



**UNHCR Field Office Ghazni
DISTRICT PROFILE**

DATE: 15 October 2002

PROVINCE	GHAZNI		Geo-Code:	6	
DISTRICT	AJRISTAN		Geo-Code:	605	
Population in 1990:	43,284 individuals				
CURRENT ESTIMATED POPULATION					
Total : 62,028 individuals (10,338 families, with an average of 6 members per family)			Based on information provided by Villages' Representatives, local authorities and survey conducted by WFP in 2001.		
ETHNIC COMPOSITION					
Pashtun	97 %	Hazara	3 %	Tajik	0 %
Turkmen	0 %	Balouch	0%	Other ()	%
CURRENT ESTIMATED IDP POPULATION					
Total: 3000 individuals (500 kuchi families – seasonal displacement)			Based on information provided by Villages' Representatives, local authorities and survey conducted by WFP in 2001.		
CURRENT ESTIMATED RETURNEE POPULATION (ACCORDING TO UNHCR RECORDS)					
Returned IDPs (Ind./Fam.) 2002	Updated on	Returned Refugees (Ind./Fam.) 2002	Update on	Children Under 12¹	Female Household²
Nil	13/10/02	271 individuals 45 families	13/10/02	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
AUTHORITY					
Head of the District:	* Hussein Ali Fairouz – District Administrator. Arrived in Ajristan in Mid-September 2002.				
Functioning Authorities:	<p>* Ghulam Haydar- Head of Police Department and acting Security Administrator in the absence of official appointee; * Mohammad Alim- Head of district Administration; * Bismillah Hasib- Head of Property Department (land); acting Head of Agriculture Department in absence of official appointee; * Abdul Rashed- Head of Finance Department; * Abdul Kadir – Head of Revenue Department; * Mohammad Zaman- Head of Education Department; * Taj Mohammed- is acting Head of Legal Office (Reporting to Provincial Justice Department) until official appointee takes up his functions.</p> <p>Beginning of September 2002, the central Ministry of Interior, and the provincial Government appointees new responsible for Ajristan district. Some official appointees have not taken their functions yet. It is worth noting that while the provincial Government states that someone has been appointed as Security Administrator, the District Administrator mentions that the post is vacant. The Head of Police- an Hazara native of Sange-Masha, Jaghori- is therefore acting in this capacity.</p> <p>Of the 15 official appointees currently working for the district, seven are Hazara and the remaining eight are Pashtoun.</p>				

GENERAL SITUATION

Ajristan is located to the West of Ghazni province, 210 km and a 12 hours drive from Ghazni centre. The district shares its Southern border with Malistan, Eastern with Nawur, Northern and Western with Uruzgan province, notably with its Shahristan and Khaas Uruzgan districts.

Ajristan is a valley surrounded by mid high mountains (highest point: Shah Tuus Baba, to the North). On its 85 km, from East to West, an estimated population of 62,028 people are living in a severely drought affected land, only traversed by Jikhai river, coming from Nawur. The population – nearly exclusively Pashtoun – comes from one main Tribe – Mullah Khil – divided in nine sub-tribes (Langar Khil, Adin Khil, Abbas Khil, Khuga Khil, Said Khil, Raza Khil, Usman Khil, Kalandar Khil and Suma Khil).

Ajristan was officially attached to Ghazni province in year 2000. Before the Soviet invasion and the beginning of the civil war, the district – named Daya- was part of Uruzgan province. During the two decades of war, the district progressively dissociated itself from Uruzgan and increased – for reasons linked to shorter distance with Ghazni centre – its links with Ghazni, and turned its limited economic activities towards this province.

Renamed Ajristan (its capital being Sangar), the district had no official appointees since the fall of Taliban regime. In September 2002, the central Ministry of Interior and the provincial Government appointed a new District Administrator (Hussein Ali Fairouz), an Hazara ethnic native of Malistan (Pashai area). At the same time, the previous unofficial Head of Ajristan was transferred to Malistan as official District Administrator. While his counterpart in Malistan did not even succeed to arrive to the district's capital –due to rejection by local commanders- Hussein Ali Fairouz arrived in Sangar – capital of Ajristan – in Mid September 2002, and was welcomed by the local population.

The transition was – according to him- facilitated by the fact that the population does not wish to appear as opposing orders from central Government, and wishes to benefit of attention and assistance from Government and aid agencies. Hussein Ali Fairouz' first actions were focused on irrigation water and introduction of rationing to enable the population to have a minimum access to water.

