



SUCCESS STORY

Chaghcharan Citizens Celebrate the Completion of New City Infrastructure: Their Village Becomes a City



Chaghcharan's only Bridge: Before and after installing rail guards

Photo: RAMP UP West



Construction of the first City Sidewalks embellished by green areas cheers Chaghcharan citizens

The Ghor Governor proudly boasted his home town now "looked like a real city and not a village anymore."

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In Chaghcharan, the capital of Ghor Province, residents have long had little access to good city services. They have unpaved streets, standing water, no sidewalks or green spaces, a bridge without railings where many children and adults have fallen into the river, etc. The municipal government lacked the resources and capacity to make needed improvements. But that is now changing. The face of Chaghcharan has transformed in a matter of months.

To support Chaghcharan in delivering better public services, USAID through its RAMP UP West program started working with the municipality and the community. As an initial step, USAID/RAMP UP West and the municipality talked with citizens and decided which improvements were the highest priority and then assisted the municipality to implement them. The initial projects included:

- 2 km of sidewalks along main street
- 8 culverts under the main street to better drain water and snow melt
- Green areas along the main streets
- 50 concrete garbage bins to improve cleanliness

The municipality participated in the bidding process to learn about transparent procurement. The municipality also learned how to monitor construction projects. USAID/RAMP UP West assisted the municipality to develop an operation & maintenance plan for long term sustainability.

On December 28 Chaghcharan municipality conducted a ceremony to celebrate completion of these projects. The community had no doubt about the results of these efforts. Joma Khan, a Chaghcharan citizen, said: "the implementation of these projects totally changed the perspective of Chaghcharan city. Chaghcharan was like a big, unorganized village, isolated and in mud in cold winters."

"These well constructed sidewalks and green areas will keep our environment safe and clean", remarked Abdul Haq, another Chaghcharan resident.

Chaghcharan Mayor expressed his sentiment, saying: "Chaghcharan municipality could revive the vision of Chaghcharan as a real city and now the municipality can deliver better services to its citizens".