

## Provincial profile for

### Nimroz Province

#### *Executive Summary*

#### **1 Natural Resources (ANDS Sector 3)**

Nimroz Province is a very poor province in terms of Natural Resources such as Mines and Forests, it is a sandy province. The province main income in the past was based on agriculture and livestock, but the severe drought of 5-7 years has strongly affected the province, it is suffering from lack of agricultural as well as drinking water.

In terms of underground resources, according to the people of the province, there is salt mines as well as it is said that in Charborjak district there are oil available and the surveys have been conducted during the regime of Mohammad Daud Khan.

There are three major rivers flowing in the province 1) Helmand River, Khashrod River and Farahrod River. All three rivers are joining Kang district and being absorbed in one area making a lake called Hamoon Saberi. One Third of Kang district is being covered by the lake and only one part of it is for people's use.

It should be stated that the lake used to be very full and there used to be a very large jungle that was used as grazing field for livestock in particular Cows; but due to the drought the lake is almost dried up and the jungle is lost, which has significantly reduced the carrying capacity of the area for livestock. The drying up is a combined effect of the drought and increased irrigation upstream, extracting water which otherwise would have filled the lake.

In terms of *water resources* as mentioned there are 3 rivers flowing in the province, the agriculture was based on the surface water being separated by traditional canals in each district from the mentioned rivers, there are two major canals called Canal Lashkari and Zarkan Canal. As the rivers are sort of dried out due to the drought the canals are also not used any longer.

There is a dam planned during the President Daud regime to be completed during his 5 year development master plan for Nimroz on Helmand river in Charborjak district called Kamal Khan Dam. The construction work was 50% completed when the communists took over and the construction of the dam was left in half the way. That dam was planned for irrigation as well as power generation. The completion of the dam at this stage would require difficult negotiations with Iran, which is also short of water in its eastern provinces and depends on the water coming from Afghanistan.

#### **2 Human Resources**

Nimroz is one of the poorest provinces in the south in terms of level of *education*, however there are around 50 schools mainly primary and only 4 high schools. The majority of the youth is crossing the border to seek jobs in Iran. During the wars large-scale migration has took place to Iran, explaining the people's orientation to that country.

Generally the people are busy with trade, legal and illegal, with Iran and then to other provinces of the country.

The level of *returnees* in the province in 2006 is not very high obviously due to the security problems and lack of job opportunities. However, according to UNHCR data (XXX families) have returned from Pakistan and Iran since January 2006 to 4 Districts of the province.

Afghans coming back to Nimroz from Iran are usually equipped with skills in the technical and crafts fields which is a positive factor for the province in terms of availability of skilled labourers.

Iran is running a short term technical and vocational training centre in Nimroz province where they train the youth in crafts and technical fields such as carpentry, Iron work, Masonry & etc.

### 3 Agriculture (ANDS Sector 6)

#### 3.1 Overview

Nimroz province in terms of agriculture is very poor after the drought; the lack of water has strongly affected the agricultural system of the province. Only 10% of the land is being cultivated after the drought. According to the information I was able to collect per district:

- In Khashrod district approximately 20000 jeribs of land used to be cultivated while it is reduced to around 2000 since the drought. The main agriculture products in the district are Pomegranates and Grapes, wheat and maize. The district has got 10 Karezes in different villages (Zara Kala, Bsrang, Malmalsa, Reza Afghan, Krmarak, Kata Sarai, Razee) that are all dry and require cleaning. People, those who can afford, installed Tube wells for the cultivation of their lands.
- In Charborjak district there is no agriculture any more; around 85800 jeribs of land used to be cultivated in the past, but due to the drought zero agriculture now. There are 3 major canals from flowing to the district 1-Lashkari Canal, 2-Qala-i-Fateh Canal and Charborjak Canal.
- Kang district is suffering badly from drought; there are no major agricultural activities in the district. There is a major traditional canal called Ibrahimabad which needs repair and construction.
- Zaranj district is the capital of the province where the Helmand River is passing through. The major agriculture is crops and orchard, which mainly provide some fruit for domestic use.

Agriculture is mainly based on crops mainly wheat, maize, melons & water melons and little orchard.

In general it could be said that agricultural irrigation system in Nimroz is depending on rivers and canals, which has strongly been affected by the chronic drought of 5-7 years and the agriculture and farming rate has dropped by 80-90% in the province.

#### 3.2 Crops

As mentioned above, Nimroz is mainly crops very little orchard to be used for domestic use. The main crops are Wheat, Barley, Maize, Melon, Water Melon and Poppy. The *drought* has strongly affected the agriculture system in the province, lack of sufficient surface water has resulted in drying up of the orchards and reduction in crops by almost 80-90%, and one can say that farming is sort of dead in the province.

