

BADAKHSHAN

Located in the northeastern region of Afghanistan, Badakhshan province is bordered by Takhar Province in the west and Nuristan in the south, and shares international borders with Tajikistan in the north, China in the west, and Pakistan in the south.

Within Badakhshan, there are diverse agro-ecological zones making farming systems and the agriculture calendar also diverse. Pastures dominate the province.

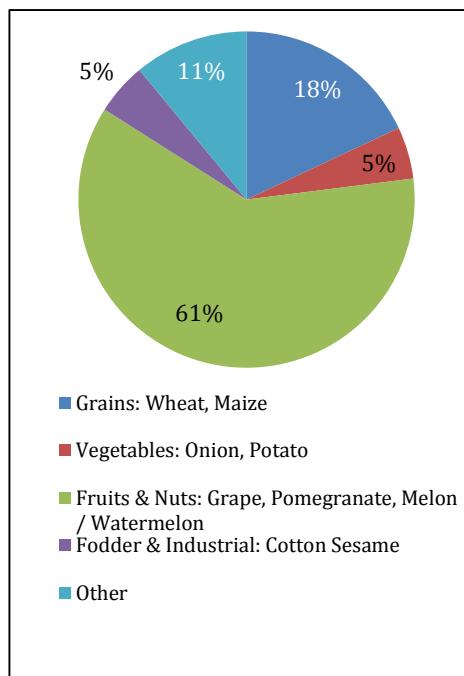
Badakhshan is famous for producing grapes, nuts, rugs and carpets.

Badakhshan in a Nutshell

- *Surface area:* 44,000 sq. km
- *Capital:* Faizabad
- *Districts:* 28 – Arghanj Khwah, Argo, Baharak, Darayim, Darwazi Balai Nesay, Darwazi Payin Mamay, Faizabad, Ishkashim, Jurm, Khash, Khwahan, Kiran Wa Munjan, Kishm, Kohistan, Kufab, Nharak, Raghistan, Shahri Buzurg, Shighnan, Shiki, Shuhada, Taqab, Tishkan, Wakhan, Warduj, Yaftali Payin, Yawan, Zebak
- *Population:* 0.9 million inhabitants (96% in rural areas)
- *Most populated districts:* Argo and Faizabad
- *Ethnic Groups:* Mainly Tajiks followed by Uzbeks and minority groups of Kyrgyz and Wakhis
- *Main languages:* Dari and Uzbeki
- *Kuchi Migration:* Winter, 5–50,000 individuals; Summer, 100–200,000 individuals
- *Returnees:* Badakhshan is the destination of 0.3% (roughly 14,000 individuals) of the total returnee population, but not a main hosting province for IDPs

HORTICULTURE

KEY CROPS



DIVISION OF LABOUR BY GENDER

Production:

Cultivation is mainly conducted by men in Badakhshan. Harvesting is done by both men and women for all crop categories.

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. However, women in Badakhshan do take part in some sales of vegetables.

INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN (UNDER 15)

Children under 15 in Badakhshan 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.

IMPROVED PRACTICES

Use of fertilizer (% of farming households):

- Field crops: 88%
- Garden plots: 4%
- Both field and garden plots: 9%

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

LIVESTOCK

KEY ANIMALS

Sheep, goats and cattle are the most common livestock raised in the province.

INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN (UNDER 15)

In Badakhshan, children share the responsibility of raising livestock and poultry with their older family members. They are also involved in the production of dairy products. While they are typically not involved in the sale of livestock, it is common for them to sell eggs, milk and dairy products.

DIVISION OF LABOUR BY GENDER

Animal husbandry:

Both men and women are active in raising livestock in Badakhshan. Men are more involved in caring for sheep and goats, while women take the lead with cattle and poultry.

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. Women mostly sell eggs.
- Dairy: Mainly women sell milk and dairy products.
- Commodities: Trading of commodities is handled solely by men.

IMPROVED PRACTICES

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

ECONOMIC FACTORS AND PROVINCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

LIVELIHOODS AND INCOME SOURCES

Agriculture is the major source of revenue for 55% of households in Badakhshan Province. Forty seven percent of all households own or manage agricultural land or garden plots in the province. In addition nearly one out in three households (32%) derive income from trade and services. More than a quarter of households (29%) earn income through nonfarm related labor. Livestock contributes to nearly a fifth of rural households (21%) income.

ACCESS TO CREDIT

Access for men and women

Men who need to borrow money or buy goods on credit in Badakhshan mainly go to MFIs, but also to family or neighbours, as well as shopkeepers or suppliers that sell items on credit. They do seek loans from banks, but to a lesser extent.

More than half of interviewees in Badakhshan said women are not 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 informal, such as family and neighbours, suppliers or storekeepers.

LAND TENURE

In 2007, 75% of the households in Badakhshan owned land or farmed land based on renting, sharecropping or mortgaging arrangements. According to our interviews, both commercial and subsistence farmers primarily have sole ownership of land.

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

IRRIGATION

According to our interviews in the province, on average 46% of households in the province have access to irrigated land, and two thirds of households (65%) have access to rain-fed land. There are no major irrigation systems in Badakhshan. What exists, is done by diverting the river or springs through intakes, into channels. Although, the irrigated area is rather low, Badakhshan has the advantage of being upstream in the irrigation system.

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS TO MARKETS

The transport infrastructure in the province was not well developed in 2007, at which point only 24% of roads could handle car traffic in all seasons, and 18% could take car traffic in some seasons. In more than half of the province (56.5%) there were no roads at all. Interviewed stakeholders in Badakhshan perceive the quality of roads linking rural areas to markets as being poor or very poor roads with only deteriorating in the past three years. Main challenges to get to the markets were identified as lack/poor quality of roads and distance from markets.

Key Income Sources

Poor: Labour sales, crop sales, livestock sales

Better-off: Livestock and product sales, crop sales, trade

Microfinance Institutions (MFIs)

The implementing partners of MISFA present in the province are BRAC and FMFB:

All Programs	Ag and Livestock Programs
• Active clients: 15,422	• Active clients: 4,278
• Active borrowers: 10,531	• Active borrowers: 3,896
• # of loans disbursed: 36,768	• # of loans disbursed: 6,242
• Amount of loans disbursed: 36,527,346 Afs.	• Amount of loans disbursed: 5,929,259 Afs.

SOCIAL FACTORS

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

Poverty rate: 61%

Per Capita monthly total consumption: 1,069 Afs.

LITERACY

Literacy rate: 26.5%

The Kuchi population in the province has particularly low levels of literacy with 5.1% of men and none of women able to read and write.

SECURITY

Perceived level of security: ↗ Security situation has improved somewhat over the past year. They also perceive most roads that link rural areas with the provincial markets to be safe.

FOOD SECURITY

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

- Never: 10%,
- Rarely (1-3 times): 27%,
- Sometimes (3-6 times): 48%,
- Often (few times a month): 9%,
- Mostly (happens a lot): 6%

Calorie deficiency (% consuming less than 2100 calories per day): 66.9%

CHILD LABOUR AND SCHOOL ENROLMENT

Child labour: 9.2%

School Enrolment: 67.7%

In Badakhshan, the Kuchi population has particularly low levels of school enrolment. One in ten girls (8%) attend school in the winter and 15% boys attend in the summer.

STATUS OF WOMEN

Female literacy rate: 11.9%; *Female share in active population:* 36.4%

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 that do are accompanied by a male relative when they do so. Very few 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.