2.3 Afghanistan Road Network

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Overview

[Map of Afghanistan Road Network]
The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) and Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) are responsible for development, management and maintenance of Afghanistan roads.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road Classification</th>
<th>Length (km)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Highways</td>
<td>3,363 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Highways</td>
<td>4,884 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Roads</td>
<td>9,656 km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Roads (unpaved)</td>
<td>17,000 km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of decades of conflict, the road network was largely destroyed. Since 2002, Afghanistan has launched major programmes for improving its road network with the help of various international partners. The Government is implementing the National Emergency Rural Access Project (NERAP) and National Rural Access Programme (NRAP) provide the construction and rehabilitation of rural roads.

Highway 1 or A01, formally called the Ring Road, is a 2,200 kilometre two-lane road network circulating inside Afghanistan connecting the following major cities (clockwise): Mazar, Kabul, Ghazni, Kandahar, Farah and Herat. It has extensions that also connect Jalalabad, Lashkhar Gah, Delaram, Islam Qala and several other cities. It is part of AH1, the longest route of the Asian Highway Network.

Part of Highway 1 has been refurbished since late 2003, particularly the Kabul-Kandahar, with funds provided by the USA, KSA and others. Most work on that stretch was done by Turkish, Indian and local companies. Japanese companies were also involved near the southern Afghan province of Kandahar. In the west, Iran participated in the two-lane road construction between Islam Qala and the western Afghan city of Herat. Pakistan rebuilt the Jalalabad – Kabul road.

For information on Afghanistan Road Network contact details and additional information, see the following links:


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Highway_1_(Afghanistan)

Road Security
**Road Security Issue** | **Comments**
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**Mines** | Vehicles face the potential danger of encountering land mines that may have been planted on or near roadways. Land mines, large quantities of unexploded ordnance and insurgents exist throughout the countryside and alongside roads, posing a danger to travelers.

**Crimes** | Robbery and kidnappings, are a potential hazard on highways outside main cities.

**General Road Safety** | The transportation system in Afghanistan is marginal. Vehicles are poorly maintained, often overloaded, and traffic laws are not enforced. Vehicular traffic is chaotic and must contend with numerous pedestrians, bicyclists, and animals. Many urban streets have large potholes and are not well lit. Rural roads are not paved. With congested roads and abundant pedestrian traffic, vehicle accidents are a serious concern and can escalate into violent confrontations.

**Commercial Transport Availability** | Commercial transporters sometimes decline to provide services to insecure areas.

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**Weighbridges and Axle Load Limits**

The newly built highways are constructed according to the norm and standards of vehicles' capacity. Their axial contain four wheel tires and each axial is computed as (12) tons. Those axial with their own weights containing two tires are evaluated and practiced as (6) tons which means each tire has the capacity of (3) tons.

**Road Class and Surface Conditions**

Generally road transport is the major means of transportation in Afghanistan. Roads are very important in a country like Afghanistan, which is landlocked and does not have adequate marine, air and rail transport. Majority of the roads in the Southern Region of Afghanistan were destroyed during the prolonged civil war. Some new roads were constructed and the old ones were reconstructed. Blockages caused by security are to be considered.

**Afghanistan Road Network Regional Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Seasonal Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern Region - Kandahar Province</strong></td>
<td>The road condition to all districts is generally good during the dry season.</td>
<td>During the summer season the road condition to all the provinces is generally good. However, in winter and spring seasons some provinces are blocked because of snowfall, heavy rain and flooding. Road to all districts in Kandahar province are generally good during the dry season while in rainy season the roads to Nesh, Maineshin, Ghorkar, Maruf, Shorawak, and Reg districts become impassable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern Region - Uruzgan Province</strong></td>
<td>Mountainous area characterized by steep and narrow roads that makes transportation very difficult in winter especially to districts like, Gezab, Khas-Uruzgan, Dehrawad, Chinarto, Char-Chino and Chora.</td>
<td>Khas-Uruzgan is one of the worst heavy snowfall affected areas but can be accessed with smaller trucks but prolonged delays can be expected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern Region - Nimroz Province</strong></td>
<td>Plain land, mostly dusty and sandy and the road from Dilara to Zaranj City is asphalted. The roads to other FDPs in the province are not paved, but they are generally good in summer.</td>
<td>During March, April and May water level increases in Helmand River result in trucks being unable to cross Sar-shila (the crossing point on the river to Kang district) of Nimroz province. However, cargo and truck may be loaded on a Ferry in order to cross the river and then continue the trip to the final destination in Kang district centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern Region - Helmand Province</strong></td>
<td>Roads are mostly graveled and compacted, while still some areas have very sandy and unpaved roads that are passable only with small vehicles such as Garamser district.</td>
<td>Most roads to districts in Helmand Province are passable throughout the year except few districts like Musa-gala, Baghran, Nawzad, Washir, Deshoo and Khanashin, which are not accessible in the rainy season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwestern Region - Zabul Province</strong></td>
<td>Mountainous area and it is not easy for transportation except for Qalat (the capital city of Zabul) and Shar-i-safa District and Shahjoy, which are located on the main Kandahar-Kabul highway.</td>
<td>Zabul Province is usually badly affected by the heavy snow fall in the winter. The road condition during dry season is good in all districts, whereas the roads to Arghnabad, Daychooapan, Nwabahar, Shinkay, Shamalzai and Atghar districts are impassable in the rainy season.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eastern Region

