

Campus Cleanup in Jalalabad

The campus of Nangarhar University in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, was cleaned up for the first time in three decades, thanks to the work of more than 500 volunteers recruited by the Afghanistan Municipal Strengthening Program (AMSP), funded by USAID and implemented by ICMA.

Armed with trash bags, receptacles, and equipment, the volunteers included students, professors, the dean of the faculty and the academic vice chancellor of the university, the head of the local Youth in Action organization, and members of the local Rotary Club.

"Our city is our home; let's keep it clean and safe!" said the vice chancellor, while briefing the participants. The deputy mayor of Jalalabad urged citizens, especially the university students, to support local government services by participating in cleaning their city and helping to keep it clean. He also asked the students to broaden public awareness about local government services and assured citizens that the municipality would do its best to make improvements.

Through AMSP, ICMA has helped Jalalabad improve city services and the quality of life for residents, working in close collaboration with the mayor and city staff in order to build their knowledge and skills. As a result, residents enjoy the immediate benefits of a clean city, and the city gains the capacity to sustain these improvements after the program eventually ends.

Volunteer efforts like this build community, improve relationships among citizens, and create a positive connection between municipality staff and residents. But cleanup campaigns of this kind represent only one of AMSP's activities. Others include:

- Initiation and completion of other small infrastructure projects that improve the quality of life for residents and provide opportunities for local workers to develop skills
- A youth program offering sports tournaments, internships, and other opportunities designed to develop the next generation of Afghan leaders by helping young people recognize their roles in the community
- Basic public administration training for municipal staff
- Development of city master plans based on GIS mapping
- Publication of *Municipal Governance in Afghanistan*, a handbook to guide future efforts to improve service delivery systems, incorporate citizen participation into decision making, and learn from the successes of other municipalities.

ABOUT ICMA

ICMA (International City/County Management Association) is the premier local government leadership and management organization worldwide. Its mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and advancing the professional management of local government. ICMA has been doing this since 1914 by providing technical and management assistance, training, and information resources to its members and the local government community. ICMA International was created in 1989 to further the ICMA mission worldwide. Since then it has successfully designed, implemented, and evaluated hundreds of international projects, establishing a solid reputation for its practical, hands-on approach to meeting global challenges.



Students and other volunteers participate in the cleanup campaign