AFGHANISTAN

Hard-to Reach Districts

Map Collection
Western region

April 2021

OCHA

INTER-CLUSTER COORDINATION TEAM

REACH Informing more effective humanitarian action

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY.....3
COVERAGE MAP 4

BADGHIS 5
BALA MURGHAB.....5
GHORMACH.....6
JAWAND.....7
MUQUR.....8
QADIS.....9
FARAH.....10
BAKWA.....10
BALA BULUK.....11
FARAH.....12
GULISTAN.....13
KHAK-E SAFED.....14
PUR CHAMAN.....15
PUSHTROD.....16
SHIBKOH.....17
GHOR.....18
CHARSADRA.....18
PASABAND.....19
SHAHRAK.....20
HERAT.....21
SHINDAND.....21

CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The Hard to Reach (HtR) assessment aims to identify and regularly monitor humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities of populations in districts marked by high levels of inaccessibility. The immediate objective of this assessment is to provide an evidence-base of the areas of greatest need, irrespective of access constraints, to inform the humanitarian response in Afghanistan. The HTR assessment has been conducted on a quarterly basis since August 2019.

Since July 2019, the Humanitarian Access Group (HAG) has been ranking all Afghan districts on a biannual basis according to three dimensions of inaccessibility: (1) physical constraints, (2) conflict intensity and spread and (3) complexity of actors. Based on the lists released by the HAG, REACH regularly updates and extends its existing porfolio of HTR districts; in April 2021 its total number of HTR districts amounted to 135.

Ahead of the needs assessment, each HTR district is mapped and divided into Basic Service Units (BSUs) to ensure that all areas and populations of a district are adequately taken into account in the sampling framework. BSUs are identified and mapped as geographic areas that have common demographic / socio-economic features and in which communities rely on the same basic services and facilities, such as health facilities, markets and schools. The identification and mapping of BSUs are done through participatory mapping sessions and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with community representatives.

This booklet contains the BSU maps for the HTR districts located in the Central region that were covered in the fifth round of the HTR needs assessment in April 2021 (n=7). Henceforth it must be seen as complementary to the HTR needs assessment factsheet booklets.[1]

METHODOLOGY

The mapping of the 135 districts was done in four phases: 70 districts were mapped in August 2018, 30 districts in August 2019, 20 districts in November 2019 and 15 districts were mapped in April 2021. For each of the HTR districts, the participatory mapping session and/or KIIs were conducted by REACH enumerators from the same district. This ensures a more efficient and safe process despite the high level of inacessibility of these areas.

The mapping component of the assessment consisted of the following activities: (1) updating of the list of settlements for each HTR district, (2) identifiying the basic services accessible in each settlement of a district, (3) drawing the boundaries of the BSUs on the hard map and (4) reporting the findings in a KOBO form.

Activities:

(1) Settlement update:

The first step of the mapping exercise consisted in updating the Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO) settlements database and determining: (1) if the settlement exists or not; (2) if the settlement name is correctly spelled; (3) if the location of the settlement is correct and (4) if there are any settlements missing.

(2) Basic service mapping:

The second step was to collect information on the availability and location of services and facilities at the settlement level. The settlement services that were mapped were: government schools; major mosque (friday mosque); small markets (< 20 shops); major markets (> 20 shops); hospitals; clinics (Basic Health Clinics (BHC) and Community Health Clinics (CHC)).

(3) BSU boundaries mapping:

After the update of the list of settlements (activity 1) and the identification of the location of basic services within districts (activity 2), participatory mapping sessions were held to determine these basic services catchment areas (i.e. which settlements are sharing which services). Based on that information, the boundaries of the BSUs in each district were drawn on a hard map that had been given to the enumerator ahead of the mapping session.

(4) Reporting the findings:

Enumerators were asked to report their findings in a survey developed with Open Data Kit (Kobo Toolbox) to allow for further crosschecking of the hard maps.

Mapping scenarios:

All three activities mentioned above rely on the availability of Key Informants (KIs) within the districts. Individual KIs were selected based on their ability to provide preliminary information on settlements and basic services in the target area. These KIs are members of the village administration, Community Development Councils, civil society associations, district education departments, health shuras, district health departments, shura or education district principles, and community-based educators.

Based on the security situation in the district, three different mapping approaches were possible:

Scenario 1: Participatory mapping with Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) within the district

Security allows for a participatory mapping excercise in the district centers and the pre-identified KIs accept to travel to and participate in FGD without compensation.

Scenario 2: Participatory mapping with KIIs within the district

Security allows for the organisation of the mapping excercise in the district centre but the KIs are not available for the FGD. In this case, the enumerator conducts separate KIIs with various representatives of different parts of the district.

Scenario 3: Participatory mapping with KIIs outside of the district

Security does not allow for a mapping excercise within the district. Therefore, enumerators visit internally displaced KIs originally from, and that had recently left, the district to be mapped, and currently residing in neighbouring accessible areas. This methodology also used in the needs assessment phase, is known as Area of Knowledge (AoK).