Roads in Nuristan and Kunar provinces are mostly in the mountains area, however, roads in Nangarhar and Laghman provinces are not mountainous except 2-3 districts. Roads to district centres are mostly paved but roads leading to villages are not paved with some that are very narrow making transport very difficult. At some areas, trucks should be loaded less than their capacity to be able to cross the bridges or go up to the hills. Transportation of goods to Nuristan and some other villages in eastern region requires secondary transportation as trucks cannot pass the narrow and unpaved roads. As a result, there is specific type of vehicles for specific routes to fulfill the market requirement.

Northern Region

The main roads in the region are narrow. There is only one main tarmac road connecting Kabul with Maimana through Mazar with junction to Hairaton (northern border).

Mazar City to Hairaton District-Uzbekistan Border (86 kms)
The road from Mazar to Hairaton is asphalt road. This road is passable to all kind of trucks with different tonnage capacity. This road is the main transit road to cargo from Uzbekistan to Afghanistan.

Mazar City to Shiberghan-Jawzjan province (138 kms)
The road from Mazar to Shiberghan is asphalted road. This is the only road connecting Mazar to Faryab and Sar I Pul through Shiberghan. This road can be travelled by all kind of trucks. Through this road, several districts like Bakh, Charbolak, Aqcha, Faizabad and many more are connected to each other.

Shiberghan to Ankhoi/Aqina (110 kms)
The road from Shiberghan to Ankhoi is asphalted. This road can be travelled by any type of vehicle with some seasonal restrictions. The road from Ankhoi to Aqina (northern border) is usually muddy and bumpy.

Andkhoi to Maimana city-Faryab (81 kms)
Road is asphalted and passable by all types of vehicles throughout the year.

Mazar City to Samangan-Aybak District (135 kms)
The road to Samangan is passing the Khulm Valley and the condition of this road is good and passable throughout the year for all kind of trucks with different capacities. This road is the highway connecting the Northern region to Kabul.

Mazar City to Kabul (425 kms)
This is the asphalted highway connecting the Northern Region and the capital Kabul and central Afghanistan. The road is passable throughout the year when snowfall does not block the Salang tunnel.

North Eastern Region

There are varying road conditions in the Northeast region of Afghanistan. Some parts are in the mountains other are in valleys. Road are narrow, winding and steep, with altitudes between 1,000 and 4,500 meters above sea level. In Badakshan, there is only one road (main road) from Faizabad heading to the east and to the west. There are some secondary roads to the. All the roads are exposed to landslide, fog, mudslide, flood, rain, and snow and impassable to the vehicles with harsh weather conditions.

Majority of districts still unreachable for all types of vehicles. Pack animals have been the best means of reaching these areas. The main road network in Faizabad is based on the following corridors:

Faizabad City to Kishim district (102 kms)

Transport capacity in the Eastern Region is hardly affected by the seasons, particularly because; most of the commodities grown in the region are consumed locally (i.e. fruits, vegetables) and not transported to other parts of the country.

In eastern region, heavy snowfall is not common but rainfall is quite natural. During the winter period (December – February) affects are seen on transportation of commodities to some parts of Laghman, Kunar, & Nuristan provinces where areas prone to flood, rock falls, snow, become hardly accessible by road. For Nuristan province in particular, the roads are usually accessed by smaller vehicles (pick-ups) but become hardly accessible in the winter when the roads become muddy. Roads temporarily get blocked by landslide or rock fall, people will clean the road with support of government.

In general, transportation in Northern provinces is mostly hindered due to heavy winter especially in those places where snowfall and rain start early. In areas prone to landslide and flooding, delivery may be delayed due to temporary road blocks. There are some remote areas like Lawlash and Bandar of Faryab province, Cheras of SAR I Pul province where there is no means of access once the snow starts to fall. It is therefore necessary to pre-position required stocks in these districts prior to commencement of winter.

