



جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان
وزارت احیاء و انکشاف دهات
برنامه ملی انکشاف ساحوی

د افغانستان اسلامی جمهوریت
د کلیو د بیارغونې او پراختیا وزارت
د سیمیز پراختیا ملی پروګرام



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
National Area Based Development Programme

SUMMARY OF THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

BALKH DISTRICT BALKH PROVINCE



Developed by the Balkh District Development Assembly with the
facilitation of NABDP/MRRD and support of District and Provincial Governors

May-June 2006

Introduction

Over the last few years, the Government has shown increasing commitment to make its strategies more responsive to the development needs and priorities of communities at the district level. This commitment was born out of the need to make development intervention more effective, enduring, equitable, and people-oriented. Accordingly, district development planning was perceived as an opportune mechanism for enabling the envisaged consultative, people-oriented development.

In May-June 2006, Balkh District welcomed a team of facilitators from the National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP) of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) to facilitate a comprehensive development planning process in the district. With the support of NABDP facilitators, the District Development Assembly (DDA), the Women's Sub-Committee of the DDA, and district Government representatives formulated a District Development Plan (DDP) for their district. The plan was developed in a community-led process and thus enabled the communities to articulate their priority needs and recommend strategies for addressing them.

The process of DDP formulation comprised a number of stages: collection and validation of secondary data about the district; analysis of the strengths/opportunities and weaknesses/threats of the district; definition of development vision and goals and development of strategies, activities and project ideas for addressing the development priority needs of the district.

This document summarises the methodological approach for and the key outputs of the district development planning process in Balkh District.

District Profile

The facilitators collected the following secondary data about the district from the provincial authorities and presented it to the DDA for review, the validity of which was subsequently confirmed by the DDA:

General Information	
Population (CSO 2004)	97,055
Area (AIMS)	511 sq. km.
Number of villages	129
Ethnic diversity	Pashtun, Tajik
Sectoral Information	
Number of health centres	One district hospital

Situation Analysis, Development Goals and Strategies

The participants used the SWOT analytical methodology to identify the strengths/opportunities and weaknesses/threats of the district per each Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) sector, the outcome of which was used as the basis for formulating development goals for the district. They subsequently developed strategies and project ideas for achieving those goals.

Security

Situation Analysis

The security situation in Balkh District has been assessed as relatively peaceful, and its various ethnicities and tribes live in mutual harmony. Moreover, the local communities and tribal councils, in collaboration with the local Government security departments, have eradicated poppy cultivation, eliminated crime and narcotics smuggling and strive to maintain law and order in the district, and women freely participate in security activities and planning. However, the local security departments have shortage of essential equipment and supplies, and professional and properly trained personnel.

Goal

To ensure overall peace and security by establishing security posts throughout the district, provide essential equipment and supplies for local security departments, and adequately train security sector personnel.

Major Strategies

1. Appointment of key local security posts on the basis of professionalism and merit.
2. Development of employment opportunity programmes for former convicts and criminals.
3. Provision of capacity building and special training programmes for the local security forces concerning social equality and human rights.
4. Establishment of public awareness campaigns concerning the Law and human rights via the mainstream media.

Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights

Situation Analysis

Generally, the rule of law is reasonably implemented with the full cooperation of the local communities and tribal councils, and the various branches of the judicial system function in the district. However, the local Government administration has a shortage of professional and disciplined personnel, and fails to provide incremented salary scale for its workforce and reduce the legal and administrative process duration.

Goal

To establish a transparent and accountable local Government administration that will respect fundamental gender and human rights, build the capacity of the district judicial system, and establish public awareness programmes concerning the Law and human rights.

Major Strategies

1. Provision of capacity building programmes for the local Government administration personnel.
2. Appointment of key local Government posts on the basis of professionalism and merit rather than power.
3. Establishment of public awareness programmes concerning the Law and human rights via the mainstream media.
4. Provision of incremented salary scale and employment benefits for local Government workforce.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Situation Analysis

The local residents have relatively better access to basic infrastructure services such as roads, irrigation systems, telecommunications network coverage, and private transportation systems. However, most of the villages lack access to electricity, and most roads in the district have been destroyed and require restoration and gravelling.

Goal

To provide access to basic infrastructure services such as roads, reliable and affordable public electricity, and exploit the natural resources of the district to facilitate local economic development.

Major Strategies

1. Construction of new and restoration of existing roads, bridges and culverts.
2. Construction of new and restoration of existing irrigation systems, intakes and canals.
3. Construction of power generation stations throughout the district.
4. Regulated exploitation and extraction of natural resources and mines by the local Government.

