

## Balkh

Situated in north-western Afghanistan between Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Balkh Province has a population of over 1.3 million people and is the country's fourth largest province. The main language spoken is Dari, followed by Pashtu. With some 410,000 residents, the provincial capital Mazar-e Sharif serves as the economic centre for the country's north.

Balkh has the second highest urbanisation rate of any Afghan province, a significantly greater proportion of its work income comes from the service and craft sectors, and it boasts an above average level of education. The airport in the provincial capital offers daily domestic and international flights and makes a positive contribution to Afghanistan's economic development.

Despite considerable progress in the areas of infrastructure expansion, education, health care, and energy and water supply, and in terms of the associated economic growth, the province continues to face major challenges. There is a marked difference in living standards between the urban and rural populations. Natural disasters are commonplace in spring and autumn.

The German Cooperation with Afghanistan has been working in Balkh Province for many years. It runs programmes in a range of areas, including education, agricultural development, sustainable economic development, the rule of law, administrative reform, water and energy supply, and health care. The various programmes have helped to effect change and improve local people's living conditions.

This section provides you with an overview of the German Cooperation with Afghanistan's activities in Balkh.

Project:

Integrating Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) – More than a Logistical Challenge

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