



ONGOING ACTIVITIES

EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN BAGHE BABUR, KABUL

Interviews among visitors to Baghe Babur during 2007 indicate a keen interest in the history of the garden and its restoration. In order to provide background information in the garden itself, boards have been installed at key points, describing the relevant building or component. In addition, 41 tri-lingual information panels (whose production was funded by the US Embassy Kabul) have been installed in a visitor's centre in the new caravanserai. These outline Babur's life and fascination with nature, which was realised in this garden, while providing an account of its transformation through history, and restoration. Key architectural fragments that were unearthed during the course of the works are also on display.



Children's play area, Baghe Babur



Visitor's centre, caravanserai, Baghe Babur



Children living in the area around Baghe Babur visiting the garden

In response to the significant numbers of families now visiting the garden, a children's area has been created on the lowest southern terrace of Baghe Babur. The result of close collaboration with children from local schools, the design of this space fuses educational, tactile and spatial elements in a structure in which children will be able to explore and play. Largely built of stone, with a range of finishes and shapes, the robust structure encircles a huge spiral shape, which could

also serve as an outdoor classroom, where children will be able to sit under the shade of a central plane tree. A labyrinth will be planted around the edge of the structure, which will be completed in spring 2008. The design of the project was facilitated by Save the Children/US and the construction was partly co-funded by the Afghanistan Child Protection Consortium, an NGO partnership supported by the USAID / Displaced Children's and Orphans' Fund.

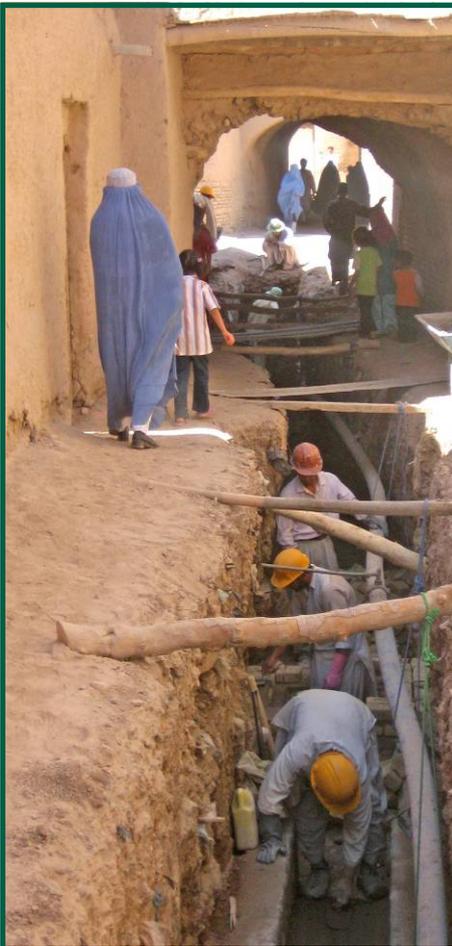
A NOTE FROM NYC TO HERAT

Before leaving my family and friends in Herat, to take up a Fulbright scholarship at Columbia University, I really did not know what to expect. Having long been interested in planning and urban conservation, I was fortunate to have



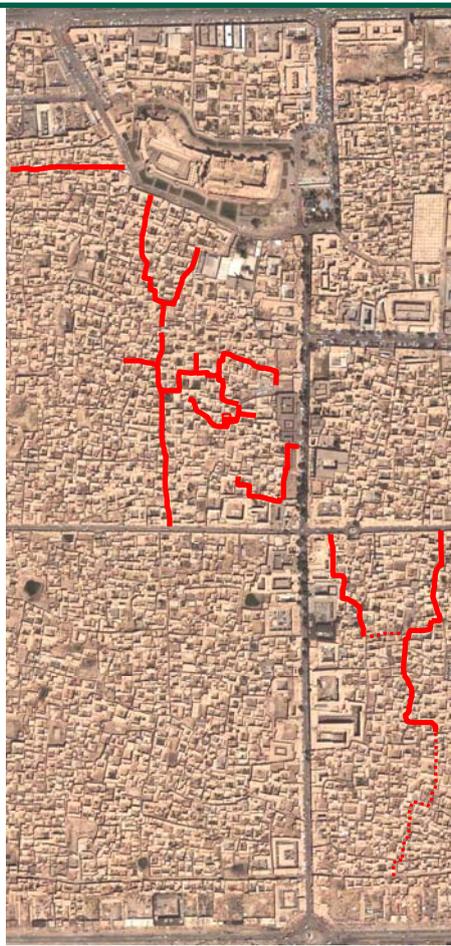
gained three years of intensive experience within the AKTC team in Herat. This helped in some way to prepare me for the urban planning course in which I have been enrolled since September 2007. Upon my arrival in New York, I was swept into a network of extremely motivated young people, from a diversity of backgrounds and cultures, from whom I am learning a great deal. I am aware, however, that the real challenge will be to apply the knowledge and experience gained during this course in contributing to the development of the city of my birth, Herat, upon my return home.

