

Evaluation Report 6/2019

Evaluation of the Clean and Green Cities Programme

September 2019



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Author: Dilli Joshi

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFN	Afghan afghani (currency of Afghanistan)
ANPDF	Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework
ARAZI	Afghanistan Independent Land Authority
CCNPP	Citizens' Charter National Priority Programme
CDC	Community Development Council
DCDA	Desabz City Development Authority
DMM	Deputy Ministry of Municipalities
EU	European Union
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GoIRA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
KII	Key informant interviews
MAB	Municipal Advisory Board
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MUDH	Ministry of Urban Development and Housing
NDC	Nahia Development Council
NGAGs	Non-government armed groups
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHAHAR	Strong Hubs for Afghan Hope and Resilience (USAID project)
SSAFE	Safe and Surge Approaches in Field Environment
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
U-NPP	Urban-National Priority Program
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an evaluation of the Clean and Green Cities Programme (CGC) implemented by UN-Habitat Afghanistan with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the European Union (EU) between June 2016 and June 2019 with a total budget of USD 34.8 million. It was implemented in 12 cities, three (Kabul, Kundooz, and Lashkar Gah) by the EU and ten (Bamyan, Charikar, Farah, Gardez, Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar, and Mehterlam) by USAID; Kabul being considered by both agencies. Its main objective was to *improve state-society relations, urban stabilisation and job creation, where urban citizens see municipalities delivering basic neighbourhood services, thus leading to increased hope and government legitimacy*. The CGC programme was designed to address the urgent needs for creating jobs in urban areas and increasing the capacity of municipalities to deliver basic urban services to all urban residents.

The report identifies the results achieved and assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the CGC. It analyses the factors that enabled the achievement of the planned results and activities, presents the lessons learned, and makes recommendations for future programmes and projects. The evaluation was conducted in three phases: inception, data collection, and reporting. The data collection and analysis tools selected were based on key evaluation questions. The evaluation employed a participatory approach and methods to collect data, including a document review, focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and stakeholder consultations. Before beginning the field phase, the evaluator held briefing meetings with the CGC team and the UN-Habitat HQ evaluation team.

The evaluation was commissioned by the country office of UN-Habitat Afghanistan and managed by the UN-Habitat Independent Evaluation Unit in close consultation with the project manager. It was conducted by an independent consultant, Dilli Joshi, between December 2018 and May 2019.

The key findings of the evaluation, including achievements, challenges, lessons learnt, and recommendations are explained below.

Achievements

The CGC achieved its objectives and result indicators. It directly contributed to a safer, cleaner and healthier urban environment in 12 cities by giving jobs to poor and needy people and by improving the delivery of urban services.

Relevance

Satisfactory

The programme was highly relevant in that it supported to create the job where there is high number of people were jobless, provided jobs to the poorest and most vulnerable of people, especially returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Beneficiaries were involved in rehabilitating parks, planting trees, collecting solid waste, cleaning canals, sweeping streets, and painting curbs. The programme design was appropriate and was in line with the priorities and strategic intervention areas of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA). The program design was also highly relevant to bring women in decision making for

the development activities and also ensure the women rights in benefit sharing process such as sub-project implemented by the female NDCS. The Prodocs envisioned 50% women representation in CDCs, however it was not fully materialized in the CDC establishment process due to socio- cultural structure. It was highly relevant to UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan (2014 – 2019) and Afghanistan Country Programme. There was no overlapping or duplication.

Effectiveness

Satisfactory

The CGC had well-developed plans and followed them closely. The results show that the programme worked well. Appropriate targeting and the selection of appropriate activities had a positive impact on entire communities, but especially the poor, IDPs, and returnees. The programme formed *Nahia* Development Committees (NDCs) and community development councils (CDCs) to implement sub-project activities. The programme achieved or even exceeded its targets for most activities.

Over the programme period, the CGC created 2,968,308 job-days and employed 21,503 people from poor and marginalized households, exceeding the set target. In total 137 community action plans were prepared and approved. The evaluation also noted that 450 Municipality Advisory Boards (MABs) and municipal staff were capacitated through trainings. The programme also conducted series of trainings to the CDCs and NDCs members that contributed in effective implementation of the sub-projects and also maintained transparency and accountability of the programme.

Beneficiaries interviewed during focus group discussions expressed their high level of satisfaction with all programme activities, especially job creation. The stakeholders—municipalities and the DMM—also rated the project as satisfactory and successful based on its achievements.

The CGC contributed to cross-cutting issues such as gender, youth, and climate change. The programme adopted a gender-sensitive approach in order to maximise women's participation and just missed reaching its target of employing 15% women labourers with an average hiring rate of 14%. Many of the labourers were young IDPs and returnees who were eagerly searching for jobs. The programme helped mitigate the impacts of climate change as well, though indirectly. Before canals and ditches were cleaned out under the CGC, many communities used to experience annual flooding when rain was heavy; afterwards, they did not.

The logframe and theory of change were found to be appropriate. The programme team monitored sub-projects regularly, and write reports on programme activities, which were submitted to donors in a timely manner. The programme team participated in regular meetings with the concerned municipalities, the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities (DMM)/ Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), and both donors.

Efficiency

Satisfactory

Out of the total USD 34.8 million, the programme allocated USD 23,913,930 (approximately 70%) for sub-projects through block grants which supported municipalities in delivering services and spent the remaining 30% on salaries and operational costs. The sub-projects

implemented in each municipality, whether upgrading parks or dumping solid waste or cleaning ditches and canals, were those most needed by the communities. The delivery rate of the CGC programme was approximately 100% with few minor works remaining in Kabul. The evaluation noted the burning rate was satisfactory despite fragile security situation.

The evaluation noted that the logframe (USAID components) was revised twice and the planning was not effective from the very beginning of the programme resulting in confusions during the implementation. Adequate resources were made available throughout the implementation period, and the release of funds, though there were several delays in block grant release and deposit was observed in implementation period. Programme personnel were committed to implementing activities and repeatedly stated that they made sure to establish good relationships with communities and municipalities. The CGC programme was appreciated and recognised by municipalities and government line departments like DMM for approaches taken, especially creation of job for vulnerable groups and city beautification.

The non-monetary benefits of the programme included greenery in the cities, raising awareness about cleanliness among households, and campaigning for waste management. Many municipalities generated more revenue due to the awareness-raising by the CGC.

Impact Outlook

Satisfactory

The programme helped municipalities deliver services and poor people get paid jobs. The municipalities and communities that benefitted believe that their relationships did improve and believe that they could capitalise on this increased rapport in future endeavours.

Though short term, the CGC had a remarkable impact on the communities it served. One major impact was that the 12 target cities became clean and green. In addition, the cleaning of canals and ditches allowed flood water to pass and relieved communities of the danger of flood damage to homes and private and public property. The formation and election of municipal advisory boards (MABs) will have positive results as their members are well connected with the communities they advise and can serve as a bridge between communities and municipalities. The CDCs/NDCs are practicing social audits of sub-projects, which will contribute in attaining good governance and transparency.

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