

Provincial profile for:

BAMYAN

Executive Summary

1 Natural Resources (*ANDS Sector 3*)

Bamyan is *one of the poorest, most mountainous, and agriculturally least productive areas* in the country. Much of the land is barren and inaccessible, with acute water shortages, small landholdings, extensive food insecurity, and poor soil quality characterizing much of the region. While specific communities in Bamyan have benefited from short-term relief efforts and some infrastructure improvements, substantial need for well-planned initiatives remains.

Availability of *mineral resources* in Bamyan is not well surveyed. There are coal mines in the district of Kahmard but the potential for these to contribute to economic development is limited by the illegal excavation and transportation of coal from these mines. There are supposed to be very significant deposits of Iron Ore in the Hajikak area, bordering Bamyan and Wardak. Marble is present in Pujnab district, though unexploited. Other stone deposits worth exploiting seem to be present and at one small quarry and stone grinding operation has started near Bamyan. It is common to come across signs of sulphur deposits in various places, but again the extent is not known. Over all, it is quite likely that minerals and stone may offer one of the major potentials for economic development in Bamyan in future.

There is *no forest coverage* and probably never was any, except in some areas like Ajar in Khamard. The terrain is mainly characterised by scrub and extensive high altitude pasture lands, most of it severely denuded. As with the rest of Afghanistan, excessive use of wood for fuel and fodder combined with years of drought and war has resulted in the destruction of much forestry and rangeland. The over exploitation of various shrubs is resulting in serious soil erosion, flash floods with the smallest amount of rain and possibly resulting in irreversible damage to ecosystem.

Bamyan famously homes the *lakes of Band-e Amir*. Though suggestions have been put forward for using this water source for generating power, there are concerns that this would damage the lakes themselves and, in the rest of the province, Bamyan generally suffers from acute water shortages.

There are *few major investment projects* in Bamyan and, in the current political climate, it is becoming increasingly difficult to encourage donors to invest in areas such as the Central Highlands as the majority of donor funding is diverted to the provinces in the south of Afghanistan. The Italian government have committed to constructing the majority of the road from Kabul to Bamyan, via the Hajigag pass in Wardak province, and discussions are underway to find funding for the remaining sections of this road. The Japanese government is also discussing supporting a road project from Bamyan centre to Band-e Amir, through Mullah Ghulam, for approximately US \$20 million. USAID and the PRT are supporting secondary road projects in the province and NGOs in the area are involved in several areas of development including agriculture, education, health, microfinance and community development. The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) is another source of investment in the province and a key development activity. NSP is being implemented by both UN Habitat and AKDN in Bamyan.

2 Human Resources

Literacy rates in Bamyan are low, ranging from 0.5%, in districts such as Saighan, to 6% in Bamyan centre for women and 6% in Saighan, to 31% in Bamyan centre for men according to a UNAMA/Solidarites survey of 2003. Labour in Bamyan is generally unskilled and the low capacity of the Bamyan workforce is hampering the possibilities for economic development in the province.

Years of conflict and drought resulted in *substantial population movements* both within and out of the province. Though returnees have come to Bamyan, the scarcity of land and lack of economic opportunity reduces the incentives for people to settle in the province. These same trends encourage migration out of the province. Seasonal migration is particularly prevalent when, during the winter, many from Bamyan travel to the main cities in Afghanistan. There is currently little movement within the province as Bamyan centre does not offer the economic opportunities to encourage this trend.

Most of Bamyan's *schools* were either destroyed during the war or were never there due to the discrimination Hazara's faced from the central governments in the past. Many of these are being rehabilitated through support from the international aid agencies. Education for the girl child seems to be well supported by the community and one can see everywhere girls going to school, even where they have to walk for one hour each way. But slightly older girls, even 12-13 year olds, tend to drop out under community/family pressure if the distance to the schools is far. An associated problem has been the disruption of schooling for many during the war and as peace sets in, this has resulted in increasing demand for non-formal education. AKDN is currently running literacy and numeracy classes in three districts of Bamyan, but the need is huge and will need increased donor and government support.