Education

Situation Analysis

Balkh District residents have only limited access to educational services. Most schools in the area lack buildings and are operated under tents and a large portion of its teachers are only high school graduates. Moreover, the district's quality of education is low, and the local education sector lacks capacity building and special training programmes for its personnel, safe sources of drinking water for students, and essential education materials and equipment.

Goal

To increase the district literacy rate to 50% by constructing education facilities throughout the district, providing capacity building programmes for teachers, and equal access to a standardised education system for boys and girls.

Major Strategies

1. Provision of capacity building and special training programmes for teachers.
2. Development of improved and standardised teaching curricula and methodologies to raise the quality of education in the district.
3. Establishment of safe drinking water sources in all public schools.
4. Establishment of vocational training and literacy centres for women throughout the district.
5. Construction of new and restoration of existing schools in the district, with provisions of education equipment and materials.

Health

Situation Analysis

Residents have a relatively better access to basic healthcare services such as a district hospital, health centres, check-up clinics and pharmacies. However, the district has a shortage of professional doctors and physician, and lacks a health inspector's office to ensure regulation conformity and investigate reports of medical malpractice in the district.

Goal

To provide access to quality healthcare services by establishing health centres throughout the district, preventing the spread of infectious diseases, and conducting public health awareness programmes.

Major Strategies

1. Development of prevention programmes to manage the spread of infectious diseases.
2. Provision of security personnel for local health centres and health personnel.
3. Recruitment of professional doctors and physicians, and conduct an official survey on the number of residents infected with tuberculosis and provide medicines to keep it dormant.
4. Establishment of public health awareness programmes concerning environmental safety, hygiene and sanitation.

Agriculture and Rural Development

Situation Analysis

A great portion of the district residents are engaged in agricultural and livestock activities, with every family possessing few sheep and/or goats, and farmers producing crops such as wheat, barley, maize, potatoes and beans. However, the district lacks adequate funding for the development of its agriculture sector, a trade centre and profitable marketing systems for locally produced goods, and farmers lack access to agricultural mechanisation equipment.

Goal

To improve agricultural and livestock productions levels and quality, provide access to agricultural mechanisation equipment, and establish fruit gardens and arbours to facilitate local economic development.

Major Strategies

1. Improvement of agricultural and livestock production levels and quality.
2. Provision of capacity building programmes for farmers using modern agricultural methods.
3. Provision of agricultural mechanisation equipment.
4. Establishment of veterinary clinics, and provision of pesticides and other plant and animal disease prevention remedies.

Social Protection

Situation Analysis

The local vulnerable groups such as returnees, the internally displaced, widows, the disabled and orphans receive some manner of assistance from local Government departments and international NGOs. However, the social services provided are inadequate and the district lacks employment opportunities and vocational and technical training centres to promote economic development and financial independency.

Goal

To establish residential settlements and public housing for vulnerable groups, survey the priority needs of the district and address them accordingly with provisions of adequate social services, and establish an information centre and early warning systems in the area to mitigate the damage and devastation caused by natural disasters.

Major Strategies

1. Creation of employment opportunities, particularly for female-headed families.
2. Establishment of an information centre and early warning systems in the area to mitigate the damage and devastation caused by natural disasters.
3. Promotion of economic development and financial independency programmes for widows, the disabled and other vulnerable groups.
4. Establishment of residential settlements for returnees and the internally displaced.

Economic Governance and Private Sector Development

Situation Analysis

A great portion of the district residents rely on agricultural and livestock productions for income, while others are involved in handicraft productions such as tailoring, embroidery, carpet weaving, and occupations such as automobile repair, carpentry, and metalwork. However, the local economy continues to be very weak due to lack of investments by the private sector in these activities, factories to improve production levels, and lack of private sector and Government initiative to exploit the natural resources and extract local mines to facilitate economic development in the district.

Goal

To promote economic development by creating employment opportunities, establishing production factories, and inviting the private sector to invest in the district and extract local mines.

Major Strategies

1. Promotion of economic development and financial independency programmes.
2. Regulated exploitation and extraction of natural resources and local mines.
3. Promotion of national and international business investments in the area.
4. Creation of employment opportunities by establishing local production factories.

Prioritized Project Ideas

After having developed strategies and activities, the participants identified and prioritized 33 project ideas of various sectors to achieve the development goals for the district, 11 of which were proposed by female participants. It is expected that these priority project ideas will be discussed in a provincial development planning process to ensure that community priority needs are articulated in the government's provincial and national development plans.