

TAKHAR

Lying on the main route to the northern region of Afghanistan, Takhar is surrounded by Kunduz, Baghlan, Panjshir and Badakhshan provinces. The northern border of the province is shared with Tajikistan.

Takhar is a rural province characterized by diverse agro-ecological conditions that feature large areas of fertile land, permanently irrigated through large canal systems along the Takhar river. The river forms part of the Kunduz river basin, extending from Takhar to the edges of Kunduz province. Herders also raise cattle, sheep, and goats in several districts.

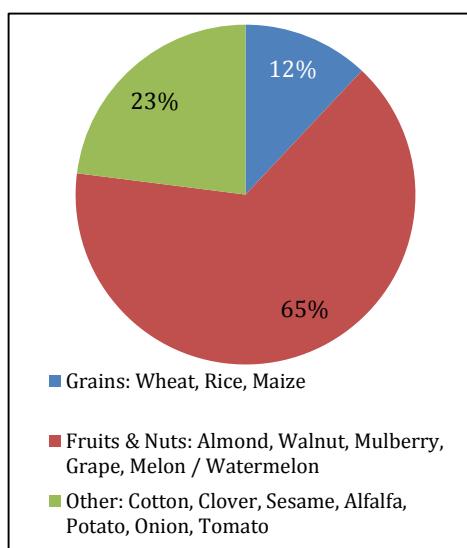
Takhar is famous for its production of rice, nuts (mainly almonds), grapes, rugs, and carpets.

Takhar in a Nutshell

- Surface area: 12,000 sq km
- Capital: Taloqan City
- Districts: 17 – Baharak, Bangi, Chahab, Chal, Darqad, Dasht Qala, Eshkamesh, Farkhar, Hazar Samuch, Kalafgan, Khwaja Bahawuddin, Khwaja Ghar, Namak Ab, Rustaq, Taloqan, Warsaj and Yangi Qala,
- Main markets: Taloqan, Faizabad, Kunduz, Imam Sahib, Khanabad, Manduy, Mazar-e-Sharif
- *Population:* 0.9 million inhabitants (87% in rural areas)
- *Most populated districts:* Taloqan, Rustaq, Chahab, Eshkamesh
- *Ethnic Groups:* Uzbek and Tajiks followed by Pashtuns and Hazaras
- *Main languages:* Dari
- *Kuchi Migration:* Winter, 100-200,000 individuals; Summer: 50-100,000 individuals
- *Returnees, IDPs:* Takhar is the destination of 1.6% of the total returnee population (roughly 75,000 individuals), but not a main hosting province for IDPs

HORTICULTURE

KEY CROPS



DIVISION OF LABOUR BY GENDER

Production:

Cultivation is mainly conducted by men in Takhar. Both men and women participate in harvesting all crops, with the exception of vegetables, which are mainly harvested by women.

Processing:

Drying fruit is mainly done by women. Both men and women are involved in shelling nuts, although women are more heavily involved in this activity.

Sale & Trade of Goods:

Men handle a large majority of the selling and trading of horticulture goods.

INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN (UNDER 15)

Children under 15 in Takhar are not involved in cultivation, except in the case of vegetable cultivation. They do, however, participate in the harvesting of all crop types. Children also participate in drying fruit and shelling nuts. While they generally do not sell other crops, children are involved in the sale of vegetables in this province.

IMPROVED PRACTICES

Use of fertilizer (% of farming households):

- Field crops: 86%
- Garden plots: 10%
- Both field and garden plots: 5%

Other improved practices: According to key informants, there has been an increase in the use of tractors, notably threshers and pesticides.

LIVESTOCK

KEY ANIMALS

Cattle are the most common livestock raised in Takhar.

IMPROVED PRACTICES

According to key informants, there has been an increase in the use of animal vaccination.

INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN (UNDER 15)

Children share the responsibility of raising livestock and poultry with their older family members in Takhar. While they are typically not involved in the sale of livestock, it is common for them to sell eggs and dairy products.

DIVISION OF LABOUR BY GENDER

Animal husbandry:

Both men and women are active in raising livestock in Takhar. Men are more involved than women in caring for sheep. Poultry are mainly raised by women.

Processing:

Men perform most of the butchering. Both men and women participate in shearing of animals. Women are in charge of producing dairy products and processing wool into yarn.

