

A Park for Peace in the Heart of Kabul

War and civil war have destroyed much of the public infrastructure and many buildings in Kabul. The 12-hectare Chihilsitoun Park in the heart of the city and its 19th century palace, Qasr-e Chihilsitoun, have also fallen into disrepair.



Context

Only ruins remain. The green spaces became neglected over time. The roughly five million residents of the ever-growing metropolis have few places left where they can go for recreation and common leisure activities. The situation was particularly bad in what used to be informal settlements – places tolerated but not supported by the city administration, where even the most basic infrastructure was lacking. One of these settlements, Char Deh, borders on Chihilsitoun Park.

Objective

The gardens, sports grounds and spaces for cultural events in the refurbished Chihilsitoun Park offer Kabul's urban population new recreational opportunities and better quality of life, laying the foundation for sustainable urban development. The recreational opportunities that the park offers promote peaceful coexistence and create a safe and pleasant environment in the city centre. The newly created green spaces also have a positive effect on air quality and the climate in the densely built city home

AT A GLANCE



Programme: Revitalisation of Chihilsitoun Park in Kabul

Commissioned by: German Federal Foreign Office

Partner: Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)

Implementing organisations: KfW Development Bank, Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)

Provinces: Kabul

Programme objective: To improve recreational amenities for the neighbouring population by installing gardens and sports grounds and providing spaces for cultural events in the rehabilitated Chihilsitoun Park in Kabul

Overall term: June 2014 – July 2018

READ MORE

- Revitalisation of Chihilsitoun Park in Kabul (https://www.ez-afghanistan.de/sites/default/files/FS_2019_Chihilsitoun_EN_0.pdf)



to millions of people. Training courses held at the Jangalak Vocational Training Centre facilities are improving residents' job prospects. Improvements that are felt quickly, if possible, are pursued.

Measures and Results

In cooperation with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office, the destroyed park has been rebuilt and redesigned. In the course of this work, the buildings in the park, such as Qasr-e Chihilsitooon palace and the former guest house, were also restored. This has given the population new and nearby opportunities for recreation, with plenty of leisure activities. Small restaurants, kiosks, sports grounds and public toilets have been built in the park, along with exhibition rooms, a conference and meeting place, an amphitheatre and an auditorium. The local population and the public administration were included in the project's planning and implementation. A survey was conducted in advance to determine residents' interests.

The programme has been completed and Chihilsitooon Park is now an attractive place visited by more than 25,000 people every month. In particular, the approximately 350,000 residents of the neighbouring Char Deh district are benefitting from the park. Above all women, children and young people now have a chance to walk and play outdoors, near where they live. A place of recreation has thus been created where people can meet in peace.

Needs analysis for an informal settlement

In addition to rehabilitation of the park, a neighbourhood strategy has been devised for the adjacent district of Char Deh. As in other informal settlements, there are no development plans in place for this district. Therefore, as a first step, a socioeconomic study was carried out, and the existing infrastructure, including roads, mosques and schools, were recorded in a geographic information system to produce an alternative image. This inventory served as a basis for determining, together with the local population, which basic infrastructure is most urgently needed, and for planning and implementing it. This included renovating the main road from Char Deh to allow better access to the district, creating a sanitation system, renovating a mosque and installing street lighting.

Training and employment prospects

The programme is improving the employment prospects of Char Deh's residents, in particular promoting working opportunities for women. Since 2015, more than 660 women and 460 men have taken part in six-month training courses in tailoring, embroidery, carpet weaving, joinery as well as

CONTACT

Ronald Steyer KfW Development
Bank Director KfW Office Kabul
kfw.kabul@kfw.de





gardening and landscaping. At the end of this training, participants were supplied with basic equipment, such as a sewing machine, to help them become self-employed.

