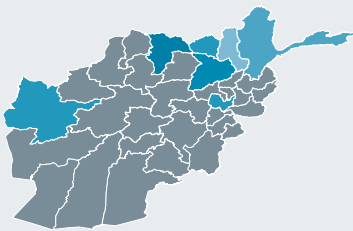


# Improving the water supply

## Programme



### Overview



Activities in the provinces of Balkh, Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, Badakhshan (top from left to right), Herat (lower left) and Kabul (lower right)

<b>Programme:</b>	Urban water supply
<b>Commissioned by:</b>	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
<b>Executing agencies:</b>	Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA), Afghan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation (AUWSSC)
<b>Partners:</b>	MUDA, AUWSSC, Ministry for Energy and Water (MEW)
<b>Implementing organisations:</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and KfW Development Bank
<b>Provinces:</b>	Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Kunduz und Takhar
<b>Programme objective:</b>	Improved drinking water supply for as many as two million people.

### Situation

A reliable supply of safe drinking water – for the majority of Afghans, this is still just wishful thinking. Only one in five people living in the capital city Kabul has a connection to the water main, which is in part in poor repair. The rural population is dependent on wells, rivers and streams, or water tankers. The scarce water resources are increasingly being overused and polluted. This is having an adverse impact on the health of the population, with children in particular suffering from diarrhoea and cholera. It is also hampering the country's economic and political development. The problem is not just the lack of new mains networks; up to 40 per cent of the water passing through existing water pipes is lost due to leakages. Inadequate legislation and institutions are compounded by a shortage of qualified personnel in the water management sector.

### Objective

The German Government is supporting the Afghan Government as it develops the infrastructure in urban areas with wells, pumping stations, feeder pipes, water tanks and distribution mains. Parallel to this, a sustainable water supply and sanitation system are to be developed.

### Results

As a result of the current situation, the drinking water supply is one of the Afghan Government's priorities and is also a priority area of Afghan-German Cooperation. Germany has been a leading donor in the urban water supply sector since 2002. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), KfW Development Bank is working to improve the infrastructure, while the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is building the capacities of the Afghan institutions to operate and expand the water supply and wastewater disposal facilities, in line with consumer needs. In addition to the drinking water systems, sewage treatment plants are being piloted on a limited scale. Information campaigns are ongoing to educate people about the importance of clean drinking water and hygiene.



In Kabul and the northern regions, modern facilities provide secure access to clean drinking water | Photo: KfW



In many places in Afghanistan people collect water from public wells | Photo: GIZ

At the policy level, legal and executive competence lie with the Ministry of Urban Development, which is responsible for water supply, and the Ministry of Energy and Water, which is responsible for the use and protection of water resources. In addition to various regulations already enacted, a set of guidelines on the creation of groundwater protection areas is currently passing through the approval process.

Afghan-German Cooperation is funding water supply systems in the cities of Balkh (Balkh Province) and Imam Saheb (Kunduz Province). Building work started in Balkh in 2012 and will begin early in 2013 in Imam Saheb. In Feyzabad in Badakhshan Province, the water supply, which until now has only reached a small fraction of the residents, is to be extended to cover the entire municipal area. Moreover, activities to improve the provision of drinking water will be increased to include the cities of Mazar-e Sharif, Pol-e Khomri and Taloqan.

Since 2008, Afghan-German Cooperation projects have also included training for the workforces of the water utilities. Besides their on-the-job training, staff has also learned methods of commercial accounting, storage and customer management.

The following results have been achieved in terms of the water supply:

- **In the capital Kabul**, around 500,000 residents have benefited from an improved or newly installed water supply.
- **In Kabul**, the number of households with their own connection rose from 39,776 in 2010 to 42,125 by the end of 2012.
- **In Kunduz**, the number of households with their own connection rose from 370 at the beginning of 2007 to 6,678 by the end of 2012. More than two thirds of the city's roughly 110, 000 population have access to clean and healthy running drinking water in their homes for the first time.
- **The local water operator in Herat** now performs to a standard that compares favourably with operators in industrialised countries. By the end of 2012, a total of 44,398 households and 130,000 people in the refugee settlements that have been integrated into the city had gained a connection to the water distribution main. Since 2008, the local operator has been operating at a profit. With the proceeds, it finances spare parts such as pumps and valves, as well as maintenance work.

Status as at January 2013

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