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**AFGHANISTAN**

# FACT SHEET

## Nuristan Province

### OVERVIEW

USAID estimated support to Nuristan from January 2002 - June 2011: \$23.1 million

Estimated Population: 132,000 (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Central Statistics Office: Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2008-2009)

Capital: Parun

Note: U.S.-led PRT (FOB Kala Gush)



In 2002, the interim Government of Afghanistan created a separate province for the Nuristani peoples, today known as Nuristan. Located deep within the Hindu Kush mountain range, this sparsely-populated area is home to an Indo-European tribal community that speaks five unique languages. The harsh terrain and remote location of the region made it one of the last areas to be converted to Islam; the Nuristanis practiced animism until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The mountainous landscape makes Nuristan's land difficult to cultivate, and many villagers rely on livestock as their source of livelihood. Furthermore, forests provide economic opportunities for woodworking and crafts. Women are responsible for crop production in Nuristan, while men generally raise livestock.

USAID's activities in Nuristan are closely aligned with the overall work of the PRT. In Nuristan, USAID has focused on the following areas: Agriculture, Democracy and Governance, Economic Growth, Education, Health, and Infrastructure.

### AGRICULTURE

**Goal:** Increase agricultural sector jobs and income through a) increased agricultural productivity by improving farmer access to inputs and effective extension services; b) invigorated agribusiness by increasing linkages among farmers, markets, credit, and trade corridors; and c) rehabilitated watersheds and better irrigation infrastructure. Also, to raise Afghans' confidence in their government by increased Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock's capacity to deliver services and promote the private sector and farmer associations through direct budget and technical assistance.

**Summary:** USAID focuses on preparing farmers and community members to participate in a modern agricultural economy through improved irrigation, agricultural opportunities, veterinary services, forestry and wildlife conservation and training.

### Accomplishments:

- Constructed or rehabilitated 14 km of farm-to-market roads, decreasing transport time and reducing post-harvest losses for farmers, as well as providing employment and training for local laborers
- Developed skills and created employment opportunities through cash-for-work projects for nearly 800 men and women, providing \$413,000 in wages
- Planted 4,000 walnut trees, 50 hectares of apple trees, and more than 170,000 fruit tree and nut saplings covering 652 hectares to promote long-term growth of licit fruit crops and restore many of Nuristan's orchards and agricultural lands that were badly damaged over decades of war
- Provided high-yield vegetable and wheat seed, as well as fertilizer, to more than 4,000 farmers to improve the quality of crops and promote licit means of livelihood



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- Launched training programs to strengthen commercial agricultural opportunities, increase farmers' agricultural knowledge, and promote direct linkages between food brokers and farmers
- Developed several women-focused programs, training 75 women in Parun on handicraft production and marketing, as well as employing women in the rehabilitation of local nurseries
- Trained 22 Afghans in business management skills and best practices
- Revitalized Nuristan's forests by planting approximately 4.8 hectares of conifer forest
- Trained government staff and local residents in community forest management
- Increased citizens' ability to protect their environment and natural resources through environmental education materials; provided training and educational materials to eight teachers and more than 400 students
- Protected Nuristan's wildlife through surveys and training, surveying approximately 105,000 hectares for wildlife habitat areas and species identification
- Established the Western Nuristan Dairy Association to serve as the voice of the dairy sector
- Completed a natural resources assessment for five districts focusing on the supply-and-demand of natural resources
- Improved farm animal health through animal husbandry training in Waygal, Wama, and Nurgram districts, addressing feeding, care, disease identification, and vaccinations
- Assessed the economic viability of goat cheese and cashmere production in the province
- Established one commercial-size and five small farms/resource centers in one district for use as a training ground for 331 people on agriculture and livestock topics
- Distributed packages of improved varieties of vegetable seeds with marketable attributes and fertilizer to 501 farmers in Waygal District
- Rehabilitated 133 hectares of upper watershed land through the establishment of terraces in Nurgram District that constructed 35 small check dams of 150 cubic meters, created 37,340 days of employment for 400 people, and paid \$149,360 in wages
- Trained 60 foster moms in nursery management
- Constructed a 3.5 km road that employed 234 skilled and unskilled laborers
- Established one commercial-size and five small farms/resource centers in one district that trained 331 people on agriculture and livestock topics

### DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

**Goal:** Build the capacity of government institutions to improve the quality of government services to Afghan citizens. Support independent media institutions and advocacy groups.