While the neighbouring districts – notably Malistan, Shahristan and part of Nawur – experience political and /or military unrest, Ajristan has not been faced to major political or military instabilities. As far as the UNHCR Field Office Ghazni knows, the district, which was know as a bastion of *Talibans* in Ghazni province, is apparently safe. Most of the population is however said to be in favour of *Hezb-e-Islami* (Ekmatyar). The new District Administrator is currently awaiting instructions from provincial Government to proceed to complete disarmament of population. It is explained that *Talibans* disarmed massively villagers under their regime.

Security in the district is officially ensured by soldiers, eight of them having been brought from Jaghori by acting Security Commander, the remaining being native of Ajristan.

According to the new authorities and representatives of villagers, most pressing needs are in the following sectors:

1. Education (notably girl's education)
2. Health facilities
3. Irrigation system & water
4. Rehabilitation of district's main roads

SECTORAL INFORMATION

SHELTER:	Settlement State:	Population is living in big compounds, made exclusively of mud brick. Several houses are located inside a large yard, surrounded by high walls.
	Housing Situation of Returning Population :	According to Villagers' representatives and authorities, the few families who have returned face housing difficulties, since their mud-made houses were destroyed during their absence. Relatives and host families currently house them.
	<p>Comments: There is not an acute need for shelter as the district has not experienced a large returnee movement. An estimated 19% of the total families claim their houses need partial or complete repairs (1,925 families).</p> <p>Materials available for house construction are limited to wood beams and doors. All other items, such as cement and glass have to be purchased in either Malistan or Ghazni districts.</p> <p>Skilled and unskilled labourers can be found within the district.</p>	

SECTORAL INFORMATION				
WATER:	Major Water Sources:		<p>- Natural springs & streams</p> <p>- River coming from Nawur district (Jikhai). Authorities are concerned that should the Nawur authorities decide to cut access to this river, the population would be in nearly completely deprived of water.</p> <p>NB: Even though land for <i>karez</i>s exist in the district, they are not however nearly all dried (99%).</p>	
	Status of Shallow Wells:		According to information provided by the people, there are currently 170 shallow wells and 80 hand-pump wells. Only 25 out of these 250 wells are not dry.	
	Access to Clean Drinking Water:		<p>Based on information provided by villages' representatives, 42% of the population has no access to drinking water (4,300 families):</p> <p>The following areas are severely affected by four years of complete drought and go to the following distances to fetch water, with the use of donkeys:</p> <p>Kush Kaba- 500 families, 4km x2 Kalandar Khil- 700 families, 4km x2 Langar Khil- 100 families, 3km x2 Usman Khil- 1000 families, 2km x2 Khuga Khil – 2000 families, 1km x2.</p> <p>Children and women are usually in charge of fetching water, even from very remote places. Donkeys are used as a mean of transportation and carriage.</p>	
	Sanitation and Drainage:		<p>The sanitation and drainage system is nearly inexistent. Local population have no elaborated baths and latrines. There are no septic tanks, no pipes and no ditches in the houses.</p> <p>Only a small part of the population, who has more financial resources, has proper bath, and cemented floors. Otherwise, rocks are put on the soil in spaces identified as bathrooms.</p>	
	<p>Comments: The district is severely affected by the drought and completely dependant on the natural springs and Jikhai river for water. It has been severely affected by the drought for the last four years, making it almost impossible for the population to cultivate anything.</p> <p>DACAAR is currently implementing a UNHCR funded water project in the district, with a total of ten wells being dug, notably in Kalandar Khil, Sanger and Shuma Khil. Up to date, 35% of the work has been completed and the work is on-going.</p>			
AGRICULTURE:	Farming System:	Irrigated:	90%	<p>Comments: In normal circumstances –ie. before four years of complete drought– only 10% of the cultivated land was rain-fed.</p> <p>Traditional tools are in use during the year and tractors are rare, and exclusively used during harvest time.</p>
		Rain Fed:	10%	
	Main crops:	Type: wheat	Harvest: Extremely poor	<p>Problems: According to the representatives of the villagers, the harvest was extremely poor this year, due to almost inexistent water resources.</p> <p>The population says that they survived last winter due to food distribution (WFP).</p>

