



# Cotton Overview

## Cotton in Afghanistan

Up until the 1980s, cotton was very important in Afghanistan. During that time, the government provided farmers with technical support and with subsidies for both fertilizer and chemicals. In recent years, the war, loss of processing capacity, low prices, drought, and the lack of government support has seen cotton production drop significantly.



Source: AP

Historically, cotton was grown mainly in the provinces of: Baghlan, Kunduz, Takhar, Samangan, Balkh, Jawzjan, Faryab, Kapisa, Helmand, Herat, Gor, Badghis, and Farah. Helmand and Kunduz are the most important provinces for cotton production.

## Cotton Mills in Afghanistan

Although there are several cotton mills (ginneries) and textile mills throughout Afghanistan, many have been damaged during the war and are either only partially or non operational. The main mills are in:

1. Kunduz
2. Balkh (Mazar-e-Sharif)
3. Helmand, and
4. Herat



Source: <http://publicintelligence.net>

Herat cotton textile Mill.

Spinzor and Press Corporation are two of the primary companies involved.

## Problems and challenges for cotton production

The lack of both government support, low processing capacity, low price and poor market access are the main reasons for the decrease in cotton production in Afghanistan. In some provinces (e.g., Helmand), poppies have replaced cotton due to the higher prices of poppy and relatively easier marketing. The lack of irrigation infrastructure has also adversely affected cotton - especially in recent drought years.

Prepared Hussain Sharifi and Mark Bell, 2012

Reference: Chemonics/USAID Cotton Production Assessment: [pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pnacy281.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnacy281.pdf)

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