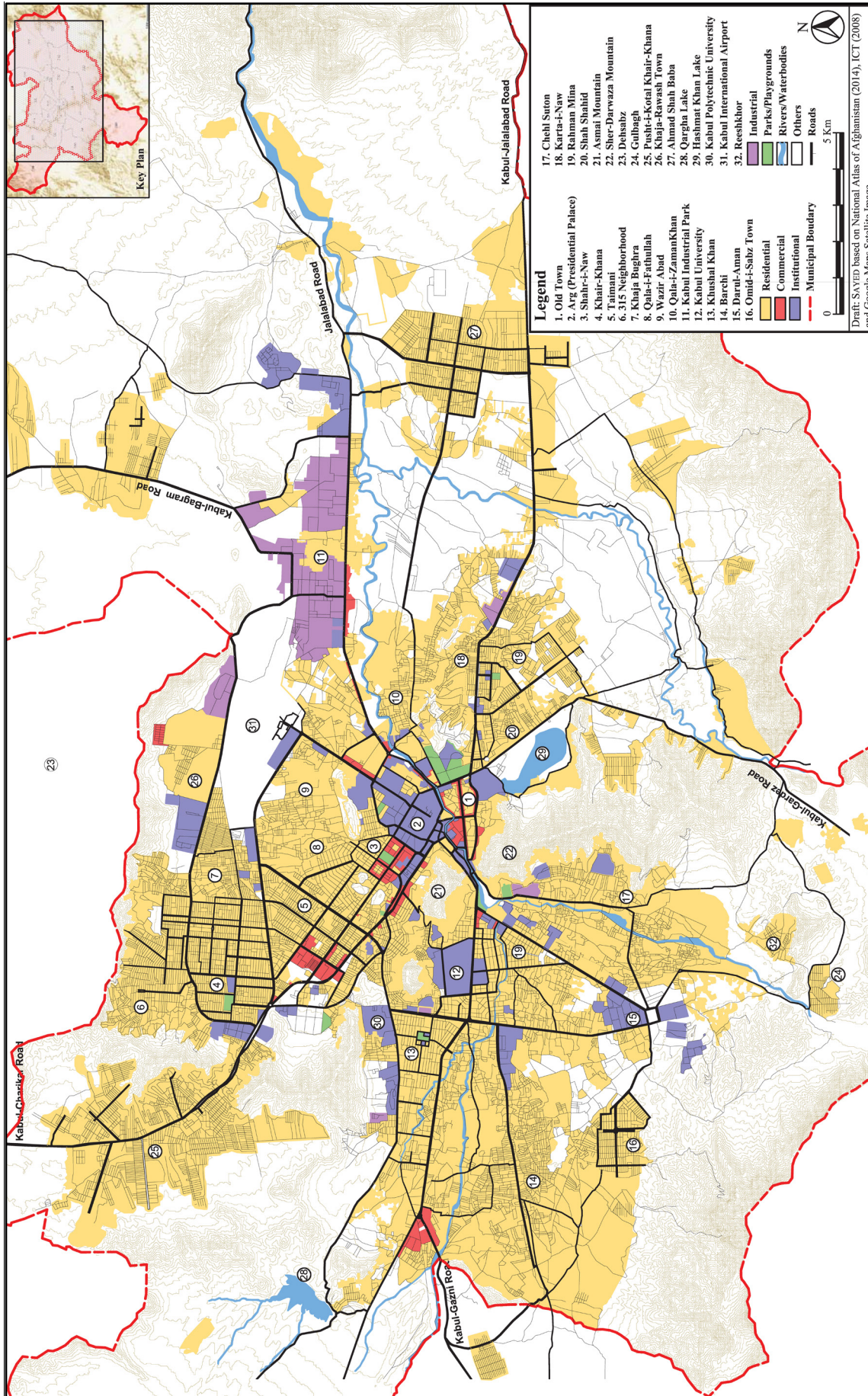
The existing land-use map covers the total area of the present jurisdiction of Kabul Municipality which is approximately 1022.7 km². Thirteen broad categories were used to classify various uses of land in Kabul: residential, commercial, mixed use, manufacturing and industrial, public and semi-public, recreational, transportation and communication, agricultural and related, water bodies, special areas, and vacant lands (ICT 2008).

The area and percentages of each category of existing land-use in Kabul were estimated as shown in the following table:

No.	Land-use category	Total Area (km ²)	Area in Percentage
1	Residential	164.1	16.0%
2	Commercial	5.4	0.5 %
3	Mixed Use	3.8	0.4%
4	Manufacturing and Industrial	9.6	0.9%
5	Public and Semi Public	52.9	5.2%
6	Recreational	6.1	0.6%
7	Transportation and communication	51.9	5.1%
8	Agriculture and Related use	143.2	14.0%
9	Water Bodies	8.4	0.8%
10	Special Area	1.9	0.2%
11	Hill Area	289.4	28.3%
12	Vacant Land	55.4	5.4
13	Unknown use	230.8	22.6
Total		1022.7	100

Table 1: Estimated land-use of Kabul in 2008
Source: ICT (2008).

It was estimated that the built-up areas in the Kabul Municipality jurisdiction area covered only 29 percent of the total area. The rest (71 percent) are undeveloped areas including mountains, hills, water bodies, agricultural areas, and vacant land. A simplified existing land use map of Kabul is shown in Map (15).

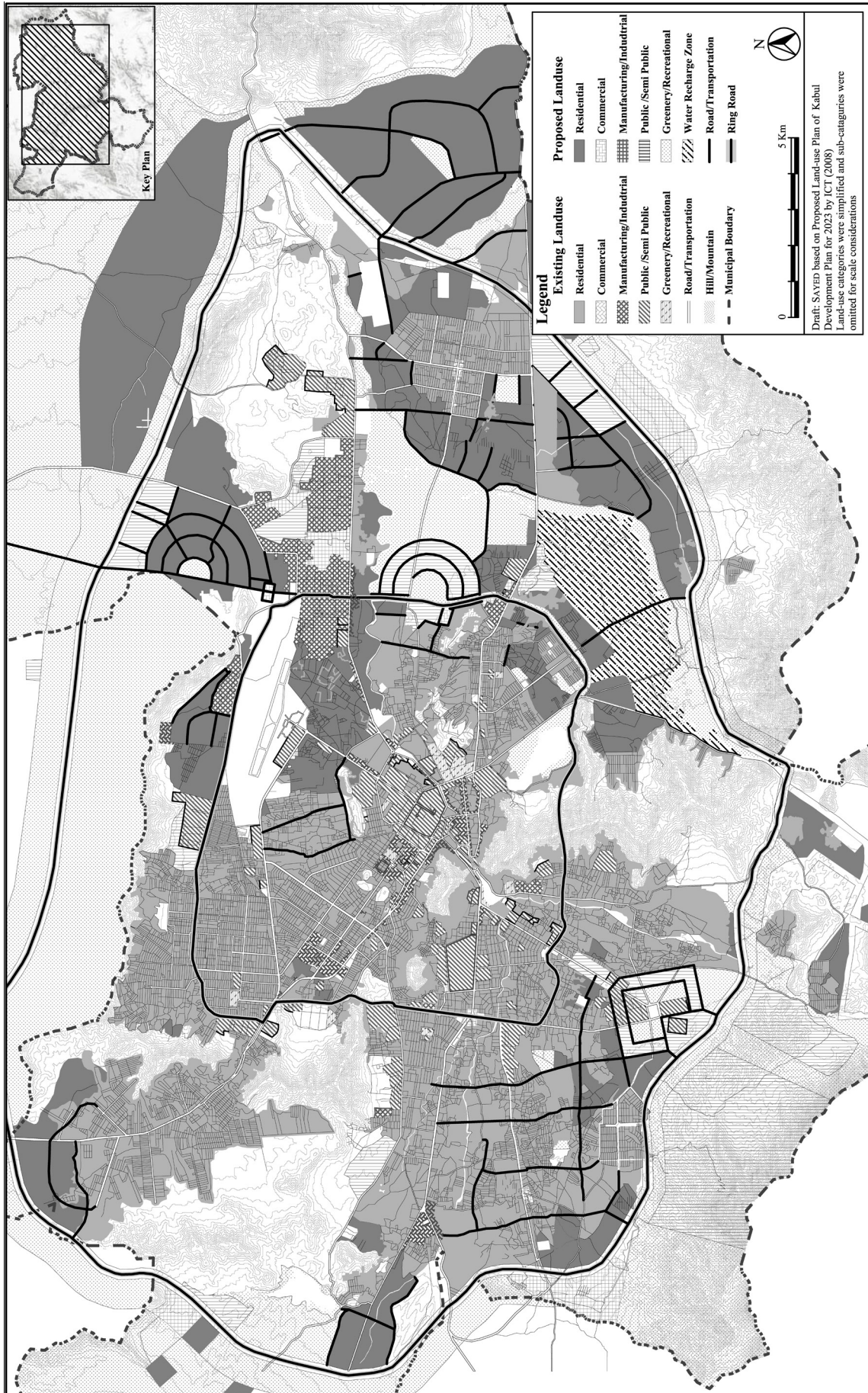


Map 15: Existing land-use of Kabul City.

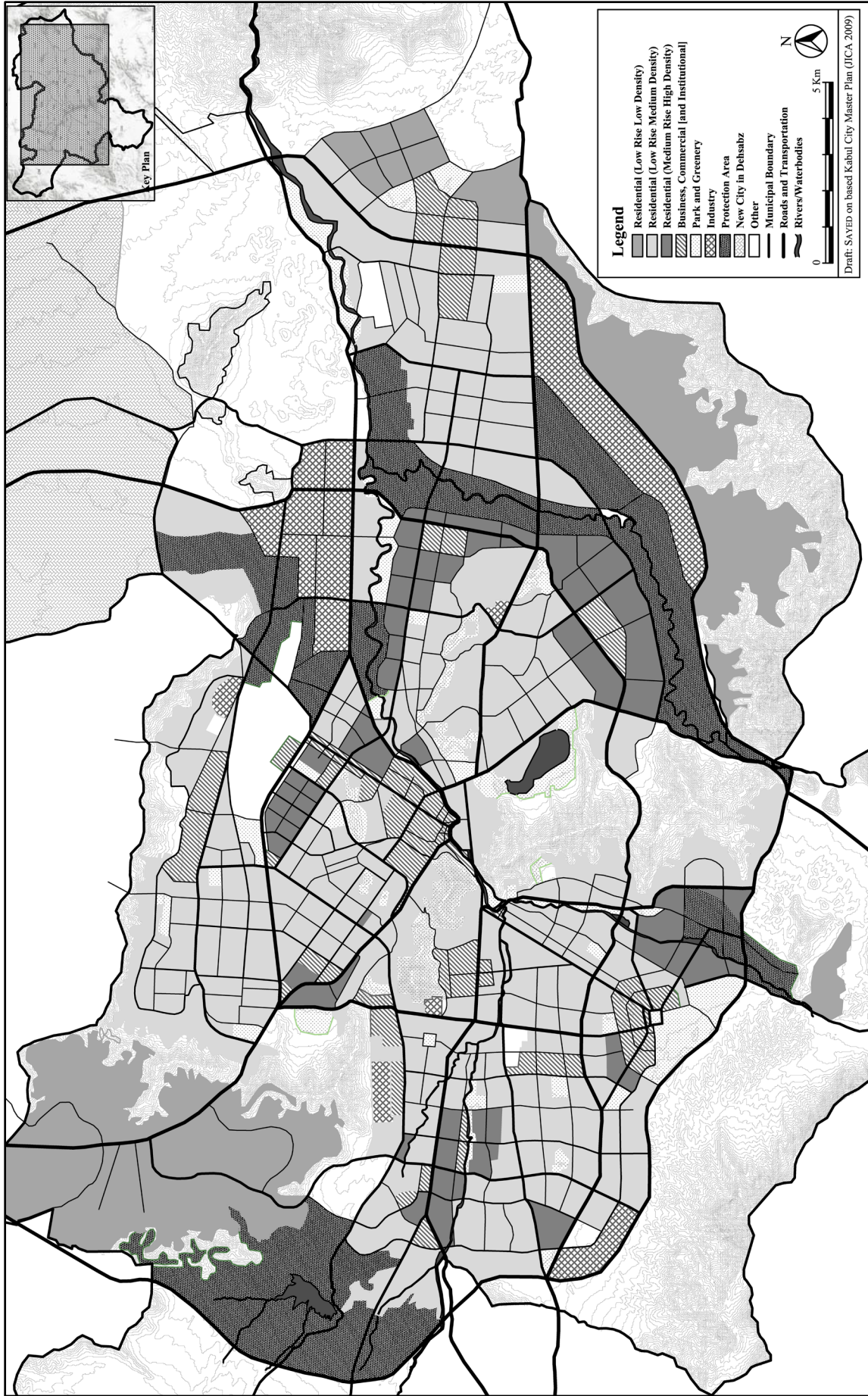
One of the ultimate outcomes of ICT development plan for Kabul was presented in the form of a proposed land use plan for the year 2023. The proposed land use plan was a vision for the expansion of existing land use. Unlike the Soviet master plans, the proposed land use in development for Kabul did not impose any radical changes in existing built-up areas of Kabul; rather, it was an envisioned possible future expansion and densification of existing settlements while considering population growth. The proposed land use was limited to the current jurisdictions of Kabul Municipality with no consideration of further growth beyond the present city boundary. This was because the ICT planners believed that the existing area within the present city boundary would suffice to accommodate the excess population expected in the future. Thus the proposal contained a green belt around the whole city alongside the city ring road. There was no consideration for development of the Kabul New City in Dehsabz in ICT's initial proposal. The majority of proposed road networks were aligned with the existing roads. Even within the informal settlements where the roads did not follow a geometric pattern, the plan intended to avoid demolition of houses for road construction to the greatest possible extent. The only radical land use proposal was the relocation of diplomatic institutions from the city center to a new location in the eastern parts of the city.

When the development plan was handed over to the JICA team for amendment, there were fundamental changes in the proposed land use in KCMP. One of the main intentions of the amended land use plan was to justify the planning of the Kabul New City in Dehsabz. Thus the new proposed land use was prepared with consideration of the interconnection of present Kabul City to Kabul New City in Dehsabz. Thus, a broad land use study was carried out by the JICA team and the target year was also shifted from 2023 to 2025 to match the time frame with the master plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz.

Despite having few similarities in many aspects, there were many differences between the proposed land use plans of ICT and JICA. There also were radical differences in the proposed road networks. The JICA team revised the road network and hierarchy through the adaptation of the proposed road network of the Kabul Master Plan 1978, which required more demolition of settlements for their extension. Unlike the ICT plan, in the JICA's amended land use proposal, the residential density is divided into three categories: low-rise low-density, low-rise medium density, and high-rise high density with detailed percentages for each one. In both proposals, there are considerations for the preservation of historic heritage including the Old City area. Maps 14 and 15 respectively represent land use proposals of ICT and JICA planning teams for Kabul 2023 and 2025.



Map 16: Proposed Land-use plan for Kabul for the year 2023



Map 17: Proposed Land-use plan for Kabul 2025 according to Kabul City Master Plan by JICA

An explanation and discussion of the various aspects of ICT's Kabul Development Plan and JICA's amended Master Plan for Kabul City in a comprehensive manner are beyond the scope of this research. Therefore, some details of these plans are omitted and only the parts which are related to different sectors of urban development within the scope of this study will be referred to, when necessary.

4.6 Urban Transformation in Kabul, Informal Growth vs Formal Planning

Approaches

Market forces are more efficient than the rigid planning approach, however, under a relatively free market circumstances. Traditionally the master planning approach required strong government intervention in the market, especially regarding land-use. The government usually imposed its desired land-use on the society through a top-down attitude. However, in a free market society control of land-use by government faces enormous challenges from the market. Thus, planning approaches should align themselves with market forces, otherwise, there are strong possibilities that they will fail.

In the post-Taliban era, the newly established government of Afghanistan was deeply dependent on international aid. The majority of funds for the government expenditures came from the international community led by the United States. This situation has continued up to present day, as in 2016 the Government of Afghanistan was capable of only financing 31 percent of its annual budget (MOF 2016). Similar to the era under the Soviet influence, which resulted in *socialization* or Sovietization of Afghanistan's institutions, a foreign power (the United States and its allies) influenced institutions in Afghanistan, this time in the direction of liberalization and in pursuance of market-based economic policies. This was reflected in the formation of Afghanistan's new constitution and subsequent government policies.

Despite the seemingly Islamic contents of the new constitution including the title of the country as the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, traces of market economy principles are also evident in the constitution. This has created a contrast between the donor policies and government institutions which still have some elements of the Soviet *socialist* influence in them. For example, according to the new CONSTITUTION OF AFGHANISTAN (2004: Article 10), 'the state shall encourage, protect as well as ensure the safety of capital investment and private enterprises in accordance with the provisions of the law and market economy'. However, the

prevailing planning approaches in Afghanistan, as a legacy of former authoritarian regimes were strongly influenced by the government dominant top-down system, which in many aspects contradicted the provisions of the market economy. The former planning approaches neglected the significant role that the private sector could play in the process of urban development. Despite the fact that donor agencies, such as the World Bank in addition to funding of the urban development projects in Kabul, provided the government of Afghanistan the policy guidelines to address the urban management issues in a more flexible and participatory manner through public-private partnership; the footprints of a deeply institutionalized rigid top-down approach (the legacy of Communist Regime) was evident in the attitude of Kabul Municipality towards the rapid changes in the city due to the population pressure and the market forces. On the other hand, most of the newly prepared plans in the post-Taliban era remained only within the bureaucratic circles without moving forwards to implementation stages or having any considerable influence over the fast transformation of the city.



Figure 16: A contrast of formal vs informal development in recent transformation of Kabul
Photo: SAYED 2015

Kabul has witnessed an enormous change since 2001. The area of the city has expanded with vast areas of newly built houses. Numbers of high-rise buildings have immensely increased which has changed the skyline of the city. Almost all of the war affected areas have been reconstructed and repopulated. The once war-torn city is now a living city that is the home for

a population of over four million. The share of formal planning attempts in the recent transformation of Kabul is very tiny since it was the market forces with the help of relatively lawless environment that played a strong role in triggering the rapid change in the urban geography of the city. Obviously, this transformation involved a variety of urban problems and issues that the population of the city is coping with on a daily basis.

The informal changes in the urban geography of Kabul since the year 2001 can be categorized into three forms: The informal settlements, the new townships, and the change in land-use and densification of the existing built-up areas. Each form of urban transformation, on the one hand, has responded to the needs of the population which the respective government authorities have failed to address and, on the other hand, has created relatively new issues and problems.

4.6.1 Informal Settlements

One of the major planning challenges in Kabul is the uncontrolled growth of informal settlements. The issue of informal settlements in Kabul is a complex one, which has strong interrelations with all other aspects of urban planning such as land ownership, provision of infrastructure and socio-economic development. The emergence of informal settlements in cities is a phenomenon that happens mostly in the developing countries. The rapid growth of population due to inwards rural-urban migration puts stress on the housing stock of cities. Many of the newcomers to the cities in developing countries consist of low-income rural dwellers that move to cities in search of jobs and better living conditions. They occupy vacant lands in the cities and their settlements often lie around the periphery of the formal built-up areas. The share of informal settlements in the total population of cities varies from city to city. They make up from 10 up to 80 percent of the total urban population (HAGGETT 1983: 406-407). In Kabul, about 70 percent of existing residential areas, which accommodate about 80 percent of city's residents, are considered to be informal settlements (WORLD BANK 2005: 1). The informal settlements of Kabul, on the one hand, are the consequence of a conflict period that left a legal gap in the development process that paved the way for the emergence of vast areas of housing without access to tenure security, infrastructure, and basic services. On the one hand, they are the reflection and a clear indicator of the socio-economic situation of the majority of the population living in Kabul. Moreover, they are the firm sign for the failure of prevailing formal planning approaches.



Figure 17: Growth of informal settlements in post-Taliban Kabul between 2004 -2009
Source: Google Earth

The emergence of squatter settlements in Kabul dates back to 1930s when the growth of residential houses began on slopes of Koh-i-Asmai and Koh-i-Sher Darwaza. The trend in growth of informal housing accelerated during the 1950s and 1960s as a result of in-migration from rural areas to Kabul in search of a job and better living conditions. The occupation of vacant lands on hill slopes was often ignored by the government (BECHHOEFER 1977: 3-8). However, the intense social disruption caused by the invasion of Soviet Union in 1979

resulted in enormous waves of population displacement in Afghanistan. The emergence of vast areas of illegal urban settlement in Kabul is one of the consequences of the breakdown of social order, and the inability of overwhelmed post-conflict formal sector to provide the rapid influx of returnees with land or houses.

Definition and typology of informal settlements in Kabul vary from one area to another. A general definition for informal settlements according to Kabul Municipality is the settlements that have not been developed according to the provisions of the city master plan. Nevertheless, the nature of these settlements varies widely, as some of them consist of the poor population in need of shelter while many others accommodate more affluent people with luxury houses. Except for some old settlements such as the Old City, where the houses are on private land, the ownership of land is a common issue in most of other informal settlements as most of the inhabitants do not have land ownership rights.

Based on a study funded by USAID²⁹, the informal settlements of Kabul were defined from two perspectives, as houses built in violation of the master plan of Kabul, and without meeting formal requirements for access to land. In official circles, the informal settlements built before the eruption of the armed conflict in Afghanistan in 1978 are viewed differently from those that emerged after (GEBREMEDHIN 2005). This is maybe because the informal settlements before 1978 were limited to those in need of shelter, and there were no cases of organized large-scale land grabs. Nevertheless, this classification does not help in addressing the tenure issues in informal settlements because it does not classify the settlements with respect to tenure arrangements. GEBREMEDHIN (2005) identified four broad types of informal settlements in Kabul, depending on the mode of land acquisition: ‘squatter settlements on public lands; settlements where most houses were built on privately owned land; settlements where most houses were built on grabbed land or land bought from land grabbers; and settlements where there is a murky legal situation.’

1. Squatter Settlements

This refers to those settlements that families in need of shelter, including lately returned refugees and internally displaced people construct themselves, as well as individually built

²⁹ United States Agency for International Development

houses on public land without meeting the requirements for lawful access to land. For this category lack of ownership rights to land is the main issue (GEBREMEDHIN 2005).

2. Informal houses built on de facto private land

A significant portion of Kabul informal settlements falls under this category. The ownership of land in these settlements is claimed by individuals based on the customary deed. The owners of land with customary deeds for their property are those who built their houses on their own traditionally inherited the land. They are the organic owners of land that were part of the villages and later became part of the city. Or some may have purchased the land from customary or traditional owners (GEBREMEDHIN 2005). Nevertheless, the households in these settlements, one the one hand, may face ownership rights issue as they need to prove their ownership rights with the valid legal documents, and on the other hand, the construction of their houses might violate the provisions of the master plan.

3. Settlements on grabbed land or land distributed by land grabbers

Grabbing of public and private land is one of the worst and complex social, legal and political problems related to property rights in Afghanistan. The grabbing of land has happened in various ways. In many squatter settlements, poorer returnees due to their extreme need for shelter have directly occupied a certain piece of land and built their houses on it. Whereas, in many other newly developed settlements, large areas of land were grabbed by warlords and politically influential people and distributed or sold to their followers. The phenomenon of land grabbing emerged after the fall of the communist government in 1992 when a large number of Mujahideen groups entered Kabul (GEBREMEDHIN 2005).

Many of the Mujahideen commanders and leaders grabbed public and private land including areas that were used as military bases in Kabul until 1992. Due to the fact that the population of Kabul was relatively fewer, and also that the victory of Mujahideen did not last very long as Kabul soon witnessed one of the worst armed conflicts in its history; the land grabbers did not find the opportunity to build their houses on their land until the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. After the fall of the Taliban, the same Mujahideen groups became one of the strong pillars of government power in Afghanistan. The grabbing of land during this period of time was a significant moment in the history of urban development in Kabul, as it occurred simultaneously with an increase in demand for housing due to a rush of millions of returnees to Afghanistan.

One of the major characteristics of new settlements on grabbed land is the ethnic homogeneity of their inhabitants, as many of the warlords and Mujahideen leaders distributed the land they grabbed only to people of their own ethnicity to buy their loyalty. As a result, an ethnic segregation among informal settlements is more evident as when compared to formal settlements in Kabul.

There are certain settlements on grabbed land which accommodate some extremely rich people, these mostly consist of high-level politicians and warlords. The affluent neighborhood of Sherpur is one of those settlements that were initially built on grabbed land. The Sherpur neighborhood is located in an area adjacent to Wazir Akbar Khan hill, which was initially supposed to accommodate Sher Ali Khan's new city in the 1870s. In the 1970s, the Wazir Akbar Khan area transformed into an elite neighborhood with modern houses, paved streets, parks, playgrounds and luxury shops. It is still one of the wealthiest residential neighborhoods of Kabul. A military compound surrounded with scant low-income informal housing located at the western part of Wazir Akbar Khan neighborhood until 2002.

In 2002, a number of government high-rank officials including cabinet ministers grabbed the land of military compound and forcefully evicted the inhabitants of the informal settlements adjacent to the site. The existing structures in the area were demolished and substituted with fancy houses with wedding-cake³⁰ style architecture. Despite Sherpur was exceptionally legalized as the owners used their power and political influence to complete the legal procedures after building their houses. Nevertheless, there is a negative public perception about it among people of Kabul as it is seen as a symbol of corruption and injustice. A recent announcement by the Kabul Municipality revealed that the owners of Sherpur houses, alongside many other property owners in Kabul, have not yet paid the price of land to the government (TOLO NEWS 2016).

Based on a report by Afghanistan Freedom House (DW-DARI 2016), since 2002 over 240,000 hectares of land has been grabbed in 34 provinces of Afghanistan. A number of 15,831 persons are accused of land grab in various parts of Afghanistan, including high-ranking government officials, mayors, local warlords, jihadi commanders, heads of political parties, parliament and

³⁰ The term Wedding-cake was initially used to describe the fancy architectural style that emerged in Russia during the reign of Josef Stalin (HALL 1996: 202). Later, this term became common among architects in Kabul to describe a styleless fancy and ornamental building design imported from Pakistan.

senate members, cabinet ministers, and some private investors. There are 355 townships built on grabbed lands. Over 100 townships are located in Kabul, out of which only 18 are authorized and the rest are considered illegal. The grabbed land also includes the areas that were allocated for returnees, teachers of government schools, schools, clinics, mosques, and cinemas.