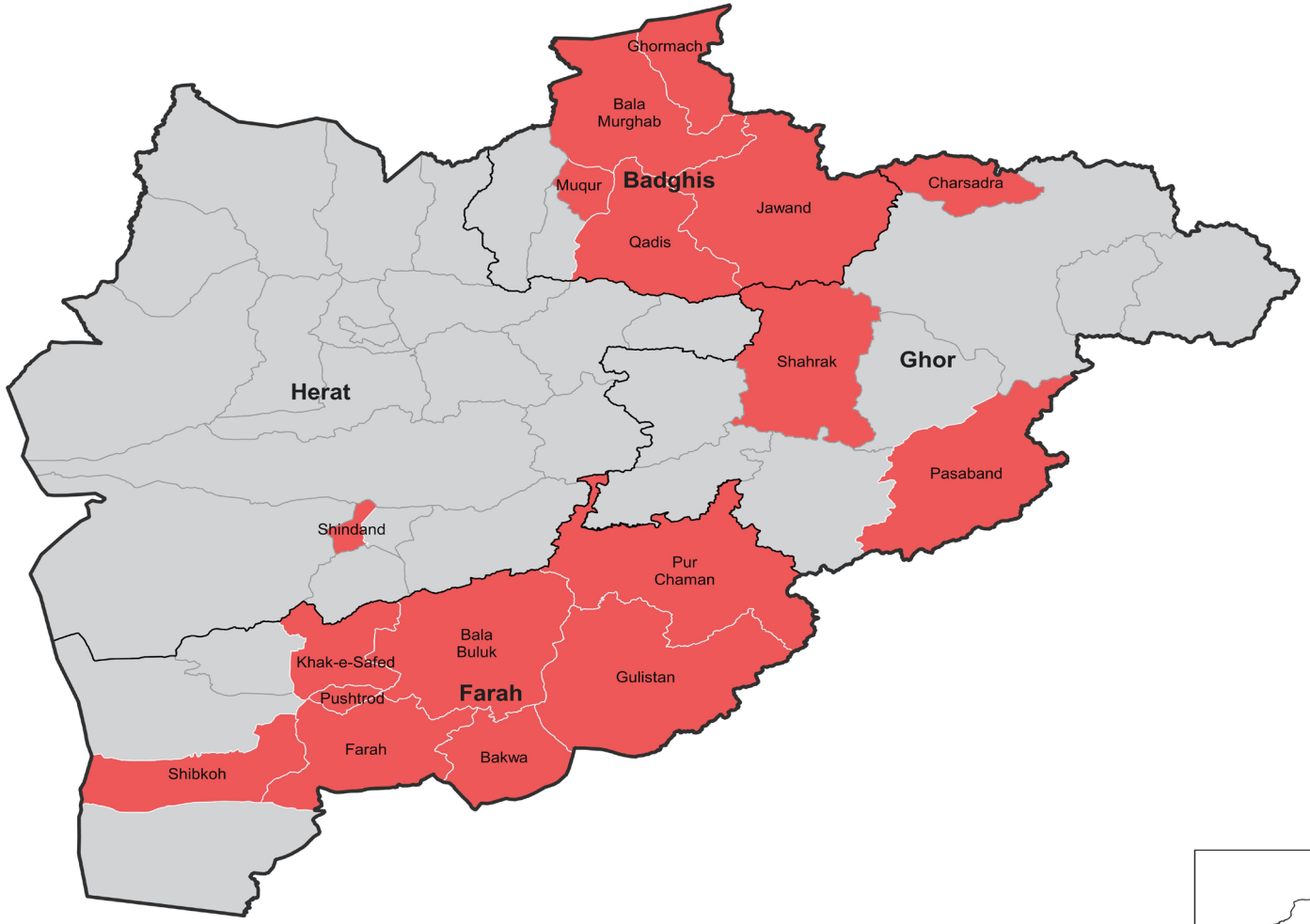
LIMITATION

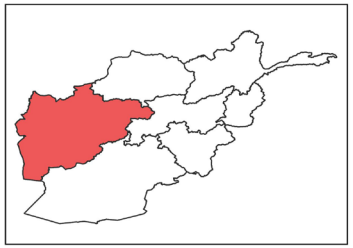
The methodology for mapping has evolved with each round of data collection even though efforts to harmonize the methodology throughout have been made. It is therefore possible to see discrepencies on how BSUs are defined in different districts; this does not affect the validity of the data regarding the location of basic services. Furthermore, the data has not been verified yet through secondary sources and is based solely on this REACH assessment. The findings should therefore be considered as indicative only.

1 The outputs for the fifth rounds of the HTR needs assessment are available **here.**
2 Shuras are local councils composed of village leaders, elders, representatives. More information on shuras **here.**