Mazar City to Shiberghan-Jawzjan province (136 kms)
The small roads to the villages are muddy/hilly and bumpy. Most of them are impassable during the winter time.

Shiberghan to Ankhoi/Aqina (110 kms)
Roads from Andkhoi to Aqina border is muddy and bumpy and during the rainy weather it is hardly passable.

Mazar to Kabul
The Salang pass/tunnel restricts transportation towards Kabul or from Kabul towards Mazar as it is prone to heavy snowfall and/or avalanches during the winter season.

Generally, transportation in Northeastern provinces is hampered due to rain, snow and flood, combined with the deteriorated condition of the road, the lack of maintenance, the trucks’ overloading and the increased traffic over the years. Particularly the bridges in Badakshan that have been washed-away (to date not yet repaired), creating serious transport delays. An earth by-pass road has been created to facilitate the flow of traffic and some traffic passing through the rivers. The road becomes impassable for heavy trucks, particularly in Badakshan area. Smaller trucks also face difficulties resulting in long transit time delays.

In addition to the general bad condition, most of the roads get blocked by snow during winter, and the ones in low-lying areas are prone to blockage by landslides and destruction by floods during the rainy periods.
From Faizabad to Kishim paved road. The road is often flooded during the rainy season and the road is passable to 6x4 or 6x6 trucks with a maximum capacity of 45mt; average transit time 4-5 hours for loaded trucks. From the center of Kishim to its villages, the roads are passable to trucks with the capacity between 8mt to 15mt. The roads are exposed to flood, landslide, mudslide, fog, rain, and snow.

**Kishim district to Kalafgan district (24 kms)**

The road from Kishim to Kalafgan is proved road, the road is passable to 6x4 or 6x6 trucks with a maximum capacity of 45mt; average transit time of 1hrs for loaded truck. From the centre of Kalafgan to its villages, the roads are passable to trucks with the capacity between 10mt to 15mt. The roads are at risk to flood, landslide, mudslide, fog, rain, and snow.

**Kalafgan district to Taloqan district (36 kms)**

The road from Kalafgan to Taloqan is proved road and passable to trucks with a size of 16mt to 45mt. The average transit time is 2 hrs for loaded trucks. And from the center of Taloqan to its villages, the passable size of trucks is between 12mt to 15mt capacity. The road is exposed to flood, landslide, fog, rain, and snow.

**Taloqan district to Kunduz City (84 kms)**

The road from Taloqan to Kunduz is tarmac and passable throughout the year, the road is passable for all sizes of trucks, average transit time of 2½ hrs for loaded truck. The road is exposed to flood, fog, rain and snow.

**Kunduz city to Baghlan province (111 kms)**

The road from Kunduz to Baghlan is primary tarmac and passable throughout the year. The road is passable for all sizes of trucks and the average transit time 3 hrs for loaded truck. The road is at risk of flood, fog, rain and snow.

**Kunduz city to Shirkhan Bandar (to the border of Tajikistan) (64 kms)**

The road from Kunduz to Shirkhan Bandar is primary tarmac and passable throughout the year, the road is passable for all sizes of trucks, average transit time of 2 hrs for loaded truck. The road is at risk of Flood, fog, rain, snow and sand storm.

**Kunduz city to Kabul (316 kms)**

The road from Kunduz to Kabul is primary tarmac and passable for all sizes of trucks with an average transit time of 1 day for loaded trucks, the road is at risk of landslide, mudslide, fog, rain and snow.

**Faizabad City to Baharak district (42 kms)**

The road from Faizabad to Baharak is paved road. The road is often flooded during the rainy season. The road is passable to 6x4 or 6x6 trucks with a capacity of 12mt – 45mt, average transit time of 3 hours for loaded truck. From the center of Baharak to its villages, the road is passable to the size of 6mt to 10mt capacity. The road is at risk of flood, landslide, mudslide, fog, rain and snow.

**Baharak district to Warduj district (24 kms)**

The road from Baharak to Warduj proved road. The road is often flooded during the rainy season and road is passable to 6x4 or 6x6 trucks with a capacity of 10mt to 45mt and with an average transit time of 1hrs for loaded truck. From the center of Warduj to its villages, the passable size of truck is between 6mt to 10mt capacity. The road is at risk of flood, landslide, mudslide, fog, rain and snow.