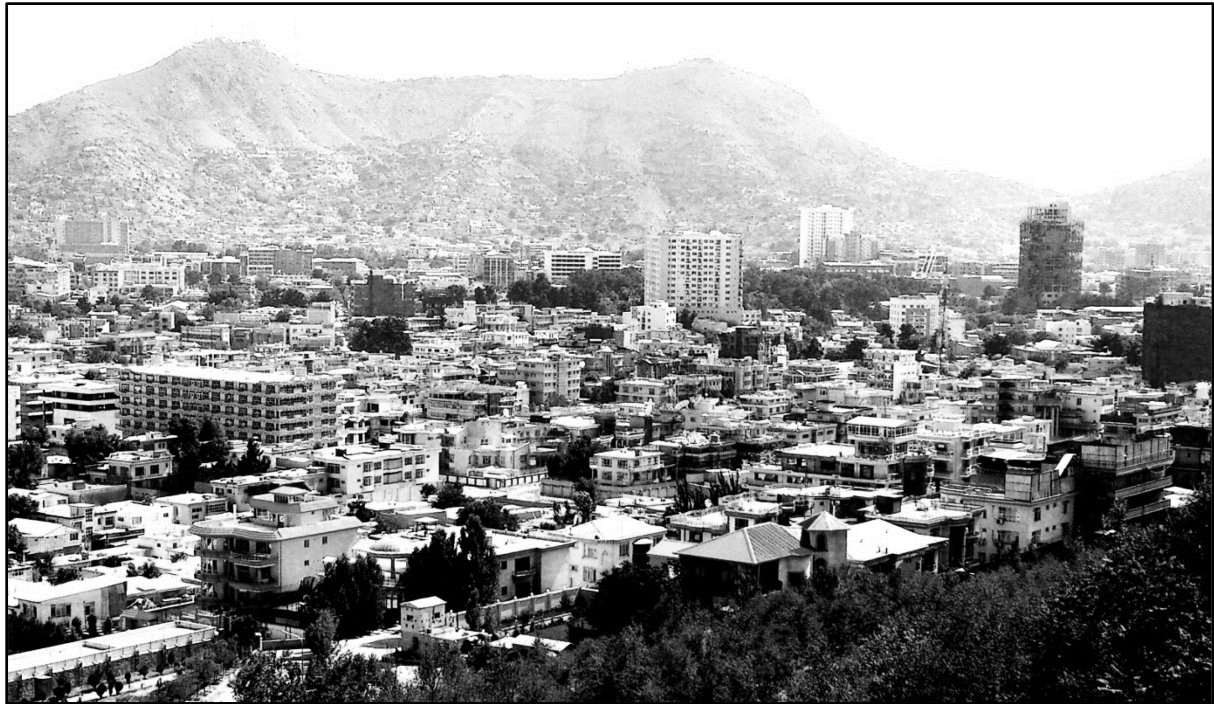


Figure 18: The Sherpur neighborhood, which is seen as a symbol of corruption and injustice
Photo: SAYED 2015

The problem of land grabs has strong roots in the political system of Afghanistan. The majority of the lands grab cases are related to armed militias or politically powerful figures which make addressing the problem a major challenge. The government system is extremely corrupt and many of those who are involved in land grabs of public or private land have a strong influence in all decision-making processes. Without reducing the influence of corrupt people from government power and decision-making levels, it is not possible to create the political will to address land grab problems in Afghanistan. Improvement of democratic institutions and empowerment and enlightenment of people about their rights can pave the way towards reducing corruption and effectively addressing those challenges (GEBREMEDHIN 2005).



Figure 19: A typical post-Taliban wedding-cake style house in Kabul
Photo: (KHECHEN 2012)

4. Occupants with murky legal situation

There are many houses with occupants that have a cloudy legal situation, despite the fact that they are neither squatters nor land grabbers. These can be broadly divided into two categories. First, the owners of property who have bought the land or house from legal owners, however, without fulfilling the required legal formalities, in order to avoid the very costly and corrupt current bureaucratic formal procedures. As a result, they have obtained customary deed instead of a formal deed. This has happened often because of high transaction taxes and corruption involved in the Afghanistan legal system, which discourages people from meeting the proper legal requirements. Besides taxes and corruption, the inefficient court system and bureaucracy involved in it make the transfer process too lengthy such that people prefer not to follow the formal procedures of property deals. In many instances, the customary deed is considered as sufficient, especially when the original owner holds a formal document (GEBREMEDHIN 2005).

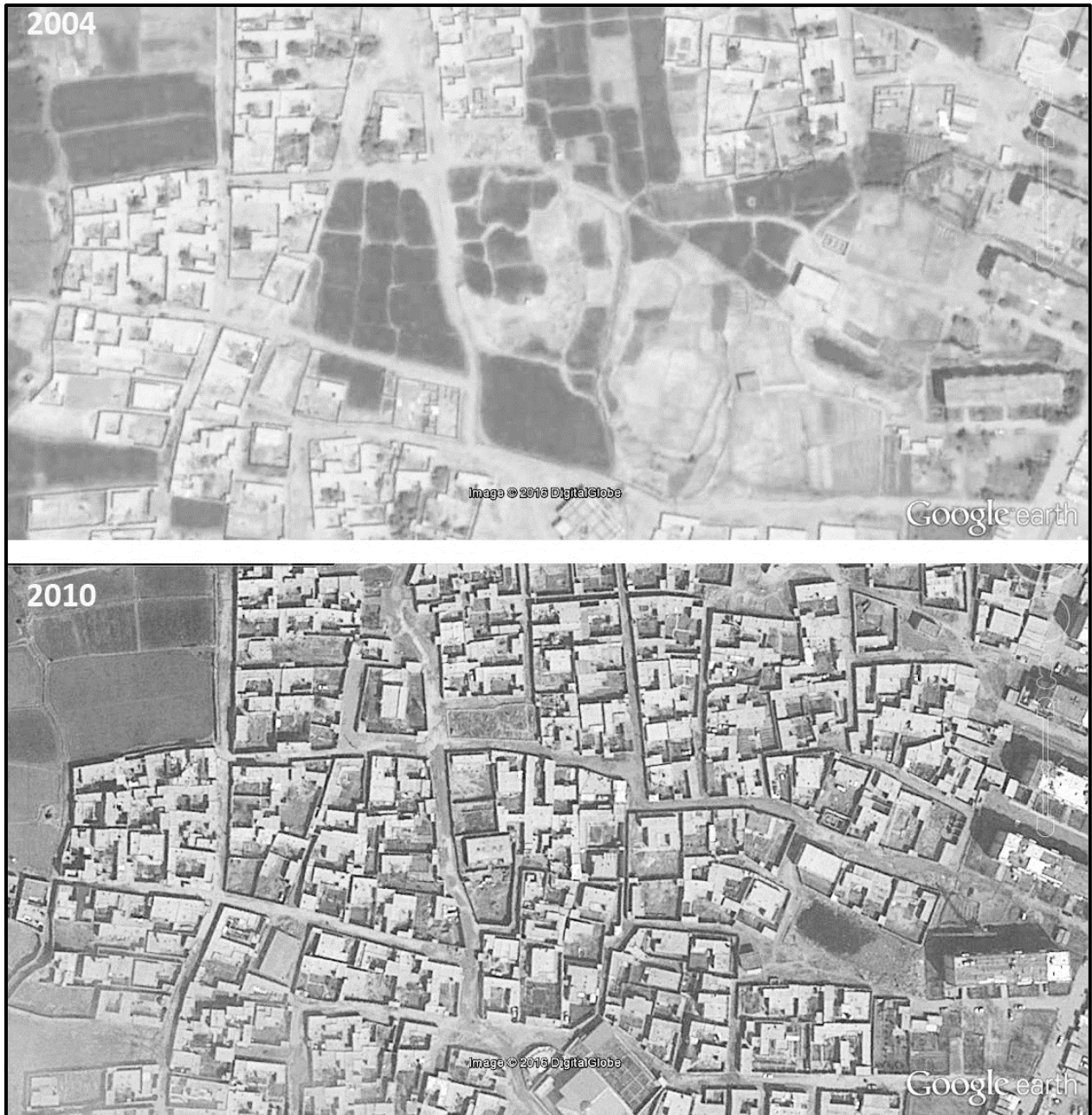


Figure 20: Change of land use from agricultural to informal residential 2004-2009

Source: Google Earth

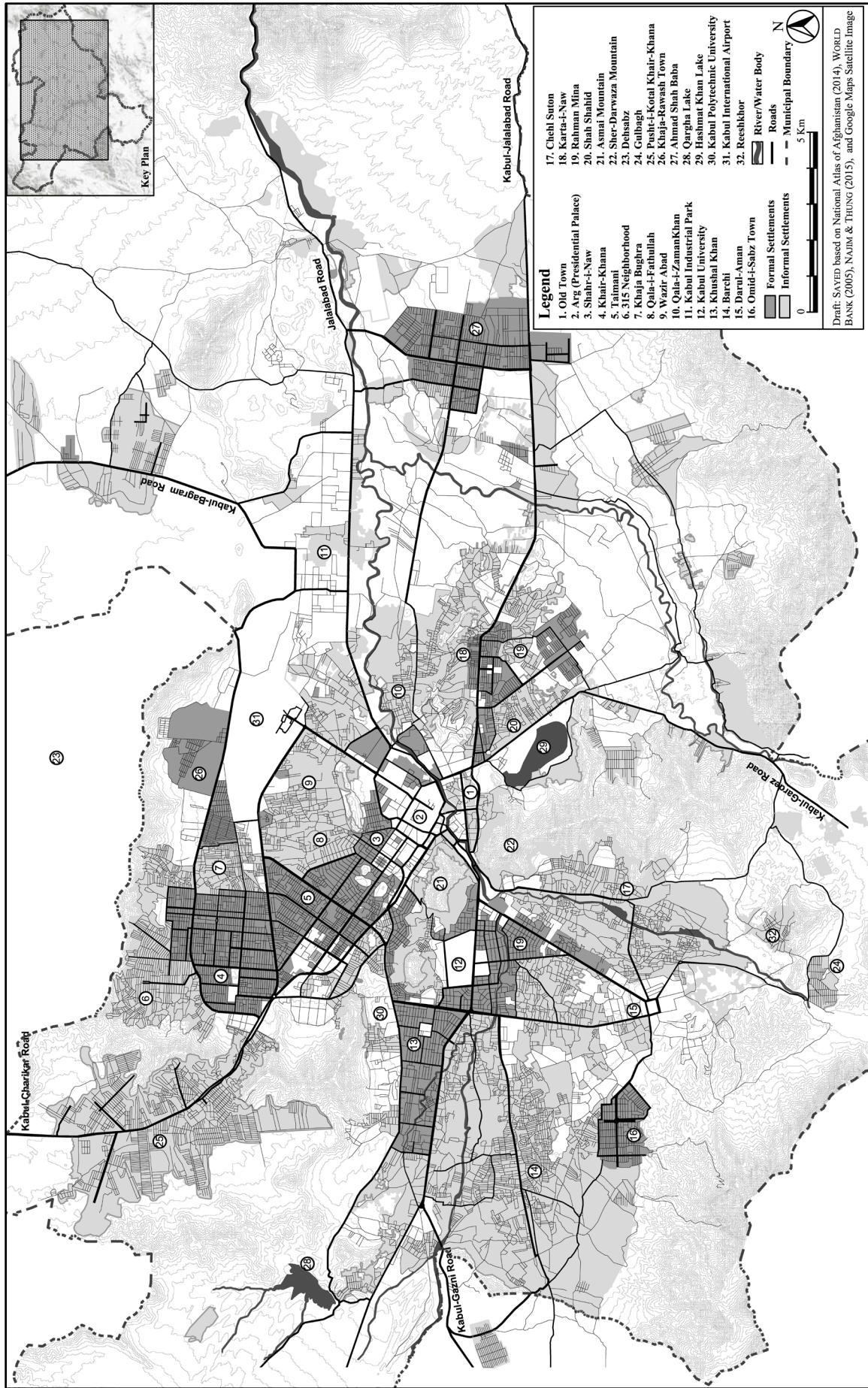
The second category of occupants of property with cloudy legal status constitutes traditional owners of land, who inherited the land that their ancestors occupied for more than fifty years. These are areas that were originally located in villages and were later incorporated into the city, and their occupants were the original owners who legitimately settled there in previous times. Most of these areas were agricultural land with few houses. However, because of the social changes, the recent trend in urbanization and influence of market forces, the owners of

agricultural land in these areas subdivided their land into many plots and sold to new occupants through a customary deed (GEBREMEDHIN 2005).

The worldwide attitude towards informal settlements has significantly changed. Until the 1970s the in many parts of the world they were mentioned in official reports as “spreading fungus” and “excessively squalid and deprived”. Today, they are seen differently as they contribute an important role in the urbanization process (HAGGETT 1983: 407). However, negative views of informal settlements still prevail in the official planning approaches in Kabul. It is a matter of fact that informal settlements are one of the causes of urban management problems in Kabul. However, from another point of view, they can be seen as a potentially positive contribution to the urbanization of the city. Unlike many other countries, the informal houses in Kabul are solidly built, well designed, and satisfy many of the needs and aspirations of their inhabitants. As the houses in the informal settlements are mostly built by the people, it is useful to see what people will provide for themselves when given the opportunity and to speculate how these constructive energies might be harnessed in the urban development of Kabul (BECHHOEFER 1977: 3).

According to HAGGETT (1983: 407), informal settlements provide six important functions:

“They act as reception centers for migrants. They provide housing within the means of the very poor. They provide a variety of small-scale employment. Their social and communal structure provides a cushion for residents during times of unemployment and other periods of difficulty. They encourage self-help in improving the standards of the houses. Finally, they provide a location within range of possible workplaces within the city.”



Map 18: Distribution of formal and informal settlements in Kabul

The main objective and the first priority of any planning approach for Kabul needs to be a response to the issues of informal settlements in an inclusive manner. Besides, the socio-economic challenges that the inhabitants of informal settlements face, two main obstacles prevent the informal settlements from further improvements. The first is that these settlements are considered as informal or illegal, so they lay outside the government's development agenda, thus the extension of infrastructure and provision of urban services to these areas are not part of government plans. The second is insecurity of tenure and fear of eviction which prevents the inhabitants of these areas from further improving and investing in their houses as they do not have a real sense of ownership for their houses and neighborhoods. Moreover, despite covering over 80 percent of the housing development in the city, the informal settlements do not contribute to the revenue generation mechanism of Kabul Municipality, as they do not pay property and other related taxes. Formalization of informal settlements will increase the sources of revenue generation for Kabul Municipality.

The development plan for Kabul proposed the creation of a system of land tenure through a collection of all available records, verification of all the customary and legal deeds and conversion of them into legal systems. The plan also envisioned a policy of 'shelter for all' through harnessing the potential of both private and public sector. The plan estimated residential housing demand for Kabul in 2008 to be 482,202 units, and available houses under residential or mixed-used were estimated to be 178,593 units out of which over 5000 houses were in ruined conditions. Thus there was a demand gap of 308,967 houses in 2008. The projected housing demand for 2023 is estimated to be 849,775 houses, leaving the net housing shortage to be 737,839 houses. In order to meet this demand, the development plan, considering the limitation in supply of land, cost of land, cost of construction, and affordability of people living in Kabul, proposed housing on 10 percent plots with provision for construction up to three floors to accommodate 30 percent of the total housing demand and the remaining 70 percent to be accommodated in group housing. Eighty percent of group housing is to be newly developed and 20 percent is to be constructed in existing developed areas by means of densification (ICT 2008).

ICT estimated about 67 percent of the houses in Kabul to be in informal settlements³¹, with no proper roads and lack of infrastructure or community facilities. These settlements have poor physical environments with serious health and sanitation issues. However, they are home to millions of Kabul citizens, internally displaced people, and war returnees. Therefore, the development plan, keeping in view the socio-economic conditions of the inhabitants of these settlements and also the prevailing cost of land and construction, proposed that the informal settlements remain, and be improved through provision of services and extension of infrastructure to these areas. However, all the new development activities will be in accordance with the proposed land-use plan and should conform with land-use regulation (ICT 2008).

A lack of clear understanding of the nature of informal settlements in Kabul is evident in the ICT development plan. The ICT development plan proposed a dual policy for future development. On the one hand, a policy was set for the informal settlements, which was flexible and recognized the emergence of these settlements as a mood of urban development. On the other hand, the development plan suggests imposing strict land-use regulations for the new development activities. It is clear that the development plan considered the informal settlements of Kabul as a static process which has stopped. However, in reality, the emergence of informal settlements in Kabul is a dynamic and continuous process which existed prior to any formal planning approach and has continued to present day.

The development plan's approach to the issue of informal settlements on the hill slopes of Kabul was to regularize and upgrade the areas with up to 30-meter height from the road level. The households living above 30 meters and on steep slopes were to be relocated in the long run. The team identified 41,300 houses on hill slopes to be rehabilitated and about 20,000 houses to be partly demolished and reconstructed for road widening and extension of public utilities in such areas (ICT 2008). Setting a strict measure of 30 meter height, to decide whether to maintain a certain number of houses and provide services and infrastructure for them or to ignore a certain another number of houses because their location is higher than 30 meters from the road level, does not seem to be a feasible measure. There are possibilities for houses to be at higher altitudes with the potential of roads and services to be extended to them. On the other

31 Due to the ambiguity in clear definition of informal settlement, it is difficult to estimate the percentage accurately. There are various figures ranging from 67 percent by ICT (2008) to 80 percent by the World Bank (2005).

hand, there are houses at lower altitudes, but their locations are either on watersheds or other environmentally hazardous areas which have the potential to cause future disasters. A more flexible and inclusive criterion needs to be set to solve issues of hill slope informal settlements.

Nevertheless, the JICA's KCMP set a more flexible measure for selection of settlements to be upgraded. According to the Master Plan (JICA 2011a), all the informal settlements were subject to upgrade except areas not suitable for living such as steep slopes and areas prone to natural hazards (flood and landslide), and areas where public interest need to be pursued such as groundwater recharge areas.

An important point that needs to be noted is that the area covered by the informal settlements in Kabul is vast. Thus, upgrades of all of them would require a lot of resources and time. The Master Plan was realistic about these challenges that are involved in the upgrade process and stated that this process will not be completed within the time frame intended for implementation of the master plan. It also admitted the fact that the expansion of informal settlements is a continuous process and might not be stopped so soon. Therefore, the plan proposed a gradual manner to reduce the informal settlement in the city. The proposal suggested that at least 4,000 households to be upgraded annually, which will cover an area of 100 hectares. Naturally, setting the criteria for selection of settlement to be upgraded first is a major challenge in Kabul, as the city is an arena of ethnic and political rivalries. There have been previous cases in which high-ranking officials in KM have been accused of allocating most of the municipality's resources to the improvement of areas where all its inhabitants belong to their own ethnic group. The Master Plan did not suggest any specific criteria; instead, it suggested the following conditions be presented to the citizens as criteria to set the priority for the upgrading of informal settlements (JICA 2011a):

- Proximity to the city center: to help improve the traffic distribution around city center area.
- Preparation of neighborhood plan by residents: as most of the informal settlements lack fundamental requirements of a township such as schools, parks, and playgrounds, a detailed plan for revision of land-use is needed for these areas to secure land for required facilities at a community-wide scale. For better understanding and agreement on the issues of land preservation and acquisition, the land-use plan needs to be formulated through the participation of residents or by the residents themselves. Despite this is not an easy task to

accomplish, as it needs a lot of effort to incorporate various intentions and opinions into a detailed plan. Nevertheless, this can be set as a condition for implementation of upgrade projects in order to motivate the community for its accomplishment.

The proposed components for the upgrading of informal settlements in KCMP included the pavement of roads and roadside drains, improvement of toilets, and securing land for public facilities within neighborhoods. In order to minimize the cost for upgrading, KCMP suggested utilization of the community workforce and setting an appropriate grade for upgrading. The plan suggested the use of stone pavements and stone masonry for roadside ditches as the stone is cheaper and easily available local material. As the plan did not initially envision the connection of pipe water supply as a component for the upgrading of informal settlements, the use of pit latrines would continue to be the main system in those areas. However, the plan suggests a management system through community involvement for the use of pit latrines to ensure periodic collection of waste to prevent the inflow of wastewater to the roadside ditches (JICA 2011a).

Regarding the informal settlements on slopes, the KCMP recommended a distinction between steep slopes and mild slopes, as steep slope involve the problem of accessibility, higher cost of infrastructure and services and also they pose additional development risks. The JICA planning team estimated the population living on steep slopes of (over 30 % slope) to be around 83,000. The plan recommended gradual relocation of the population from those areas to safer areas, as it was suggested by the ICT, and deepened the recommendation by extending the restrictions on new encroachments in the hillside areas. The criteria set for restrictions on new encroachments in hilly areas included steep areas at 20 percent slope or greater, areas higher than 1,860 meters or the maximum height of existing water supply systems, areas within 50 meters of mountain ridges, and areas higher than 50 meters from the main roads with no access roads already constructed. Safety and cost-effectiveness were also considered in these criteria.

The KCMP acknowledged that due to the scarcity of urban land and lack of mechanisms for the process, the compulsory relocation of families is not realistic and will face many objections. On the other hand, the relocation of the population to more distant areas would push the displaced families even further from their job centers and employment opportunities (HAGGETT 1983: 407). Thus, the plan encouraged self-motivated gradual movements to the safer areas. The proposed strategy to make the population move from steep slopes to safer areas included:

1) clear demarcation of restricted areas by means of physical fences on site, 2) restriction of new construction and reconstruction by means of imposing permission condition through municipality, and 3) provision of support for movements (JICA 2011a).

The variation in nature and legal status of these settlements makes it difficult for a planning approach to propose certain unified solutions for all informal settlements. Especially, when there are complicated ownership issues such as those who bought the land from a land grabber and sold it to another person with customary documentation.

The ownership of land is a significant issue which can affect the selection of informal areas for upgrade. For example, one of the measures used for selection of urban neighborhoods in Kabul for upgrading purpose through KURP prior to preparation of development plan was the age of the neighborhoods. As, the officials believed that older neighborhoods during the 1970s and 1980s were occupied by individual families who were in need of shelter, whereas many of the new neighborhoods in informal settlements were grabbed by commanders and other people in power and then distributed, rented or sold to people in need. Within informal settlements of Kabul there are houses which may not belong to the family residing in it; rather they belong to rich property owners that have grabbed the land in different areas of Kabul and make a profit from renting them to the poorer families. Therefore, the distinction between settlements which are occupied by people in need of shelter with those that are illegally grabbed by people in power for making a profit is a time-consuming process. Before deciding on any policy regarding the upgrading of an area in informal settlements, there needs to be a comprehensive assessment of the ownership issue to make sure that the shelter has been given to people who deserve it.

Regardless of how well the above planning approaches have addressed the issues of informal settlements, so far, there has not been any considerable attempt to implement the plan on the ground. There have been various upgrading activities in Kabul including projects by KURP which was funded by the World Bank, UN-Habitat, and improvement of some neighborhoods of the Old City through the restoration of historic buildings and monuments by the Agha Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) and Turquoise Mountain Foundation (TMF). Nevertheless, the respective organizations carried out these activities independently without referring to the KCMP, as many of those activities happened before the KCMP was commenced.

4.6.2 Emergence of New Townships

Since 2001, many new townships have developed in Kabul, most of which have been developed through the investment of private sector in the housing market. The majority of those townships have legal issues, either related to the land rights or failing to follow the bureaucratic procedures for licensing. In 2014 a report of the Kabul Municipality was revealed in the media with a focus on the number of private townships with legal issues (RUSTAMI 2014). Based on the report since 2001, about 355 new townships have been developed in different parts of Afghanistan. Over 100 of them are located in Kabul. The townships include plot development in the form of family housing with courtyard and group housing in the form of residential high-rise buildings. The majority of these townships have geometric layouts with consideration of some required facilities.

Apart from their legal issues, the townships significantly contribute to the urban development process in Kabul. One of the major reasons that cause legal issues for new townships in Kabul is a lack of clearly defined government rules and regulations. There is no clear regulation for land subdivision by the private sector. Also, there is still a conflict of authority between the MUDA and Kabul Municipality over which organization should have the power and authority to license the new townships. The licensing process is done through the MUDA, which is usually involved with corrupt, time consuming and unclear bureaucratic procedures. The influence of the former regimes' system still prevails in the bureaucracy of the country. Apart from land ownerships issues, illegality or informality of majority of new townships is due to the narrow and rigid definitions of legality or formality.



Figure 21: A view of a privately constructed new township and housing complexes in Kabul.
Photo: SAYED 2015

If the government authorities can solve the legal issues of these townships including land ownerships issues and licensing, they can smoothly be integrated into the formal urban fabric of Kabul; as their layouts allow for easy extension and improvement of infrastructure and provision of services.

4.6.3 Land-use Change and Densification of Existing Built-up Areas

Densification of existing built-up areas and changes in land uses are another major mode of urban transformation that has shaped the new face of Kabul. The densification of residential areas happened through the change in the structure of the existing buildings such as adding new extensions or more floors to accommodate more people. In some cases, the whole building is demolished and replaced with a newly constructed building with an additional number of story and floor areas. Sometimes, the building involved changes in terms of land-uses; mostly from residential to commercial uses. In many areas of Kabul, the low-rise residential houses have been replaced with high-rise commercial buildings. This process has happened with more ease in war-torn areas as the majority of low-rise/low-density structures, which were destroyed during the war, were replaced with new high-rise buildings. The urban transformation was also involved with the introduction of huge glass building facades as a new element in the architectural mix of Kabul (ISSA 2006: 30).

The change of density and land-use has been a continuous process which is still going on. This transformation is unnoticeable in the short-term. However, its impacts are evident with the passage of time due to population pressure in areas such as Shahr-i-Naw, where most of the densification and land-use change has happened. A visible indicator of this impact is traffic congestion on the streets of denser areas of Kabul, where roads widths and right-of-ways do not comply with the flow of traffic. The unregulated change in the density can put pressure on infrastructure as well. The existing infrastructure networks were designed to cater to certain population sizes. For example, the size of water supply and sewer pipes were designed to provide service for a smaller number of populations, whereas the increase in the density causes those networks not to function efficiently. The same can apply to power distribution networks and solid waste collection mechanisms. On the other hand, the change in use of land from residential to commercial has enhanced the pressure on these areas. The commercial centers and shopping areas attract populations from other parts of the city resulting in overcrowding of access roads and disruption in daily movements of population.