COVERAGE MAP

AFGHANISTAN - Western Region
Hard-to-Reach Monitoring - April 2021





Badghis
Bala Murghab July 2018

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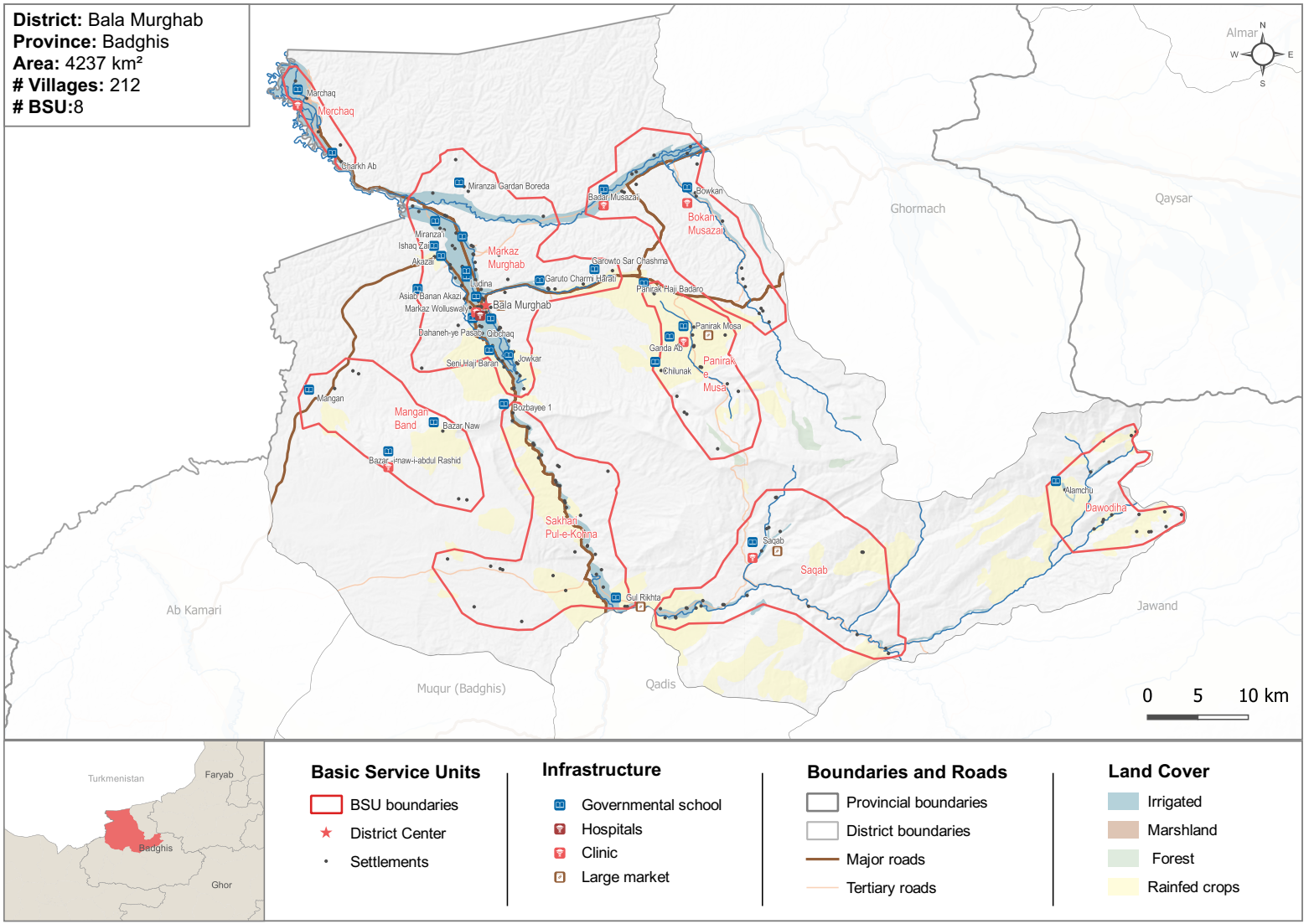
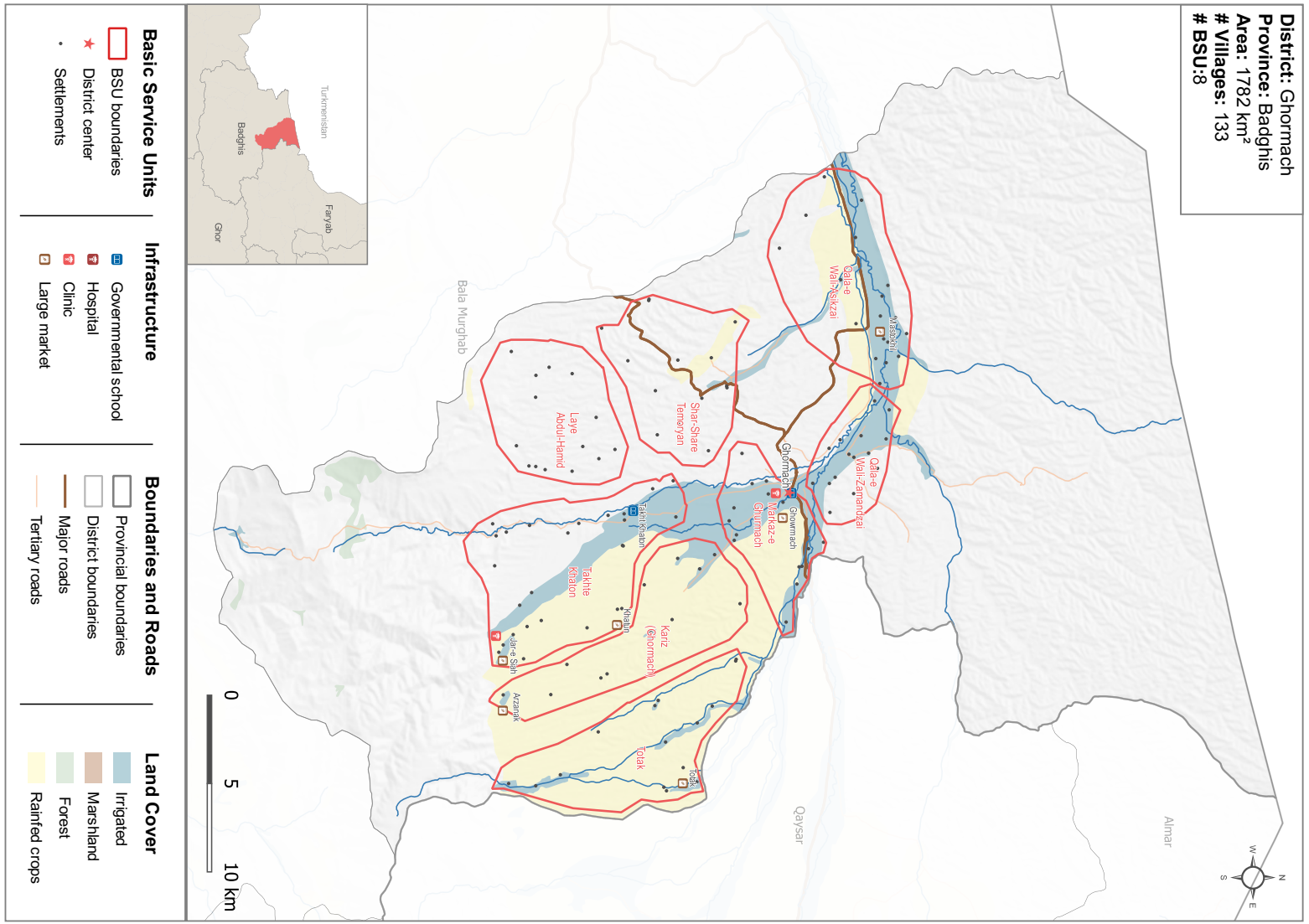
District: Bala Murghab
Province: Badghis
Area: 4237 km²
 # Villages: 212
 # BSU:8