According to UNODC report during the year 2005 due to availability of water in the rivers, 1690 hectares of land was cultivated with *poppy* out of which 1164 hectares were only in Khashrod where Helmand River is passing and 526 hectares in Chaharburjak district; while in 2004 there was 0 poppy and in 2003 only 26 hectares and 2002 and 2001 again 0 hectares. These figures show that due to lack of water the cultivation level was very low and when there was water in 2005 people had cultivated Poppy due to its high price and could help them with recovering of the periods of drought and no cultivation.

People pay for each litre of water since the only alternative remaining is the underground water being pumped from deep bore-wells through diesel water-pumps, which is very costly. This has caused the farmers to turn to poppy cultivation, which is being considered the only alternative cash crop under the current circumstances.

### 3.3 Livestock

Nimroz used to be very rich in terms of livestock in the past: *oxen* for traction, *cows* for breeding and milk, *sheep, goats and camels* were the livestock and every family member used to keep livestock in big numbers; for instance according to one of the elders from Chakhansoor, there were more than 500,000 animals in the district while only 10% of that survived the drought. Similarly other districts were also keeping lots of animals.

Hamoon Lake used to be very rich in terms of fodder and hay for cattle and other animals and used as the free grazing field. Since the drought reduced the water in the lake, it is almost dried, there is no longer fodder available in the Hamoon and it has strongly affected the animal husbandry in the province.

Still the families keep animals, but lack of sufficient fodder and veterinary facilities are the major problems.

The trade of animals is being continued to Iran, the families keeping animal smuggle the animals to Iran for selling. Oxen and buffaloes coming from India are being sold via Nimroz to Iran in both legal and illegal forms.

Establishment of *dairy* farms could be an option for the area in order to revive the animal husbandry and livestock production in a more intensive way. Increased availability of fodder and veterinary facilities would help people to re-establish the tradition of animal keeping.

### 3.4 Fisheries

This is not common with very little chance and possibilities.

### 3.5 Land tenure

Land distribution and ownership is very complex in Nimroz, entire province land is belongs to few families of Baluchi called Baloch Sardars. The rest of the people either have very little land or they are the farmers working the lands of the landlords. During the regime of Mohammad Daud a land reform plan was implemented in the province to give land to the poor and landless families.

Still the land tenure could be explained as:

- small land owners with up to 30 jeribs
- medium land owners with up to 200 jeribs, and
- big land lords with countless lands, more than thousands of jeribs

On the other hand there are many landless farmers who are working for other land owners on the basis of:

1. **Labourers:** Working for the land owner, the land owner has provided them with shelter/house and pays them on labourer whatever agreed upon either on monthly or yearly basis when the harvest is done
2. **Bazgari or partnership:** The land owner gives his land in partnership to a farmer to work on it on the basis of agreement to give one-third, one-fourth, or one-fifth of the harvest to the farmer who cultivates the land of the owner. The harvest ratio depends on the nature of agreement and share of expenditures, for instance the owner takes the responsibility for provision of fertilizers, seeds, tractor, fuel for water pump or whatsoever and the farmer is only working on land for cultivation, in this case the 4 or 5 shares would belong to the owner and 1 or 2 shares will be given to the farmer.
3. **Ijara (Lease):** Ijara is the form of agreement between the land owner and the farmer for a longer term that the farmer rents or leases the land of the owner for 1-2-3...5 years for a fixed sum of money or amount of product being cultivated in the land; for instance 100 kg of wheat per each jerib to be given to the owner on annual basis, while all the expenditures fall the responsibility of the farmer. This should be mentioned that for orchards there is another form of Ijara or Lease exists in Nimroz; once the orchard is close to yield or bear, someone is ready to buy the fruits of the tree on a

lump sum basis from the owner; the picking/harvesting, packaging and transportation remain the responsibility of the buyer.

Now coming back to land ownership, it is usually on inheritance basis being distributed among the heirs. In certain cases it has either been given centuries ago by the governments of that time to the people or the people have just simply occupied the vacant lands and then it became their property by laps of years and time.

### **3.6 Agricultural support services and input supplies**

Apart from the government of IRAN that is providing very little support to the farmers through the department of Agriculture, no any major services available in the province.

The Iranian Government has assisted the cooperatives through the department of agriculture with 9 Tractors on the basis of 5 years loan as well as distribution of some seeds and fertilizers which is not sufficient.

### **3.7 Agricultural structures (farmer groups/organisations/larger farmers etc)**

There are only 4 Farmers' Cooperatives registered with the Department of Agriculture under the names of:

1. Yaqoob-i-Laice
2. Sistan
3. Gulzar
4. ?

Due to lack of irrigation systems and lack of water, the farming system is completely paralyzed in the province; the only active farmer groups are the above mentioned Farmers' cooperatives and apart from that Nimroz has got a number of very big land owners who could also be considered as target groups.