**Summary:** USAID builds the capacity of government institutions to improve the quality and quantity of services to citizens in Nuristan Province through support to the justice sector, media, civil-society, and governance development.

#### Current Activities:

- Provide capacity building training to civil-society organizations
- Support a radio station
- Promote children's rights awareness and providing province-wide training and support to increase participation of Afghan women in political processes. These activities inform women about issues such as health, education, and women's rights, and encourage them to take an active role in their communities



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- Provide assistance to improve the ability of provincial leaders to respond to citizen needs and to provide essential public services such as power, water, sanitation, safe roads, and waste management
- Train provincial- and district-level civil servants in the five common functions highlighted in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy: financial management, human resources management, procurement, project management, and strategy and policy development
- Provide the provincial governor with operational resources and money for community outreach and micro projects to support his needs and serve as incentive to develop
- Develop the human and institutional capacity of the courts, increase access to justice particularly for women, and develop and implement a case tracking system including professional training for judges and administrators on the system
- Provide institutional capacity development and advocacy support to women-focused Afghan civil-society organizations

### Accomplishments:

- Supported justice sector development through the publication and distribution of Judicial Reference Law sets, a 17-volume collection of laws, to all 20 judges in the province
- Developed and trained judges and court administrators in the new Afghanistan Court Administration System, a case-management system that improves the courts' ability to manage cases and provide due process, leading to more effective and transparent rule of law
- Supported justice sector development through a one-month Foundation Training Program for 15 sitting judges and a one-year Supreme Court-mandated Stage Judicial Training Program for five judicial candidates, providing judges access to the tools necessary to officiate over the courts
- Assisted the Supreme Court in drafting a new ethics code for all judges and provided training for all of Afghanistan's judges in the contents and importance of the code
- Promoted effective local governance by training the provincial council to improve professionalism, knowledge, and skills, resulting in more effective and transparent leadership
- Promoted public participation in governance through civic education for Nuristan's citizens in preparation for the 2004-2005 elections
- Supported the 2008 voter registration exercise, assisted domestic and international observation missions, trained political parties and independent poll agents, conducted a series of poll surveys ahead of the elections, and ultimately helped conduct the 2009/2010 elections
- Provided capacity building training to three civil-society organizations
- Awarded nine grants

### ECONOMIC GROWTH

**Goal:** Create a developed business climate that enables private investment, job creation, and financial independence.

**Summary:** USAID's economic growth program helps the Afghan government develop sound economic governance and works with the private sector to stimulate investment and business opportunities. USAID partners with Afghans and the Afghan government to attract investment, generate sustainable employment, and expand market linkages. USAID promotes a legal economy in Nuristan Province through expanding access to telecommunications and modern banking services and through supporting small and medium enterprises.

### Current Activities:



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- Support the Ministry of Finance's provincial budgeting team and provincial budgeting officers based in the Jalalabad training hub, to conduct budgeting training programs and provide technical assistance to provincial officials in preparing annual budget estimates

### Accomplishments:

- Installed three district communications network centers, operated by Afghan Telecom, that provide telephones, internet, and photocopying services to district government officials and the public at large
- Installed the Revenue Reconciliation and Accounting database in the Nuristan Mustofiat, which has dramatically reduced processing times of Afghan government revenue receipts, production on revenue reports, and uploading into the consolidated Ministry of Finance Financial Management System
- Trained 37 Nuristan officials in effective planning and budget estimate preparation to increase their participation in the national budget process by developing inputs that better reflect local needs and priorities
- Supported 50 small and medium enterprises through association assistance and business skills training
- Created three business associations to serve as the voice of the private-sector
- Provided economic opportunities and self-sustainability for women through establishing and providing training for the Afghanistan Women's Business Federation
- Improved market bazaars to increase commerce in Want, Wama, Noogram, and Doab districts
- Promoted economic related information and data collection activities to build Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) regional economic research and analytical function introduced in DAB zone offices
- Supported the revenue reconciliation team of the Nuristan Mustofiat centered on accurate revenue collection posting and reporting to center
- Promoted improved cash management operations with regard to availability and quality of bank notes in circulation

### EDUCATION

**Goal:** Improve the quality of basic education through improved teacher quality and increased availability of primary school textbooks.