The big other big problem in Bamyan is the *lack of sufficiently educated and skilled teachers*. It is difficult to find a teacher with grade 12th education themselves, most are around the grade 8th. This problem is more acute in case of women teachers. Programs for upgrading the skills of teachers, both methodological as well as subject knowledge, for regular teacher training, etc are much needed. Some agencies like AKDN as well as the government are running teachers training programs. AKDN is running accelerated learning courses for teachers in a couple of districts over winter.

There is *severe paucity of technical and higher skilled people* in Bamyan. Those who have them have migrated out of the country or live and work in Mazar and Kabul and are not interested in coming back given the infrastructure and facilities in Bamyan. This represents one of the most fundamental hindrance to long term development in the province. There is need to build capacity around applied skills that can allow people to find employment and take the process of development forward. Similar situation prevails within the government and capacity building on various fronts is a key.

3 Agriculture (ANDS Sector 6)

3.1 Overview

The main crops grown in Bamyan are *wheat, barley, beans and potatoes*. Most fields are 'snow-fed', irrigated by water from the melting snow following winter, or by springs and karezes. In general there is a single crop season and agricultural productivity is limited by difficult terrain, poor soil quality and harsh climatic conditions including severely cold winters, annual spring flooding and propensity to drought in the summer months. Given that *livestock is extremely important* for people in Bamyan, fodder crops are common as well; in places that have enough water and are lower than 2000 meters, people manage to take a fodder crop after their autumn planting harvest.

In general these problems have been exacerbated by *significant deforestation* in recent years, which has resulted in extensive erosion of land, leaching of soil and an increase of flooding and mudslides. Demographic pressures are also contributing to the further division of *landholdings* and the use of more marginal lands. It is estimated that 30% of the population in Bamyan is landless and amongst those who do own land the majority own small landholdings of 2-3 geribs. Most farming is subsistence based and there is very little market activity in the agricultural sector. Many families, both landless and those with little land, work as sharecroppers and receive anywhere between a fifth to a quarter of the yield depending on their inputs.

Over the last 20-30 years, increased pressures in the agricultural sector, combined with a reduction in dairying and wool-based handicraft production, a concentration on imports and food grains has led to an increase in labour migration, reduction in investment, dependence on remittances and increased indebtedness. Schemes to encourage the production of different crops which use less water, such as

maize, systems to allow for multi-cropping seasons, and processing of fruits could help mitigate some of these problems. Research into and projects in soil and bio-mass conservation are also vital to help alleviate the problems surrounding drought and the irrigation of crops. Improved productivity, linked to an appropriate market system, could allow for the agricultural sector to become a viable source of livelihoods in the province.

3.2 Crops

The main crops grown in Bamyan are wheat, barley, beans and potatoes. There is *little marketing* surrounding these crops. As *most farming in the province is subsistence based* there is frequently little surplus for selling. Farmers do sell potatoes from Shibar, Kahmard and Bamyan center, but over production, lack of regulated market (cheap imports from Pakistan) and a lack of storage facilities to maintain the harvest has often resulted in very low prices for this crop. Sale seems to be always in distress. *Very little crop diversification* is seen, with only some kidney beans and peas seen in some parts. Wheat and potato being the main crops, there is a need to work on the productivity of the same. Many agencies (mainly FAO and government) have introduced various varieties, but a regular system of farmer led trials needs to be developed along with production and supply chain of reliable seeds, once farmers have selected certain varieties (AKDN is currently doing some work on this front).

Horticulture is a potentially lucrative area for the province with the production of mainly apple and apricot, but also peach, cheery, walnuts and pears. These fruits grow mainly in Kahmard, with small orchards in parts of Punjab, Bamyan and Yakawalang. There is significant potential for the apple industry in Panjab, Yakwalang, parts of Shibar and Waras. However, providing market access is severely hampered by the poor state of infrastructure in the area, particularly the roads. The journey from Kahmard to Bamyan center takes approximately 5 hours and then the journey to Kabul a further 9-10 hours (trucks) on very poor roads in which it is difficult to prevent the fruits and vegetables from spoiling.