### **3.8 Agriculturally related businesses**

As mentioned, due to the drought farming is not very successful, however people cultivate very little probably only 10% of lands located close to the irrigation systems and rivers and is being used for domestic use only.

## **4 Other business activities (ANDS Sector 8)**

The only business going on in the province is the trade between Iran and Nimroz in both legal and illegal way. Majority of goods for domestic consumption is being imported from Iran, which includes all kinds of goods starting from food items to construction material, medicines, etc. and the export to Iran is Animals and the animals' by-products such as wool, skin etc.

Nimroz is also a potential route for opium smuggling from Helmand and Kandahar through Nimroz to Iran and Pakistan.

According to the information I was given there are no factories, apart from the Ice Factory in the province; while there are some domestic crafts and handicrafts being produced for sale to the market in Nimroz such as Baluchi carpets and kelims, other Baluchi Customs, spun wool, animal by-products and etc.

## **5 Security (ANDS Sector 1)**

Security is major constraints towards economic development of the province; the threat of drug smugglers is also there in the province. One can say that the security situation in Nimroz is largely dependent upon the way how the Iranians will control the border.

**6 Physical infrastructure (ANDS Sector 8)**

- Governmental Offices
- Traditional canals
- Kamal Khan dam incomplete
- Hospital
- Only Zaranj city has power from Iran
- Roads from Zaranj to Iran and Zaranj to Kandahar-Herat main road
- Schools primary and high schools
- Military barracks and police posts
- A small airport

There is a custom office on the border in Zaranj. The road from Zaranj to the Iran border is fine and the road between Delaram and Zaranj through Ghorghori is also fine, under rehabilitation and now close to completion. But there are no interconnecting roads at the district level, connecting districts to the capital and/or border etc.

The big canals which should facilitate the irrigation are all damaged; the Kamal Khan dam is left incomplete, there is potential of a dam construction in Khasrod and cleaning and construction of all the traditional canals in all the districts.

**7 Institutional constraints (ANDS Sector 8)**

- Government bureaucratic procedures
- Lack of quality control and standardization procedures
- Lack supporting mechanism in the government
- Lack of resources in the government and lack of attention of the donor communities to the province
- Lack financing mechanisms and institutions
- Afghan transport is not allowed into Pakistan and Iran which creates problem in particular for transport of fresh food, has to change goods from one truck to the other in border, while Pakistani trucks are allowed to cross the border and come inside Afghanistan
- Lack of technical and professional agriculture extension workers

**8 Credit**

There are no institutions apart from IRAN government ad hoc support to farmers and department of agriculture. The Afghanistan International Chamber of Commerce (AICC) and Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) under ministry of Trade have got representational offices with very little activities and low human resource capacity in Zaranj.

**9 Stakeholders**

No	Description (Name)	Importance Rate			Comment
		1	2	3	
1	Government Authorities	X			To take the lead role & build its capacity
2	Provincial Council	X			As advisory & regulatory body
3	Village & District Councils (CDC)		X		As advisory, participatory and owner, but not very active
4	National Security Forces (ANP & ANA)		X		As security & stability enforcement bodies

5	International Security Forces (NATO & Coalition)			X	As there is no presence of PRT and international security forces in the province
6	Local Commanders	X			As the main influential group
7	District level authorities (District Head and District Police Commander)	X			As facilitators but also in most instances as problem creators
8	Taliban Groups	X			Could be a threat to implementation
9	Religious scholars and Mullahs	X			Very important to be brought in the implementing process to avoid their passive views
10	Local NGOs & Coordination body and women Associations		X		As implementing & participatory body, but very limited presence of NGOs
11	International NGOs		X		As implementing, participatory & support, but very little presence of INGOs
12	Ulema (Clerics) Shura & Madrassas		X		Can facilitate implementation as participant
13	Banks, AICC and Chamber of Commerce	X			As financing & business promotion bodies
14	IDPs, Returnees, Disables and Kuchi and women and children		X		As vulnerable and marginalized groups to be targeted
15	Media		X		As information & communication bodies
16	PRT & CIMIC			X	As influential bodies in terms funding agencies, but no presence of PRT
17	United Nation Agencies		X		As funding and capacity building as well as supporting & participatory bodies, only UNHCR is present
18	Donors		X		As funding & resource owners, but no presence
19	Cooperatives and Unions			X	Very limited availability

## 10 Summary of key potential development opportunities

Agriculture in Nimroz seems in dire straits and a strategic reconsideration of the agricultural future of the province is called for. It should be considered to put the scarce areas under irrigation at the service of livestock production through the production of winter fodder. Large areas of abandoned crop fields could be turned into areas for the production of firewood with drought resistant trees and some initial irrigation during the first 2-3 years. A good hydrological study should shed light on the possibility to rehabilitate the existing canals and afterwards again have sufficient water for irrigation.