Figure 22: Shahr-i-Naw Kabul, replacement of low-rise residential plots with high-rise commercial buildings causing densification of the area and affecting infrastructure and services.

Photo: SAYED 2014

Densification of urban areas can be used as a mechanism to manage urban growth and accommodate the future population within the city. However, it needs to be regulated and associated with improvement of infrastructure and services in densified areas. The unregulated densification of urban areas in Kabul is one of the significant issues that have been neglected in most of the prevailing formal planning efforts.

4.6.4 Formal Housing Projects

The core objective of formal planning efforts in Kabul has been the provision of housing and regulation of existing housing development trends. There are several completed and ongoing formal group housing projects in different parts of Kabul, many of which are planned and implemented by the MUDA. The Khwaja-Rawash project located at the north of the Kabul International Airport is one of largest housing development projects in the country.

Unlike the previous Soviet Microrayon projects which were fully planned and implemented by the government, the new housing projects involve huge amounts of private investment. This has certain advantages as well as disadvantages over the Soviet Microrayon projects. The advantages can be:

- The chance has been given to private developers to invest in the housing market, which will partially respond to housing demand and in return will boost economic growth. This can be a positive transition from a government dominant economy towards a market economy.
- The construction process is faster than the Microrayon³² as several actors are involved and work in parallel with each other.
- The distributions of apartments are not restricted to certain people, as it was for Microrayon project during the Communist Regime. Everybody is free to buy an apartment in the new housing projects.

³² From construction technology point of view, due to use of prefabricated concrete plates the construction of Microrayon project was much faster than current housing projects, which use cast-in-place concrete frame structure with brick walls. However, the Microrayon project was carried out by a single government corporation with limited production capacity.

There are obvious disadvantages as well:

- The costs of apartments are very high as, unlike the Soviet Microrayon projects, the primary purpose of investment in the housing market is to get profit out of it. Thus the market determines the cost. On the other hand, the Microrayon apartments were sold through a long-term loan that the apartment occupants were supposed to pay the prices of their houses as installments in a period of 20 to 25 years. This period has been reduced to 3 to 5 years in the current housing projects and the house buyers should pay at least 90 % of apartment price before they can occupy their apartments. As a result, the apartments are affordable only for high-income people, which make up a minor portion of the population in Kabul. The majority of the homeless population do not benefit from these housing projects. As a consequence, the possible scenario in the next decades in Kabul will be a tiny minority owning several houses and a vast majority renting them, or there will be many people without houses living alongside many houses without people.
- There are possibilities of compromising the quality of construction materials in privately developed housing projects, as there is no reliable quality control procedure imposed by the officials during construction works. The use of substandard construction materials in structural components of buildings can have especially disastrous consequences.

There is a governance issue related to formal housing projects in Kabul. As mentioned before, the majority of the housing projects in Afghanistan are carried out directly by the MUDA, or licensed to private developers. MUDA is the licensing authority to private townships for all the cities of Afghanistan. The prevailing centralized system of urban development has created a complex managerial procedure, which is evidently inefficient. The licensing procedures for new townships are involved complex bureaucratic steps and are usually involved in bribery and corruption, which sometimes exhaust the investors and paves the way for the emergence of unauthorized townships. A need for decentralization of the planning systems and establishment and empowerment of local planning authorities is very evident. This is especially important for Kabul, as the Kabul Municipality has its own city planning department, which is not involved in licensing of private townships and housing projects within its jurisdiction. Moreover, the majority of the new townships and housing projects within the jurisdiction of Kabul Municipality have been carried out without any consideration of the KCMP.



Figure 23: Khwaja-Rawash, the largest public-private housing project in the country
Photo Source: KHAMA PRESS (2016)

The development new townships and housing projects may respond to housing needs of the population up to some extent. However, the issue of housing in Kabul is strongly related to the issue of informal settlements, which is the only affordable way that the majority of Kabul citizens have used it as a solution to overcome their needs for shelter. The government needs to acknowledge it as having strong potential and take necessary steps to gradually improve their living conditions in a sustainable way with the resources available. Furthermore, there need to be certain policies developed to ensure affordable formal housing for the low-income families.

4.7 Infrastructure and Urban Services in Post-Taliban Kabul

The urban infrastructure in most areas of Kabul was damaged and the city services were interrupted during the civil war and many years after. It needs to be pointed out that Kabul lacked efficient infrastructure even before the civil war. The recovery of urban infrastructure and regulating the urban services is a long-term process that not only requires enormous amounts of investment but also needs effective policy measure and institutional rehabilitation to ensure efficient access of the population to urban services.

In many cases of post-conflict recovery, more attention has been paid to the recovery of the physical damages with less consideration of the damages to the fabrics of the society. The rehabilitation of urban infrastructure in a post-war situation needs to be treated differently as to a post-natural disaster situation. There are extra dimensions of post-war recovery which make it distinct from a post-natural disaster situation. First, good design and mitigation measures can reduce the impact of a natural disaster on infrastructure; whereas in a war situation, deliberate human actions can cause unpredicted damages. Second, unlike in war, natural disasters do not necessarily cause social, political and cultural divisions. A significant issue in a post-conflict situation is to ensure that the recovery of damaged infrastructure and strategies for the provision of new services will help to heal the social divisions (BROWN 2005: 101-102).

4.7.1 Physical Infrastructure

During the civil war, Kabul's infrastructure was badly damaged. The physical infrastructure has been extended to only a few areas of Kabul. Despite there have been several assessments of the current situation of infrastructure in Kabul. The ICT team carried out comprehensive assessment through a city planning approach on the conditions of existing infrastructure facilities in Kabul. The ICT team carried out an assessment of the existing situation of water supply, sanitation, drainage, power supply and solid waste management in Kabul. Based on their findings only a few areas of Kabul were covered with services and infrastructure networks.

4.7.1.1 Water Supply and Sanitation

The main source of water supply system in Kabul is from underground water through pipe networks, hand pumps, and shallow and medium depth wells. The current water supply network, with an estimated length of 500 km, is estimated to serve only a population of about 1 million, including public tap users and office workers. There are 39,207 properties and 392 public taps connected to the piped water supply network, Microrayon and similar government housing projects are the only areas in Kabul which are fully covered with piped water and sewerage systems (JICA 2011a).

The water supply system has a significant influence over the functionality of other infrastructure networks such as sewerage and drainage, as without a sustainable water supply

network the extension of sewer systems into city neighborhoods will not be logical. According to Wahid (2014), the areas covered with piped water do not get 24-hour water supply. Rather the supply runs for a limited time during the day and the residents get only an average quantity of 40 liters per capita per day (LCD). Therefore, many of the houses with piped water connections have their own drinking water tanks to keep their daily water requirements.

The administrative arrangements for supply and maintenance of water to Kabul residents have certain managerial gaps. The water supply system is managed through the Afghan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation (AUWSSC), a public corporation established in 2008. The company administrates water supply and sewerage services for the entire country. AUWSSC has its own independent master plan for improvement of the water supply system. The Kabul Municipality does not have administrative authority over AUWSSC. The Kabul Municipality only manages water supply and sewerage system of Microrayon area. There is little sign of coordination between the Kabul Municipality and AUWSSC in management and maintenance of water supply system in Kabul. This is more relevant in relation to the current master plan of the Kabul Municipality.

The ICT (2008) team, using the experience of the other countries in the region, proposed and recommended a minimum level of required water supply to be 100 LCD to suffice daily household needs and support functionality of the sewer system. Thus, the total water demand for Kabul in 2023 was estimated to be 291.6 MCM/year. Based on the ICT study the existing capacity of available underground water resources in Kabul was estimated to meet the water demand in 2023.

However, this estimation was considered unrealistic by the JICA team in the amended master plan. As the JICA planning team changed the target year for the master plan to 2025 and also proposed a different population growth scenario, the calculation of the water demand was altered. Based on availability of present and planned water resources which were estimated to reach from current 44.4MCM/year to 120 MCM/year in 2025, the target per capita consumption for 2025 was calculated at 55 LCD. The JICA team also amended the water supply proposal with consideration of the Kabul New City project. The proposal excluded District 17, which covers newly developed settlements in Pusht-i-Kotal Khair-Khana, from Kabul water supply networks and considered to be serviced from the other sources alongside the Kabul New

City (JICA 2011a). Largely, the JICA plan contains a more comprehensive and detailed study of water issues in Kabul and recommendations to improve the water supply and sewerage system. Nevertheless, the practical responsiveness of JICA's proposed master plan in relation to water supply and sewerage is still ambiguous, as the water supply improvement projects are undertaken mostly independently without coordination with the proposed KCMP. The dependence on underground water threatens the sustainability of water supply projects in Kabul. The aquifers in Kabul basin are estimated to suffice the water needs to a limited population size and alternatives need to be sought for the future excess population.

It needs to be kept in mind that the supply of water in 2008, when the development plan for Kabul was prepared, did not meet the demand and that the same situation exists up to present day (2016). Many of the neighborhoods visited in Kabul in 2015 did not have access to piped water in their houses, nor did they have access to any public tap, hand pump or water well in their near locality. Hence, they had to manage their lives with the minimum quantity of water they brought from a far distance, or buy it from water carriers. The same applies to the sewer system and proper drainage facilities. According to a study by ACF (2006) in hilly neighborhoods, for some families, it took about one and half hours to fetch water from the nearest water source. Many of those neighborhoods have not witnessed any change so far.

As compared to water supply, the sanitation system in Kabul is in a worse condition. A major challenge in sanitation is the lack of sewer network in the city. Only limited areas of Kabul such as the Microrayon are covered with piped sewer systems. The majority of the houses in the city have traditional pit latrines, which have serious health and sanitation issues. In some areas, the latrines flow outside the houses and mix with stormwater causing contamination and health risks. More affluent areas and almost all apartment buildings use septic tanks. The vacuuming of pit latrines and septic tanks is also done privately. There are many contractors in the city that run the business of septic tank vacuuming.

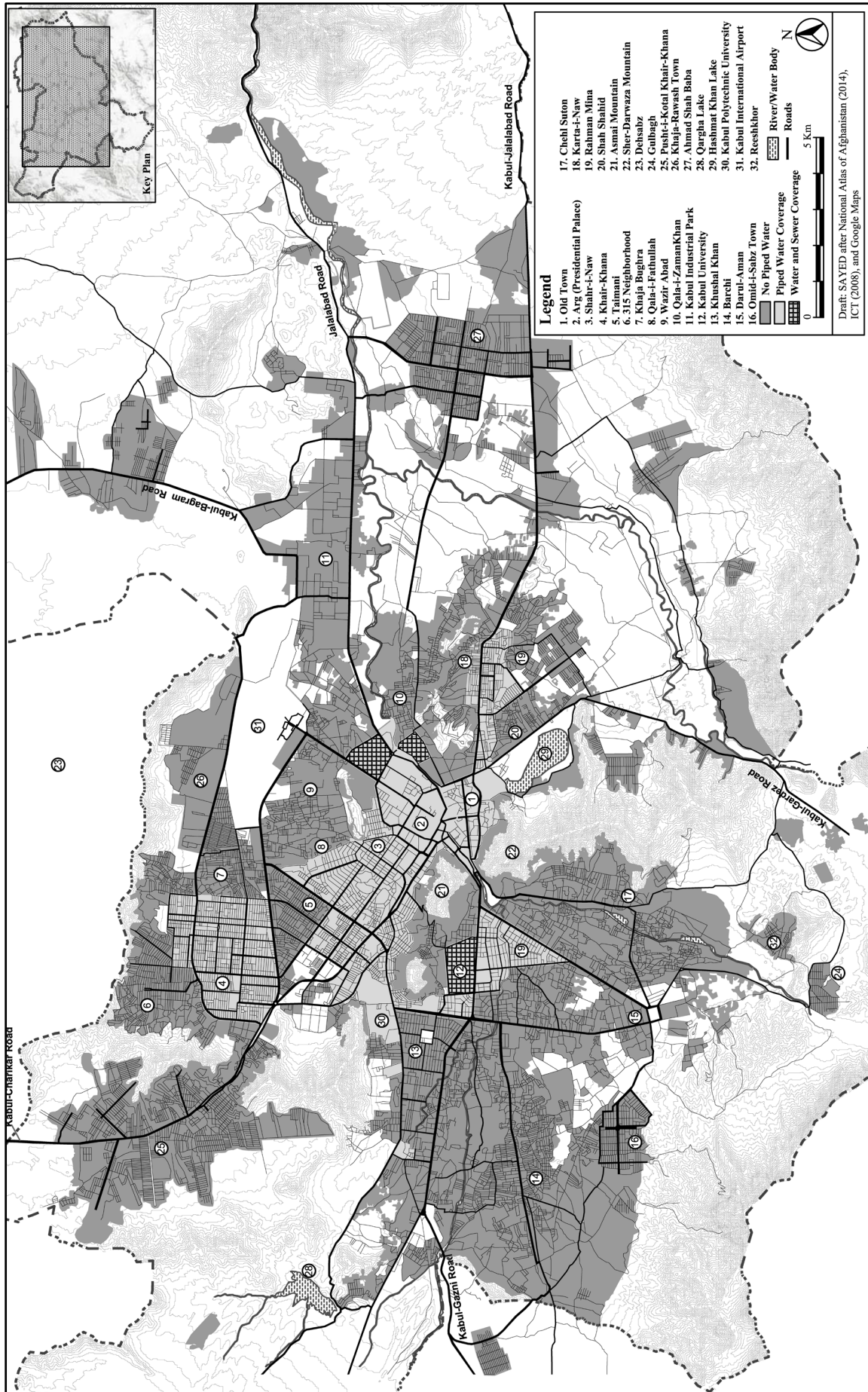
The extension of sewerage system depends on the availability of water. It is not possible with the current consumption rate of water supply to develop a city level sewer network even in areas which already have piped water network. It needs to be pointed out that even the use of flush toilets with on-site sewerage systems to be connected to private septic tanks will require an uninterrupted supply of water. Extension of a city-wide water supply and sewerage network requires a huge amount of funds, which the government of Afghanistan is not able to afford

without assistance through international aid. Thus, it does not seem possible for Kabul to have city-wide water supply and sewerage network coverage within the time frame specified in the new planning attempts. The ICT and JICA planning teams proposed an interim solution to move from using of dry latrines to the construction of private sewer/septic tank systems.

Nevertheless, the conversion of dry latrines to septic tanks will also require not only large amounts of investment by households but also a complex procedure of enforcement. Construction of a septic tank is not affordable for many households in Kabul. The ICT team proposed the Kabul Municipality to conduct a program to support citizens to build onsite septic tanks for their houses. According to ICT's proposal, 415,000 dry latrines were estimated to be in need of improvement. A subsidy or loan of 90 USD was also proposed to help pay for households to convert their dry latrines to septic tank based toilets. The proposal recommended banning the construction of dry toilets in newly developed areas (ICT 2008).

It needs to be pointed out that the ICT's proposal was too optimistic about the conversion of dry latrines to septic tank based toilets. According to ICT's proposal, it would have been possible to convert 415,000 dry latrines into septic tank based toilet with an investment of only 37.35 million USD. To have a clear picture of the situation, it is important to mention that the construction of an average household level septic tank with proper insulation would cost around 2,000 USD. The conversion of the septic tank is not the only step that needs to be taken to change a dry latrine to a septic tank based one. A complete restructuring of the bathroom is needed, with new fixtures and piping extensions. That would increase the cost to about 3,000 USD for every household. Hence, the total cost of the project will rise to around 1.2 billion USD.

An obvious fact is that neither subsidy for construction of septic tank as a temporary way out for sanitation problem, nor the construction of a comprehensive new water supply and sewer system as a permanent solution is affordable for a concerned organization within the Government of Afghanistan at the present time. Therefore, the improvement of the water supply and sewerage systems in Kabul will continue in the form of current small-scale projects based on the availability of funds. The provisions of the Master Plan can only be reliable when enough funds are available for their implementation.



Map 19: The coverage of piped water supply and sewerage network in Kabul

4.7.1.2 Surface Water Drainage

The surface water drainage in Kabul is managed by the Kabul Municipality. It was estimated that in 2008 only waste-water drains were available to only 25 percent of households in Kabul, many of which were damaged during the past conflict and remained nonfunctional. Until 2012, all the roadside drains in Kabul were open ditches, which usually were filled with dust and wastes, and thus during the rain, they did not function well. As a result, rainwater flooded onto the streets creating problems for the traffic system. Sometimes the whole area was covered with water and the normal movement of the population in that area was interrupted. Since 2012, the Kabul Municipality has intended to construct covered roadside ditches along the newly renovated roads.

Some areas of Kabul such as Taimani and Parwan-i-Se were fully covered with water until the 1970s. In fact, they were natural water bodies, where people used to go hunting for ducks and other birds. During the 1980s, the development of residential neighborhood in Khair-Khana expanded toward these areas. To evacuate the trapped water in the area and prepare the ground for physical development, the government dug a canal (Known as Wazir Abad Canal) to serve as a catchment for the surface water and to drain it into agricultural lands in the north-east of Kabul Airport. At present, Taimani and Parwan-i-Se, with tens of newly built multi-storey building and wedding halls, are among very dense areas of Kabul. However, because of recent encroachments and new constructions, some parts of Wazir Abad canal are blocked or the water catchment and flow has been interrupted. This causes vast water blockage in this area during rainy season. The residents of such areas sometimes spend the whole day clearing water from their houses.

Another problem with the drainage system in Kabul is that most of the drains are constructed together with the road network while every road is constructed separately without coordination of elevations and drain slopes in an integrated manner. As a result, topographically many of the drains lead to dead ends without being connected to the mainstream. So once there is a heavy rain, it takes several days for the area to be cleaned. Sometimes the Kabul Municipality pumps out the blocked waters manually to make clear the area.



Figure 24: Water blockage due to deficiency of surface water drainage system in Kabul
Photo: SAYED 2010

The settlements on hill slopes, at least, do not have any problem of surface water blockage. However, their latrines and wastewater are directly connected to open water drains, which bring all the waste from hilly areas to the lower areas. This is the case in many of city neighborhoods, where the pit latrines are directly connected to open ditches of surface water drainage, causing contamination of the surface water and severe health problems.

The ICT (2008) team suggested a comprehensive detailed study, to find the missing links in the drainage system and to improve and connect them to the major drains and streams of the city. The Kabul Municipality has been carrying out certain projects for improvement of rainwater drainage system in selected neighborhoods of Kabul under KMDP. However, a city level comprehensive solution has not yet taken place.

4.7.1.3 Solid Waste Management

Keeping the city clean and maintaining an efficient solid waste management system is a major environmental and hygiene challenge in Kabul. The city government has not been very successful in coping with this challenge. The Kabul Municipality relied on its personnel of keeping the city clean. Most of the cleaning jobs including cleaning of roads are done manually by municipal staff. In the first years after the fall of Taliban, the municipality was out of equipment to collect and dispose of the solid waste. The sanitation department of Kabul Municipality had only a few trucks for the collection of wastes, which were not sufficient to

serve all the areas of Kabul. Despite the fact that there are some improvements in the quantity of personnel and availability of equipment in Kabul Municipality in recent years, still, there are many deficiencies in the management of solid waste. The planned settlements and areas near administrative centers are served better compared to informal settlements far from the main roads. Sometimes, the garbage containers at collections points are full and waste overflows on the streets for days waiting for the Municipality truck to clean it.

The cleanliness of a city and quality of its environment is not just a clear indicator of a good urban management system, but also it is a noble representative of socio-cultural values and living quality of the citizens. Like many other aspects of the society, the urban culture of the Kabul citizens was badly affected during the years of the past conflict. The lack of a sense of ownership, which is a consequence of years of living under severe threats from war and the Taliban's repressive and anti-urban culture, prevents most of the Kabulis from taking an active part in keeping their city clean and livable. They throw their waste on the streets and around the garbage containers. Moreover, all of those who are living in Kabul have not grown up in cities. As it was mentioned before, the majorities of today's Kabul residents consist of either returned refugees from Iran and Pakistan or those who have come from villages to live and work in Kabul. Thus, the dominant culture in Kabul is rural one. This is the reason some of the planning experts in Afghanistan refer to Kabul as the biggest village in the world (MURADI 2012).

The main garbage disposal site in Kabul was located in Kotal-i-Khair-Khana, where due to the expansion of squatter settlements along the highway towards the north, it is now adjacent to the residential areas. In the development plan for Kabul, the ICT (2008) team proposed 5 more landfill sites and 4 transfer stations, door to door collection of garbage and use of tricycles to collect garbage at the local level to improve the solid waste disposal system.

Active involvement of the citizenry will play however a significant role in achieving an efficient garbage collection system. Thus, parallel to planning and investment on solid waste management systems, effective campaigns need to be conducted through media and other social means to raise the citizen's awareness about their roles and responsibilities in maintaining a clean and healthy environment.



Figure 25: Deficiency of solid waste management and carelessness of citizens in Kabul.
Photo: SAYED 2014

4.7.1.4 Power Supply

Kabul had a deficiency of power supply since 1970 when the population of the city started to increase tremendously. In the 1980s, the citizens of Kabul used to experience regular power cuts throughout the day, and in some neighborhoods, the electricity was absent for several days. During the civil war of 1992-1996 in Kabul, most of the power networks in areas affected by war were destroyed and the power supply cables and equipment were looted. The city was out of power for several years, when in last years of the 1990s during the rule of Taliban, some parts of the city were connected again with electricity. Later, when the Taliban regime was overthrown and the people returned and started to reconstruct their destroyed houses, the electricity network was also gradually extended to those areas of Kabul. However, the shortage in power supply was still something that the residents of Kabul were often suffering from. Three hydropower plants on Kabul River known as Naghlu with a capacity of 100 MW, Sarubi with a capacity of 22 MW, and Mahipar with a capacity of 66 MW, as well as two thermal power plants with maximum capacities of 21.8 MW and 23 MW were the main sources of power supply in Kabul (FICHTNER and ADB 2013). These power plants were not maintained and serviced well for several decades; on the other hand. Additionally, the three hydropower

plants fully depend on the availability of water in dams and precipitation rate. In 2008, the domestic supply of electricity in Kabul was 124 MW and per capita supply by the Ministry was 100 watts. Based on this rate, the ICT (2008) team estimated the power demand for the year 2008 to be 450 MW, thus, the forecasted demand for the year 2023 would be 800 MW. This figure is close to the forecasted power demand for Kabul in the Power Sector Master Plan of the Government of Afghanistan which was prepared in 2013. The power sector master plan estimated the electricity demand for Kabul to be 876.3 MW for the year 2025 and 1215.7 MW for the year 2032 (FICHTNER and ADB 2013: 8,53).

In 2007, the Government of Afghanistan through the Ministry of Energy and Water signed an agreement with Uzbekistan to purchase electricity with a supply capacity of up to 300 MW (FICHTNER and ADB 2013). This required a huge investment to construct the transmission lines to connect Kabul to Uzbekistan through the Hindu Kush. With all its difficulties, the project was completed and for the first time, the residents of Kabul enjoyed an uninterrupted supply of electricity in winter of 2010.

Another important step in the management of power sector was the establishment of Afghanistan Electricity Company (DABS)³³ in 2008. DABS is an independent and autonomous company with all its equity shares owned by the Government of Afghanistan. The company is responsible for management, generation, import, transmission, and distribution of electricity throughout Afghanistan (DABS 2016).

The power supply is one the distinct infrastructure sectors in Kabul, which has had major improvements since the fall of Taliban in 2001. The billing system has improved decreasing the possibilities of corruption. Power distribution networks have been extended to all areas damaged during the war and newly developed residential areas including informal settlements. Maintenance of equipment has been enhanced and avenues for energy waste or theft have been reduced.

In 2008, only two percent of Kabul roads were covered with street lighting. The ICT (2008) plan estimated 240 kilometers of main roads, and 4,900 kilometers of a side road to be in need of street lighting. Since 2009 many of the streets in Kabul have been furnished with lights,

³³ The company is known by its Pashtu acronym DABS which stand for Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat literally meaning The Afghanistan Electricity Company.

mostly powered by solar energy. Nevertheless, they have been through individual projects funded by international donors, mostly independent from any affiliation or coordination with the ICT development plan for Kabul.

A major concern of the energy sector is the dependency on neighboring countries. This raises questions about the challenges of sustainability of the prevailing system. As the main switch of Kabul power supply is in neighboring countries, disagreement on prices in the future can be an issue. Also, there is the possibility of power supply to be used as pressure tool in case of political clashes. Afghanistan is assessed to have a high potential for renewable energy generation by means of hydropower, solar and wind energy. Thus, investment in local sources of energy generation could lead to the self-sufficiency of Afghanistan in the energy sector.

4.7.2 Socio-Cultural Infrastructure and Facilities

Kabul, in comparison to all other cities of Afghanistan, has the highest concentration of socio-cultural infrastructure and amenities, including health, education, cultural and recreational facilities. Nevertheless, quantity and quality of these facilities are not adequate for the growing population of the city. On the other hand, the distribution of the facilities within the city does not occur in a balanced manner. While some of the city neighborhoods enjoy a variety of these facilities, others suffer from lack of them. As many of the residential settlements in Kabul have informally been developed, mostly by their occupants or land grabbers, there has not been evidence of consideration for the provision of socio-cultural infrastructure and facilities within these settlements. Many of the formal settlement lack any recreational facility. There are only a few parks and little open space in Kabul. Sports fields and playgrounds are missing in many neighborhoods of the city. It is a major planning challenge to provide land for socio-cultural facilities in already densely built-up areas.

4.7.2.1 Educational Facilities

The education sector in Afghanistan has gone through many ups and downs since its modernization at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was accelerating during the Communist Regime as the governments had specific intentions and planned to increase the literacy rate in the country. Therefore, special attention was paid to educational institutions, not only for young generation but also included the establishment of basic schools for illiterate senior citizens.

The civil war of 1992-1996 had enormous damage on educational institutions including the destruction of many educational infrastructures. However, the worst damage to the education sector of Afghanistan was due to Taliban's oppressing policies when they seized the political power. They banned education and employment for women, which paralyzed half of the society. Moreover, the majority of the school teachers were female, who were not allowed to work anymore. This discriminating gender policy severely damaged the education as well as health sector in the country (RASANAYAGAM 2005).