Abdul Saboor, December 2007



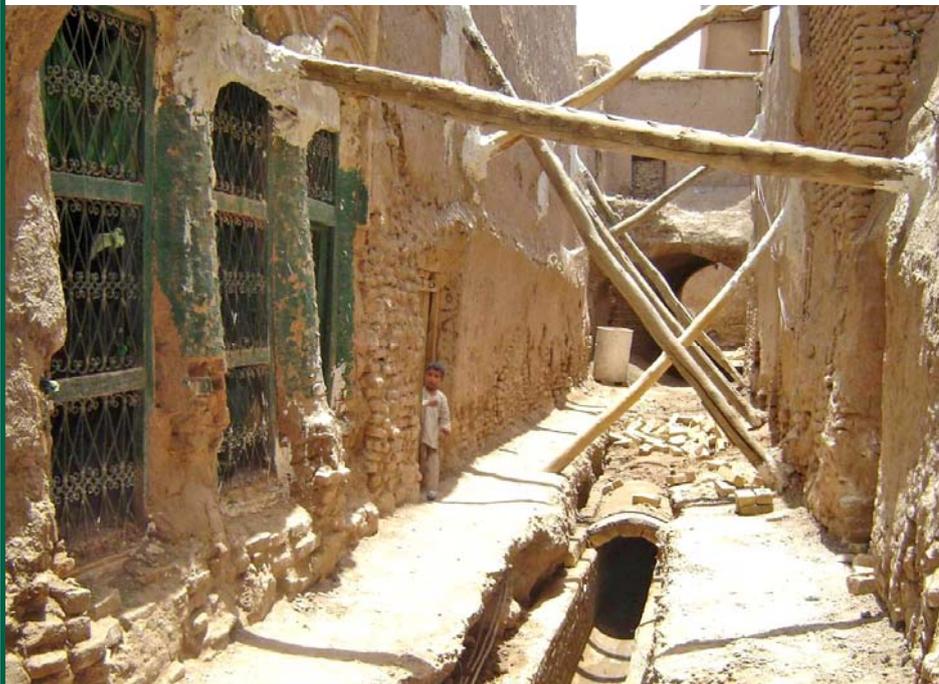
■ DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE OLD CITY OF HERAT

In order to address widespread problems of rising damp, support continues to be provided for repairs to a system of underground drains that runs through the historic fabric of the old city. Many sections of these brick-vaulted drains, which seem to date back to the 19th century or earlier, had collapsed or become blocked by plastic waste. With significant contributions in labour from



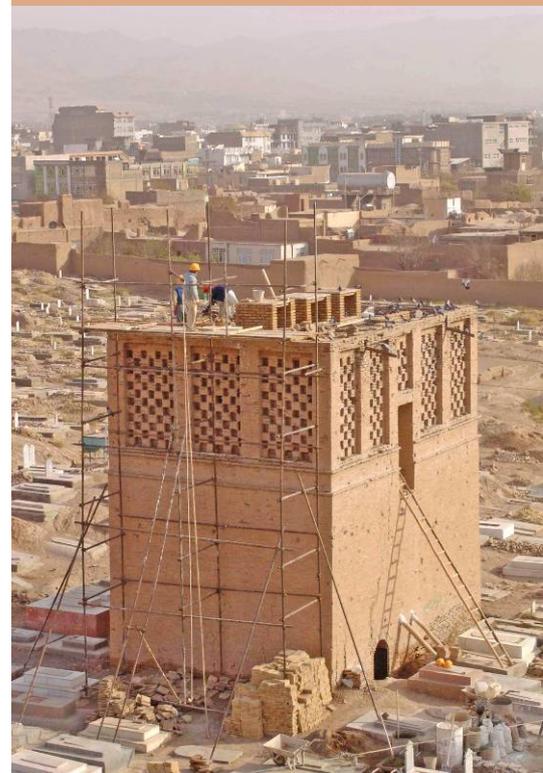
Area of drainage intervention to date in Herat old city

residents, a total of 590 metres of drains have now been repaired or re-built through Abdullah Mesri quarter alone. Together with drains already repaired in neighbourhoods to the north, it is estimated that some 7200 inhabitants and three public *hamams* have directly benefited from this initiative. In 2007, around 22% of AKTC's old city budget will have been spent on upgrading measures of this type.



■ PIGEON-TOWER, KUHANDAZ

As part of efforts to conserve a range of traditional building types, remedial works were initiated in August 2007 on a pigeon-tower or *kaftarkhana* in Kuhandaz, north of the old city of Herat. These distinctive structures dot the landscape in and around Herat, and were the source of pigeon manure for use in market-gardens and orchards. Supervised by staff of the department of historic monuments, the restoration entailed re-building of two brick masonry domes that had collapsed, and repairs to the thousands of niches that line the interior walls of the structure (see photo above).



☛ For more information about AKTC's programme in Afghanistan, contact us in Qala Moeen Afzal Khan, Gozargah Street, District 3, Kabul or Qala Ikhtyaruddin, Herat information@aktc.akdn-afg.org