Projection: WGS84
Data sources: Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO): Administrative boundaries, Land cover, DEM and hydrography
REACH: Basic Service Units boundaries, settlements, health services, education facilities and markets. Open Street Map (OSM): Roads
Note: Data, designations and boundaries contained on this map are not warranted to be error-free and do not imply acceptance by the REACH partners, associated, donors mentioned on this map.

Badghis
Ghormach July 2018

HTR I 2021
AFGHANISTAN



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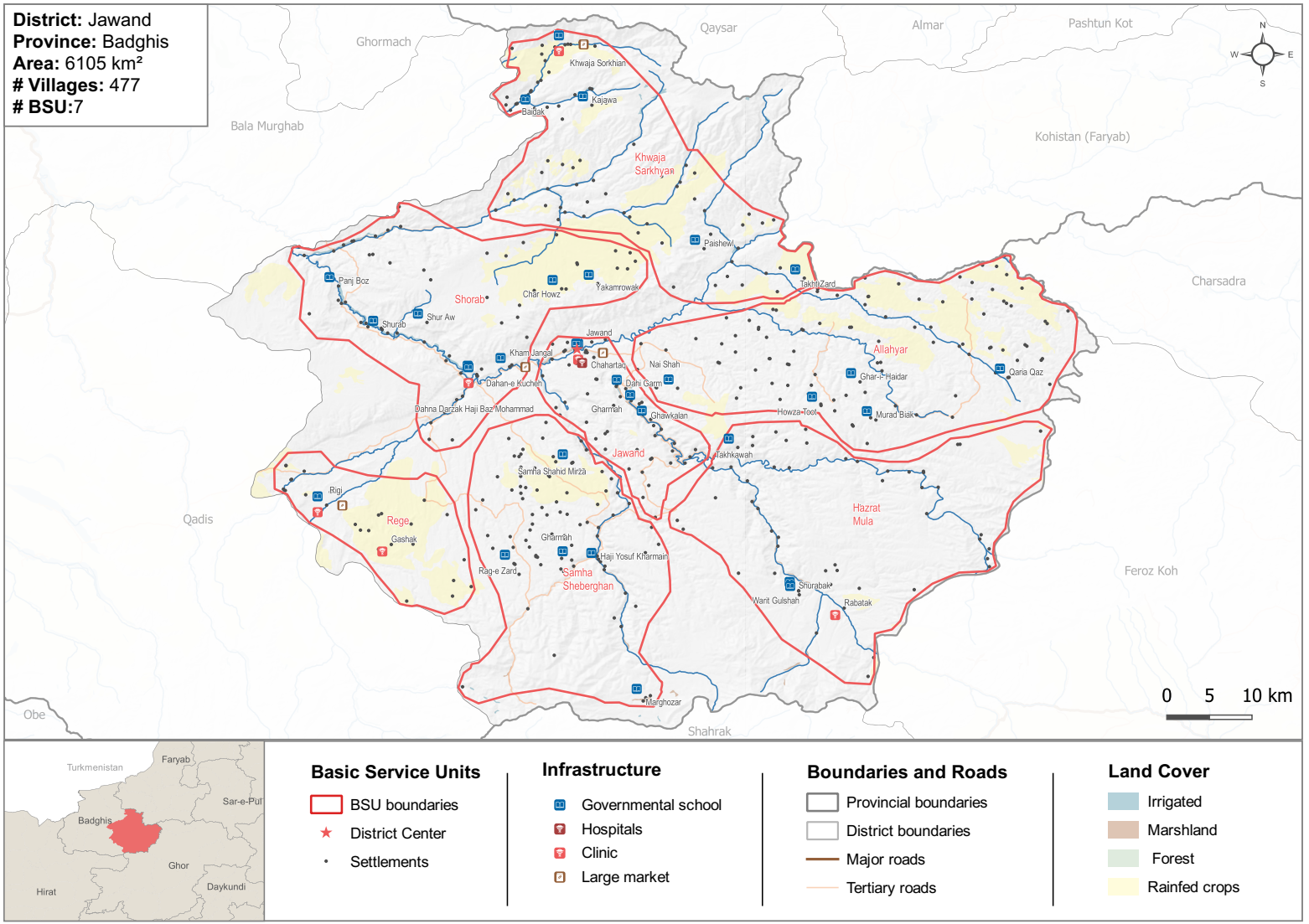