The education sector in Afghanistan has witnessed incredible improvements since the fall of the Taliban, The number of school students increased from about 1 million in 2001 to over 9 million in 2014. This includes an increase of girl students from zero in 2001 to around 3.4 million in 2014 (CSO 2015). However, from the urban planning point of view, there has been very little improvement in the provision of social infrastructure including health and education institutions. Overall, a shortage of social infrastructure is evident in Kabul due to the high growth rate of the population since fall of the Taliban regime. The number of children enrolled in schools is increasing compared to the number of graduates each year. Many of the schools in Kabul are running in two to three shifts to respond to the demand for space.

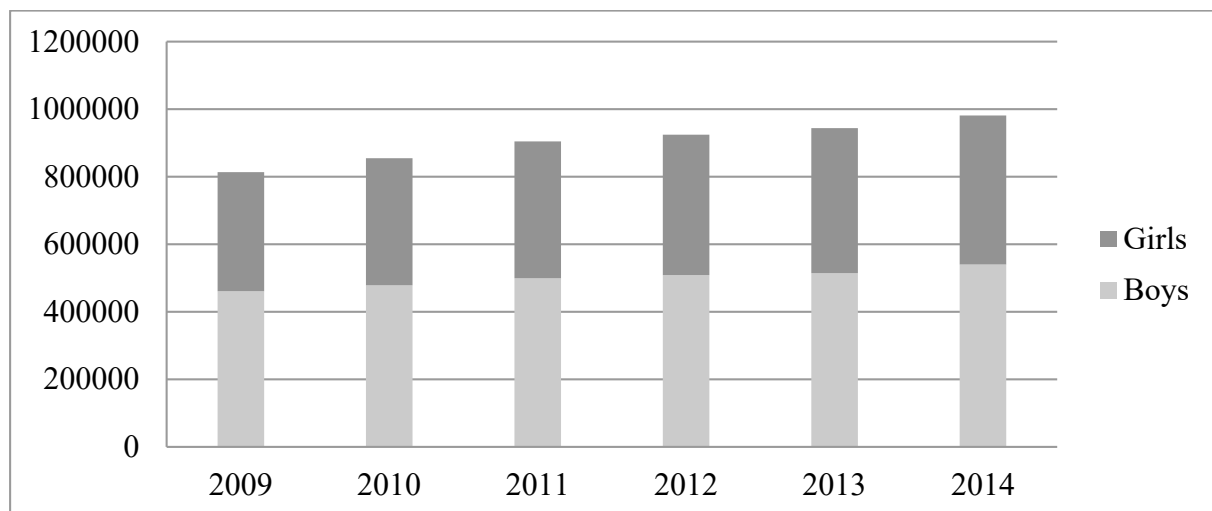


Figure 26: Number of students enrolled in public schools in Kabul from 2009 to 2014
Sources of data: CSO (2012, 2015)

Moreover, access to primary school is not equitably available to all families. The distribution of educational facilities in the city is not balanced. Most of the educational facilities and schools are located in the formal settlements. In some neighborhoods of informal settlements, school

children have to walk over six kilometers daily to get to a primary school. Especially, in hill slope settlements they have to walk through steep and dangerous paths.

The ICT team in the development plan for Kabul recommended educational facilities including nursery schools/kindergartens, and primary schools to be an integral part of residential areas with equitable distribution. Higher-level facilities would be provided at sub-district, district, zonal and city level. The ICT team also suggested integration of educational facilities at different levels from pre-primary to higher levels in order to prevent allocation of separate land for each facility in already developed areas where land is scarce (ICT 2008). The ICT team proposed a list of educational facilities according to the requirements of planning norms for the year 2023, which was later modified by the JICA team estimated a total area of 1220 hectare extra land for the provision of educational facilities for the Kabul population in 2025.

It needs to be mentioned that the Ministry of Education is responsible for the provision of educational services and controls its quality up to the high school level. University level education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education. However, the provision of land and infrastructure to build schools and educational institutions is an urban planning issue.

The proposed educational facilities in the KCMP for 2025 is a typical example of the normative planning approach, in which the planners estimate the needs of the future population through referring to books on urban planning standards, without having a clear understanding of the availability of resources and the financial means to achieve it. For example, availability of land is one of the main constraints on the provision of education and health facilities in already built-up areas. This requires the acquisition of residential land within settlements where there is a lack of these facilities. In order to achieve this, certain policies and norms need to be developed. There needs to be a kind of compromise between communities and implementing agencies in order to provide required infrastructure and facilities to these settlements. This also requires enormous amounts funds which are beyond the financial capacity of current planning institutions and other concerned organizations in Afghanistan to provide.

	Type of Facility	Area Per Unit in sqm	Standard per Population	No of Services Required	Total Area Required in Ha
1	Kindergarten/Nursery School	400	5000	1,240	49.7
2	Primary School	3000	15000	413	124.1
3	Secondary School	6000	15000	413	248.2
4	High School	8000	15000	413	330.4
5	Management Training / Teachers Training Institute/ Polytechnic	4000	500000	12	4.7
6	School for Mentally Challenged	2000	250000	25	4.7
7	School for Physically Challenged	2000	250000	25	4.7
8	General College	50000	500000	12	62
9	Nursing and Paramedic Institute	2000	1000000	6	1.6
10	University Campus	400000	city level	3	120
11	Medical College cum Hospital	400000	city level	3	120
12	Engineering College (Polytechnic)	400000	city level	3	120
13	Research Institute	150000	city level	1	15
14	Police Training College	50000	city level	1	5
15	Fire Training Institute	50000	city level	1	5
16	Veterinary Institute	50000	city level	1	5
	Total			2,572	1,220.1

Table 2: Proposed education facilities as per KCMP for the year 2025
Source: JICA (2011a)

4.7.2.2 Health Facilities

Health facilities include comprehensive health centers and basic health clinics. Based on the data collected by the Central Statistics Department of Afghanistan, there were 149 governmental and 252 private hospitals, 398 comprehensive health centers, 943 basic health centers and 765 sub-centers. Also, there were 657 governmental and 787 private medical laboratories, 155 governmental and 11,473 private pharmacies all around the country. Out of these, there are 39 comprehensive health centers, 77 basic health centers, and 3394 pharmacies in Kabul (CSO 2015), which in terms of quantity is not so different from other cities of Afghanistan. In terms of quality, however, they are in much better conditions. What makes Kabul distinct from other cities of Afghanistan is that the health facilities in Kabul not only provide services to the residents of the city, but they also have to cater to the whole region around the country.

Nonetheless, the overall health status of Afghanistan is one of the worst in the world, despite Kabul is relatively in a better situation compared to the country level. There are three major challenges in the provision of health services in Kabul; quantity, quality, and accessibility. In terms of quantity of health services, although, there is no global norm for the density of the hospital beds in relation to total population (WHO 2014) and the requirements depend on the geographical location, environment, hygiene conditions, and disease prevention measures. A comparison with other countries in the region of the number of beds and health personnel in relation to the number of the population shows that Afghanistan is at the bottom.

Country	Density of health workforce (per 10 000 population)					Density of health infrastructure and technologies				
	Physicians	Nursing and midwifery personnel	Dentistry personnel	Pharmaceutical personnel	Psychiatrists	Hospitals (per 100 000 population)	Psychiatric beds (per 100 000 population)	Computed tomography units (per million population)	Radiotherapy units (per million population)	Mammography units (per million females aged 50– 69)
Afghanistan	2.7	5	<0.05	0.05	<0.05	0.4	0.6	0.2	0	0
India	7	17.1	1	5	<0.05		2.1		0.4	
Pakistan	8.3	5.7	0.6		<0.05	0.5	5.6	0.3	0.1	1.6
Uzbekistan	25	119.4	1.7	0.4	0.3		15.9		0.6	
Germany	39	114.9	8.1	6.2	0.7		86.1		6.4	

Table 3: Comparison of the Afghanistan health system and facilities with other countries
Source: (WHO 2015)

The quality of health services in Kabul is much lower compared to its quantity. Travel of thousands of Afghans to Pakistan and India in order to acquire better quality medical treatment can be an indicator of the lower quality of health services in Afghanistan. A study by the Ministry of Public Health of Afghanistan states that an average 65802 people from Afghanistan annually travel to India, out of which 7,265 (11%) of them were patients whose purpose of travel was acquiring medical treatment. The report estimated that Afghans spend annually an average of 26.97 million USD in India to access better medical services. It is worth mentioning that 37% of the patients were residents of Kabul. However, all the patients traveled to India from Kabul (MUSTAFA, ATAULLAH, NOORMAL, SALIMI, and AYAZI 2010). It is not possible to find exact statistics of patients traveling to Pakistan for medical treatment, as there is no restricted control of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan and no registration of the purpose of travel. However, considering the fact that travel cost to Pakistan is much more affordable than to India, the number of patients traveling to Pakistan would probably exceed that of India by many folds.

Accessibility to health services is another major issue in the provision of health facilities. The concentration of health facilities in certain parts of the city leaving other areas out of easy access has created a problem for some residents. Many neighborhoods in the city do not have easy access to basic health services. They have to travel a long distance to reach to a basic health service. The situation is much worse for the hillside neighborhoods which lack basic health service in their locality and also do not have vehicular access to their houses for ambulance and emergency cases.

Improvement of quality and quantity of health services are interrelated to other aspects such as investments in training and educating the required number of health workers. This is not a mere city planning issue, rather it is more related to the functions of the Ministry of Public Health in coordination with the Ministry of Higher/Education. Accessibility to health facilities, however, entails more city planning related aspects which have an interrelationship with the location of facilities, land use planning, and growth management. In the case of Kabul, similar to educational facilities, it is a challenging issue to provide the required land in already built-up urban neighborhoods. This involves a lot of work with communities in order to get their agreement on the reorganization of the land use in their locality. KCMP proposed the following health facilities for Kabul for 2025 (JICA 2011a):

	Type of Facility	Area Per Unit in m ²	Standard per Population	No of Services Required	Total Area Required in Ha
1	Basic Health Center	1000	15000	413	41.3
2	Comprehensive Health Center (100/200 beds)	10000	100000	62	61.9
3	Family Welfare Center	2000	100000	62	12.4
	Pediatric Center		100000	62	0
	Geriatric Center		100000	62	0
	Diagnostic Center		100000	62	0
4	Maternity Home (50 beds each)	1500	50000	124	18.6
5	Nursing Home/Polyclinic (50 beds each)	1500	50000	124	18.6
6	District Hospital	30000	500000	12	37.1
7	Veterinary Hospital	2000	500000	12	2.5
8	Care Centre for Physically & Mentally Challenged	1000	500000	12	1.2
9	Nursing and Paramedic Institute	20000	1000000	6	12.4
10	Medical College cum Hospital	400000	1000000	6	248
11	National Hospital	400000	1000000	6	248
12	Communicable Disease Hospital	50000	1000000	6	31
13	Mentally Challenged Hospital	50000	1000000	6	31
	Total			1,037	764

Table 4: Kabul Development Plan proposed health facilities for 2025

Source: (JICA 2011a)

Similar to educational facilities, the KCMP also had a normative approach for the provision of health facilities. The plan proposed a norm of 5 beds per thousand people for the hospital and based on this, specified the number of required hospitals for the projected population. In order to meet the requirements of health facilities to overcome the shortfall of the number of beds per one thousand populations, the Master Plan proposed rebuilding and restructuring of existing hospitals and separation of contagious diseases treatment facilities from inhabited areas of the city and using the space for general hospitals.

As mentioned above, the provision of services based on the normative approach and extracting norms from urban planning standard books will not necessarily respond to the actual problems on site. Two issues can arise from this approach. Firstly, the availability of the resources and funds to provide the required infrastructure and equipment may not keep pace with the proposed plan. Secondly, all these facilities will need trained professionals and medical workers to run them, which may not be available in accordance with the proposed quantity.

Any rigid proposal for improvement of health and education facilities in Kabul may not effectively respond to the shortcomings of those services. Rather, there need to be specific detailed targets set in coordination with the line ministries (the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Higher Education) considering the availability of existing resources, personnel, and future growth potential, in order to overcome the existing shortcomings and prepare for future requirements.

4.7.3 Roads, Transportation, and Traffic Management

Transportation occupies a central position in the fabric of a modern-day urbanized nation (O'FLAHERTY 1997a: 2). The urban transportation network acts as the arteries of the urban system to connect different land uses and to ensure efficient delivery and circulation of population and goods throughout the city. It is the movement and dynamics of urban structure which makes cities alive. The relationship between transportation network and land-uses in cities is significant. The efficiency of an urban structure can be measured by the functionality of its road networks and transportation systems. In order for an urban transportation system to function competently, the physical structure of road network is as significant as the management of the transportation system. Design and structure of urban road network play an important role in setting the standards for hardware of urban transportation, while, traffic management is the art and science of maintaining and balancing the flow of movements within this network. Planning and design of road networks are important steps in the planning of urban areas; whereas, management of traffic system and movements within cities is an important function of urban management.

4.7.3.1 The Road Network in Kabul

The urban transportation system in Kabul is limited to the road network. A rail network and other modes of urban transportation are non-existent in Afghanistan cities. Both, the absence of a functional road network and efficient traffic management system, are evident in Kabul. Before the Civil War in Kabul, the road networks were extended to limited areas of Kabul where settlements existed. During the civil war of 1992-1996 when about two-third of the city areas were destroyed, the roads and traffic infrastructures were also badly damaged. After the conflict with the influx of population and expansion of urban areas, new roads were also extended. As most of the newly built residential areas in Kabul were informally developed by people in an unorganized manner without prior planning; thus, the roads and the right-of-way in most of those areas do not match any transportation standards. In some areas, the local roads are so narrow that movement of vehicles takes place with difficulties. Only one vehicle can pass through those roads and if any other vehicle comes from the opposite direction, one of them has to move back for a long distance to a point where they can pass by each other. However; in some other roads, the right-of-way is unnecessarily wide making inefficient use of land. Extension of roads in the informal settlements of hilly areas is mostly without consideration of terrain and topography of the area, making the road too steep and hardly accessible. Almost all of the roads of informal settlements are muddy with no traffic signs and signals.

According to the WORLD BANK (2012) until the year 2008, out of over 1,500 km of roads in Kabul, only 350 km were paved. Of these, about 60 percent were again damaged and the remaining streets were in poor condition. It was estimated that half of all drains were not functional.

Many of the city roads, even within formal settlements, are muddy with no pavement. As a result, during the rainy season, the tires of the vehicles get dirty with mud and then they carry the dirt to other paved streets bemiring them. After the rain when the dirt is dried on the paved roads, it spreads dust on the environment by moving vehicles. It gets much worse when the dust is mixed with smoke generated from vehicles and makes the surrounding areas a suffocating environment.



Figure 27: Difference in layout of roads and right-of-way between formal and informal settlements

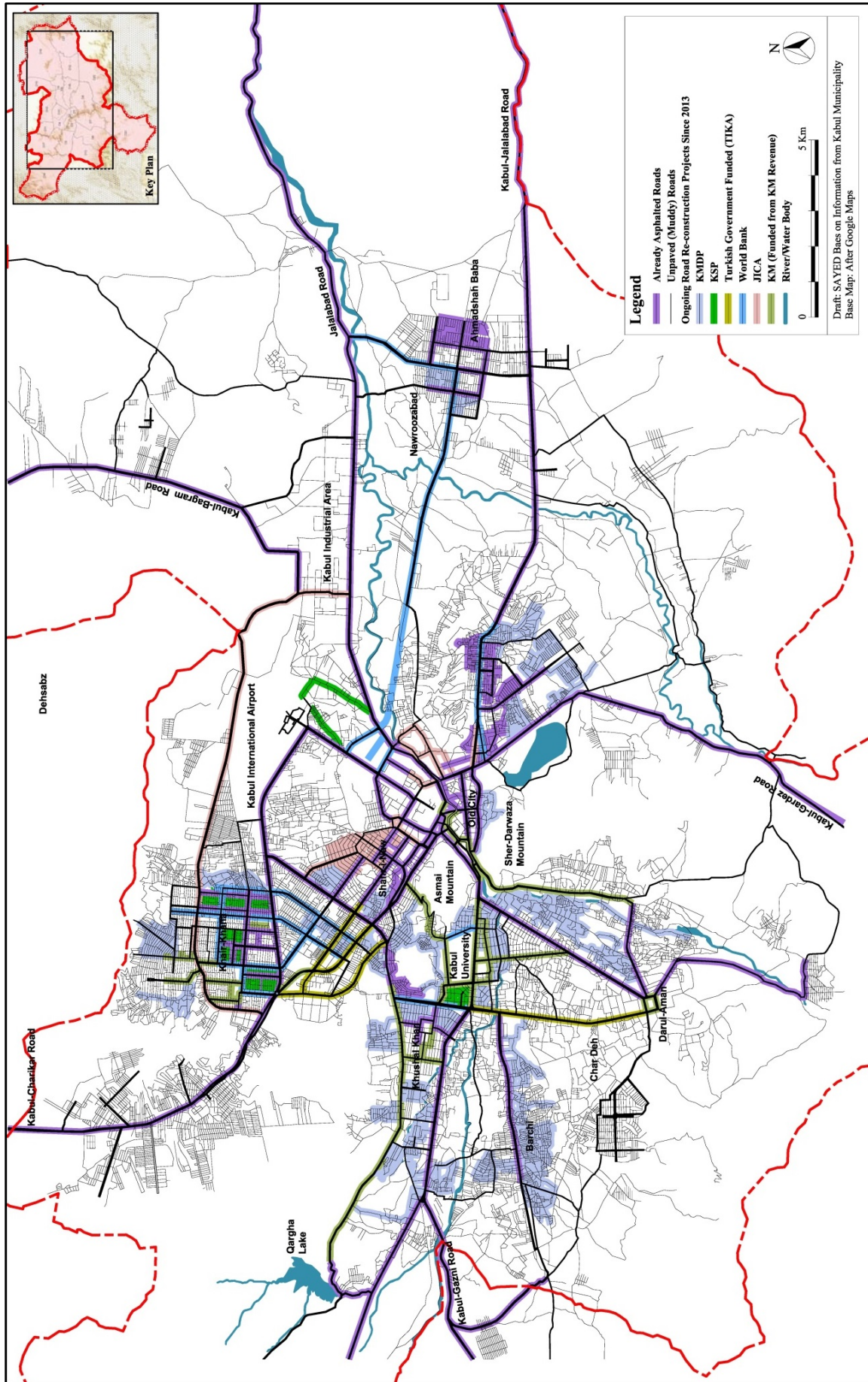
Source: Google Earth

With the regular budget of the Kabul Municipality, it seemed not possible to invest in the paving of all urban roads in Kabul. Based on estimation by the Kabul Municipality in 2008, there was an investment need for an amount of 1,160 million USD for a period of 15 years to improve the urban roads in Kabul. The estimation required 650 million USD for the first five years for funding the road improvement project, which included rehabilitation and widening of the main roads, asphaltting of the unpaved secondary streets, and construction of a ring road and other new roads needed along with the expansion of the city (WORLD BANK 2012).

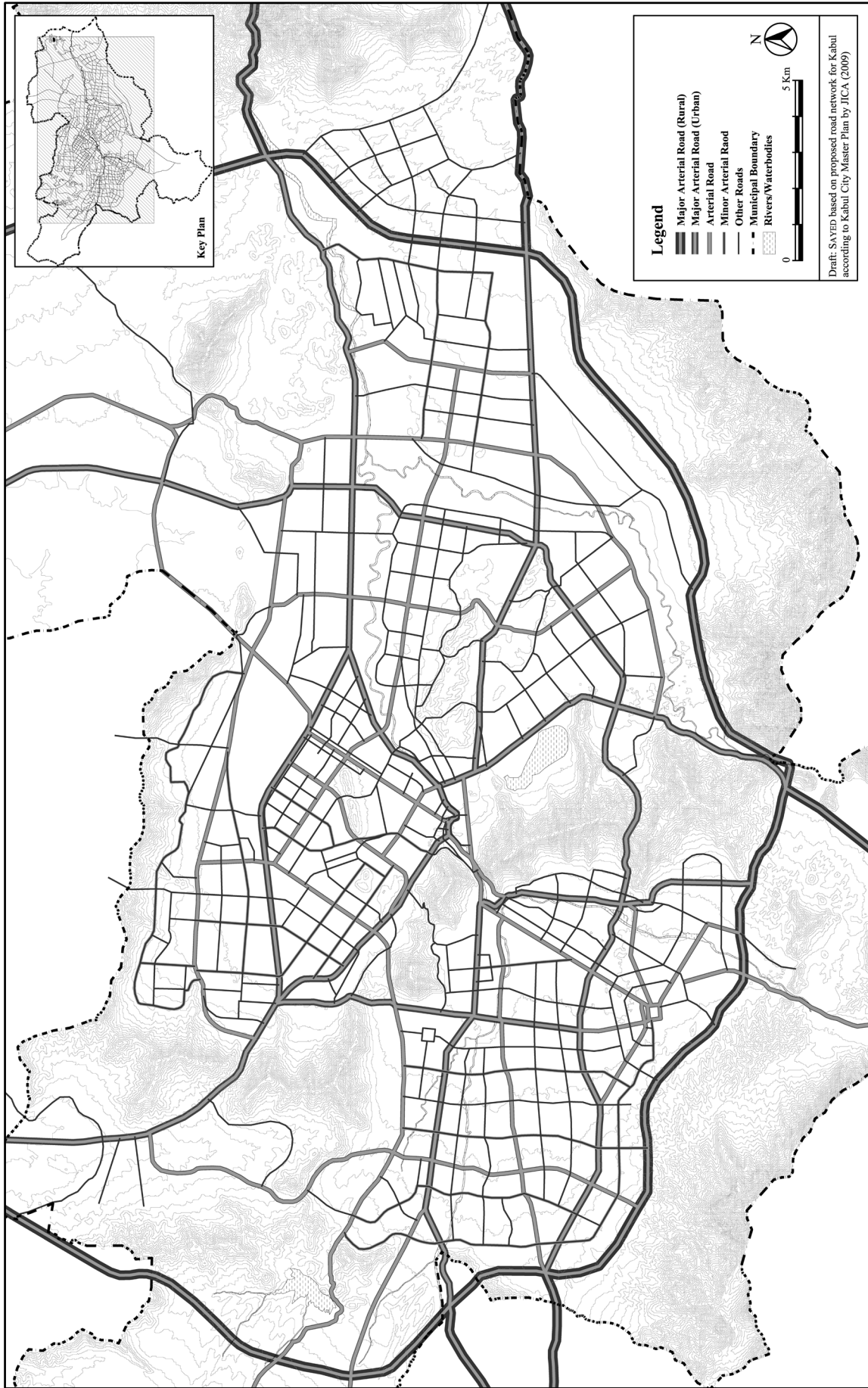
The proposed road network of JICA team in the KCMP resembled the road network proposed in the Master Plan of 1978. Unlike the ICT team, which followed the pattern of existing roads in the city, the JICA team referred to the Kabul Master Plan 1978 and adopted its road network into the new plan as much as possible. The extension of the road network in accordance with the JICA's proposed master plan will require the demolition of large built-up areas mostly within informal settlements. In order to implement the proposed network, it will not only require huge amounts of the fund for acquisition of land, relocation of the household to another place in the city, and construction costs; but it also requires a time-consuming administrative procedure to acquire the land. A vast land titling process is needed prior to the acquisition of land, along with the lines where roads are going to extend; to specify which plots of land belongs to whom and what types of documents and deeds every household possesses.

There are many donor agencies involved in financing the construction of road projects in Kabul. The development of roads is carried out under different projects in relation to the types of roads, sources of funds and ways of funding the projects. The development funds from the United States (USAID), the Government of Japan (JICA), the government of Turkey (TİKA), and the World Bank alongside the development budget of Kabul Municipality are the main sources finance for road development projects in Kabul. JICA is fully funding the construction of several arterial roads in Kabul, alongside partial funding for community-based projects for the reconstruction of local roads. This program known as Kabul Solidarity Program (KSP) was initiated by the Kabul Municipality in certain areas of the city with the purpose of involving local communities in the rehabilitation of their neighborhoods. Within this program, the local communities are supposed to contribute in funding and construction of the pavements, sidewalks, and drains in their community, which covers up to 35% of the total project budget. The remaining project cost is covered by JICA through Kabul Municipality. Another similar program is through Kabul Municipality Development Program (KMDP), which is a continuation of the KURP project within the structure of the Kabul Municipality. The detail of coverage of road projects in Kabul in the relation to funding sources and concerned programs are shown in Map (20).

It needs to be mentioned that the layout of many actual road construction and development projects do not comply with the proposed road network of the KCMP (Map 21).



Map 20: The status of the existing road network in Kabul with ongoing road re-construction projects.



Map 21: Proposed road hierarchy and network for Kabul 2025 according to Kabul City Master Plan by JICA

4.7.3.2 Traffic Management in Kabul

Urban traffic management is the practice of maintaining efficiency in the flow of traffic in a city considering accessibility, safety and accident prevention. In order to have an efficient traffic management system in a city, at first, it is important to have the entire necessary infrastructure for the urban transportation system. Alongside efficient institutions, the existence of standard roads, traffic signs and signals, and street lighting are prerequisites for efficient traffic management system. Rules and regulations and qualified traffic personnel are also significant. “Regulatory traffic management has its basis in law, and uses mandatory and prohibitory traffic signs and markings to inform drivers regarding what they must and must not do in relation to speed, movement and waiting”(O’FLAHERTY 1997b: 450). Strong institutions and competent administrative structures are needed to enforce rules and regulations to maintain order in the daily movement within the city. Traffic networks and transportation system are vulnerable during armed conflicts in cities. Recovery and reconstruction of physical road networks are a very challenging issue in a post-conflict era in a country such as Afghanistan. However, the recovery and institutionalization of the traffic management system is a complex issue that will take much longer than the physical reconstruction of transportation networks.

As mentioned before, traffic infrastructure in Kabul was badly affected by the civil war. Rules and regulations were left out for several years and chaos was the only rule in Kabul. Despite enormous investment in the reconstruction of roads and efforts on the improvement of traffic management in Kabul, a poor traffic management system still dominates. Only a limited asphalted road network existed in Kabul before the civil war; it was limited to areas of the downtown, Shahr-i-Naw, Wazir Akbar Khan, and main roads around some urban neighborhoods of Khair-Khana, and Karta-i-Char. Nevertheless, the traffic management was more efficient, as on the one hand the urban population size and the city areas were smaller, and on the other hand, the number of vehicles in the city was fewer. This was because of the socio-economic situation of the population, where very few people could afford to have a personal vehicle. Thus, the majority of the population used public transport system, which was more effective and affordable during the years before the war.