SECTORAL INFORMATION							
	Current Land Condition:		According to the Villages' Representatives, only 40% of the arable land is in use, due to the drought. Even this portion is however also seriously affected by the drought.				
	Existing Irrigation schemes:		Irrigation relies on natural springs, streams and water coming from Jikhai river, constantly rarefying. Some land used to use <i>karezes</i> , but they are dried up and are currently not in use.				
	Livestock Situation:		<p>According to staff working in veterinary clinic in Sangar (run by Mercy Corps International), the herd has been considerably reduced due to the drought and therefore lack of grass.</p> <p>On an average base, families state they have lost 90% of their animals. Families have usually one donkey, one cow and three sheep.</p> <p>Diseases moreover affect herds. 130,000 sheep belonging to <i>Kuchi</i> were vaccinated by the veterinary clinic during the summer season.</p>				
	Horticulture Availability:		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Fruit trees: - Market sale <input type="checkbox"/> - Home use <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>None</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vegetables: - - Market sale <input type="checkbox"/> - Home use <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>None</td> </tr> </table>	Fruit trees: - Market sale <input type="checkbox"/> - Home use <input type="checkbox"/>	None	Vegetables: - - Market sale <input type="checkbox"/> - Home use <input type="checkbox"/>	None
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<p>Comments: The agriculture sector is considerably affected by the drought. As a consequence, the population who is exclusively dependant on this sector, has difficulties to secure food and income for their families.</p> <p>It has been reported by the authorities that people have started leaving the area due to the drought. It is expected that both heads of family (and possibly families) could leave the district in coming months, if they fail to secure means to feed their dependants.</p>							
INFRASTRUCTURE :	<p>The population and the authorities stressed the need to rehabilitate :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Road from Ajristan to Khaas Uruzgan; -Road from Ajristan to Shahrstan (currently no direct access to this neighbouring district); -Road from Ajristan to Malistan. 						
EMPLOYMENT:	Main Sources of Income:	Agriculture (farming)					
	<p>Comments: As already mentioned, the population is exclusively dependant on the agriculture and product of their livestock, and is therefore directly and severely affected by the drought.</p> <p>A movement of population – at least heads of family – is foreseeable if the people do not receive necessary assistance in the field of water and are not supported during winter time.</p> <p>An estimated 388 families have no income (4% of the total district population).</p>						
HEALTH:	HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE:		Number currently functioning				
	Hospital (H):		None: District hospital has been destroyed.				
	Basic Health Centre (BHC):		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>There is currently only one clinic run by SCA, and located in Sangar, district's capital.</td> <td>No. with female doctors None – Two Middle Advanced Medical students are currently employed in the clinic.</td> </tr> </table>	There is currently only one clinic run by SCA, and located in Sangar, district's capital.	No. with female doctors None – Two Middle Advanced Medical students are currently employed in the clinic.		
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	Mother Child Health Centre (MCH):		None				
	Emergency Obstetrics Care Centre (EOC):		None				
		Yes	Where?:				

SECTORAL INFORMATION

	<p>Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI):</p>		<p>WHO runs an EPI programme in the district.</p> <p>One vaccinator is currently employed by UNICEF and posted at SCA clinic. WHO provides the vaccines.</p>			
	<p>Disability Rehabilitation Facilities:</p>	None	<p>Where?: N/A</p>			
	<p>Pharmacies with Medicine:</p>	Yes	<p>Where?: There is one pharmacy in the SCA run clinic, which contains only basic drugs.</p> <p>Four other private pharmacies are located in the district, but only have extremely basic drugs, which most of the time are unsuitable for treatment of specific diseases.</p>			
<p>Comments: The health sector is in need of urgent support. There is only one clinic functioning in the district, which does not have a doctor and nurses. Two devoted Mid-advanced medical students run the clinic, one being in charge of OPD and the other one of pharmacy. The clinic employs a health educator (paid by WHO).</p> <p>According to one of the Mid-advanced, the population in the district has no means to go for consultation in Sangar, and even if they go there, they rarely receive specific treatment for their diseases, due to lack of drugs.</p> <p>Infant mortality rate is said to be high, and it is explained that complicated pregnancy cases often lead to the death of both mother & child.</p> <p>There is no female medical staff in the district, and as a consequence, females have nearly no access to healthcare.</p> <p>Main diseases affecting the population are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. pneumonia 2. anaemia 3. stomach diseases & child diarrhoea 4. tuberculosis <p>Most pressing needs for the medical sector are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Female medical staff, notably obstetrician/gynecologist 2. Well supplied pharmacies 3. Qualified medical staff <p>However, any prevention and health education programme in the district is expected to meet resistance from an important part of the male population.</p>						
<p>EDUCATION:</p>						
<p>Education Centre:</p>						
<p>Types</p>		<p>Currently functioning</p>	<p>Teachers:</p>		<p>Students/Pupils:</p>	
			<p>M</p>	<p>F</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>F</p>
<p>No. of Secondary Schools:</p>		3	38	0	700	0
<p>No. of Primary Schools:</p>		11	120	0	2,550	250
<p>No. of Informal Schools:</p>		None				
<p>Madrassa:</p>		One is operating in Sangar, with 100 pupils (boys).				