3.3 Livestock

Livestock is the *traditional source of livelihood* in the area and the one with the most potential for future development. Livestock is sold in both regional and national markets and small businesses have formed around the sale of veterinary medicines. Milk products like ‘kurut’ are traditional and do have a market locally as well as in Kabul. However, years of war, drought and extensive deforestation and destruction of rangeland, which has reduced the availability of suitable fodder for animals, has severely disrupted livestock in the province. A MRRD/WFP report estimated that livestock numbers have reduced to 64 percent of 1990 levels. There are other estimates (DoA and community elders) that suggest that the current small ruminant population is only 25% of its pre-war numbers. This reduction in cattle population has increased the vulnerability of a population relying on a largely subsistence-based economy.

In this environment, programmes which provide veterinary and pasteurising services, fodder improvement, through agro-forestry and rangeland management, and herd improvement have great potential for providing economic development in the province. There is need to also investigate the potential for leather industry (hide collection, processing etc locally).

3.4 Fisheries

Although fish is available in some areas in Bamyan, such as Band-e Amir, Dare-e-chast (Yakwalang), Ajar valley (Khamard), rivers of Waras, there are only one attempt at trout farming near center of Bamyan, and none other commercial attempt at fisheries. There is need to look at the ecological consequences of introduced varieties (even accidental).

3.5 Land tenure

It is estimated that 30% of the population in Bamyan is landless and amongst those who do own land the majority own small landholdings of 2-3 geribs. The physical terrain in the province limits the potential size of landholdings and increased demographic pressure in recent years has resulted in the further

division of these land-holdings to family members, resulting in the use of more marginal land. Issues of land ownership and access to resources are the main source of tension in the area and usually form around ethnic divisions, between Tajiks and Hazaras. The major cause of tension in the province, is the relationship with Kuchis in the province, especially in Panjab, Waras and Yakawlang, and the inherent conflict in interest between those who use land for pastoral purposes and those who cultivate land.

3.6 Agricultural support services and input supplies

Basic agricultural services and input supplies are available. Following the fall of the Taliban many humanitarian agencies focused on agricultural service provision and shops across the province now sell agricultural equipment and fertilisers. More sophisticated fertilisers and pesticides, and good quality seed (even that of wheat), are not available in the bazaar, but providing access to these inputs is possible with sufficient demand.

However, the potential growth of this sector is limited by the agricultural market type and size. Agricultural activity in the province is generally geared towards subsistence and is not sufficiently profitable. There is little growth in this sector (land and water constraints) and prevailing trends would suggest that this sector may actually decline with increasing pressures lessening the possibility for financial gain. But given the very low level of services at the present there is scope and gain in addressing this gap. Over all though, this reduces the incentives for those providing agricultural support services and input supplies to expand their businesses and develop long-term business plans. Encouraging the production and selling of alternative crops and fruits which are more profitable could, therefore, also benefit this business sector.

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

The prevalence of subsistence-based farming, reduction in dairying and handicrafts activities and livestock numbers, and individualistic mentalities as a consequence of decades of war, opposition to the Soviet Union and its models of collectivization, has resulted in a *lack of farmer groups and organisations* in the province. The government though has three farmers cooperatives in Bamyan center (foladi valley), but they are not exactly well run, vibrant institutions. Agencies in the area are working to improve this situation by forming community committees and working through local shuras or newly elected Community Development Councils (CDCs). For example, AKDN has formed farmer groups through participatory methodologies including farmer field schools (FFSs) and participatory technology development groups (PTDs). Now fledgling institutions, these groups do have the potential for further development.

3.8 Agriculturally related businesses

The most significant agricultural business in the area involves the *selling of livestock inputs*, such as veterinary medicines, and some agrarian inputs, such as fertilisers and pesticides. There is limited selling of crops. Potatoes are sold but high production and lack of storage facilities to maintain the harvest has resulted in depressed prices. Various agencies in Bamyan are involved in agricultural activities and are working to increase the profitability of the agricultural sector, mainly through the production and selling of alternative crops and fruits. However, providing market access is severely hampered by the poor state of infrastructure in the area, particularly the roads. Long journeys on bad roads reduces the potential for selling fresh fruit and vegetables outside the province. For this reason, several organisations are concentrating on fruit processing and marketing activities such as apricot and Mulberry drying.

Medicinal plants and food additives, is another area that may carry significant potential as well as livelihood opportunities for the poorest (especially landless). AKDN with partnership of ICARDA is investigating some of this potential.