One of the invisible impacts of any conflict is the damaging of culture and moral values. In reality, it is moral values which cover the areas neglected by the law to maintain the order in a society. It is not possible to depend only on police forces to maintain law and order in every

dimension of human life. Cultural values and moral measures may prevent the citizen from doing wrong even in places where there is no policing or surveillance. In a post-conflict situation, recovery of physical damages and reestablishment of institutions are easier than the recovery of damages to social and cultural values. This is specifically in the area of traffic management very evident in Kabul, where breaking of the traffic rules by the drivers is very common.

Today, Traffic jams in peak hours, the inadequacy of the road network, the absence of traffic signs and signals in most of the roads, lack of traffic rules and regulation, an increase in the number of daily accidents, and the existence of corruption and bribery among traffic personnel are the main characteristics of urban traffic system in Kabul.

Sidewalks and pedestrian ways are mostly occupied by vendors or goods from shops, making the pedestrians walk on roads and disrupt the flow of the vehicular traffic. Moreover, the flow of traffic on most of the roads in Kabul is regularly disturbed by movement of bicycles, pushcarts, and sometimes animals. This degrades the efficiency of movement and decreases the level-of-service of the roads.

The Kabul Traffic Department faces scarcity of professional capacity to cope with overgrowing traffic challenges of the city. Since 2005, the number of professional personnel in the department has declined from 750 to 250 (NOORI 2010: 106). Those include the traffic police officers who are responsible the daily management of traffic flow on the roads of Kabul.

The general perception in Kabul Traffic Department is that wider roads will reduce traffic congestion. Nevertheless, it is not the width of right-of-way which makes the flow of traffic more efficient, but it is the regulations for use of the right-of-way that prevent interruption in the flow of traffic. In most of the paved roads, the lanes are not specified and there is no standardized lane width. This makes the vehicles line up in an unorganized manner, and it gets worse when some drivers overtake others in a zig-zag pattern creating blockages that cannot be solved for several hours even with a traffic police intervention.

Security barriers and/or full blocking of some roads are the other issues that affect the flow of traffic in Kabul. This includes putting concrete barriers or security walls along with some roads in front of international organizations, foreign embassies or government ministries narrowing

the right-of-way, or in some cases such as the US Embassy, ISAF³⁴ headquarter and other foreign embassies the roads are completely inaccessible to the public. The blockages of these roads have paralyzed important parts of Kabul and/or have put more pressure on other roads in those areas. As a result, the traffic jam in those areas is inevitable during peak hours, as the alternative routes are limited to the drivers.

Only a few roads are equipped with traffic lights and signals. In the rest of areas, traffic flow is managed manually by traffic police. Movement of high-ranking officials e.g. government ministers, members of parliament, as well as military vehicles of NATO and ISAF forces cause heavy traffic congestion, as the security forces close the roads to public traffic during the time they move in the city.

Unlike many other cities in the world, Kabul Municipality does not have any authority over the Kabul Traffic Department, which is part of Ministry of Interior. Construction and maintenance of roads are the responsibility of Kabul Municipality while traffic management is a function of Kabul Traffic Department, which does not have its own planning and engineering section. Moreover, the operation of bus services is the responsibility of the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. Lack of proper coordination among these organizations leaves a vast gap in managing the daily movements of vehicles in the city. Many of the decisions related to utilization of urban roads are taken by the Traffic Department. For example, Traffic Department has changed some of the two-way roads to one-way roads in crowded areas of the city to cope with congestion, and in some areas, unnecessary U-turn points have been placed using concrete blocks or stone, which does not comply with any traffic engineering and transport planning measures.

According to (WAHID 2014), the Kabul Municipality wishes to integrate the Kabul Traffic Department within its administrative structure as one of the measures to improve traffic management system in the city. However, this involves a high-level political decision which is beyond the authority of Kabul Municipality.

34 The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was a NATO-led security mission in Afghanistan, established by the United Nations Security Council in December 2001 in accordance with the Bonn Conference on Afghanistan.

Lack or scarcity of public parking is another major challenge in Kabul. There are no assigned parking areas in crowded areas of the city. Vehicles usually park on road sides which are not assigned for parking purposes, affecting the flow of traffic. It gets worse when vehicles park in two rows at the side of the roads at crowded commercial areas such as Shahr-i-Naw.

Registration of vehicles and issuance of driving licenses are processed in a poor manner which involves long bureaucratic procedures and corruption. In most of the cases, the driving licenses are issued without a driving test through bribing personnel in the traffic department or paying dealers and middlemen, who have connections within the traffic department. In some cases, forged driving licenses can be bought. As there is no centralized digital database system for registration of driving licenses, it is hard for traffic police officers to distinguish between a valid license and a fraudulent one. On the other hand, there are no regular checks in the city and there are many drivers who drive in the city even without a driving license (AHMAD and FAKHRI 2014).

Registration and documentation of vehicles are also done in a poor manner on paper-based systems. There is no centralized digital database system for registration of vehicles in the traffic department. As a result, identification and follow-up of violence of traffic regulations by drivers are a very difficult.

4.7.3.3 Public Transport Services

The public transport services in Kabul are provided by both government public transport agency and the private sector. Millie-Bus³⁵, the public transport agency operating under the Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation, is the largest bus service in the country. It was established in April 1975(N. H. DUPREE 1975). Before civil war of the 1990s in Kabul, Millie-Bus was the main provider of public transport services in Kabul. Besides, a small portion of the load was carried out by privately run minibusses. During the war, almost all of the assets of Millie-Bus agency including the majority of buses were destroyed. After the fall of Taliban, the agency was revived with limited resources. Despite the enormous aid from various donor countries including India, Japan, Pakistan and Iran which contributed a

35 Millie Bus is the Pashtu name meaning 'The National Bus'.

considerable number of buses to the government of Afghanistan³⁶, the Millie-Bus agency has not been able to operate efficiently and compete with the private sector. It has been reported that 90 percent of the donated buses since 2002 is not operational due to technical issues and mismanagement (S. KOHISTANI 2014).

The operation of private transport services has increased in Kabul in order to overcome growing demand. It is estimated that the private sector counts for over 90% of mass transport services in Kabul (HABIBZAI, HABIBZAI, and SUN 2010: 10). The most common mode of private transport services is Toyota Town-Ace mini buses. They operate informally in all areas of Kabul without specifically assigned stop points. Their route is usually from areas around the city towards the city center (CBD Area) and vice versa. These vehicles, which operate individually, provide transport services to Kabul citizen at a price higher than Millie-Bus and lower than Taxi operators. Unlike the taxi services, these mini buses are not authorized through the traffic department to provide public services. They are registered as personal vehicles and do not pay any kind of tax from their income to the government. Kabul residents have many concerns about the safety and comfortability of these vehicles, as usually, the number of passengers they pick exceeds the capacity of the vehicle and most of the time they run while doors are open. However, they are relatively quick and affordable when compared to other modes of travel in Kabul.

Recently, a private company launched bus services in Kabul. In July 2014, Afghan company Life Star started its operation with 80 buses, which is the largest privately run bus service in Kabul (SAEEDI 2014).

One of the evident problems with the operation of privately run bus services in Kabul is that they concentrate more on revenue generation, rather than serviceability. As, on the one hand, their main focus is on routes that have a higher number of passengers and generate more revenue. On the other hand, the buses do not follow a specific time interval for their operation; rather their routine depends on times and locations where the number of passengers is more. As a result, this leaves a gap in coverage of city areas where there are fewer passengers as well as makes the service inefficient in terms of timing. Involvement of the private sector in the

36 India is the largest contributor of city buses to Afghanistan which has donated 600 Tata buses, followed by Japan (111 buses), Pakistan (100 buses) and Iran (50 Buses).

provision of urban services will improve the quality of services, only when strong public institutions exist to monitor and control the quality of services provided by the private sector. The Millie-Bus has only authority over its own services which are also not managed in an efficient manner. The Kabul Traffic Department does not have any specific assignment for the private service providers to specify their routes within the city. Kabul Municipality also does not have any authority over the traffic and movement issues in the city. One of the main issues in the improvement of public transport in Kabul is a lack of unified monitoring institutions to supervise the activities of public and private service providers in the urban transportation sector. This issue can only be overcome when a strong urban governance system under one umbrella of Kabul Municipality acquires the authority over every aspect of urban management within Kabul. This may require integration of institutions such as Kabul Traffic Department and the Millie-Bus within the structure of the Kabul Municipality.



Figure 28: Toyota Town-Ace version, the most common mode of unauthorized private urban transportation service in Kabul.

Photo: SAYED 2015

4.8 Challenges and Constraints in Management of Post-Taliban Kabul

Despite various attempts and allocation of enormous budget and resources for preparation of development plans, none of the development plans for Kabul have gone through implementation stages. Nevertheless, the informal growth has played a major role in shaping the urban pattern of the post-Taliban Kabul. There have been different formal urban development activities in Kabul since the fall of the Taliban. The large scale planning attempts such as DPK and KCMP seems to be a total failure. Whereas small scale planning attempts and urban development projects with realistic and defined targets such as KURP, KMDP, and KSP were more fruitful and had a real impact on the urban transformation of the post-Taliban Kabul.

It needs to be pointed out that alongside enormous informal growth; there have been certain improvements in the development of infrastructure and urban services through formal institutions. These improvements have been in various sectors through implementation of different projects, however, in a scattered manner without effectively coordinating with each other. The majority of urban development projects were funded by the international donors and commenced without being extracted from any of the comprehensive development plans (master plans) that were prepared for Kabul in the post-Taliban era. There were specific programs for improvement of physical and social infrastructures, road re/construction and improvement projects, housing development projects, and programs for improvement of parks and playgrounds around the city. Many of these projects were also implemented by other sectoral organizations without coordination with KM or referring to any urban development plan.

Similar to the previous Soviet master plans that were mentioned in chapter 3, there are certain constraints that have caused the recent planning approaches in Kabul to fail. The roots of some of the constraints in implementation of development plans for Kabul are similar to the ones that the previous planning practices encountered in Afghanistan. However, there are further reasons behind the failure of the recent plans, which vary from deficiency of institutional capacity to an absence of understanding Afghanistan's context and the nature of previous planning practices in Afghanistan. The experience from the previous planning approaches in Kabul indicated the fact that imported planning practices without a clear understanding of Afghanistan's urbanization context would not succeed.

It needs to be mentioned that conflict and instability have always had their role in the failure of development activities in Afghanistan in different time periods. But that should not be presented as an excuse for the failure of planning practice hereafter. Nevertheless, any planning attempt needs to understand the fact that conflict has been an inherent part of Afghanistan's recent history. Therefore, the threats of conflict have to be considered in the planning of any development activity and especially city planning practices in Afghanistan.

4.8.1 Incompatible Urban Governance System

The prevailing urban governance system in Kabul is not compatible to overcome challenges and constraints that the city faces. The reform of urban governance system is crucial in a post-conflict situation, especially in countries like Afghanistan where the change of every political regime has been involved with the ideological diversion of government policies. Since the independence of the country in 1919 until seizing of the government by the Taliban, most political regimes in Afghanistan had special attention to reforming urban governance system in according to their political ideologies. However, in the post-Taliban era, despite a better political environment and international support, there no major reform of urban governance system occurred.

Unlike many countries of the world, the municipality system in Afghanistan does not comply with any compatible urban governance structure. There is no elected mayor, no city council, and overall no citizen representation. The mayor of Kabul is appointed by the president, which opposes the provision of the Constitution of Afghanistan. There is no unified urban governance system. Different sectors are governed and managed by various organizations with less coordination among them. Despite being the dominant administrative structure, KM is an organization which is partly involved in the management of the city. The last law of municipalities is from the Taliban regimes which contradict the new constitution of Afghanistan. The other laws and regulations related to land management and urban development issues also have serious deficiencies.

The incompatibility of urban governance system has enormous negative effects on management and planning system. The authorities and responsibilities of KM are not very clearly defined. There are unsolved conflicts of authority among various agencies involved in the management of Kabul. For example, as mentioned earlier, construction, development, and

maintenance of urban roads are the responsibility of KM. The Ministry of Public Works is responsible for construction and maintenance of the Kabul ring roads and highways. Whereas the operation of daily traffic is managed by the traffic department, which is a department of Ministry of Interior, and city buses operate under Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation. Similarly, the conflict of authority between KM and MUDA still prevails (BOYER 2006: 33). MUDA claims the authority and responsibility for preparation of development plan for all the cities of Afghanistan including Kabul. Whereas, according to KM, Kabul as the national capital of the country should have its own rights and control over its jurisdictions. MUDA is constructing massive housing projects within the jurisdiction of KM with little involvement of KM in them. The provision of urban services such as water supply, sanitation, and electricity, as well as education and health facilities, have a similar situation, as various organizations are responsible for, with less involvement of KM.

The existence of appointed mayor instead of elected one, lack of municipal council, and lack of public representation in the municipal governance also separated the KM from citizens of Kabul. This has a direct effect on the planning and management of the city. When the citizens have no voice in the municipal governance and no decision-making power, they would naturally oppose to any government urban development plan which was made behind closed doors and was considered as a highly confidential document.

4.8.2 Incompatible Planning Approaches

There is a lack of an efficient planning approach to be compatible with the socio-economic context of Afghanistan. There are still clashes among urban development professionals over the process and approaches to city planning and management in Afghanistan (NAJIM and THUNG 2015). There are many influential professionals in the planning institutions in Kabul who believe that the Soviet planning system was “perfect” (SADAT 2015). This group consists of those who have completed their higher education studies in the former Soviet Union, former socialist countries of Eastern Europe, or the educational institutions within Afghanistan, which were under direct influence of the Soviet Union.

There are many others who criticize the Soviet planning systems. These include professional returned from the Western European countries or the United States. The dominant international funding agencies in Afghanistan such as the World Bank and USAID also support the second

group. However, the prevailing planning and management system in the post-Taliban has components of both methods which are far from responding well to the urban development issues in the context of Afghanistan.

In the new development plans for Kabul, the effort and tendency of its main initial donor, the World Bank, was to institutionalize a flexible planning approach under the light of government's market-based economic policies with the involvement of citizens and the private sector in planning and decision-making about the future of the city. This tendency was evidently specified in the terms of reference of the project for preparation of DPK. Despite various issues that were discussed its deficiencies, the final outcome of the ICT's DPK was a relatively more flexible than any other master plan for Kabul which existed before. It had more potential to be modified in according to the realities of Afghanistan. This could be achieved during its implementation stages and it could be used as a roadmap for future development projects in Kabul.

However, on the one hand, the prevailing bureaucracy in the institutions of Afghanistan, which still had a strong influence of the Soviet socialist procedures, and on the other hand, the influence of DCDA forced the planning approaches to move back towards something similar to the previous Soviet master plans. The JICA's KCMP resembled the Kabul Master Plan 1978 and was a diversion of planning process towards previous master planning approach. This was because the World Bank which funded the DPK had strict conditions and clear terms of reference for planning methods, whereas, the JICA's fund for KCMP did not involve such conditions.

It needs to be acknowledged that the level of effort that had been put in the preparation of the KCMP by the ICT and the JICA planning teams was incredible and a record in the history of city planning in Afghanistan. Unlike the Soviet master plans that consisted of fewer written documents and a series of drawings, the ICT study, and the JICA's KCMP consisted of hundreds of pages of data and information alongside a variety of maps and drawings, in which many aspects of urban development in Kabul were studied and documented.

Nevertheless, the complexity of the new KCMP was one of the significant issues that mounted as a constraint for its successful implementation. This is because the plan was prepared by highly qualified international professionals, which was incomprehensible for KM planners,

architects, engineers, and other technical personnel. Due to the relatively low scale of salaries in KM, the professional capacity of its personnel is quite low. Moreover, all the documents and reports of the new master plans were written in English, which made it more complex for many of the municipality staff who did not understand it. The master plan was too general and schematic and needed to be detailed out. It was very important for those who prepared the detail plans to clearly understand the master plan before working on its details.

Moreover, similar to previous Soviet master plans, KCMP requires demolition of vast areas of existing urban settlements. The informal settlement could be more vulnerable if the plan was implemented. Cities reflect the socio-economic characteristics of their inhabitants. The existence of vast areas of poor housing and slums in a Kabul represents the fact that a majority of the low-income population is living there. Without exception, all of the planning attempts for Kabul have been future-oriented, with less concern about the present problems. The prevailing master plans for Kabul have only drawn a line to exclude those low-income settlements from the rest of the city. It is not the poor housing conditions that generate informal settlements in the city; rather, it is the master plans that create the distinction by excluding them from the formal plan and defining them as informal settlements. In reality, Kabul is a city of predominantly informal settlements with few planned areas.

The planning of cities needs to have the power to drive people to become aligned with the objectives of the plan. This should not be by using force, rather it has to work with the spirit of the society and make it drive from within. One of the problems of normative planning is its blindness in sensing the spirit of society and in most of the cases, it has moved against this spirit. Kabul needs a planning and management system which can empower the people to make their city. The perception of city management and planning should not be serving the rich and threaten the majority of the population with fear of eviction and demolition of their houses. The solutions for city problems have to come from the people at the grassroots level; not from a group of international consultants who spend few days in security isolated five-star hotels, and then propose a strategy for urban challenges of a city that they never lived in.

4.8.3 Corruption

Corruption is one of the most threatening obstacles, not only against urban governance and management reforms but also the whole state-building efforts in Afghanistan. In recent years,

Afghanistan has been consistently at the bottom of the corruption perception index, only surpassing North Korea and Somalia (TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL 2015). Widespread corruption is involved with the decline of government legitimacy, which has resulted in deterioration of security situation and Taliban's revival (CHAUDHURI and FARRELL 2011).

According to a survey by the Asia Foundation, 62.4% of interviewed Afghans said that corruption was the major problem in their daily life (WARREN 2014: 92). In 2012, half of Afghan citizens paid a bribe while requesting a public service and the total cost of bribes paid to public officials amounted to US\$ 3.9 billion, which is 20% of GDP in 2012 (UNODC 2012). Involvement of politicians and high-ranking government officials makes it hard to fight corruption, as many of those who are supposed to bring a change in the situation are the most corrupt people in the country.

4.8.4 Inefficient and Time-Consuming Decision Making Process

Existence time-consuming bureaucratic procedures for plan approval are one of the many constraints that cause a delay in the planning process. The master plan for Kabul, because of its importance as the capital city, has to go through a long approval process. The President of Afghanistan is the ultimate authority who approves the city plan before it goes to the implementation stage.

There has always been a confusion about the nature of urban problems in Kabul among the various professionals within the government. The lack of a planning consensus and a common understanding of urban issues and ways to address those issues among the technocrats reflect in their reaction to the master plan. The Master Plan has its pros and cons among the advisors of the president as well. So it took over three years of time for the President of Afghanistan to approve the Master Plan of Kabul. Yet, the master plan has not gone through implementation stage as the new President of Afghanistan has some considerations about it. As a matter of fact, by the time the plan is passed through all the bureaucratic procedures for its approval, it is already obsolete. The city transforms fast and the urban issues need to be re-defined in according to the new circumstances.

The other constraint is the technical gap between the master plan, which is a very broad perspective for the city development, and detailed plans that need to be extracted from the master plan. This requires the technical capacity within the city planning department of Kabul

Municipality, which hardly exists. The city plan prepared by international consultants is too complicated for the local planners to fully comprehend, and interpret it into detailed plans and actual projects. The majority of the professional personnel in the city planning department of Kabul Municipality have a degree in engineering or architecture. There are no professional planners, as the planning education almost did not exist within the universities and the higher education system of Afghanistan.

The plan prepared by an international company, which does not have a clear understanding of the situation in Afghanistan, would hardly respond to the inherent urban issues of Kabul. It is a matter of fact that both international consultancy companies (ICT and Companies hired by the JICA) conducted certain studies to have a better understanding of the background of urban development in Afghanistan, before the plan preparation. However, they used normative planning approaches to prepare a plan that they did not have any responsibility for its implementation. Planning is a continuous process that needs to have a smooth flow from pre-planning stages to implementation/post-implementation phases. This continuity is broken in the planning process in Kabul.

The other consequence of hiring the international company for city plan preparation is that the company generates a plan that is very ambitious and does not pace with the actual resources and financial means of the government. For Example, the plan asks for upgrading or relocation of informal settlements as a matter of fact, but it does not discuss the sources of financial funds for it.

The further challenges and deficiencies of development plans for Kabul can be understood during their implementation stages. The prevailing reaction of authorities in the Kabul Municipality to the deficiencies of development plans for Kabul (e.g. ICT's plan for Kabul) was to reject the plan and hand it over for further revision, which usually took several years to happen. As a result of this process, the development plans have remained in a bureaucratic circle of planning, evaluation, objections, and revision and amendments for a year without finding a chance to move into implementation stages.

The important issue is that Kabul Municipality as implementing agency of the KCMP should take the plan into the implementation level and cope with the challenges and issues. It is

essential to revise the deficiencies of the Master Plan in the project level to prevent the time-consuming process of amending the whole master plan.

According to the municipal law of the communist regime in Afghanistan, the central authority for city planning had the responsibility of plan preparation. After being finalized, the plan needed the approval of councils of ministers and the president of Afghanistan. This process of approval also applied for any amendment to the plan (Municipal Law, 1991). The same procedure still prevails.

4.8.5 Scarcity of Professional Capacity

The scarcity of professional capacity is another challenge that KM and MUDA face in planning and management of cities in Afghanistan. Despite various projects for capacity building within these government agencies through international donors, there is only a few qualified professional staff working as permanent personnel in KM and MUDA. In the initial years after falling of the Taliban regime, there was an overall scarcity of educated people and professional capacity at the country level. This was because the education system was severely damaged during the civil war and the Taliban rule and there were only remnants of few higher educational institutions, which were at their lowest possible capacity. Although, due to the improvement of public and establishment of dozens of new private educational institutions in recent years, the scarcity of professional capacity is no more a threat in the capital city of Kabul. However, the challenging issue for the governmental organizations such as KM and MUDA is how to compete with the private firms and NGOs to recruit those professionals in a free market situation where the job opportunities outside government institutions are more attractive. As mentioned before, a major reason behind it is the scale of salary in governmental agencies, which is very low as compared to private companies or international organizations in Afghanistan. Therefore, most of the qualified professionals leave their government jobs when they are offered more attractive job opportunities outside the government structure.

Moreover, many of the internationally funded development projects are implemented through the establishment of a parallel semi-private organization within a government organization. The intention is often to improve management and professional capacity of the host government organization through its interaction with the internationally funded parallel organization. However, in reality, it is evidently not very effective. KURP was an example of

such a parallel organization. Despite the fact that KURP was incorporated within the structure of MUDA as one of its projects, it was never fully integrated into the MUDAs administrative structure. Rather, it remained a parallel organization alongside the MUDA with an evident variety of differences. The technical and administrative personnel of KURP were selected from among local and international professionals with international salary scales paid by the World Bank, while their counterparts in the main departments of MUDA were paid at local scales. Thus, it created a double standard among the MUDA's personnel and, on the other hand, dependency to the international aid made KURP a fragile organization which could be easily disintegrated after the project fund was over. Moreover, KURP, despite having high professional capacity compared to MUDA, had less effect in improving professional capacity among MUDA's regular staff, as they had less interaction with each other.

There are many similar development projects in Afghanistan carried out by the international companies or consultants in which the administrative costs are much higher than the benefits. It is estimated that about 40% of aid to Afghanistan return back to donor countries in profits, salaries, and allowances (WALDMAN 2008: 18). Moreover, the international experts are paid an additional 70% of their basic salary as a danger allowance and hardship pay, because of the security situation in Afghanistan. Thus, the total cost of each full-time expatriate consultant reaches half a million dollars a year, which is hundreds of times the average annual salary of an Afghan civil servant (WALDMAN 2008: 19).

4.8.6 Financial Constraints

The international aid economy played a significant role in the formal city planning efforts for the post-Taliban Kabul. However, the new visions for Kabul urban development were extremely unrealistic and ambitious, not only in town planning aspects but also in relation to available funds and commitment of donor agencies. Despite the international donor agencies funded the planning and design phases, the implementation phases were under the shadow of ambiguity and uncertainty. The donors' concern about the uncertainty of the urban development projects was reflected in the KURP implementation completion report of the World Bank as well:

“The urban agenda and the program outlined by the Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA) to which KURP tried to respond, was extremely ambitious. Despite Project design

supported by a qualified Bank team with required skills, the team failed to exercise judicious selectivity in the scope of the Project – the components chosen were neither straightforward nor simple, nor was there adequate time to prepare them, nor were there adequate resources. There were also multiple interlocutors for such components, increasing the number of entities that would be involved in the implementation of the project and consequently the complexity. In fact, the municipal finance component was not managed by the KURP PMU but by the MOF" (WORLD-BANK 2013).

As it was discussed in Chapter 3, one of the major obstacles in the implementation of previous master plans was a limitation of funds to finance various projects extracted from the master plan. The same applied to the new development plans and projects for Kabul. For example, according to ICT's estimations, the DPK required an amount of about 20 billion USD for a period of 15 years for its implementation. The estimation by the JICA team in the amended plan also indicated a similar amount for project implementation. The breakdown of costs for various sectors is shown in Table 5.

Sectors	Total Cost US\$ million	Phase wise cost		
		Phase I 2008-13	Phase II 2013-18	Phase III 2018-23
Housing	2363	786	848	729
Physical Infrastructure	821	274	197	350
Social Infrastructure	12000	7200	1800	3000
Recreational Facilities	250	100	75	75
Environment	600	300	120	180
Heritage	110	30	25	35
Roads and Transportation	3928	1101	1168	1659
Total Cost	20,072	9791	4233	6028

Table 5: Consolidated project cost for Kabul development plan
Source: ICT (2008)

As shown in the above table, there was an investment needed for an amount of 9.79 billion USD for implementation of the first phase of the master plan. This required an annual amount of about 2 billion USD for the initial five years of plan implementation phase. In order to have a better picture of the financial status of Kabul Municipality, it needs to be pointed out that the national budget of Afghanistan for the year 2016 was 6.63 billion USD, out of which only 31% of it was from the government revenues and the remaining depended on international aid. The development budget of Kabul Municipality in 2016 was 56.9 million USD which made about

0.9% of the national budget (MOF 2016). Recently, Kabul Municipality undertook certain measures to improve its revenue collection process. However, it is challenged, on the one hand, by outdated tax rates and administrative burdens for the taxpayers, which makes it difficult for Municipality to enforce payment. On the other hand, the centralized system of finance at country level requires the Municipality to hand over its own revenues to the central government. The municipal budget is then reallocated by the central government in the national budget and the Ministry of Finance must approve it (METCALFE, HAYSOM, and MARTIN 2012: 27).