**Summary:** USAID supports educational improvements in Nuristan Province through national education projects. USAID provides radio-based teacher support programs, textbook support, and constructed and/or refurbished schools.

### Current Activities:

- Provide radio-based teacher support programs to improve teachers' skills and performance in the classroom
- Continue textbook support

### Accomplishments:

- Constructed three schools
- Printed one million textbooks

### HEALTH

**Goal:** Improve the access to and quality of health services and increase the abilities of individuals, families, and communities to protect their health.



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**Summary:** USAID's principal health investments in Nuristan Province come through nationwide programs, including provision of refresher training courses for nurses and physicians and pre-service training for community midwives based in Nangarhar Province.

### Current Activities:

- Fund the Diseases Early Warning System for 14 routine conditions/diseases in five sentinel sites
- Support the Provincial Public Health Office and the Provincial Public Health Coordination Committee to strengthen the technical, leadership, and management capacity of the provincial health team to support the delivery of the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) and the Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS)
- Train community health worker trainers and community health supervisors, and orient new non-government organization staff, to expand the use of post-partum family planning
- Fund a community-based midwifery education program for students from Nuristan to reduce infant and maternal mortality

### Accomplishments:

- Trained 720 pharmacists, shura members, and community health workers on safe drinking water, oral rehydration salts, and birth spacing to increase the quality of preventative healthcare
- Trained provincial health officers to develop monthly joint monitoring plans to support the delivery of BPHS and EPHS
- Graduated 23 midwives from Nuristan from the community-based midwifery training program based in Nangarhar Province

## INFRASTRUCTURE

**Goal:** Improve infrastructure to create licit economic opportunities, promote freedom of movement, and facilitate delivery of government and social services.

**Summary:** The infrastructure program in Nuristan Province focuses on the construction of renewable energy systems and water facilities while building the capacity of local workers and supporting the local economy using locally available materials.

### Current Activities:

- Provide access to electricity through the installation of four solar school systems and twelve solar streetlights to benefit students and residents of Khawia District
- Assess the feasibility of constructing a gravity-fed, water supply system and reissue the tender for the construction of wells in Nurgaram District

### Accomplishments:

- Constructed or refurbished water and sanitation facilities, installed latrines, and provided hygiene education

## STABILIZATION

**Goal:** Improve stability, extend the reach of the Afghan Government, and promote stabilization efforts that lay the groundwork for medium- to long-term development activities.



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**Summary:** USAID creates linkages and builds confidence between communities and the local government through small-scale infrastructure, training, and community development projects.

### **Current Activities:**

- Work with the communities of Bargi Matal District on canal rehabilitation and construction, road improvements, and latrine construction

### **Accomplishments:**

- Provided training courses in management, English and information technology for 72 provincial and district level personnel to improve local governance and build capacity
- Completed an assessment of the Kamdeshi vs. Kushtozi conflict to devise solutions for effective community mediation
- Completed a natural resources assessment for eight districts focusing on the supply and demand of natural resources
- Improved animal health through animal husbandry training in Waygal, Wama and Nurguram districts on feeding, care, disease identification, and vaccinations
- Conducted a production assessment to determine the economic viability of goat cheese production in the province
- Expanded irrigation canals and orchard nurseries in southern Nurguram District
- Constructed footpaths and two micro-hydropower plants in Dowab District to improve safety and provision of electricity for rural residents
- Improved livestock health through training in animal care, disease identification, and vaccination techniques
- Constructed drinking water systems in Nurguram District to improve health and hygiene
- Supported community rehabilitation efforts through three foot-path and canal rehabilitation community stabilization grants in Nurguram District