

A Portrait of the Capital

A situation analysis and spatial mapping of the Kabul City Region (KCR)

This discussion paper presents the draft land and dwelling data for the Kabul City Region (KCR) from the Future of Afghan Cities Programme (FoAC). It shows the considerable land area used for agriculture in and around Kabul city. The residential land use indicates the population of KCR is an estimated 6 million people, equivalent to approximately 20% of Afghanistan's total population. On this basis, the data reinforces the importance of city region spatial planning and governance to effectively guide the urbanisation over the coming decade in the capital region.

Discussion Paper #7, Series Two, April 2016

Composing the portrait

Paper #1 in this series, titled "Breaking the Rural - Urban Divide" advocated for seeing urbanisation beyond the traditional rural versus urban binary¹. Paper #2 demonstrated that many District Municipalities are key parts of Afghanistan's human settlements structure, especially in the five main city regions. And Paper #6 showed the enormous transport and mobility inter-linkages between Kabul and the surrounding Provinces, with over 200,000 trips daily in and out of Kabul City.

This paper builds on these three papers. It does so by providing reliable and up-to-date data and mapping, based on actual conditions, for the Kabul City Region (KCR).

Data for decision making

The data presented in this discussion paper is drawn from the Future of Afghan Cities Programme (FoAC) currently under implementation². It is based on a similar methodology to the State of Afghan Cities 2015 Programme by analyzing up-to-date, high resolution satellite imagery in terms of dwellings and land use (agriculture, residential, commercial, roads, etc)³. The outcome will be a baseline dataset on the city regions that will support improved programme design, city region governance, and planning major infrastructure in these city regions and directly support the development of the Urban National Priority Programme (U-NPP).

Findings

The draft KCR data and findings are presented on the following two pages. Overall, the findings show that:

- With an estimated 6 million people, KCR is estimated to be home to one in five Afghans;
- Although Kabul City remains the main centre, around 40% of the 6 million live in towns and villages around the centre;
- Although Kabul City accounts for half of the residential (51%), institutional (71%) and commercial (72%) landuse in the KCR, Kabul city depends on the periphery for agriculture and green spaces (93,000 hectares);
- Vacant plots are not only prevalent within the administrative boundaries of cities but also in the city regions. KCR has 20,500 Hectares of vacant plots (45% of which is in Kabul City) equivalent to house circa 2.5 to 3 million additional people.

This leads to the need to advocate for a reframing of the prevailing narrative, towards:

- There is a growing interdependency between Kabul city as the engine and the surrounding city region as the vehicle of the national urban economy and culture;
- It is not a rural-urban binary; Administrative boundaries do not correspond to land-uses or functions;
- There is more than sufficient land for growth for the coming decades, including existing vacant plots;
- There is immense potential value in improved cooperation across provinces and municipalities, based on functional relationships.

Box 1: Joint Kabul Metropolitan Declaration

1. The Kabul metropolitan cooperation and governance is essential to steer a more sustainable development and growth of the capital city and its surrounding towns and villages.
2. To that end there is an urgent need to formally establish the first Kabul Metropolitan Forum (KMF), with quarterly meetings prepared by a technical secretariat.
3. The key partners of this multi-scale and multistakeholder metropolitan forum should comprise all relevant central, provincial, municipal authorities and agencies, as well academia (university), civil society and business community.
4. The KMF will only deal with issues that are of a truly metropolitan nature and cannot be properly addressed by either central or local level only, such as urban growth management, new city extensions, metropolitan transport and mobility including public transport, urban environment including river and water management, wetlands, large parks and reforestation, urban agriculture and food security, regional tourism and cultural and natural heritage preservation.

5. A period of 12 to 18 months will be needed to operationalize the KMF, draft a shared vision and growth management plan, identify and prepare implementable metropolitan projects, engage with citizens and put together a roadmap and business plan for more formal metropolitan governance and service delivery and revenue generating metropolitan agencies.