The development plans for Kabul and KCMP were prepared in a normative manner without consideration of potential resources and funds to finance its implementation. The dominant methodology was the extraction of the requirements of the projected population for land use, infrastructure and other urban facilities based on normative planning standards prevailing in various parts of the world. An assessment of the available resources and potential funds at pre-planning stages was absent in planning for Kabul. The first step in planning needed to be a clear understanding of available and potential resources and then their allocation in an optimum manner based on prioritization of the needs of the society. Moreover, it was important for the plan to envision a clear implementation strategy based on realities of the society. In the case of KCMP, the capacity of Kabul Municipality needed to be evaluated to understand whether it has the political, technical, administrative and financial means and capacity to implement such a plan.

In addition, the privatization of certain services such as plan preparation, especially in post-conflict situations like Afghanistan, can evidently be involved with many problems and challenges. Firstly, the international consultants involved in plan preparation for post-Taliban Kabul (e.g. ICT and JICA planning teams) lacked the required local knowledge about the city which could not be acquired in short period of time. Secondly, due to the dangerous security situation, the international experts were not able to properly conduct field visits to obtain empirical data about the city prior to plan preparation. Finally, the international consultants often focused on what needed to be achieved, rather than what can be achieved with resources available. Thus, it is not surprising that the outcome of their work does not comply with realities of Afghanistan.

5 Kabul New City: A Post-Conflict Utopia

5.1 From a Dystopia to a Utopia

Planning and design of new cities have been prevailing practices since the dawn of human civilization. The ideal of human settlement with the maximum level of welfare and prosperity to its inhabitants has been humanities ultimate desire which has been reflected in different ways through the history. Plato's 'Republic', Sir Thomas More's 'Utopia', and in the modern era Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City', Le Corbusier's 'Radiant City', and Frank Lloyd Wright's 'Broad Acre City' reflect the human enthusiasm towards the creation of ideal spaces. Many of these ideal spaces have had a strong influence in actual planning and design of cities. However, these Utopian idealist concepts, when applied in the real form, have had many deficiencies and faced enormous critics. Jane JACOBS (1961) was one the influential critics of utopian city planning approaches, who introduced new principles of city planning different and even opposite of those, prevailed after the second half of the twentieth century in many countries around the world. Jacobs's ideas, which were from citizen's perspective rather than a professional planner, changed the ways city planning was perceived; however, not in less developed countries, where the city planning professionals still favor the utopian conceptions.

Many new cities have been planned and designed in different parts of the world influenced by the utopian concepts of the modernist town planners. Despite their differences in political and socio-economic motivations, a common feature among many of these cities is their location on a new clear site away from another existing city. The major intention of planning on a clear site was to build a city from scratch to prevent possible problems that existing cities suffer from, such as informality, traffic congestions, environmental pollution, and visual "ugliness". This could also give planners the opportunity to apply their ideal urban forms and aesthetics creating their dream utopias. Chandigarh in India, Islamabad in Pakistan, Brasilia in Brazil, and recently the King Abdullah Economic City in Saudi Arabia are the examples new cities which have been planned and designed on clear sites.

The experience of planning for a new city, as it was mentioned in chapter three, has a deep root in urbanization trend of Kabul. It also shaped a significant part of post-Taliban urban management efforts. In parallel to attempts for reconstruction and revitalization of urban

planning and management system in Kabul, the concept of planning for a new city in Dehsabz emerged and significantly influenced the post-Taliban urbanization scenario for Kabul.

Planning for a New City in Dehsabz is a radical shift from a post-conflict dystopia to an ideal utopia. “Dehsabz was to become the first "carbon-free" capital of the world to develop into the economic center of Afghanistan with the latest sustainable technologies, traditional construction methods and crafts, with water, the wind and solar energy” (ISSA 2012: 182). It was expected to be part of a solution for ever-growing urbanization problems of Kabul. However, its effectiveness is under a shadow of ambiguity and it appears to arise a new set of problems rather than a solution. The master plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz is a final outcome of various planning attempts for this purpose. This chapter examines the utopian planning approaches for new cities in the socio-economic and political context of the post-Taliban Kabul, with special, emphasize on planning conceptions of Kabul New City in Dehsabz in relations to its efficiency in order to address the post-conflict urbanization issues of Kabul.

5.2 Background of Development in Dehsabz

Dehsabz is a district of Kabul Province located at the northeast of Kabul City. The Khwaja-Rawash hill at the north of the Kabul Airport separates Dehsabz from Kabul, and the Koh-i-Safi mountain ranges at Northeast isolate it from Koh-i-Safi district of Parwan province. Dehsabz is also bordered by other four districts of Kabul province at Northwest namely Shakardara, Mir-Bacha-Kot, Kalakan, and Qarabagh. The area of the district is about 565 square kilometers. The vast area of Dehsabz consists of arid land, hills and mountain ranges, except for only a few villages and settlements, which are surrounded by agricultural land.

Kabul-Bagram road, one of the two main highways connecting Kabul to the Northern provinces, crosses the Dehsabz District. The highway was constructed in the 1980s during the reign of the communist regime in Afghanistan as an alternative path to avoid Mujahideen’s assaults on supply trucks of goods from the Soviet Union to Kabul. It was intentionally extended through areas of arid land to make security coverage easier and to reduce the risk of destructive attacks from inside gardens or agricultural fields, as they used to happen often on the other highway at the east of Dehsabz. The construction of the highway increased the significance of the Dehsabz area as it provided easier access for the villagers to sell their agricultural products in markets of Kabul. However, the area became more significant after the

fall of Taliban in 2001, as the demand for housing and shelter increased in Kabul due to the influx of returning refugees and IDPs.

In 2002, when the growth of population in Kabul was increasing at a very fast rate, the city area expanded towards north and northwest mostly on upper hills of Khair-Khana, Khujabughra, and outskirts of Khwaja-Rawash Hill (Figure 30). This created a perception among land owners, private developers, and some town planning professionals that the expansion of Kabul will go beyond the north hills and soon will take over the Dehsabz District.



Figure 29: Expansion of residential areas in Kabul to the north direction on the hill slopes towards Dehsabz

Source: (ARCHITECTURE STUDIO 2007)

The post-Taliban political environment and the new government's tendency towards privatization of development sector encouraged the private investors to take part in the reconstruction efforts. This paved the way for many investors to return back to Afghanistan and benefit from the boom of the real estate market which was emerging in Kabul. A relatively lawless situation of immediate post-Taliban era enticed a number of opportunistic groups as well to enter into real estate market. As a result, several private investors bought parcels of arid land along the Kabul-Bagram highway from the local population, with the intention of making large profits from converting them into urban land. The market for the new townships in Dehsabz was booming in the initial years after the fall of the Taliban. Many private developers got involved in the business of new townships. The business was simple and very profitable. As, on the one hand, the newly established government did not yet have any provision or

regulation about the emergence of new townships and their licensing, and on the other hand, the investors did not follow any professional town planning method. Their job was only to subdivide large parcels of land to small plots of 300 to 500 square meters and sell them to the customers. There were also few private companies, which had broader and more professional town planning agendas for their investments. Their plans included construction of group housing projects with some facilities. Nevertheless, the sold parcels of land and partially built houses were never fully occupied by their owners, because they lack required infrastructure and basic services. Moreover, daily commuting to Kabul is costly and time-consuming.

Meanwhile, that the private developers were selling plots of land on the site, the idea of preparing a comprehensive development plan to consolidate and regularize the prevailing development activities in Dehsabz was argued and discussed among government authorities and professionals. The argument among professional relied on the fact there are topographic or environmental constraints for urbanization to other directions rather than Dehsabz. Northern and eastern areas, because of availability of large area of flat land and advantageous locations along the trade routes, were considered to be more suitable for future growth of the city. As mentioned in chapter four, a study by the WORLD BANK (2005: 15) recommended the expansion of Kabul be limited to the municipal boundaries of the existing city, as the existing city had the capacity to accommodate the future population in the form of area upgradation and densification.

Nevertheless, the authorities and some professionals at the MUDA were in favor of development of brand new city with modern concepts. Authorities of MUDA were tired of struggling with Kabul Municipality over issues and problems of existing Kabul. Therefore, they favored planning of a new city under the full authority of the ministry as an alternative solution to the problems of Kabul. The main argument was that addressing the problems of existing Kabul, such as the provision of infrastructure and solving issues of informal settlements, would be costlier and time-consuming than planning and development of a new city. It was also believed that the development of a new city would reduce the population pressure on Kabul. As a result, it would ease to overcome problems of Kabul.

On the other hand, architects and planners, who were in decision-making positions at the MUDA, saw this as an opportunity to practice their profession on a clear site. As the prevailing concept of planning among the majority of planners in Afghanistan was a top-down master

plan approach that needed a clear site to be implemented. Even if there were settlements on the site, the planners used to consider it as clear, and the implementation stages were involved with the use of bulldozer for preparing the site. A relatively clear and flat area such as Dehsabz was almost a dream for the planners and urban designers at the MUDA to practice their profession. Therefore, they naturally favored planning of a new city.

Nevertheless, the private developers and investors, who had a strong relationship with political elites in the government including President Karzai, played a very important role in the emergence of a concept for a new city in Dehsabz. In fact, they were the main reason, as the development of the new city was intended to be carried out by means of private investment. Some of the private investors prepared the first plans for the development of housing complexes in Dehsabz. However, the MUDA wanted something more comprehensive, as the private plans were for limited areas in Dehsabz and lacked some major urban utilities and services.

The planners at the MUDA did the first attempt to prepare a concept plan for Dehsabz, as part of an action plan for Kabul during 2003 and 2004. The plan covered an area of approximately 550 square kilometers of Dehsabz district, with a concentration on the roadside development along the Kabul-Bagram highway. The existing agricultural areas located on the west side of the Kabul-Bagram highway were preserved while the arid lands of the eastern side of the highway were considered for the new development. The plan contained a variety of categories for the proposed land-use. It also anticipated for the construction of a dam at the northeastern part of Dehsabz near Kalakan district to provide the required water for the new city. Due to the rapid changes on the site and bureaucratic constraints, the prepared plan could not move forward from a conceptual level.

5.3 The Emergence of the Dehsabz-Barikab City Development Authority (DCDA)

The period from 2002 until 2004, which were the initial steps for the establishment of the new Government of Afghanistan including enactment of a new constitution and the first presidential elections, the concept for the planning of new city in Dehsabz was in its inception period but never got actualized. However, after the presidential elections of 2004, the concept of the new city became more significance, as the political elite circle around President Karzai were very

much in favor of starting the project. As a result, in 2006, an independent board for development of Kabul New City was established based on a presidential decree. One of the president's advisors led the board and the members consisted of cabinet ministers, parliament members, president's advisors, and representatives from the private sector. Consequently, Dehsabz City Development Authority (DCDA) was established in 2007, as the executive body of the independent board for the development of Kabul New City (DCDA 2012).

In 2007, the DCDA conducted an international competition for the preparation of a conceptual design for Kabul New City in Dehsabz. The transparency of this competition was not very clear to the public, as there were no media coverage about it. The author could not succeed to find more details about the competition procedures and the cost of the project. Nonetheless, Architecture-Studio, a French company was selected as the winner of the competition, and the job of plan preparation was handed over to it. The company prepared a fancy concept design for Dehsabz area. The plan was more of an urban design exercise ignoring many of the site realities such as the existing villages, agricultural land, and site terrain. It also reflected less of the architectural and cultural lifestyle of the local people; and, its implementation would require a total demolition and clearance of the site. Despite the neat drawings and a beautifully made maquette, the proposed concept could not satisfy MUDA as it did not address any existing issues of the site and lacked an implementation strategy. Therefore, it was left away; however, the maquette of the project is still available in DCDA's office for the exhibition.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was one of the main funding agencies in Afghanistan that were interested in development aspects of Dehsabz area. JICA already conducted a study in 2006 about Dehsabz area and issues of water availability. Based on this, the DCDA requested JICA for support in plan preparation. Finally, the task of plan preparation for Kabul New City in Dehsabz was handed over to JICA in 2008. JICA hired a group of international companies as RECS International Inc., Yachiyo Engineering Co., Ltd., CTI Engineering International Co., Ltd., and Sanyu Consultants Inc. to carry out the task of plan preparation. The team started its field work in 2008 and submitted its final work to DCDA in 2009(JICA 2009a). Meanwhile, the area of Barikab located at the northern part of Dehsabz along the way to Bagram Airbase was incorporated in the plan as an agricultural economic zone of the new city (DCDA 2012). In April 2016, the Dehsabz-Barikab City Development Authority (DCDA) was promoted to Capital Region Independent Development Authority (CRIDA) through a presidential decree (CRIDA 2016).



Figure 30: The concept design prepared by the Architecture Studio in 2007 for Dehsabz
Source: (ARCHITECTURE STUDIO 2007)

5.4 The Master Plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz

Planning of new city in Dehsabz is one of the various attempts to overcome problems and issues of the existing city of Kabul. Prior to Dehsabz, Kabul has witnessed many previous *New City* concepts from Sher Ali Khan's Sherpur City in the 1870s, to Amanullah's Darulaman City in the 1920s and Zahir Shah's Shar-i-Naw in the 1930s, as mentioned in Chapter 3. From among which, only the last one was a relatively successful town planning approach, despite focusing only on housing the elite population of its time. Nevertheless, all the other town planning attempts for *New City* failed due to political and socio-economic reasons. Planning for Kabul New City in Dehsabz was also perceived as a mean for implementing some planners' modernist dreams, which seemed not possible in the existing city of Kabul.

The final outcome of the JICA team was a set of comprehensive reports of over 1900 pages along with maps and drawings for the proposed Master Plan for Kabul Metropolitan Area. The report includes a detailed study of Kabul metropolitan area and proposals for its future development. A part of the report was allocated to the Master Plan for Kabul New City (MPKNC). The MPKNC included proposals for future land-use, transportation, water supply and sewage, solid waste, power supply, and provided cost estimates for implementation of the future projects.

The emergence of new planned cities around the world has had various motives from political, in most cases, to social and economic causes. The main motives for the emergence of New City in Dehsabz initially were the rapid population growth due to the return of refugees and displaced population who were in extreme need of shelter. Thus, the main function of the new city was to accommodate the excess population of Kabul city. Nevertheless, the MPKNC, along with residential function, has anticipated certain other urban functions to be located in the New City. This has been done through breaking down the urban functions into various categories. The categories broadly included administrative, commercial, legislative, judicial, diplomatic, research and development, social, cultural, recreational and sporting, and agricultural. These functions have been assessed and based on the suitability of each function for a certain location in the city center, sub-center, or outer areas; the preferable locations for each function have been assigned. Functions such as defense and security administration, domestic and international trade, international business and financial services, conferences and conventions centers, research and development for all the sectors, higher order social services, recreational and sporting, and all the administrative functions related to construction and development were proposed to be located in the New City (JICA 2009a).

5.4.1 Population, Land-use and Future Development Perspectives in Dehsabz

The present area of Dehsabz district consists of various villages and scattered rural settlements. despite the fact that many private investors and even land grabbers, knowing that the area of Dehsabz is intended to be the site for a new city, started some development activities in the form of new townships including selling and distributing land plots along the Kabul-Bagram road, there has not yet any actual urban settlement emerged in the area. Rather, most of the land plots and constructed houses are still vacant, as there is no infrastructure, utilities, and urban services available on the site.

Similar to Kabul, there is no accurate data about the population of Dehsabz District. According to official population estimations, Dehsabz had a population of 56,107 in 2016 (CSO 2016b). However, in the Master Plan for Kabul New City, the base population for Dehsabz was considered at 100,000 in 2009, which was projected to would grow at a rate of about 5 percent per annum to reach to about 250,000 by the year 2025. As the new city is intended to accommodate more population to reduce the present pressure on Kabul, three alternative population estimates were considered for the new city in the year 2025: (1) modest development with a population of 500,000, (2) steady development with a population of 1 million, and (3) ambitious development for a population of 2 million (JICA 2009a).

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the JICA team estimated the population of Kabul at 4.1 million in 2008 and 6.7 million projected by 2025 for the metropolitan area, including 1.5 million for the new city in Dehsabz. The justification for the distribution of the population in the region relies on the fact that Kabul does not have the spatial capacity to accommodate the estimated population for the year 2025, which in an uncontrolled situation can reach up to 7.5 million. The excess population would need to be distributed in the region. As all other directions for the future growth of Kabul have some sort of either physical constraint (such as the existence of mountains towards western parts) or environmental limitations (location of upper underground water catchment areas in eastern and southern parts of Kabul), thus, the northern region was considered the only preferable choice. Therefore, the northern regions of Kabul would have to accommodate some 3.5 million people by 2025. However, this would depend on the development of the new city and how fast would it take place.

According to the above-mentioned three alternatives of development in the new city, the size of the population that would be accommodated there might vary. MPKNC estimated an average level of development from among different alternatives and defined it as Kabul metropolitan alternative. Under this alternative, the new city development was supposed to reach a population of 1.5 million by 2025 (JICA 2009a).

The JICA team conducted a study to identify the potential of various types of land in Dehsabz and Barikab area for future development. The criteria for suitability of land for urban use in the area were set based on the five factors: topography, access, protection area, geology, and watershed. Based on the topography criterion, the land was classified into three major categories as: (1) areas with less than 4 degrees of slope, (2) areas with a slope between 4 and

10 degrees, and (3) areas with a slope more than 10 degrees. The land classification based on access relied on the distance from the main roads. Thus the land was classified into various categories depending on their proximity to the main access roads. The criterion for protection areas included preservation of existing agricultural fields except for areas with high potential for urban development. The classification based on geology divided the land based on their proximity to the geological fault lines to identify the land with less potential for natural hazards such as earthquakes. The classification based on the watersheds specified the watersheds and their slope in the area to protect environmentally sensitive watersheds (JICA 2009a).

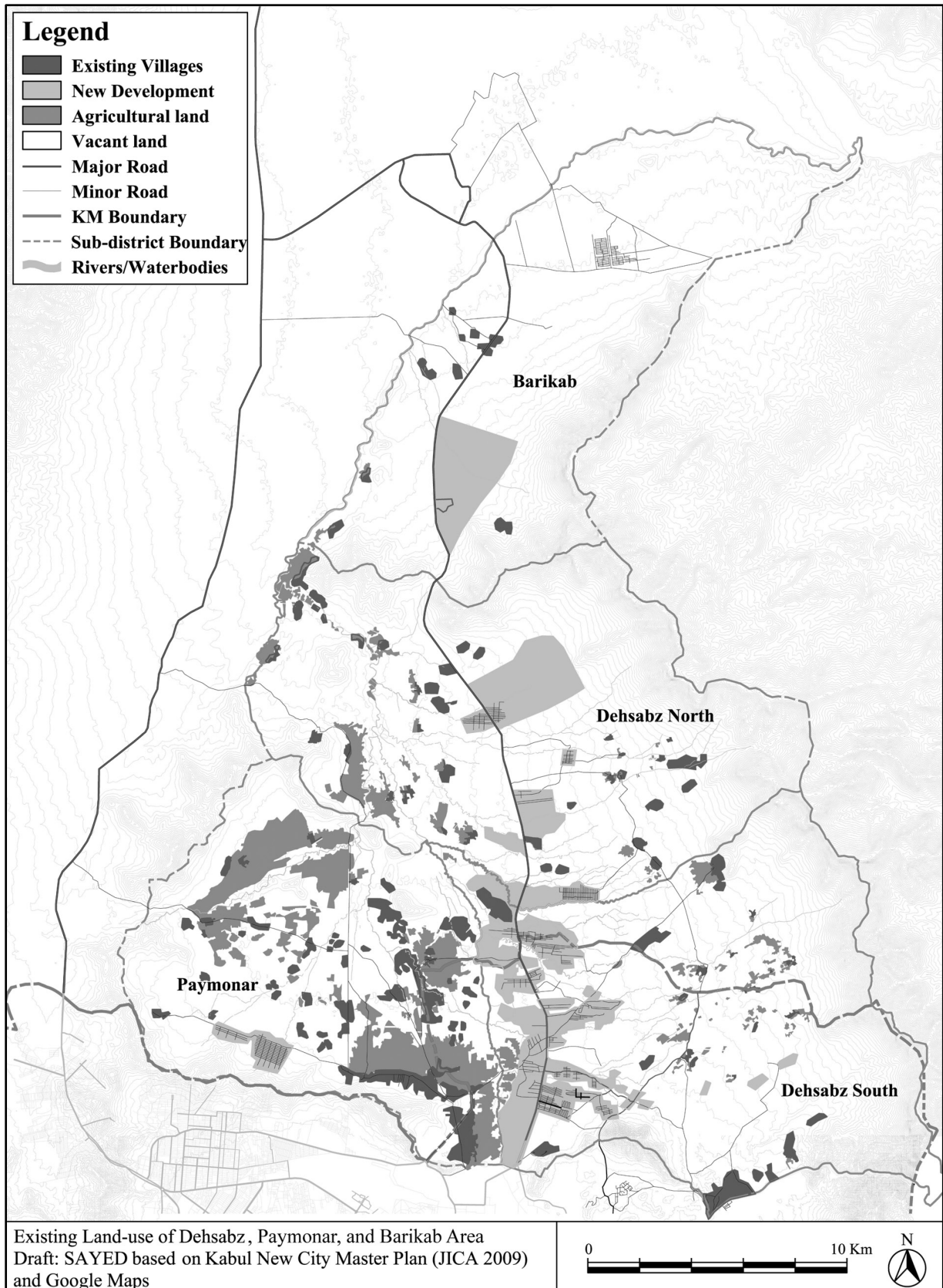
Based on the classification of types of land in the area, the JICA team proposed a land use plan for the new city for 2025. The land use plan includes variety of uses such as residential (individual housing lots with three different sizes for different densities as well as apartment buildings with two different densities), rural housing, commercial and business (with two varieties at central and district levels), light industries, public infrastructure (sewage treatment plant), green and open spaces (parks, recreational areas, green buffers, bully and riverside green, and peripheral green), agricultural fields (intensive and extensive), commercial agricultural area, agricultural villages, military areas, road and transport networks, and rivers and water surfaces(JICA 2009a). Map (x) shows a simplified proposed land use plan for Kabul New City. The details of land use categories have been omitted in Map (24) for more clarity.

As mentioned before, planning for new cities had different motivations in different countries. Some countries such as Pakistan and Brazil have planned new cities (Islamabad and Brasilia) to relocate their national capitals to a new location with modern infrastructure and to escape from the urban issues of their old capitals. While some other countries such as Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan are planning for new cities (King Abdullah Economic City and Khazar Islands) with intention of diversifying and boosting their country's economy through the planning of new cities. The intention behind planning for Kabul New City in Dehsabz, as per HOTAKI (2015), is not anymore a mere accommodation of Kabul excess population in the near future; but to achieve socio-economic growth through induced urbanization and to pave the way to attract more investment. Thus, the functions of the new city would be based on economic motivations. According to JICA (2009a), the intended functions of the new city have been listed as the following:

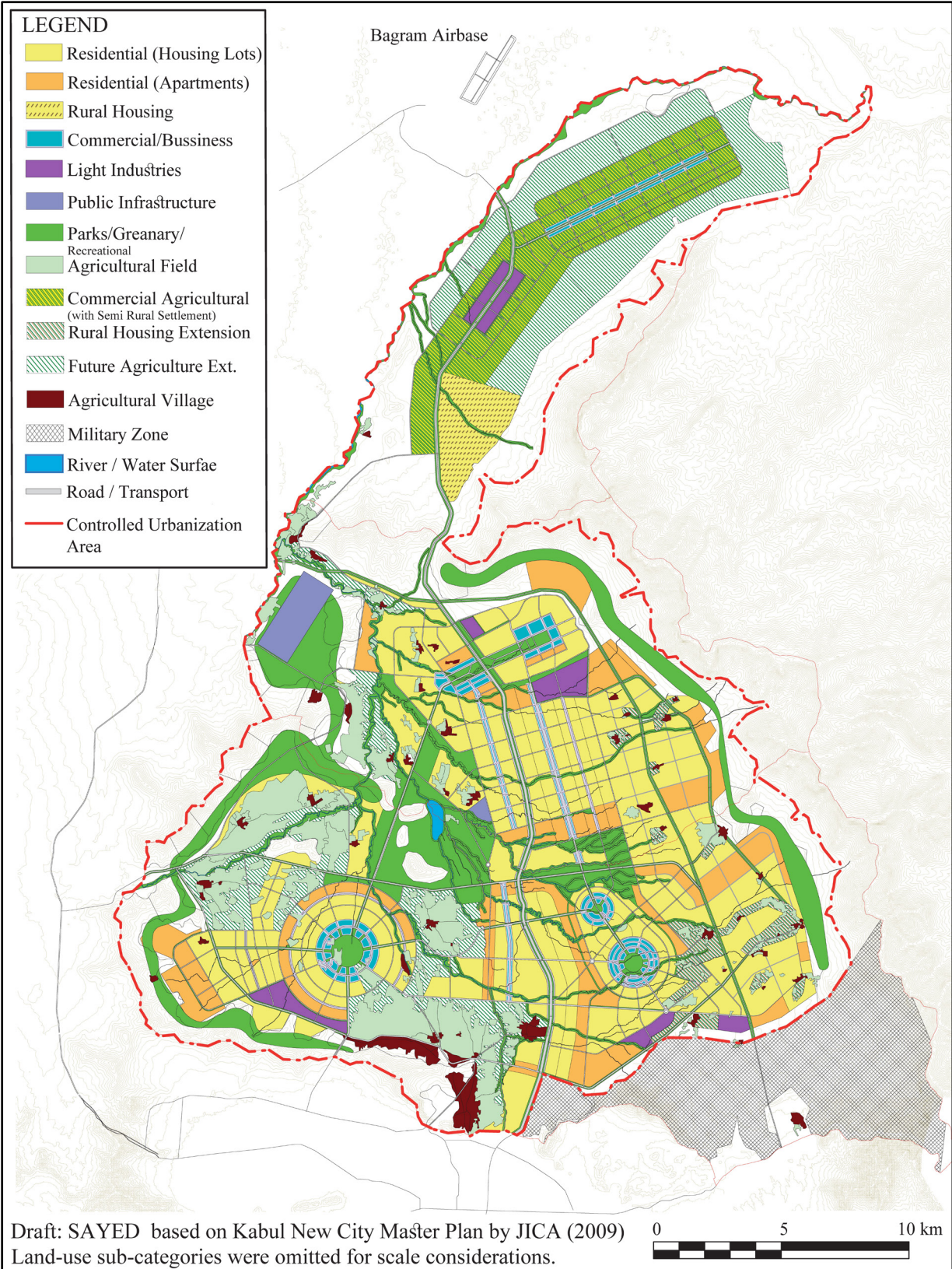
- Defense and security-related administration

- Domestic and international trade
- International business and financial services
- Conference/Convention, research, and development for all the sectors, higher order social services, and recreational and sporting functions.
- The Parliament and local courts may also locate in the new city, but their preferred location may be sub-centers due to their strong functional links with administrative functions.
- All the administrative functions related to construction and development in the New City
- Commercial agriculture, agro-processing, agricultural R & D, and other related services should locate in the Barikab area.