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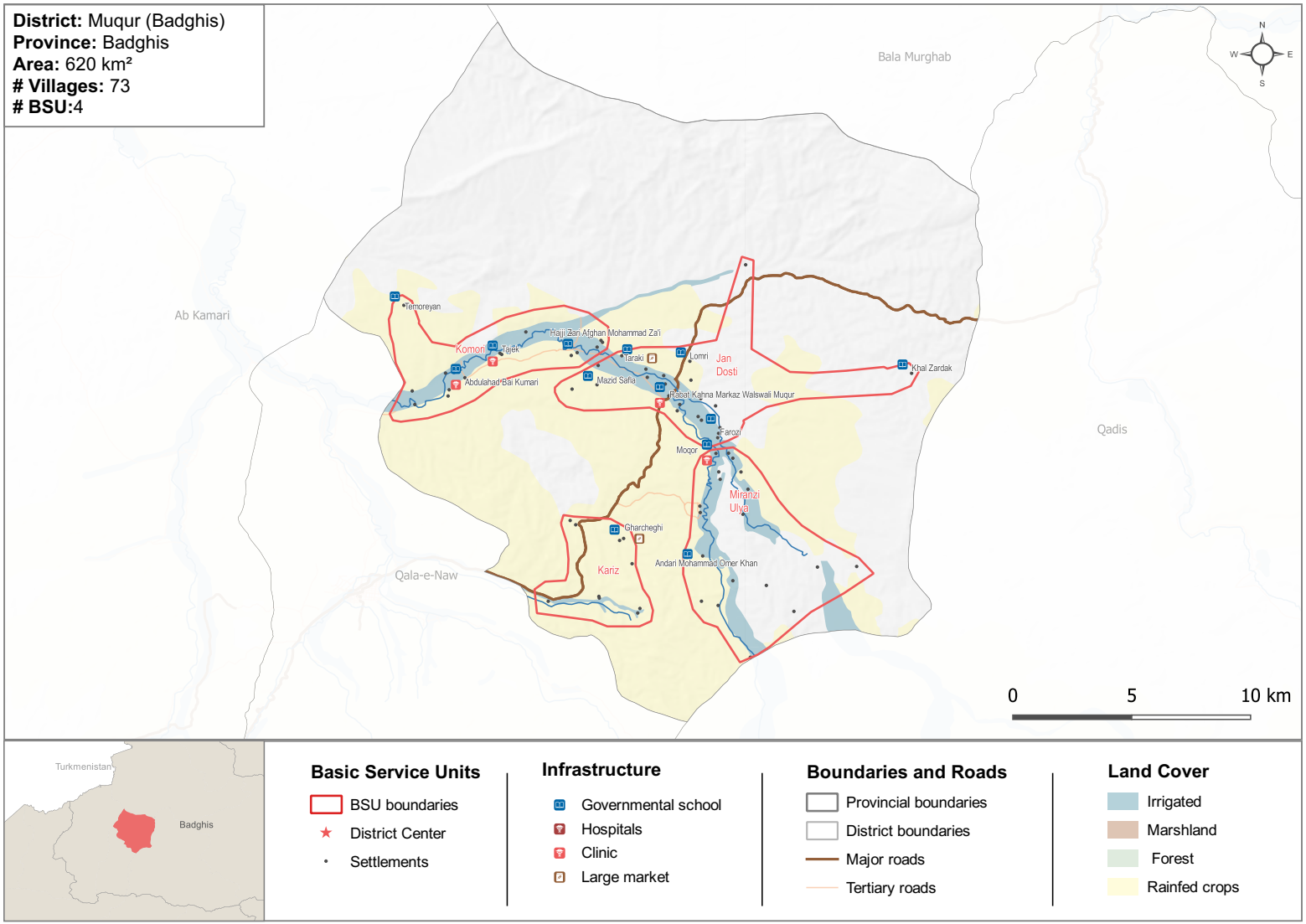

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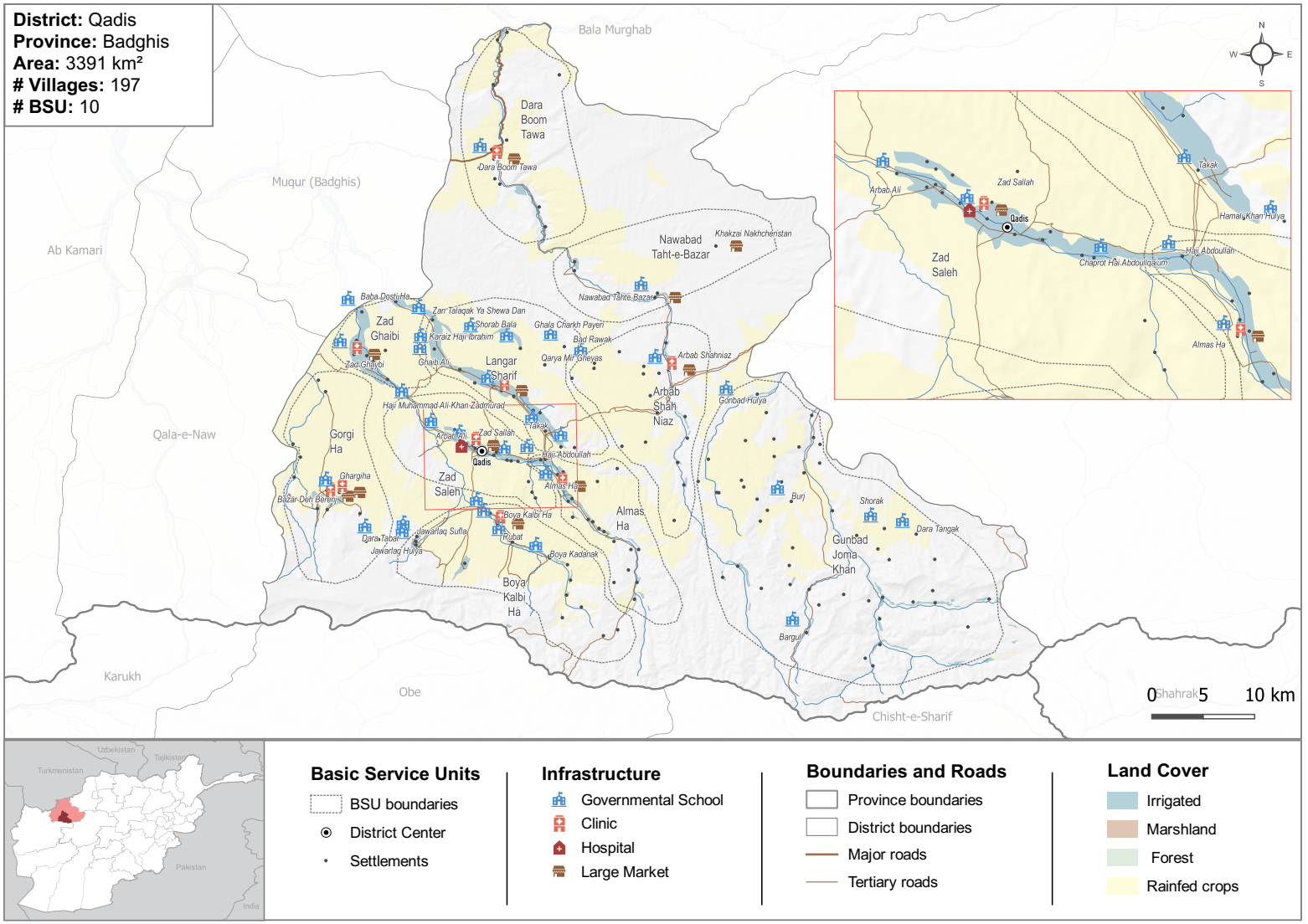