4 Other business activities (ANDS Sector 8)

Other business activities in Bamyan province include the construction industry, timber industry, handicrafts, mining and shops in the bazaar. There is no small manufacturing. There is potential development for the **construction industry** in the province, especially as the NGO law now restricts NGOs from undertaking construction work themselves. However, the capacity of contractors in Bamyan province is very limited and most agencies currently hire from outside the province.

The **mining** industry is a potential source of economic development but is poorly regulated and hampered by the illegal extraction and transportation of coal. **Handicrafts** is another potential source of business development as the long winters in Bamyan are conducive for activities such as carpet weaving. The **carpet weaving** industry in Shibar has already been formalised to some extent and exists in an informal capacity in districts such as Waras and Panjab. In general, the potential for business development is limited by a lack of skills in the area and the need to outsource.

In early 2006 a Chamber of Commerce formed in Bamyan to help small businesses operate and form business development plans. They work mainly with the shopkeepers in the bazaar. The Chamber of Commerce has the backing of the government, is in contact with the Afghan Chamber of Commerce and has received training from the Centre for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). This is a fledgling institution and its impact is yet to be seen.

Significant growth in small enterprise is being boosted by micro finance activity, especially in Bamyan Bazar, yakwalang bazaar by agencies like ARMP, CHF and BRAC.

5 Security (ANDS Sector 1)

The security situation in Bamyan remains stable and access to communities is possible. Anti-government sentiments are rare though frustrations are expressed over the lack of support received from the central government in Bamyan despite the good security situation and lack of anti-government elements in the province. There are increasing concerns over the stability of provinces bordering Bamyan including Ghor, Wardak and Dai Kundi and the spill-over effect this could have on the province.

6 Physical infrastructure (ANDS Sector 8)

A **lack of power and poor roads exists** as the largest current obstacle to economic development in Bamyan. There is no power grid in Bamyan and power is mostly produced through generators. The government is planning to place a diesel generator in the Bamyan bazaar to provide electricity to the shopkeepers, university and schools in the surrounding area. Demand for power within communities is high: the majority of projects implemented under NSP are either micro hydro power projects or solar panelling projects. The potential for water as source of power is limited by the scarcity of water in many areas in the province and that existing water sources often freeze during the winter period. Experience suggests that solar panelling is a good alternative in the absence of other potential sources, though it can only provide power for lighting purposes and not for industrial use.

The **roads** in Bamyan are in an enormously poor condition. There are two routes to Kabul: via the Shibar pass, through the province of Parwan, at a distance of 237 km, and through the Hajigag pass, through Wardak province, at a distance of 180 km. However, it takes approximately 8 and 6 hours respectively to travel on these roads and security is poor on the Hajigag pass. The district of Waras in Bamyan province is 191 km from Sar-e Asyab, via the Shatu pass, though it takes approximately 7 hours to drive. Furthermore, many of these roads are closed for long stretches during the year, often from November to April, due to heavy snowfall during the winter period and flooding during the spring.

Access to services remains minimal with virtually all services being provided by the assistance community, most often on the basis of accessibility rather than need. Critical health problems include low vaccination rates, widespread incidence of water borne diseases and high levels of infant and maternal mortality. Education remains a key priority for the region given the need for improved access and quality of education. Veterinary services are being provided through a system of livestock development centres and veterinary field units provided by AKDN, DCA and Oxfam.

7 Institutional constraints (ANDS Sector 8)

There is a *general lack of legal and social structures* in the province with which to create an enabling environment for business and agricultural development. The government has little capacity with which to establish such a legal framework and has shown little initiative in resolving conflicts surrounding issues of land ownership. This environment is compounded by a lack of business capacity and skilled labour in the province.

8 Credit

There are several agencies in Bamyan, including Afghanistan Rural Microcredit Programme (ARMP), Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) and CHF (only Bamyan center), providing microfinance services. However, these agencies in general do not provide loans to the most inaccessible areas, where it would be difficult to collect monthly instalments, and loan systems are often inflexible. ARMP is the only agency with operations in five of the seven districts of Bamyan, though their outreach is limited as of now and loan instruments and requirements not yet very conducive for bulk of the population. Informal lending systems do exist but service charges are often inhibiting, ranging from 100-150% annually.