SECTORAL INFORMATION					
	<p>Comments: Education is the first priority sector in need of assistance in the district.</p> <p>Only 3,500 children are going to school. Out of these 3,500, only 250 are girls. It is the first year that girls have the possibility to go to school in the district (school supported by NGO <i>Shuhada</i>). Five first grade classes are currently operating to girls in Ajristan. Age of girls going to school does not exceed eight years old.</p> <p>Local authorities and population seem to believe that supporting boys' education is the only way to facilitate, in a second time, girls' education, even if it takes years.</p> <p>Education sector in Ajristan has received limited support from UNICEF – books, stationary, furniture and two tents – and it is estimated that only 20% of the needs in the above mentioned items are currently covered. 83% of the classes are held outdoors, which will cause serious problem during winter time.</p> <p>Priorities in the field of education are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Renovation/construction of facilities 2. Provision of school supplies & equipment 3. Qualified teachers, including female 4. Promotion of girls' education <p>The estimated literacy rate is of 2% for men and 0% for women.</p>				
MINE/UXOs:	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Existence of mines & UXOs:</td> <td>No mine presence reported.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Identified areas to clear:</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	Existence of mines & UXOs:	No mine presence reported.	Identified areas to clear:	N/A
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	Identified areas to clear:	N/A			
Comments: According to both local authorities and population, there is no mine in the district.					
PROTECTION					
Population Movement:	<p>According to UNHCR's statistics, only 45 families (271 individuals) have returned to the district.</p> <p>However, based on figures provided by villages' representatives, 208 refugee and 72 IDPs families have returned in the district. However, according to the people, another 4,337 refugee families (mostly in Pakistan, in Quetta, Peshawar and Wasiristan) and 1,710 families displaced are expected back in the district.</p> <p>The district sees a seasonal migration of <i>kuchi</i> families (around 500) who spend the summer in Ajristan and winter in southern districts of Helmand and Kandahar. Due to the drought, this migration was hastened this year.</p> <p>A new movement of population could take place towards neighbouring districts or Pakistan, should the people not be in a position to secure income and feed their families during winter.</p>				

SECTORAL INFORMATION

<p>Women:</p>	<p>Women in Ajristan are completely left aside of the society and the decision making process (no lady representative at <i>Loya Jirga</i>). Girls' education started in the district for the first time this year, with a total of 250 girls attending school. However, the local culture make it nearly impossible to foresee how girls could be left to attend mid grades, all the more there is currently only one girl school and girls would have to walk long distance before reaching school.</p> <p>According to the Heads of the tribes, women are extremely well protected in their society and there is no need to introduce any change in their daily lives. According to same sources, women can introduce their claims to the elders of their villages, but should the process need prolonged procedure, a <i>Wakil</i> should necessarily represent them. Local authorities mention that they had a case of a lady claiming her inheritance rights and who finally had to leave the district, having not succeeded and having to means to support herself in her habitual place of residence.</p> <p>Based on information provided by the villages' representatives, ladies can move freely in their village, and go from one village to another. However, UNHCR Field Office Ghazni did not see any ladies walking on the roads during its mission.</p> <p>Girls get married at around 15 years old, and the dowry price varies between 100 and 200 millions old <i>Afg</i>. An estimated 6% of the families are headed by single females (590 families).</p>
<p>Children:</p>	<p>According to the provincial Department of Education, an estimated 10,000 school-age children (6,000 girls and 4,000 boys) are not attending school. Most of them are helping their parents in their daily tasks; girls are fetching water, taking care of the animals and collecting firewood, while boys are assisting their father in the fields.</p> <p>Due to lack of education, distance and lack of health facilities, the infant mortality rate is said to be extremely high. According to medical staff based in Ajristan, children mostly suffer from malnutrition and diarrhoea.</p> <p>As far as UNHCR Field Office (FO) Ghazni knows, apart from <i>Shuhada</i>, which runs a girls' school, there is no other NGO implementing programmes in the children's sector.</p>
<p>Discrimination:</p>	<p>Ajristan being almost exclusively populated by Pashtoun – including <i>Kuchi</i> families who have seasonal presence in the district – there has been no substantive report of discrimination based on ethnicity. <i>Kuchi</i> nomads are welcomed in this district, unlike in neighbouring Hazara-populated Malistan.</p> <p>During field mission, UNHCR FO Ghazni was informed that some 300 Hazara families were currently living in the district, mostly in Adin Khil, Khuga Khil and Dongola areas. Most of these families, natives of Shahristan, Bamyan, Nawur and Malistan were employed in Pashoun farms before the civil war, and returned to the district, where their former employer re-hired them. However, UNHCR FO Ghazni has been informed that, prior to the arrival of the newly appointed District Administrator, these families were not correctly treated by their employers, being regularly insulted and sometimes beaten. Due to time constraints, UNHCR FO Ghazni was not able to contact directly these Hazara families.</p>