The JICA's proposal includes four urban cores for the New City, which consists of mostly commercial functions. This will be in addition to other ten urban cores proposed for existing Kabul in the KCMP, which will make a total of fourteen for the Kabul metropolitan area.



Map 22: Existing land-use of intended New City area in Dehsabz, Paymonar, and Barikab



Map 23: Proposed Land Use Plan for Kabul New City in Dehsabz

5.4.2 Justifications for Planning of the Kabul New City in Dehsabz

A decision on the planning of new city in Dehsabz was already made prior to any feasibility study being carried out. The JICA planning team did not have any decision-making authority; rather their focus was on plan preparation and its delivery to DCDA, which was part of Japan's technical support to reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Allocation of resources and their optimum utilization is one of the major functions of urban planning. It is very important for the planners to have a clear understanding of available resources prior to any planning approach. In the case of Dehsabz, the available resources for city planning including land as the basic resource, labor, technology, and financial means to transform the planning concepts into reality were not comprehensively evaluated prior to the decision-making process. Nevertheless, the authorities and the planning team needed strong explanations to justify the decision-making on the planning of a New City. The following includes their main justifications reflected in MPKNC according to planning team of JICA (2009a):

1. The importance of Kabul in the national and regional context: significant location of Kabul along the trade route connecting central Asia to south Asia required the capital functions of the city to be enhanced to support the socio-economic link of Afghanistan with the global socio-economy.
2. Water balance in upper Kabul basin: the risk of water scarcity is increasing in Kabul due to rapid population growth. Pollution and groundwater degradation threaten the sources of ground water in Kabul basin. The future of the city growth depends on the availability of water in the area. Urbanization of upper Kabul basin will damage the underground water recharging areas. Therefore, the environmentally sensitive areas of upper Kabul basin need to be protected. The available water resources in upper Kabul basin that can be developed for urban use was estimated by JICA study to be 171 MCM/year. This amount can support around 5 million urban populations, at the per capita water use of 90 liters/capita/day. The projected population of Kabul in the year 2025 is estimated to be 7.5 million. Thus, the alternative area to accommodate the excess population is Panjshir basin in the north of Kabul.
3. There is special provision for the development of Kabul New City in Dehsabz in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). ANDS was the government's only

systematically written five-year strategy (2008-2013) on the development of security, rule-of-law, social and economic growth, and poverty reduction. ANDS encompassed special provisions for urban development which also included the Kabul New City project (ANDS 2008: 379). It was envisioned as a part of the government strategy to achieve urban development through a public-private partnership in financing, service provision and management, and also to alleviate urban sprawl and to strengthen city planning and management capacities. The Kabul New City is envisioned to be a significant source of revenue generation through the facilitation of private investment with support and facilitation of the Government. The revenue generated would be invested on reconstruction development of Kabul as well as the development new city.

4. The natural growth of population, if adequate water is made accessible, will lead the expansion of Kabul city towards the north along the Bagram road. This growth needs to be guided in the form of planned urbanization or otherwise it can happen in the form of urban sprawl. To prevent the urban sprawl, the expansion of the excess population of Kabul towards the north has to take place in the form of new city development.

One of the basic assumptions of the MPKNC was the direction of growth in Kabul. It was assumed that if enough water was made available in the area, the expansion of urban settlements in Kabul would proceed naturally towards the north along the Bagram road. This was considered as something that will inevitably happen either in a planned manner or otherwise in the form of urban sprawl. Thus, it was suggested that the best way is to direct the growth of Kabul towards the north in the form of the new city development to have efficient use of land and to create more orderly, comfortable and efficient urban space.

This assumption seems to be not matching with the reality. The new housing projects along the Kabul-Bagram road have not yet attracted the population to move there. There are very few urban settlements formed in the area. Rather majority of the urban expansion in the north of Kabul is happening along the old Kabul-Charikar road in the northwest direction. The reason is simple; the Kabul-Bagram road runs through a desert-like area where there are no other settlements, bazaars, gardens or agricultural farms along the way up to about 40 kilometers to the north. Whereas, the old Kabul-Charikar road runs through villages, roadside bazaars, gardens, and agricultural farms, which makes the area more attractive for the population to settle there. Moreover, the water availability is not an issue along the Kabul-Charikar road.



Figure 31: The new developments alongside Kabul-Charikar Highway
Photo: SAYED 2015

5.5 Challenges and Constraints

The implementation of the KNCMP was supposed to be in three phases, starting in 2010. Each phase would take five years and the master plan would be fully implemented by 2025. However, there is no sign of plan implementation on the ground. A series of challenges and constraint including governance, management, planning, and technical issues are involved in the concept of the Kabul New City in Dehsabz. Some of these constraints are the main causes that prevented the plan to move into implementation phases.

5.5.1 Urban Governance and Management Issues

There are serious governance and management issues involved in the planning of the Kabul New City. The decision on the planning of Kabul New City was made in a situation where the conditions were not ready for such significant decision. The ambitious decision over planning for a new city from scratch in an immediate post-conflict situation was more likely to implicate risks of failure. The state was weak and fragile; the sources of funds and resources were not clear; the formal economy was uncertain and almost non-existent; the informal and criminal economy dominated, and the public and social institutions were damaged. The government was

in need of a reform at all levels. As it was mentioned in Chapter 4, there was no fundamental reform in the urban governance and management system in the post-Taliban era. Thus the decision on planning for Kabul New City was made in a situation where there was a lack of efficient governance system, amended and compatible urban legislations, and an effective urban management system.

Moreover, considering the problems and challenges of governance and management system in existing Kabul City, it is not possible for the New City to be immune of those symptoms. There were already clashes between different government agencies in relation to the planning of Kabul New City. DCDA is an independent organization which is not accountable to MUDA or KM. MUDA wanted DCDA to be part of its administrative structure. In 2014, the urban development minister criticized DCDA for the delay in implementation of the KNCMP and requested the President to dissolve DCDA and hand over its job to MUDA (AFGHANPAPER 2014). However, the president ignored this request.

The administration system and budget of DCDA are different from other governmental organizations. DCDA continuously received financial support from international donors such as JICA for its operational budget. The salary scales of its personnel and staff is many folds higher than other government agencies, which made it unsustainable and dependent to foreign fund. DCDA is a fragile organization which can easily disintegrate or change to a weak government institution once the international fund is cut off. Thus, the future of the urban governance and management system in the Kabul New City, similar to the city's own fate, is under the shadow of uncertainty and ambiguity.

5.5.2 Return of Normative 'Master Plan' Approach

The Kabul New City Master Plan is a comeback to a similar approach as the previous Soviet master plans for Kabul, however, with market-based maneuvers. Despite the KNCMP, unlike the previous Soviet plans, include a large set of reports and strategies; their final outcome, which matters the most for Afghan planners, is the proposed land use and road network plan. The proposed land use plan is what most of the planners in DCDA refer as to the *Master Plan*. The land use categories in the proposed plans are broad. The architects and planners in DCDA use the same method of detail plans, which was used for implementation of the Soviet master plans in Kabul. The detail plans are drawn with high accuracy specifying the different types of

buildings, roads, sidewalks, parking areas, parks, playgrounds, along with their intended dimensions and every detail for a specific area. Even the size, height, and footprint of buildings are specified in detail plans. In fact, detail plans draw a complete future image of the city, which does not leave any room for architectural innovations for individual buildings. The DCDA's approach is even more rigid, as the detailed plan is not the final stage of a city planning approach. DCDA architects designed specific types of residential buildings that are supposed to be constructed in the New City.



Figure 32: An example of a typical design for residential housing in Kabul New City in Dehsabz (Module Type III)
 Source: (HOTAKI 2015)

The rigidity of the planning approach in KNCMP can be a strong constraint to its successful implementation, as it does not respect the freedom of choice of its potential customers and

offers them limited options. This approach was common during the Soviet influence when the large-scale apartment housing projects were run only by the government. What makes it different and challenging for the present time, is the new political environment. In a socialist oriented political environment, where the government controlled all the resources including land and the housing policies were based on the need-supply relation rather than the demand-supply chain, the mass production of housing was seen the only effective way to overcome population needs for shelter. However, in a market dominant environment, where the housing supply is mostly through the involvement of private sector, the rigidity of city plans and limitation of choices would severely affect the demand-supply chain. Moreover, during the communist rule in Afghanistan, the government was the only supplier of shelter for the population, whereas, the market-based policies of the post-Taliban government allows for private sector involvement in the housing market. Thus, there are a variety of suppliers in the housing market, which the rigidity of the master plan can possibly prevent a free competition that is a requirement of a market economy.

In many other countries such as India, the zoning regulations are substituted for the detailed plan. This means that the master plan indicates only broader categories of land use and the zoning regulations specify the details of the sites with specific ranges for building setbacks, ground coverage, floor area ratio (FAR) and building height. This approach is more flexible and effective, as it does not enforce any specific form for buildings, and allows a variety of choices for the citizens. The JICA team suggested a transition from detailed plan to zoning regulation for implementation of the master plan (JICA 2009c). However, this doesn't seem to be applied by the local professionals at the DCDA office.

5.5.3 Challenges of Land Management

Land management is one of the most complicated post-conflict issues in Afghanistan. The land administration system has gone through many changes during the last four decades. Every political regime has had its own land management policy, which in many cases contradicted its predecessor regime. There was no functioning land administration in Afghanistan in 2001(WILY 2013: 17), which resulted in massive land grabs. Instruments for land governance and management are still inefficient to address the complicated post-conflict issues.

The land management and administration in Dehsabz was one of the major obstacles in the planning of Kabul New City project. Only 34.7 % land in Dehsabz is government land and the rest 65.3 % is private (JICA 2009b). DCDA did not allow for private subdivision of land unless provided by the Master Plan. It was intended to acquire the land completely in order to implement the Master Plan without difficulty. However, acquisition of land itself was a major challenge, as the land owners were not ready to hand over their land. The villagers of Dehsabz oppose the Kabul New City project as they see it as a threat to their normal life.

Alongside the local villagers, there are many nomads settled in Dehsabz in recent years. Many of them have lost their livestock or the security situation threatens their nomadic migration pattern. Thus, they have been trying to permanently settle in Dehsabz. However, they do not own legal titles to land. In July 2013, the nomad settlers of Dehsabz kidnapped four Japanese engineers of DCDA who went there for the survey, to express their protest against the New City project. This was followed by the Kabul police intervention, which led to a violent conflict resulting in the death of 7 and injury of 18 persons (FOSCHINI 2013). Moreover, despite the land purchases were banned in Dehsabz through an official decree in 2006, it has not been able to stop the land purchases (JICA 2011b: 29). This indicates that fact that the development in Dehsabz is going to a direction very different from what MPKNC has anticipated for.

The current legal framework and laws related to land governance and administration are not in a position to respond effectively to the above issues. Planning for Kabul New City in the absence of efficient land management instruments was one of the shortcomings of the decision-making process in the urban management of post-Taliban Kabul.

The presence of agricultural land in Dehsabz is also another challenge for DCDA. Most of the villages and agricultural land in Dehsabz were intended to be preserved in the future plan. The assumption that the development of an urban center with variety of modern residential, commercial and institutional buildings in the middle of a rural area would not affect its surrounding areas seems to be unrealistic. In reality, the construction of a road, a train station, a market or a shopping center, a school, a hospital or a clinic, or an institutional building can affect its surrounding areas. Any form of development in an area can change the price of land in its surrounding. Thus, the development of three major urban cores in the Dehsabz as per MPKNC if implemented, would definitely affect the land prices in its surrounding agricultural

land or rural settlement. This would cause those surrounding area to gradually convert into urban land, probably in the form of informal settlements.

5.5.4 Market-oriented Urban Growth and the Problem of the Poor

The development of the Kabul New City in Dehsabz cannot possibly improve the life of the majority of urban poor in existing Kabul. The market-based policies of post-Taliban political and economic environment in Afghanistan were the main motives for conception of Kabul New City project. The boom in housing market enticed many Afghan investors to look for new investment opportunities in Dehsabz real estate market. The New City was meant to be developed through private investment. According to (HOTAKI 2015) the development of the New City in Dehsabz required an amount of 9 billion USD initial investment for bulk infrastructure and utilities. The DCDA assumed this investment to come from the government of Afghanistan in order to prepare the ground for private investment on the site. Once the city attracted private investment in the housing market, it would boost the economy through interest returns. Then the government could spend the revenues from the New City to improve infrastructure and utilities of the existing city.

However, there are major concerns in relation to DCDA's above assumption. Firstly, the Government of Afghanistan is not economically in a position to afford an investment of 9 billion USD for infrastructure in the New City, which would require an annual budget of over one billion USD for the initial years of plan implementation. It needs to be pointed out that in the Afghanistan national budget of 2016, an amount of 1.26 billion USD was allocated for development of infrastructure for the entire country. This included development budgets for fourteen sectoral government organizations including six ministries, KM, DCDA, and other organizations involved in development and provision of infrastructure, out of which the DCDA's budget was only 1.6 million USD (MOF 2016: 75). Secondly, assuming that if the government of Afghanistan was in a position to invest in bulk infrastructure in the New City; it arises the question of whether it would be feasible to leave the existing city of Kabul with all its problems and issues and extend infrastructure and utilities in vacant lands of Dehsabz with the hope to boost the economy through private investment. Even if the New City project boost successfully the economic trigger in the long-term as it is intended, with the prevailing urban planning and management system there is no guarantee that it will positively affect the urban poor of the informal settlements in the existing Kabul.

Moreover, the private investment in the housing market can only be absorbed if the benefits are more than the costs to the investors. It is apparent that private developers will seek ways to make more profit out of their investment. As a consequence of this, the housing supply market cannot overcome the population need due to unaffordability of their constructed apartments to the majority of population among low and middle-income groups. The only people who afford to purchase apartments in the intended housing project in the New City will be the high-income population which consists a very few number of Kabul's population. As a result, the richest people own a number of properties, while, the poor and middle-income families would still be supposed to live in rented houses which belong to that rich population. In fact, this housing policy helps rich people to get richer and the poor will be more exploited by rich by means of paying a large portion of their income for a monthly rent of accommodation. "The focus of planning on 'providing private interests with public resources', will have to give way to demands that planning revert to...protecting the needs of ordinary people rather than privileged minorities, the public rather than private interest..." (LOVERING 2009 cited in WATSON 2009: 153).

5.5.5 Financial Constraints

The Kabul New City project is involved with serious financial constraint alongside the other challenges. As mentioned above, the New City is intended to be the largest private investment development project in Afghanistan. According to HOTAKI (2015), the New City project requires a total amount of 80 billion USD for its completion. An amount of 71 billion USD is expected to be financed through private investment, alongside 9 billion USD from government investments in bulk infrastructure. The Kabul New City project is supposed to be the "second most expensive modern city in the world after King Abdullah Economic City in Saudi Arabia" (HOTAKI 2015). King Abdullah Economic City is a master-planned city under construction on the Red Sea coast of Saudi Arabia with an investment of 100 billion USD. It is an attempt to expand the economy beyond the export of crude oil. Despite the stable political situation, rich economy, and optimal level of security in Saudi Arabia, their new city project is involved with a variety of challenges and constraint (MOSER, SWAIN, and ALKHABBAZ 2015).

The utopian concept of Kabul New City reflects the ambitious and unrealistic conception of urban planning, which by no means fit the socio-economic context of Afghanistan. The comparison of war-torn Afghanistan to oil-rich Saudi Arabia would not be rationale. It was

already mentioned that the Government of Afghanistan is by no mean in a position to finance the construction of bulk infrastructure in the New City. The idea of private investment originated with the rapid growth of population and an enormous increase in housing demand in immediate years of the post-Taliban era, which created an image that the investment in real estate market would have a great benefit. If the planning process for the Kabul New City project was short and quick, there were more chances of attracting private investment in housing markets. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the presence of international community and security forces not only directly affected the housing market in Kabul, but also, it improved the quality of life of thousands of Afghans who were recruited for high wages. Thus, the increase in housing demand was the consequence of not the only high number of refugees and IDPs return, it was also due to an increase people's hope for the future, as well as, an improvement in the income level of many people in Kabul who could not afford to purchase houses before.

Nevertheless, the optimal situation did not last long as the security situation started to consistently deteriorate. The demand for housing decreased and the prices of property started to fall. The bubble in the housing market which was created due to the presence of thousands of international organizations and security personnel was broken after the majority of NATO forces left Afghanistan in 2014 (HYMAN 2014: 14). The deterioration of security situation, especially after 2014, was aligned with the majority of Afghans losing their high-income jobs and hence their hope for the future. New waves of Afghan refugees headed to neighboring countries and many to European countries in search of better and secure living conditions. Considering the new situation, the Kabul New City does not seem to be an attractive project for the private sector to invest there. Thus, the Kabul New City project will possibly remain a utopian dream of modernist urban planners.

5.5.6 The Problem of Water Scarcity

The scarcity of water in upper Kabul basin is one of the main justifications for planning a new city at the north of the present city. According to this argument, the risk of water scarcity is increasing in Kabul due to rapid population growth. Pollution and groundwater degradation threaten the sources of ground water in Kabul basin. The future of the city growth depends on the availability of water in the area. Urbanization of upper Kabul basin will damage the underground water recharging areas. Therefore, the environmentally sensitive areas of upper Kabul basin need to be protected. The available water resources in upper Kabul basin that can

be developed for urban use was estimated by JICA study to be 171 MCM/year. This amount can support around 5 million urban populations, at the per capita water use of 90 LCD. The projected population of Kabul in the year 2025 was estimated to be 7.5 million. Thus, the alternative area to accommodate the excess population was considered to be Panjshir basin in the north of Kabul. Thus, this could justify accommodating a certain portion of the future excess urban population of Kabul in northern areas where availability of water was not a problem.

A comprehensive study on the availability of water resources in Kabul Basin was conducted by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in 2010. The study confirms the fact that with the rapid growth of population and the extensive use of underground water in urban areas of Kabul, most of the existing shallow water supply wells in Kabul may contain no or little water by 2057 (MACK, AKBARI, ASHOOR, CHORNACK, COPLEN, EMERSON, HUBBARD, LITKE, MICHEL, PLUMMER, REZAI, GABRIEL B. SENAY, VERDIN, and VERSTRAETEN 2010).

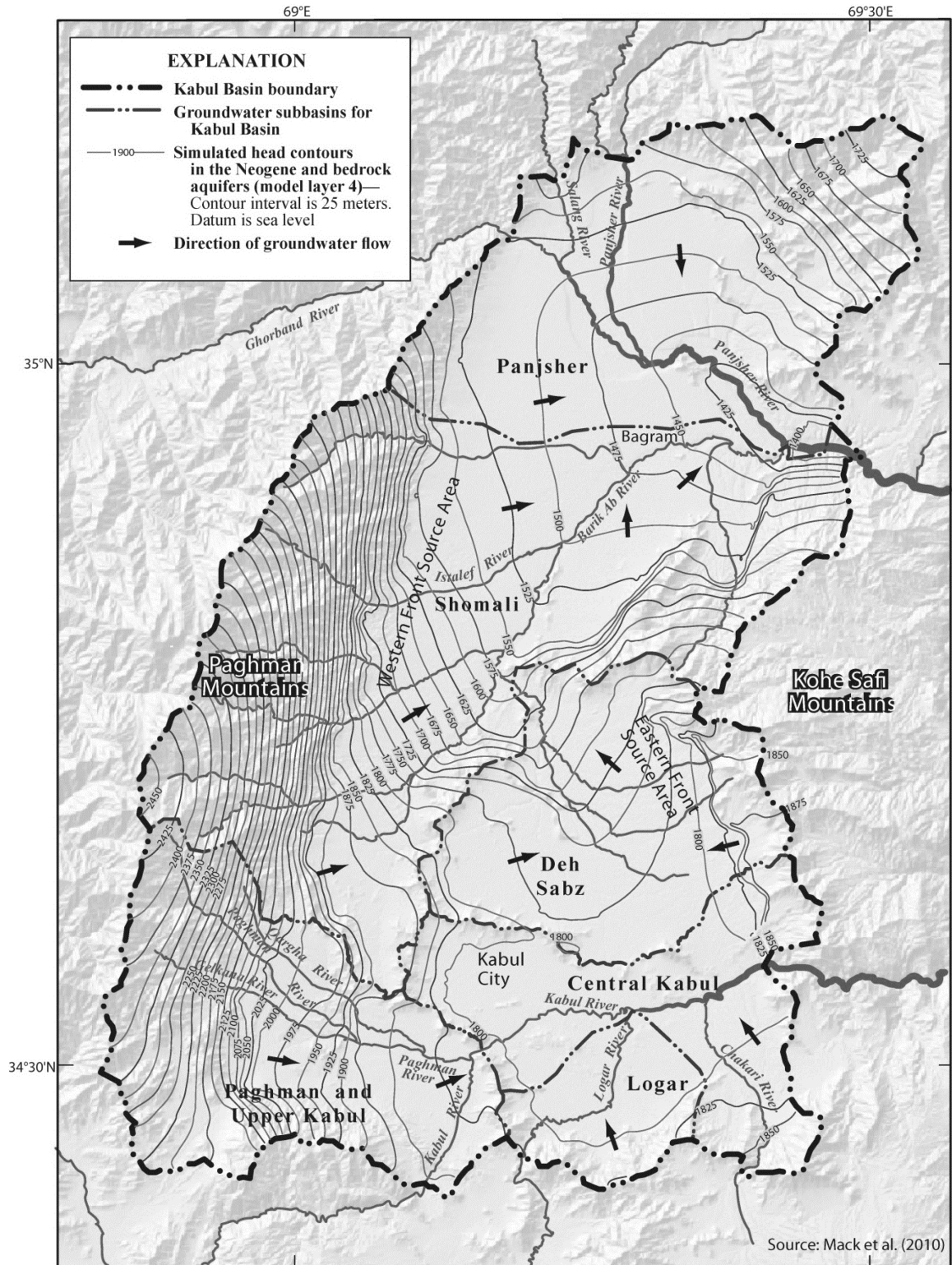
However, the planning for a new city in Dehsabz wouldn't necessarily overcome the problem of water scarcity. This is because there are very little surface and underground water available in the Dehsabz basin. Unlike the Kabul area, which is naturally located on a vast reserve of underground water as well as has more streams of surface water, the Dehsabz area has the limitation of such sources of water.

According to JICA (2009a) study, the available underground water sources will suffice for an only limited number of population. The available water sources could possibly support the city development for a population of about 450,000 for the whole new city area. This would include development for up to 150,000 people in Dehsabz North area and for up to 100,000 people for each of the of Paymonar, Dehsabz South, and Barikab areas. Thus, MPKNC suggested for the formulation of ambitious projects of bringing water to the new city from the Panjshir and Salang Rivers at about 60-80 km north of Kabul. MPKNC envisioned various water supply options from the construction of dams at different locations on available rivers and water streams as well as direct water intake from the rivers.

The Panjshir River streams from the Panjshir Valley. It combines with the Salang River in the plain area of Saiad District of Kapisa Province about 5km to the north of Bagram Airbase. The Salang River which is also a combination of two streams from Salang and Ghorband Valleys.

The average surface altitude in Saiad District where the two rivers join is about 1440m, some nearly 400 meters lower than the Dehsabz.

Considering the altitude difference of about 400 m between Dehsabz and Punjsher/Salang Rivers, which requires pumps with about 400m head and energy to supply water to a distance of over 50km, the project would need huge investment. Moreover, considering the economic situation of Afghanistan the high cost of operation and maintenance will challenge the sustainability and continuity of the project. On the other hand, the scarcity of water in Kabul for the long-term can not necessarily justify the decision on planning for a new city. The argument in MPKNC about the water balance in the Kabul Basin and availability of water for the future excess population is logical to the extent that it suggests for alternative sources of water in the region to cope with future challenges of water scarcity. However, planning for a new city to achieve this does not seem a rational way to overcome the problem. If water needs to be brought from northern water sources located over 50km away at an altitude 400m lower than Dehsabz; it would not be a major challenge to extend it further to Kabul, as Kabul and Dehsabz are not far from each other and are located at the same altitude.



Base from U.S. Geological Survey Shuttle Radar Topography Mission data, 2000, 30-meter resolution
 Universal Transverse Mercator projection, Zone 42 N
 World Geodetic System, 1984

0 10 KILOMETERS
 0 5 MILES

Map 24: The head surface in the Neogene aquifer in the lower altitude areas and the bedrock aquifer in the upland areas of the Kabul Basin, Afghanistan.

