



## German Cooperation with Afghanistan

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### Media Meeting on the Sustainable Use of Ground Water in Kabul

**Kabul, March 15<sup>th</sup> 2017** – Yesterday, a media meeting on sustainable ground water usage took place in Kabul. Four Afghan ground water experts and more than 70 media representatives attended the event. Altogether, they concluded that Afghanistan’s ground water resources must be properly managed to prevent overuse and pollution. The Social Association of Journalists in North Afghanistan (SAJNA) and the Afghan-German Cooperation hosted the meeting.

To open the media meeting, the Director of the Ministry of Energy and Water’s (MEW) Hydrogeology Department, the Director of the Afghanistan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation (AUWSSC), the KfW water project coordinator as well as a civil society activist gave short speeches on two questions: Why is ground water important and how can it be used sustainably?

MEW’s Director of the Department of Hydrogeology, Eng. Mohammad Naeem Tokhi, said: “Especially in large cities like Kabul, ground water faces two major threats: overexploitation and pollution.” Eng. Hamidulla Yelani, Director of the AUWSSC, added that contamination could be prevented by appropriate sewerage systems. He explained: “Currently, AUWSSC provides services in 21 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces. Soon, we will be able to accommodate demand for sewage management in the missing provinces as well – thanks to the Afghan government and our international partners.”

Regarding the question how to make the use of groundwater more efficient, Mr Sulaiman Salehi, KfW’s water project coordinator, referred to an extensive sewerage system that is planned in Kabul: “The sewerage masterplan for Kabul city is an important step towards effective sewage management. Until the project’s completion in 2019, Germany will provide more than AFN 3 billion funds.

Apart from technical equipment, cooperation between different stakeholders was also crucial, Mr Salah Kabeer, a civil society activist and water expert emphasised. He underlined: “The Afghan government, civil society and media need to work together to preserve our ground water resources.” All panellists further highlighted the media’s key role in increasing awareness among the population regarding questions on the efficient use of ground water.

*“Media Meetings 2017 – Afghan media for Social Responsibility” are a series of regular events held by Afghan-German cooperation and SAJNA. The meetings bring together experts from the public sector, civil society, development organisations and the media to discuss important development issues.*