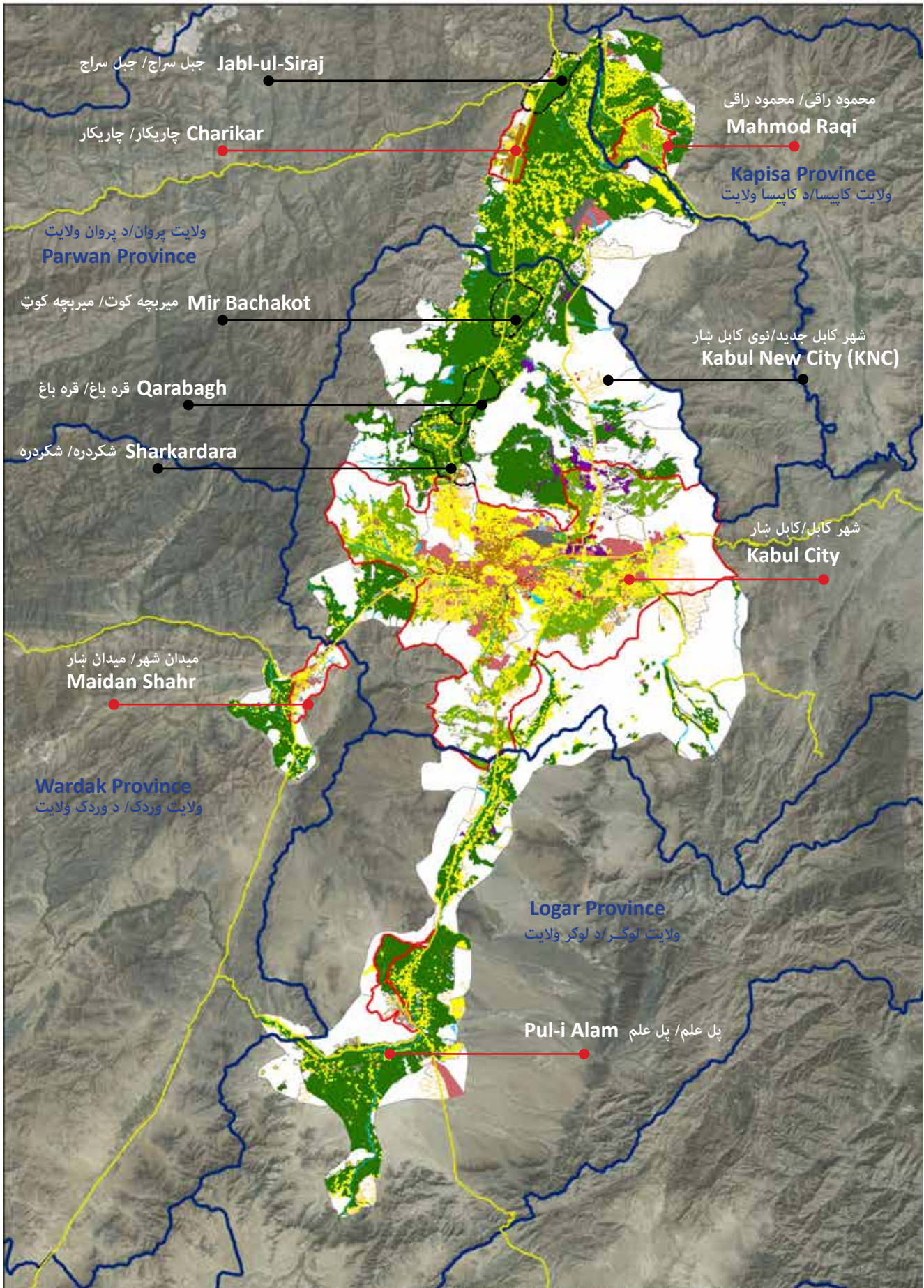
6. A final KMI meeting under joint MUDA/IDLG-GDMA leadership will decide upon a final proposal for H.E. President's decision on the best way forward.

8 March 2016



¹GoIRA (2016) Breaking the Rural-Urban Divide. Discussion Paper #1, Series Two; GoIRA: Kabul
²GoIRA (2016) Breaking the Rural-Urban Divide. Discussion Paper #1, Series Two; GoIRA: Kabul
³UN-Habitat (2015) Understanding Urbanisation. UN-Habitat: Kabul. <http://unhabitat.org/understanding-urbanisation-monitoring-urban-dynamics-in-a-fragile-and-resource-constrained-context-discussion-paper-9/>

⁴The first Kabul Metropolitan Conference was held on 21 December 2015, hosted and chaired by the Kabul Mayor, and attended by MUDA, IDLG/GDMA, Arazi, DCDA and the Mayors of Charikar, Mahmood-Raqi, Maydan Shahr and Pul-i-Alam. The second Kabul Metropolitan Conference was held on 8 March 2016, jointly chaired by Kabul Governor, MUDA Minister and IDLG/DMM.