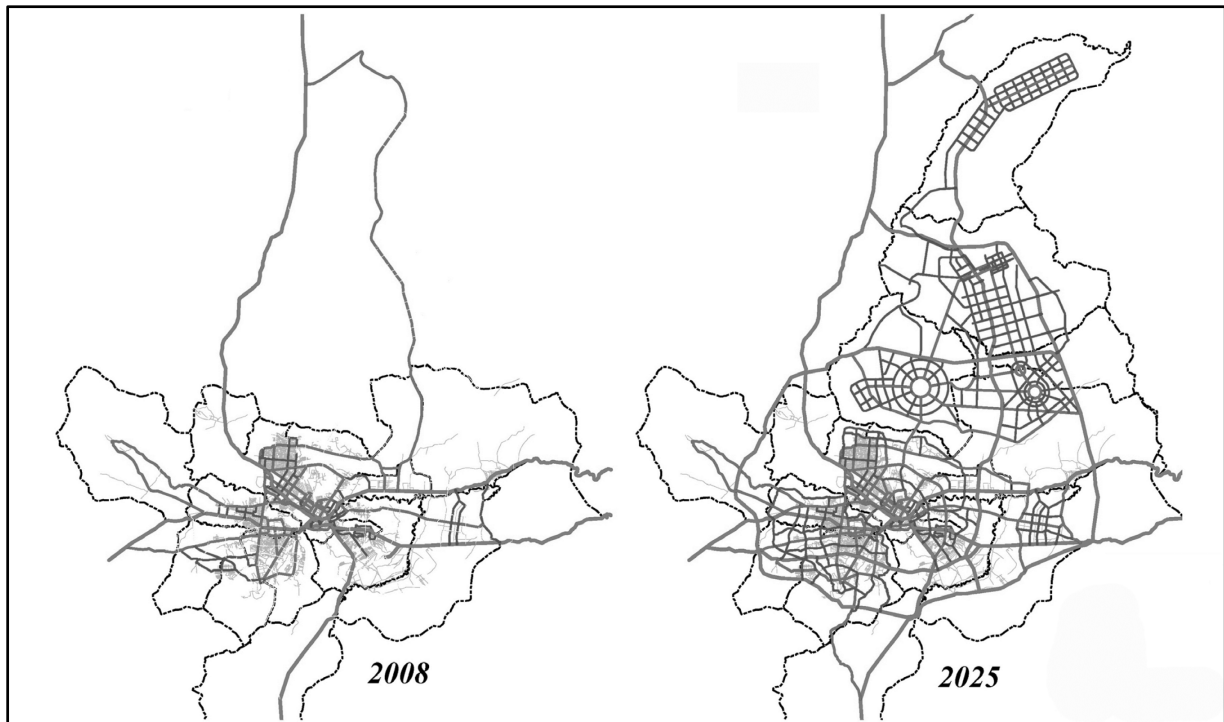
Source: (MACK, AKBARI, ASHOOR, CHORNACK, COPLEN, EMERSON, HUBBARD, LITKE, MICHEL, PLUMMER, REZAI, GABRIEL B. SENAY, VERDIN, and VERSTRAETEN 2010)

Moreover, an alternative study suggested a different solution to overcome the future problem of water scarcity in Kabul. It recommended the construction of a dam on Logar River on a location at about 60km south of Kabul in the long-term. The suggested site for the dam is 25 km east of Pol-i-Alam, the capital of Logar Province (LASHKARIPOUR and HUSSAINI 2008: 258). The advantage of this alternative is that the proposed location in Logar is located at an altitude of above 2000m, which is much higher than Kabul and makes it easy to supply water to Kabul in the future.

5.5.7 Interconnections with the Existing City

The New City is not intended to be a replacement for existing Kabul as the national capital city. As mentioned before, the intended functions would be a supplement to the existing city with more concentration on economic activities. The concentration of the majority of government organizations, educational institutions, and economic activities in existing Kabul on the one hand, and the creation of potential new jobs especially in the construction sector in initial years of the new city development stages, on the other hand, will create a huge number of commuting population. Thus, the number of commuter between the existing city and the new city will increase alongside the development of the new city. This will require efficient transportation connections between the two cities.

The existence of natural barriers such as Khwaja-Rawash Hill, which separates Dehsabz from Kabul, will be a potential constraint that limits the transportation networks between the two cities to certain routes. This challenge already exists in Kabul in relation to the connection between eastern and western parts of the city, in which the traffic routes despite having the widest roads in the city level have always the problem of a traffic jam. Nevertheless, the prevailing poor traffic management system of Kabul plays an important role in enhancing the problem. Unless the authorities are efficiently prepared for the management of future commuter's routes between Kabul and Dehsabz, the same challenge will threaten the envisioned routes between two cities in a larger scale. The proposed road connections between the two cities in MPKNC are shown in Map 26.



Map 25: Existing and proposed road network for Kabul and the New City in Dehsabz
Source: JICA (2009)

5.5.8 The Disparity in the Regional Distribution of the Population

There is an imbalance in the regional distribution of the population in Afghanistan. As mentioned in chapter two, five major cities as Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad accommodate about 90% of the total urban population of Afghanistan. According to an estimation by the CSO (2016a) these five cities with their surrounding rural areas accommodate a total population of over 10 million, which makes over 38% of the country's population. Kabul has grown extraordinarily large in recent years and it is a clear case of a 'primate city' because it is disproportionately larger than any other city in the country. Kabul is estimated to be roughly four times larger than the next largest cities, such as Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Kandahar (GOIRA 2015: 15).

According to the JICA's proposed master plan, the Kabul Metropolitan Area, which will be a combination of existing city of Kabul and the New City in Dehsabz, will have to accommodate a total population of 9 million by 2025. This will make 66 % of Afghanistan's urban population. Based on MPKNC, the Kabul New City in Dehsabz is intended to accommodate the excess population of existing Kabul in next decades. The assumption is that the excess population will

move to the new city. However, in reality, this will not happen; because the growth of population in Kabul like many other cities is happening in two ways. The first is due to the natural population growth rate as the birth rate is greater than the death rate. And the second is due to the in-migration of the population from rural areas. In the case of Kabul, most of the excess population due to the natural growth will be accommodated within existing settlements of Kabul in the form of densification as it has been happening up to the present day.

According to WATTS (1981), the traditional settlement pattern in Afghanistan goes through four sequences, which are spatial selection, declaration, accommodation, and saturation. The spatial selection refers to the selection of site, which in most cases in Kabul happens through squatting or purchasing of land from informal market. Declaration happens by immediately building a perimeter wall to secure the land, followed by construction of accommodation inside the walls. The initial construction is limited to build a house that has certain numbers of rooms which suffice to accommodate a single family. When the family members increase within the time, the family adds new rooms to the building through horizontal extension if there is enough space in the land plot or vertically in the form of adding new floors to the building. Therefore, when the family sizes get bigger through the time, the single family house turns into a multifamily complex house until it reaches the saturation stage when no more addition is possible. The subdivision and densification of houses can also happen for economic motives when there is high demand for rented houses. This way, the residential density of an area gradually changes within the time.

On the other hand, the in-migrants from rural areas to Kabul contribute significantly to the population growth rate. The implementation of MPKNC will generate a lot of new jobs, especially in the construction sector. Thus, the new city in Dehsabz will boost an artificial and induced urbanization process, by way of turning as a population pull center for the whole region. Therefore, the majority of the population moving to the new city will not be the excess population of existing Kabul; rather they will be the new migrants from the rural areas of the surrounding provinces that will move to Dehsabz in search of newly created jobs.

Another possible consequence of this process can be the emergence of a vast area of informal settlements in Dehsabz. It is an obvious fact that the majority of in-migrants in search of a job in the construction sector will consist of low-income groups. They will not afford to buy or rent newly built houses. Hence, they will use their own means to find an accommodation near their

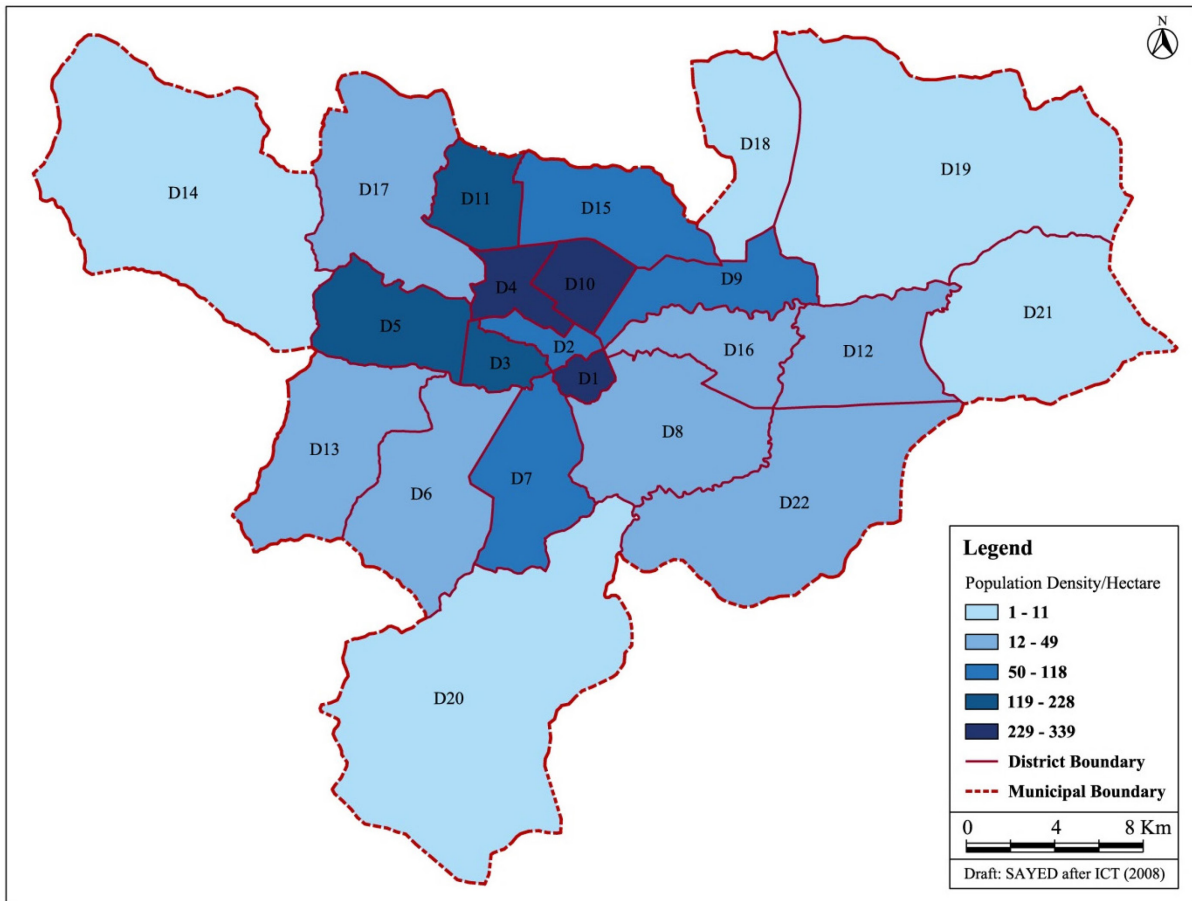
job centers, which will gradually lead to the emergence of new squatter settlements in the areas around new formal settlements, same as it has happened in Kabul.

There is a need for policies to reduce the in-migration to Kabul. The policies could be in the form of providing more economic opportunities and incentives for the rural dwellers to eliminate the push factors that force the rural population to move to the cities. Also, more attention needs to be paid to small and medium cities to absorb the excess population of the rural areas, and to decrease the population pressure on large cities such as Kabul.

5.5.9 Urban Density versus Urban Sprawl

In the last two centuries, the size of cities has enormously increased. Historic cities were limited in size due to their limitations in means of accessibility and serviceability. The advancement in means of transportation has played a significant role in the horizontal expansion of cities. This has been enhanced by the technological progress in the expansion of services and infrastructure that is capable of managing the ‘inflow of resources and outflow of wastes’ within the cities. However, there is a limit to the increase in the size of the cities. According to HAGGETT (1983), the limit to the expansion of a city is up to the point where the benefit of crowding is more than its cost. This limit may not be the same for every city, as there are various socio-economic factors that affect it. Larger cities have certain advantages such as better serviceability, more socio-economic opportunities, and higher income levels. They are also involved with some social problems such as higher crime rates, drug abuse, poverty, and environmental pollution (HAGGETT 1983: 355).

The social and environmental problems of larger cities are more evident in inner city areas, which in many developed countries have forced the affluent population to move away from those problems to suburban areas. This has created a new urban pattern and a lifestyle. This has led to the development of scattered low-density new residential areas far from the urban centers. This form of urban development is referred as urban sprawl. The “modern usage of the term ‘sprawl’ was coined in 1937 by Earle Draper, one of the first city planners in the Southeastern United States” (BLACK 1996 cited in NECHYBA and WALSH 2004: 177).



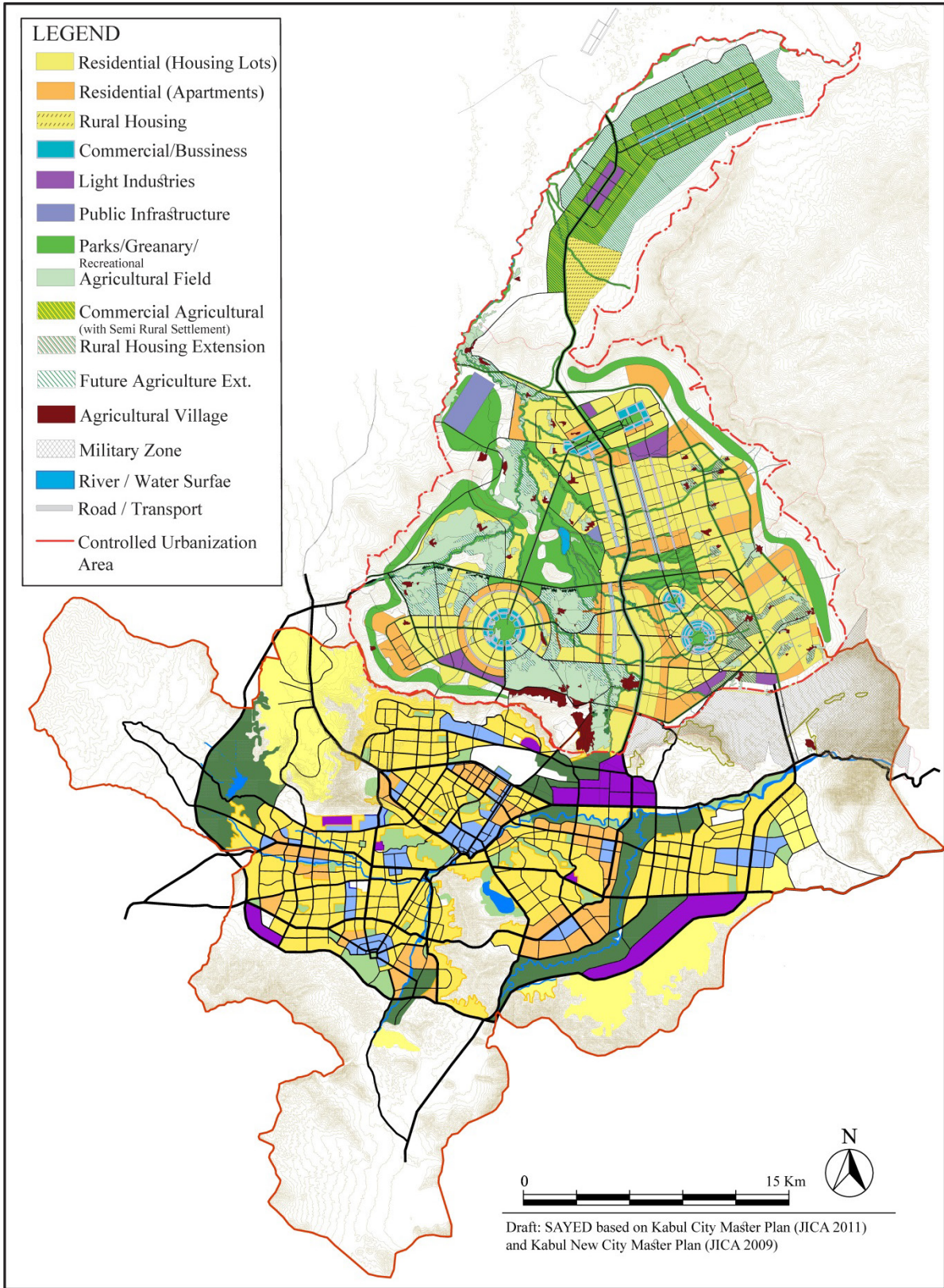
Map 26: Population density in different districts of Kabul

As mentioned in chapter 4, the gross population density in Kabul is estimated to be 44 persons per hectare. Thus, the existing developable area of Kabul has the potential to accommodate the projected population within the existing municipal boundary for next decades. Despite the population density is relatively high in some central districts of existing Kabul City, nevertheless, the majorities of outer districts contain vast tracts of vacant land and have a high potential for further densification and development (Map 27).

The development of a new city in Dehsabz will possibly lead to a vast urban sprawl in the Kabul region. This will be inevitable if the allocated resources are diverted to development of the New City without overcoming the current issues and challenges of the existing city. This raises new issues and challenges and adds more problems instead of solving the existing problems of Kabul. Urban sprawl leads to an increase in the costs of utilities and public services, the time of travel, the level of resources and energy consumption, and also the production of more air pollution. It can also bring the negative impacts of urbanization on the environment through conversion of large areas of agricultural and wilderness land to urban use

(OTTENSMANN 1977: 389). According to NECHYBA and WALSH (2004: 178) “urban sprawl raises four issues concerning efficiency and equity: unproductive congestion on roads, high levels of metropolitan car pollution, the loss of open space amenities, and unequal provision of public goods and services across sprawling metropolitan suburbs that give rise to residential segregation and pockets of poverty.” The most significant issue related to urban sprawls is that “it leads to an inefficient and costly pattern of development” (PEISER 1989: 193).

As mentioned before, the current jurisdiction of KM covers an area of about 1,022 km² and the intended development area for the New City covers an area of 740.4 km² (JICA 2009a). The combination of both cities will occupy an area of about 1,762.4 km² expanding approximately 72 km from north to south and 53 km from east to the west. The development of the New City will lead to a more discontinuity in urban development pattern leaving large tracts of undeveloped land in between. This can economically challenge the provision of infrastructure and urban utilities in scattered parcels of developed areas separated by vacant lands or other natural barriers.



Map 27: The combination of Kabul City Master Plan and Kabul New City Master Plan

6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Significant Findings

There are varieties of challenges and constraints that affect the post-Taliban urbanization trend in Afghanistan in general, and especially in Kabul as a flagship of urbanization in the country. The following are a summary of challenges and constraints:

6.1.1 Governance Constraints

Afghanistan was one of the less urbanized countries in its regional context until the second half of the twentieth century. Conflict and instability played a significant role in enhancing the urbanization trend in Afghanistan. The war and unrest due to the military invasion of the Soviet Union damaged the rural livelihood system and severely affected the rural population. This led to the displacement of a large number of population and mass outmigration from rural areas, either to urban centers within Afghanistan, to refuge to other countries. The change of political system from monarchy to republic; then, from a Soviet dominant radical communist regime to the Taliban's radical Islamist rule; and finally the recent American dominant government have their strong effects on the planning and management of cities in Afghanistan.

The reform of urban governance system is crucial in a post-conflict situation, especially in countries like Afghanistan where the change of every political regime has been involved with the ideological diversion of government policies. However, in the post-Taliban era, despite a better political environment and international support, there were no major reforms of the urban governance system in Afghanistan. The majority of existing legislations related to municipal governance, land management, and city administration are the legacy of the previous regimes, which in many cases contradict the constitution of Afghanistan. There is no elected mayor, no city council, and overall no citizen representation in the municipal government.

The dominant perception within many Afghan institutions backs the idea that 'centralization of power and authority ensures stability and efficiency'. However, in reality, this perception is a major constraint, not only for the development of cities in the country but also the whole state-building process. The government system is highly centralized. The people have no power in the decision-making process over the city development issues. The absence of people's voice in the municipal government and the top-down planning approach, which has often negatively

affected people, would naturally motivate them to oppose to any government urban development plan which was made behind closed doors and was considered as a highly confidential document.

The authorities and responsibilities of Kabul Municipality, as the dominant urban government agency, are not clearly defined. There are unsolved conflicts of authority among various agencies involved in the management of Kabul. Various government agencies are involved in the urban management of Kabul without effective coordination and communication, which often results in inefficient use of funds resource.

6.1.2 Management and Capacity Constraints

The existence of inefficient and time-consuming managerial procedures within the Kabul Municipality and other organizations involved in the management of Kabul is a major challenge. Moreover, the scarcity of professional capacity within these organizations adds to the constraints. Despite, the new political environment allows for privatization of urban services, nevertheless, it was evident that in post-conflict situations, where the government institutions are weak to monitor the quality of services provided by the private sector, privatization does not effectively respond to the needs of the population.

In addition, the privatization of certain services such as plan preparation, especially in post-conflict situations like Afghanistan, can evidently be involved with many problems and challenges. Thus, the outcome of the city plans prepared by the private sector often did not comply with realities of Afghanistan as it was discussed in last chapters.

6.1.3 Lack of effective city planning concepts

Historically, urbanization trend in Afghanistan has streamed into two distinct channels of formal and informal approaches. The informal urbanization trend was influenced by the traditional way of living, which was in a harmony with social values and to some extent effectively responded to the requirements of the society. The formal trend, however, was due to ruler's ambitions for modernization, which often ignored the realities of the society. The formal urbanization trend was involved with adaptation urban planning concepts following the European or Russian models that emerged in contexts very different from Afghanistan. Adaptation of urban development approaches developed for a different context

has been one of the major constraints for their success in Afghanistan. The intellectual and professional capacity in Afghanistan has not developed to a level to allow the emergence of a serious discourse in the area of urban studies. The city planning approaches influenced by the Soviet socialist system or western market-based policies have been blindly implemented without an understanding of the social, economic, political and cultural context of Afghanistan. These have not often been able to respond effectively to the needs of the majority and were involved with social rejections. As a consequence, the urbanization trend in large cities such as Kabul has moved forward by the majority of people without any dependency or attention to the formal planning agendas. This has led to new challenges and constraints such as the emergence of large areas of informal settlements.

After the establishment of the new Afghan government in 2002, there was a need for an overlook to the urbanization process. This would require some paradigm shifts in the prevailing perceptions and concepts of urban development. Considering the post-conflict situation of Afghanistan, the urban development process needed a fundamental reform from of the governance, management and administration system, which could pave the way for urban planning efforts. However, the government authorities focused more on ambitious urban planning agendas without considering financial, legislative and administrative capacities which were required for those plans to take place. As a result, none of the post-Taliban planning approaches could successfully move forward.

The ICT plan was relatively flexible as compared to JICA's master plan. The JICA master plan requires demolition of vast areas of existing settlements, which does not match the social economic conditions of the majority of Kabul residents. The utopian concept of Kabul New City in Dehsabz is much more ambitious and far from the realities of Afghanistan. It is not feasible to waste the limited funds and resources of the government in developing infrastructure in vacant lands of Dehsabz, leaving the existing Kabul with its 80% informal settlements without access to utilities and basic services. It is evident that the ambitious urban planning attempts in post-Taliban Kabul were involved with a huge waste of public resources and funds. Nevertheless, the more important issue is that if those plans could move forwards to implementation stages; it does not seem that they would respond to the needs of the majority of Kabul citizens. Rather, the plans would serve the higher income populations and the implementation processes would be involved with the eviction of the majority of poor from their shelters.

6.1.4 Financial Constraints

Most of the large-scale development plans for Kabul were extremely unrealistic and ambitious as compared to available funds and financial capacity of concerned agencies in Afghanistan. Limitation of the fund has been one of the main causes of failure of various development plans for Kabul. Despite Kabul Municipality's recent measures to improve its revenue collection process, the overall municipal revenue cover a small fraction of funds required for implementation the prevailing ambitious city master plans. International donor agencies such as the World Bank, USAID, and JICA play a significant role in financing urban development projects in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, it is unrealistic to expect those funding agencies to finance ambitious city planning projects, which their efficiency to benefit the majority of the population is unclear.

Moreover, the funding source for the utopian concept of the Kabul New City in Dehsabz is expected to come from the private investment. However, this requires an initial government investment for development bulk infrastructure, which is far beyond the capacity of the government of Afghanistan. The deterioration of security situation and burst of an economic bubble created by the presence of international security forces decreased the likelihood for private investors to count on Kabul New City project for their future investment. Thus, the financial constraints play a significant role in turning the ambitious master plans for Kabul and Kabul New City in Dehsabz obsolete without being implemented.

6.1.5 Corruption

Corruption is one of the most threatening obstacles, not only against urban governance and management reforms but also the whole state-building efforts in Afghanistan. Widespread corruption is involved not only with deficiency of government services, but also it has led to the decline of government legitimacy. Involvement of politicians and high-ranking government officials makes it hard to fight corruption, as many of those who are supposed to bring a change in the situation are the most corrupt people in the country.

6.2 Recommendations

A fundamental reform of the urban governance and management system in Afghanistan is a requirement. A paradigm shift is required not only within the government organizations but

also in public institutions about the basic understandings of the governance concepts. The democratic institutions should be improved. The government should recognize the people's constitutional rights of having elected mayor and city council members in their cities. People's representation and involvement in decision-making at the city and district levels have to improve. The rules, regulations and all the legislations related to urban governance and management need to be updated in according to the requirement society.

There is a need for a public discourse over the purpose of urban planning and management in Afghanistan. The prevailing planning and management concepts focus on top-down approaches which have been proven inefficient. Kabul needs a planning approach to recognizing the traditional way of living of the majority. The informal settlement, which is the reflection of the socio-economic situation of Afghanistan need to be accepted as a reality, while the planning and city management efforts should focus on improvement of the living conditions of people living there.

The long-term large-scale utopian planning concepts need to be avoided. It was evident that none of such plans for Kabul were able to respond to the needs of the majority, as they faced with financial, political, social and cultural constraints. Urban development strategies in post-conflict situations like Afghanistan need to be comprehensive while planning should be short-term, quick, clear, affordable and responsive to the needs of the majority of the society. Plan preparation should be in a bottom-up manner; the city development plans need to be a compilation of detailed plans prepared through direct involvement of people at the community level based on their needs and available resources. The job of urban planning authorities needs to shift from imposing their desired land-use on communities, to advocating the interest of communities when there is a conflict of interest among them.

In order to increase the efficiency of the urban development process, the planning and management system of cities at the country level needs to be decentralized. The central government has to empower the local authorities and delegate the decision making power to municipalities and the local governments. More attention needs to be paid to smaller cities and social problems of villages to avoid massive in-migrations from villages to towns and from small to large cities. This would help to cope with population pressure on large cities like Kabul and ensure a balanced distribution of urban population within Afghanistan.

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„Ich erkläre: Ich habe die vorgelegte Dissertation selbständig und ohne unerlaubte fremde Hilfe und nur mit den Hilfen angefertigt, die ich in der Dissertation angegeben habe. An Textstellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus veröffentlichten Schriften entnommen sind, und alle Angaben, die auf mündlichen Auskünften beruhen, sind als solche kenntlich gemacht. Bei den von mir durchgeführten und in der Dissertation erwähnten Untersuchungen habe ich die Grundsätze guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis, wie sie in der „Satzung der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis“ niedergelegt sind, eingehalten.“

Gießen, im Juni 2017

Sayed Maqbool Sayed