Sale & Trade of Goods:

- Livestock & Poultry: Men sell and trade most livestock and poultry. Eggs are sold by both men and women.
- Dairy: Both men and women sell dairy products and milk, although women play a more active role in this activity.
- Commodities: Trading of commodities is handled solely by men.

ECONOMIC FACTORS AND PROVINCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

LIVELIHOODS AND INCOME SOURCES

Two thirds (65%) of rural households rely on agriculture as their major source of revenue; more than a third of rural households earn income through non-farm related labour. Livestock also accounts for income for almost one in five rural households (19%)

Key Income Sources
<i>Poor:</i> Labour sales, crop sales, livestock and livestock product sales
<i>Better-off:</i> Crop sales, livestock and livestock product sales, trade

ACCESS TO CREDIT

Access for men and women

Men who need to borrow money or buy goods on credit in Takhar mainly go to Microfinance institutions, and to their family and neighbours, as well as suppliers/shopkeepers.

More than half of interviewees in Takhar say women are able to borrow money or buy goods on credit. For those who declare that women have access to credit, the main sources they identify are mainly family and neighbours, Microfinance institutions and suppliers/shopkeepers.

Microfinance Institutions	
<i>The implementing partners of MISFA present in the province are BRAC, FMFB and OXUS:</i>	
All Programs	Ag and Livestock Programs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active clients: 11,453 • Active borrowers: 7,908 • # Loans disbursed: 31,837 • Amount of loans disbursed: 19,458,505 Afs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active clients: 2,017 • Active borrowers: 1,684 • # Loans disbursed: 3,829 • Amount of loans disbursed: 2,817,064 Afs.

LAND TENURE

In 2007, 51% of the households in Takhar owned land or farmed land based on renting, sharecropping or mortgaging arrangements. According to our interviews, commercial farmers primarily have a shared ownership of their land, while subsistence farmers mainly own their land (both sole and shared ownership).

Interviewees claim that livestock producers in the province are both sedentary and nomadic. Their main challenges with regards to access to land are overgrazing, expansion of residential housing onto pastures, and conversion of pasture into cropland.

IRRIGATION

In 2007, nearly half of the household (48%) in the province had access to irrigated land and 65% to rain-fed land. According to our interviews in the province, the proportion of farmers using irrigated land has increased somewhat over the past three years. Today, interviewees claim that around half of the farmers cultivate irrigated land.

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS TO MARKETS

The transport infrastructure in Takhar was reasonably well developed in 2007, at which point 43.1% of roads could handle traffic in all seasons, and 29.1% were able to take car traffic in some seasons. However, in more than a quarter of the province (26.1%) there were no roads at all. Interview stakeholders in Takhar perceived the quality of roads linking rural areas to markets to have somewhat improved in the past three years. Despite this perceived improvement, interviews in the province identified the lack of roads and their poor quality as the number one limitation to market access for rural farmers, followed by the distance from markets and the problem of seasonal flooding.

SOCIAL FACTORS

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

Poverty rate: 36.6%

Per capita monthly total consumption:
1,533 Afs.

LITERACY

Literacy rate: 16.7%

The Kuchi population in Takhar has extremely low levels of literacy. Only 0.7% of men and none of the women are able to read and write.

SECURITY

Level of security in Takhar: 

According to the interviews, the security situation has greatly improved over the past year and most of the roads that link rural areas with the provincial markets are perceived as safe.

FOOD SECURITY

Problem satisfying food need of the household during the year (households %):

- Never: 23%
- Rarely (1-3 times): 24%
- Sometimes (3-6 times): 41%
- Often (few times a month): 6%
- Mostly (happens a lot): 6%

Calorie deficiency (%) consuming less than 2100 calories per day): 25.5%

CHILD LABOUR AND SCHOOL ENROLMENT

Child labour: 11.1%

School Enrolment: 48.7%

Very few Kuchi children (almost 1% of the boys and no girls attend school in Takhar during the winter months, and no Kuchi children attend school in the province during the summer.

STATUS OF WOMEN

Female literacy rate: 6.8% - *Female share in active population:* 41.0%

Access to markets / female mobility: According to our interviews, a majority of women in the provincial centre go to the local bazaar to buy goods. Most of them are accompanied by a male relative when they do so. Very few women go to sell items. Women outside of the provincial centre are less likely to go to the local bazaar to buy goods and more likely to be accompanied by a male relative.