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	Location موقیعت/خای	Land Area ساحه اراضی / د ځمکی ساحه		Landuse Profile مشخصات استفاده زمین / د ځمکی څخه گڼه اخستلو پیزنڅیر	estimated total population فیصدی نفوس ټول نفوس اټکل
		Total Area (ha) مجموع ساحه (هکتار)	Total % فیصدی/ ټول سلنه		
Provincial Municipalities شاروالی های ولایتی / ولایتی ښاروالیایی	Kabul City کابل/کابل	103,049 ۱۰۳۰۴۹	25%		58% %۵۸
	Charikar چهاریکار/ چهاریکار	3,025 ۳۰۲۵	1% %۱		1.6% %۱,۶
	Mahmood Raqi محمود راقی/ محمود راقی	3,970 ۳۹۷۰	1% %۱		0.8% %۰,۸
	Pul-i Alam پل علم/ پل علم	3,752 ۳۷۵۲	1% %۱		0.4% %۰,۴
	Maidan Shahr میدان شهر/میدان ښار	3,347 ۳۳۴۷	1% %۱		0.2% %۰,۲
District Municipalities شاروالی های نواحی / ولسوالی ښاروالیایی	Jabl-ul-Siraj جبل سراج/ جبل سراج	2,547 ۲۵۴۷	1% %۱		0.6% %۰,۶
	Mir Bachakot میریچه کوت/میریچه کوت	2,514 ۲۵۱۴	1% %۱		0.6% %۰,۶
	Sharkardara شکر دره/ شکر دره	4,755 ۴۷۵۵	1% %۱		0.8% %۰,۸
	Qarabagh قره باغ/ قره باغ	3,352 ۳۳۵۲	1% %۱		0.8% %۰,۸
KNC کابل جدید/نوی کابل	Kabul City کابل جدید/نوی کابل	59,210 ۵۹۲۱۰	15% %۱۵		3% %۳
Non-Urban غیر شهری/ غیر ښاري	Non-Urban غیر شهری/ غیر ښاري	217,484 ۲۱۷۴۸۴	52% %۵۲		33.2% %۳۳,۲



³See 'The State of Asian and Pacific Cities', UN-Habitat, October 2015

⁴See also 'Unpacking Metropolitan Governance for Sustainable Development', GIZ/UN-Habitat, 2015

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Convening consensus to make history

Over the past three months MUDA, DMM, and the Kabul Governor, upon H.E. President Ghani's request, have led a process of engaging the relevant authorities and partners in visioning the KCR. The Kabul Metropolitan Initiative is selected as a Flagship project of the Urban National Priority Programme, currently under preparation.

A series of meetings and conferences have been held to ascertain the opportunities for better planning and governance of the city region from a 'bottom-up' process⁴. At the most recent conference, held on 8th March 2016, the Governors, Deputy Governors and Mayors of all surrounding provinces were in attendance.

The Outcome Declaration calls for the establishment of a Kabul Metropolitan Forum that can support more integrated planning and investments in the city region (see Box 1). This is a significant

achievement as it is the first time in the history of Afghanistan that the metropolitan, or city region, scale has been considered from a governance perspective.



Box 2: Comparison with other countries and city-regions

As most Asian city regions, Kabul City Region is grappling with how best to manage its rapid and uncontrolled growth and economic transformation, growing social complexity and fragmentation, and environmental impacts⁵. Some lessons learned from other city regions in Asia and abroad suggest following⁶:

- In managing urban transformations governments at all levels must recapture their primary responsibility of providing governance for all. But given the complexity and growth of cities and their regions, governments should not try to do everything. Rather they should play a strategic role in partnership with other key stakeholders;
- Kabul's city-region is characterized by urban sprawl and fragmentation. Urban growth is increasingly transcending and blurring boundaries between the public and private, formal and informal, and state and civil society sectors. In addressing the needs of urban development it is essential that new forms of collaborative governance emerge, supported by national urban policies;
- Neither centralized or fully decentralized models offer a panacea to effective urban governance. Greater attention must be paid to the development of institutional arrangements which work in specific urban and national contexts;
- Achieving greater transparency in public decision-making and establishing institutional accountability should be essential objectives. More responsive and effective local institutions are essential to the creation of effective partnerships, and in mobilizing the support and participation of urban citizens;
- In managing such challenges national and local governments have a critical responsibility in driving and managing processes of change. But they can only do so supported by coherent national guidance and policies. As many other Asian and Pacific cities, Afghan cities are managed with legal and regulatory frameworks, and through institutional arrangements, which are outdated;
- There is a need to address the power sharing gap between local and central government; the financing gaps in local government budgets and investment; and the capacity gaps of local governments in promoting strategic and future-oriented urban planning.

Ways forward

- Advanced survey and research to achieve a shared understanding of the challenges and potentials of Kabul city region as national capital and main engine of economic development;
- Consultation of all key stakeholders in the Kabul city region;
- Initial visioning at metropolitan scale as basis for a metropolitan growth development plan and selection of transformative metropolitan;
- Alignment of the Kabul Metropolitan Initiative with the Urban National Priority Programme and the subsequent National Urban Policy and Spatial Strategy.



The Future of Afghan Cities (FoAC), is a government-led programme of MUDA, IDLG/GDMA, Kabul Municipality and ARAZI that focuses on the development of a Urban National Priority Programme (U-NPP) that will set Afghanistan's urban priorities for the coming decade. To support this, FoAC will also undertake a detailed analysis of five city regions and at least 20 strategic district municipalities to provide key data and recommendations for policy and programme design.