**Warduj district to Zebak district (59 kms)**

From Faizabad to Kishem from Kishem to Kalafgan from Faizabad to Baharak and From Baharak to Warduj all are asphalted roads with few damages especially between keshim and Faizabad, this road experiences flooding during spring season.
The road from Warduj to Zebak is proved road. The road is passable to 6x4 or 6x6 trucks with a capacity between 10mt to 45mt and an average transit time of 2 hrs for loaded truck. From the center of Zebak to its villages, the passable size of truck is between 6mt to 12mt capacity. The road is at risk of flood, landslide, mudslide, fog, rain and snow.

Zebak district to Ishkhasim district (35 kms)
The road from Zebak to Ishkhashim is proved road. The road is passable to 6x4 or 6x6 trucks with a capacity of 10mt to 45mt with an average transit time of 1½ hrs for loaded truck. From the center of Ishkhashim to its villages, the passable size of truck is between 10mt to 14mt capacity. The road is exposed to flood, landslide, mudslide, fog, rain, and snow.

Central Region
Most of central and central highland region roads run through mountainous areas. However, there are some narrow and flat roads with some paved roads to few provinces. During winter, the road conditions become muddy and icy and access is impossible.

Route to Jalalabad (via Maheepar, Sorobi).
Mostly open, the road is asphalted. If inaccessible for any reason there is another route called lataband. This road is not asphalted and longer in distance hence not preferred, it can be used as an alternative route. Routes from Jalalabad city to other districts and Peshawar are mostly accessible (as depicted in below map to Kunar, Sorkhroad, Kama, Shinwar, Kunar, etc), but due to insecurity some southern districts are restricted for movement and sometimes are also inaccessible by commercial trucks.

The winter affects the passes and makes the accessibility really difficult in central and central highland regions. The roads get totally cut off to most part of central highland for the heavy snow i.e. Daikundi, Waras, Lal center of Ghor and Saighan. Transportation in Central region is mostly delayed due to heavy winter especially in those places where snowfall and rain starts early. In addition the heavy snow fall results in an increase in the water level and causes flood and roads to be washed off in spring.

Western Region
Asphalted ring road is the main road connecting Hirat Province to Farah and Kandahar Provinces. Roads connecting Hirat to Islam Qala border, Turghundi to Turkmenistan border Hirat to Qala-have been restored. All other roads are in bad condition.

Some river beds can serve as roads during the summer and winter seasons, but are turned into rivers during spring.

Roads in Badghis province are partially asphalted while in Ghor province are not asphalted. Heavy snow fall makes them impassable during winter seasons. Bridges are non-existent in most areas, with vehicles driving across rivers during the dry summer and winter. With the onset of spring, these crossing points are made impassable by rising water levels from the melting snow.

Roads to Badghis and Ghor centers lead to the following mountain passes:

- Badghis-Sabzak Pass (can be inaccessible during winter and resulting in difficulties to access Qala-e-naw, the provincial capital and the larger Badghis.
- Bayan Pass (Northern route to access Chagcharan, difficult or inaccessible during winter)
- Ghuk Pass (Alternative route to access Chagcharan, inaccessible during winter)

Transport capacity in the western region is hardly affected by the seasons, particularly because, most of the commodities grown in the region are consumed locally (i.e. fruits) and not transported to other parts of the country. In addition, the Iranian border and Torgundi serves as one of the main entry points for most goods entering Afghanistan (through the port of Bandar Abbas) attracting many truckers and resulting in sufficient transport capacity.

Primary Roads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legs</th>
<th>Distance in km</th>
<th>Road surface condition</th>
<th>Terrain</th>
<th>Weather Limitations</th>
<th>Gross Tare Weight</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart-Kandahar</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>All weather</td>
<td>35 MT max</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herat-Islam Qala</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>All weather</td>
<td>35 MT max</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herat-Torgundi</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>All weather</td>
<td>35 MT max</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herat-Farah provincial centre</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>All weather</td>
<td>35 MT max</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Supply route to Districts are all in bad conditions particularly in winter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province/Region</td>
<td>Aggregate Distance</td>
<td>Type of Road</td>
<td>Description of Road</td>
<td>Supply Routes</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hirat-Ghor provincial capital (Chaghcharan)</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>Murrum</td>
<td>Mountainous, steep and narrow; mostly constrained by snow and partially by rain &amp; mud.</td>
<td>Bad road</td>
<td>Supply routes to Districts are all mountainous and inaccessible due to heavy snow and mud usually during January-April. In some parts, the roads are vanished in winter.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badghis Provincial center (Qala-e Naw)</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>Asphalt</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>Partially constrained by snow in Sabzak bypass in winter.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Supply routes to Bala Munghab and Jawand districts are roughly accessible in winter due to snow, rain and mud.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>