9 Stakeholders

Vice President Khalili and Wolesi Jirga member Akbari remain the most influential figures at the national level in Bamyan though their involvement in specific issues of economic development in the province would be limited (3). Governor Habiba Sarabi is dedicated to improving economic development in the province but is constrained by a lack of resources, her position as a female Governor, and limited capacity in many of the line ministries in the province. However, her active involvement in all programmes in the area is critical (1). The Provincial Council is potentially a key stakeholder (1). They are active within the province, conducting road missions and meetings to gauge community needs, and reporting back to the provincial government on this. They participate in government coordinating bodies where they act in both an advisory and monitoring role and are keen to increase their involvement in developing government policy in coordination with the provincial authorities.

UN agencies and NGOs are active in the province in various sectors including agriculture, education, health and micro-finance. To date, coordination between these various agencies has been poor though steps are being taken to rectify this. Many agencies are limited by small budgets which are increasingly diminishing in the current political climate as donor funds go to programmes in the southern provinces of Afghanistan. Encouraging the participation of all agencies in this process is important (2) though there are certain key agencies in the province whose participation will be vital including the PRT, AKDN, UNAMA, UNHCR, UN Habitat, FAO, Solidarites, NRC, ADRS, Suhada, and AADA (1). Civil society and media presence in Bamyan is extremely limited (2). Radio Bamyan and TV Bamyan have shown great initiative in their programmes but are hampered by an acute shortage of resources. Furthermore, the impact of media is limited in the province. For example, radio signals for local stations do not go beyond Bamyan centre.

The role of traditional shuras is diminishing due to the presence of Community Development Councils (CDCs) elected as part of the National Solidarity Programme. Members of these shuras have generally taken part in the NSP process and there has been a smooth transition between the two systems of community representation. This is not the case with the ulema shuras who are feeling increasingly marginalised due to the NSP process. Steps are being taken to incorporate members of these shuras into the NSP programme where possible but many members of the ulema shuras do not feel that they should have to take part in this programme. Alleviating feelings of marginalisation and working in collaboration with the ulema shuras is crucial for the success of projects at the community level. However, the Community Development Councils (CDCs) remain the key body at the community level (1).

10 Summary of key potential development opportunities

There are several sectors which show potential for development if they receive sufficient investment including livestock, horticulture, rangeland rehabilitation, carpet weaving and handicrafts. Growth in the agricultural sector requires initiatives to alleviate problems associated with small landholdings, poor soil quality and water shortages. This requires research into soil and bio-mass conservation and alternative crop species and cropping systems with the view to implement the findings of such research in the future. Increasing the productivity of the agricultural market would also enhance the feasibility of business initiatives in this sector.

Providing power is essential for economic development in the province and the use of solar power for this purpose has demonstrated great potential. Increasing access to more flexible credit schemes (things like group lending without collateral) will also serve to encourage entrepreneurial enterprises in the province.

Economic development in Bamyan is hampered by the lack of capacity within the government and communities in the province. Increasing this capacity is crucial. NSP offers an important forum through which to strengthen the capacity of communities. Steps should be taken to strengthen the institutional capacity of the large number of Community Development Councils (CDCs) established as part of NSP to increase the leadership and management capabilities of local community leaders. Several organisations are expanding on this programme to form cluster-level development committees (CLDCs) to encourage collaboration between villages through the planning of joint cluster-level activities, and to share knowledge, experience and lessons learned through interaction, meetings and exposure visits. Building the capacity of these institutions will require long-term and continued interaction over a period of 10 to 15 years. Capacity building of the Provincial council, local NGOs, private sector too will be key towards this effort.