SECTORAL INFORMATION	
Recovery of Property:	<p>According to the authorities, there is no formal court in place in the district. Consequently all cases, be they linked to property, land, house or personal disputes, are settled by traditional justice mechanism.</p> <p>Claims are introduced by claimants through Villages' elders and – based on information from authorities – 70% of the cases are settled at this level. However, remaining 30% are referred to the District Administrator who dispatches the cases, according to the nature of the cases.</p> <p>A Legal Office, reporting to Ghazni Department of Justice, was set up one month ago, and can investigate on claims of all natures, go to the villages to collect testimonies and gather supportive documents. In a month-time, 20 cases were submitted to this Legal Office, and five cases solved.</p> <p>According to the authorities, and notably the Head of Property Department, there are currently 300 cases pending at the level of this Department, cases mostly due to appropriation and occupation, which took place during the Taliban regime.</p> <p>As far as returnees are concerned, authorities have reported that several cases involving returnees took place during this year, and could not be solved, as there were no proper authorities in place at that time. It was added that these returnees had since then moved to Helmand and Kandahar provinces. UNHCR FO Ghazni believes the disputes involved <i>Kuchi</i> nomads and villagers.</p>
Availability of Land:	Same as above.
House Occupation:	Same as above.
Security Situation:	<p>The security situation is apparently satisfactory in the district, with no major security incidents reported. However, the neighbouring districts of Malistan and Shahrستان currently experience/ or recently experienced political and military unrests.</p> <p>According to the authorities, the conflict opposing different Hazara-led factions in Shahrستان (notably <i>Nasr</i> group) has not had direct repercussions on the district, with displaced going to Nawur (Hazara-populated) and not to Ajristan.</p> <p>Local population is said to be pro-<i>Hezb-e-Islami</i> (Hekmatyar) and to have been a stronghold of the <i>Talibans</i> during previous regime.</p>
Others:	
NGOs Working in the District	
<p>The following NGOS are currently functioning in AJRISTAN :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * SCA: runs clinic in Sangar, capital of Ajristan; * Mercy Corps International: runs a veterinary clinic in Sangar; * DACAAR: currently implementing a UNHCR funded water programme (10 wells) * Shuhada: runs a girls' school in Khwaja Khil. 	
Other Comments (including accessibility)	
<p>There are two main ways to Ajristan: one goes by Nawur district, and is a total of 170 km from Ghazni centre. It is not recommended to use this road, due to difficulties to pass high peaks, and given the fact that large part of the itinerary cross empty villages, where attacks can take place.</p> <p>It is therefore advised to go to Ajristan using the following itinerary: Ghazni- Jaghori (via Zardalu and Tamakee areas): four and a half hours to five hours Jaghori- Malistan (via Badulum): four to four and a half hours Malistan- Ajristan (via Kushnaq): two hours</p> <p>Accommodation can be arranged in Jaghori with <i>Shuhada</i> organisation; in Malistan with DACAAR/RCDC.</p>	

¹ Children under 12: Estimated figure based on Voluntary Repatriation Forms (VRFs)

² Female Household: Women returned unaccompanied by men. Estimated figure based on VRFs.