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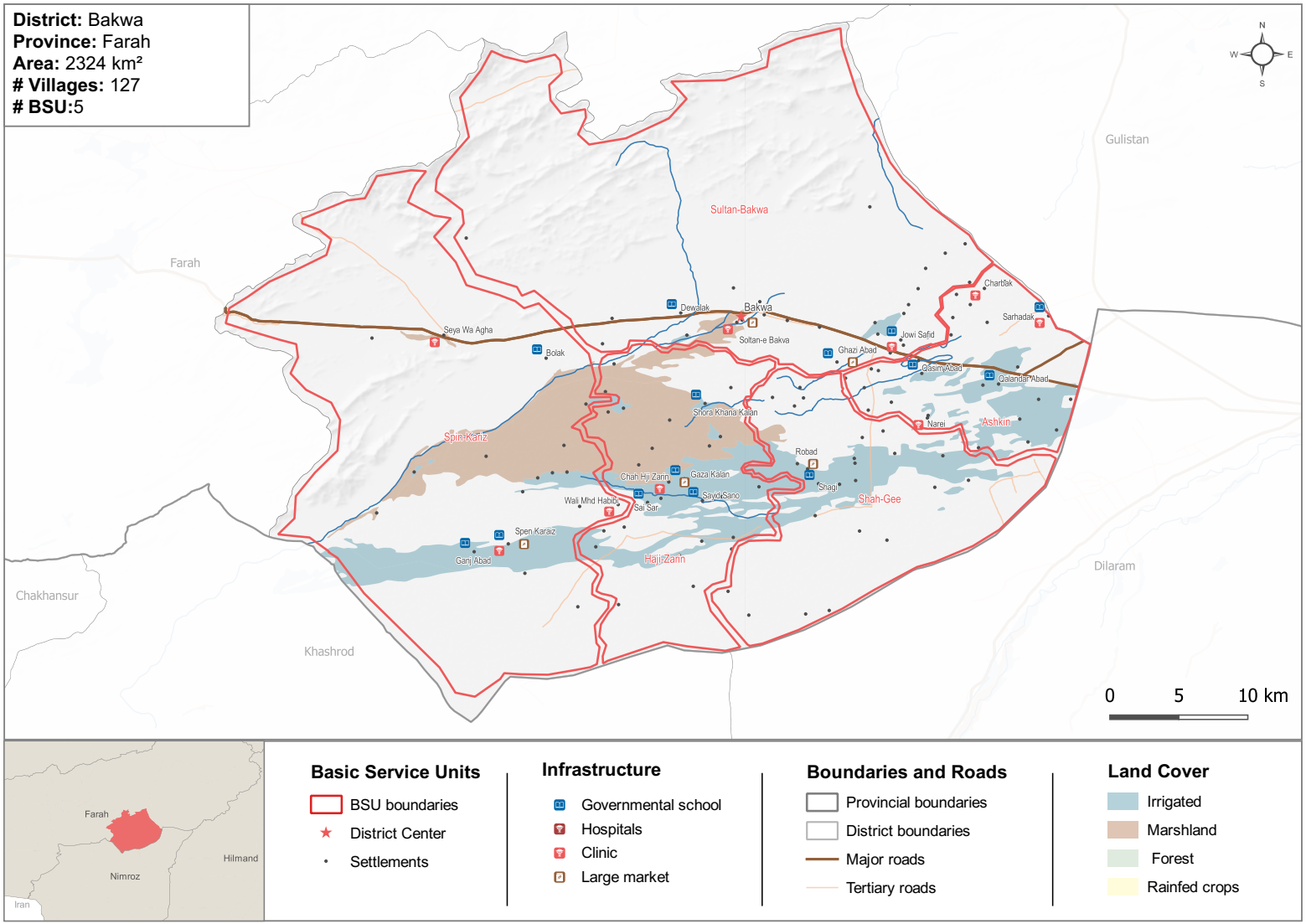