Annexes

Annex 1: Summary of the main development activities in the province

Institution	Programme	Location/Coverage
UN	UNAMA (coordination, government capacity building). FAO (alternative livelihoods in Shiber, Panjab and Waras, literacy). UNHCR (returnee support). UN Habitat (NSP in Yakawlang, Saighan, Kahmard). UNICEF (teacher training, text book distributions, school construction). UNOPS (reconstruction - roads, bridges, schools). ANBP (DIAG). UNDP (NABDP).	Central Highlands (Bamyan province, Dai Kundi Province, district of Lal wa Sarjantal, Ghor province).
NZ Govt (PRT, NZAID)	Security. Government capacity building (particularly army and police). Government infrastructure. Support to Governor's priority projects.	Mainly Bamyan Centre but also district support
US Govt (USDOS, USAID)	Government capacity building. Government infrastructure.	Mainly Bamyan Centre but also district support
AKDN (AKF, AKHS, ARMP)	Rural development: natural resource management, Watershed development, Livestock development, Forestry and rangeland, Agriculture extension, Horticulture development, education, water and sanitation, community development, business development. Health Services. Micro-finance. School Construction and other infrastructure works. Capacity Building (NGO, Govt, Community leaders). NSP (Shibar, Waras, Punjab)	Bamyan province and Sheikh Ali and Surkhi Parsa districts in Parwan Province.
Solidarities	Natural resource management (nurseries, livestock, seed improvement). Small scale infrastructure. Winterisation and disaster response. Limited gender activities.	Bamyan, Kahmard, Saighan, Yakowlang
Oxfam	Natural resource management (nurseries, livestock, seed improvement). Community development. Small scale infrastructure. Food security activities. Income generation activities.	Panjab, Waras, Dai Kundi, Sharistan, Lal wa Sarjantal.
CHF	Construction of schools and clinics. Microfinance	Construction in most Bamyan districts. Microfinance in Bamyan Centre currently with Yakawlang planned.
CARE International	School construction. Teacher training. Establishment and support of Parent Teacher Associations and School Management Committees.	All Bamyan districts.
Save the Children (Japan)	School construction. Teacher training.	Bamyan centre, Yakawlang, Shibar

Ibn Sina	Basic Health Provision (Clinics and health posts)	Saighan, Sheikh Ali
ADRA	Basic Health Provision (Clinics and health posts)	Panjab and Waras
AADA	Basic Health Provision (Clinics and health posts)	Bamyan centre, Yakawlang.
AFRANE	Teacher training. School construction.	Waras
EAC	Adult literacy. School rehabilitation. Vocational Training. Natural Resource Management (bee keeping, animal husbandry, nurseries, check dams)	Waras, Panjab
BRAC	Microfinance. Demobilization of child soldiers.	Bamyan Centre and Shibar
ICRC	Agriculture development. Irrigation	Bamyan district.
JICA	Women's empowerment. Capacity building of DOWA.	Bamyan Centre;, Yakwalang, Khamard and Shibar (through IPs)
NRC	Land tenure issues.	All Bamyan districts.
NDI	Government capacity building. Civil-service training.	Bamyan and Dai Kundi province.

Annex 2: Sources of data and relevant reports

Sent by Kabul at other occasion

Annex 3: Working methodology used

Given the limited time frame afforded to complete this provincial profile it was not possible to conduct comprehensive interviews or liaise with stakeholders. Given more time during the next project phase, the briefly contacted people listed below would be involved in a more comprehensive potential analysis. AKF is in the process of conducting a comprehensive livelihood baseline survey to be completed in the next 3 months. This survey could provide invaluable information for completing such a profile.

Annex 4: List of persons/agencies visited/contacted

Name	Position/agency/relevance re future development	Topic discussed	Date
Ms. Habiba Sarabi	Governor of Bamyan		
Mr Amir Fooladi	Assistant to the Governor		
Mr Khairabadi	Head of Department of Economy		
Eng. Tahir Atayee	Head of Department of Agriculture		
Chamber of Commerce			
Mr Gregory Raikes	Political Affairs Officer, UNAMA		
Mr Mohammed Ammar Hashim	RRR National Programme Officer		
Squadron Leader Shane Meighan	S5 Planning Officer, NZPRT.		
Mr Karim Merchant	Chief Technical Advisor, SALEH project, FAO		
Ms Sophie Baire	Solidarites		
Mr Taweechai Termkunanon	UNHCR		
Mr Oivind Sterri	Project Coordinator, NRC		

Annex 5: Provincial summary of socio economic data

For Bamyan not more socio economic data are available than those listed by national overviews like FAO livestock census etc. AKF Kabul will provide these profiles for all Provinces.