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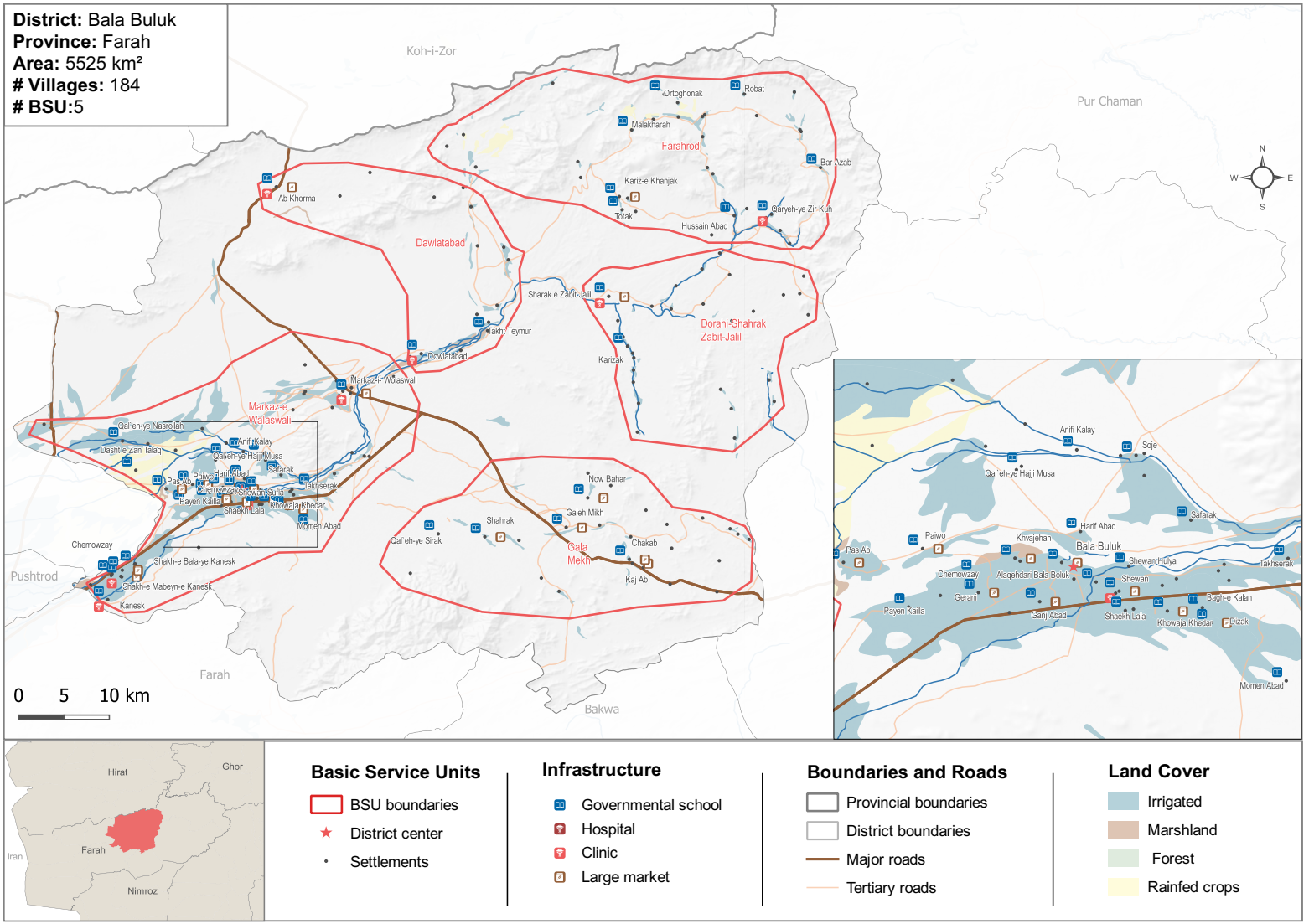

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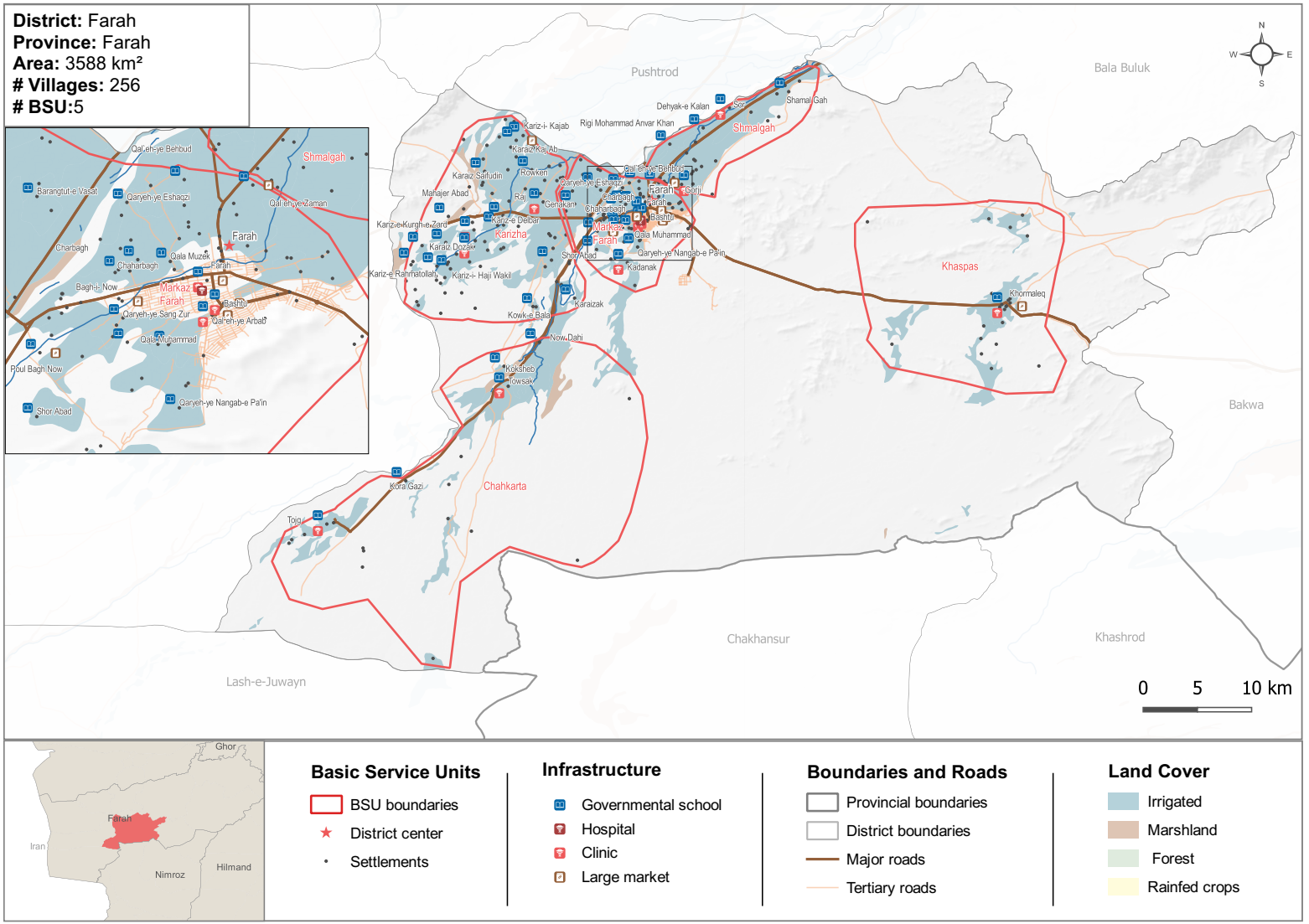

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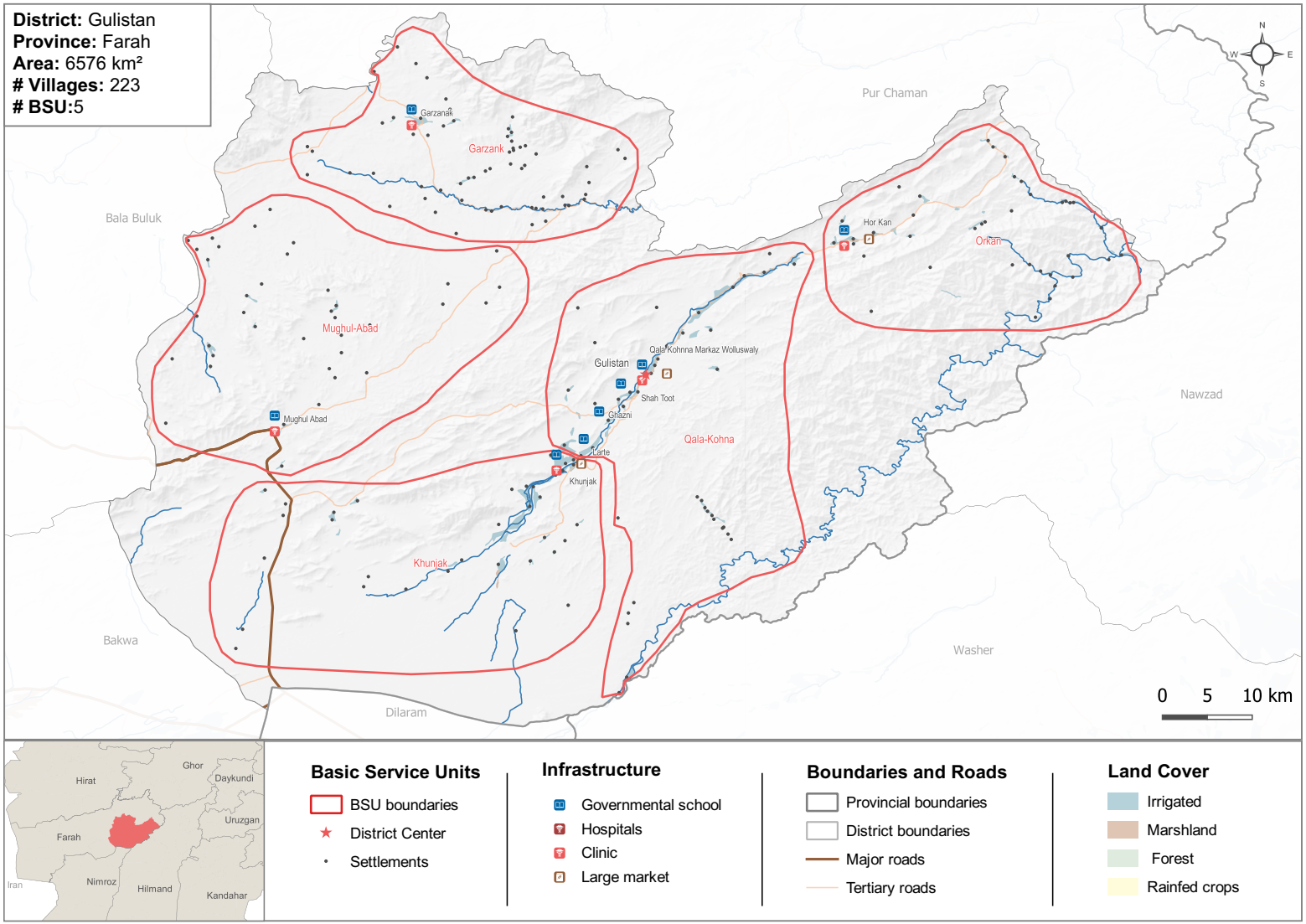

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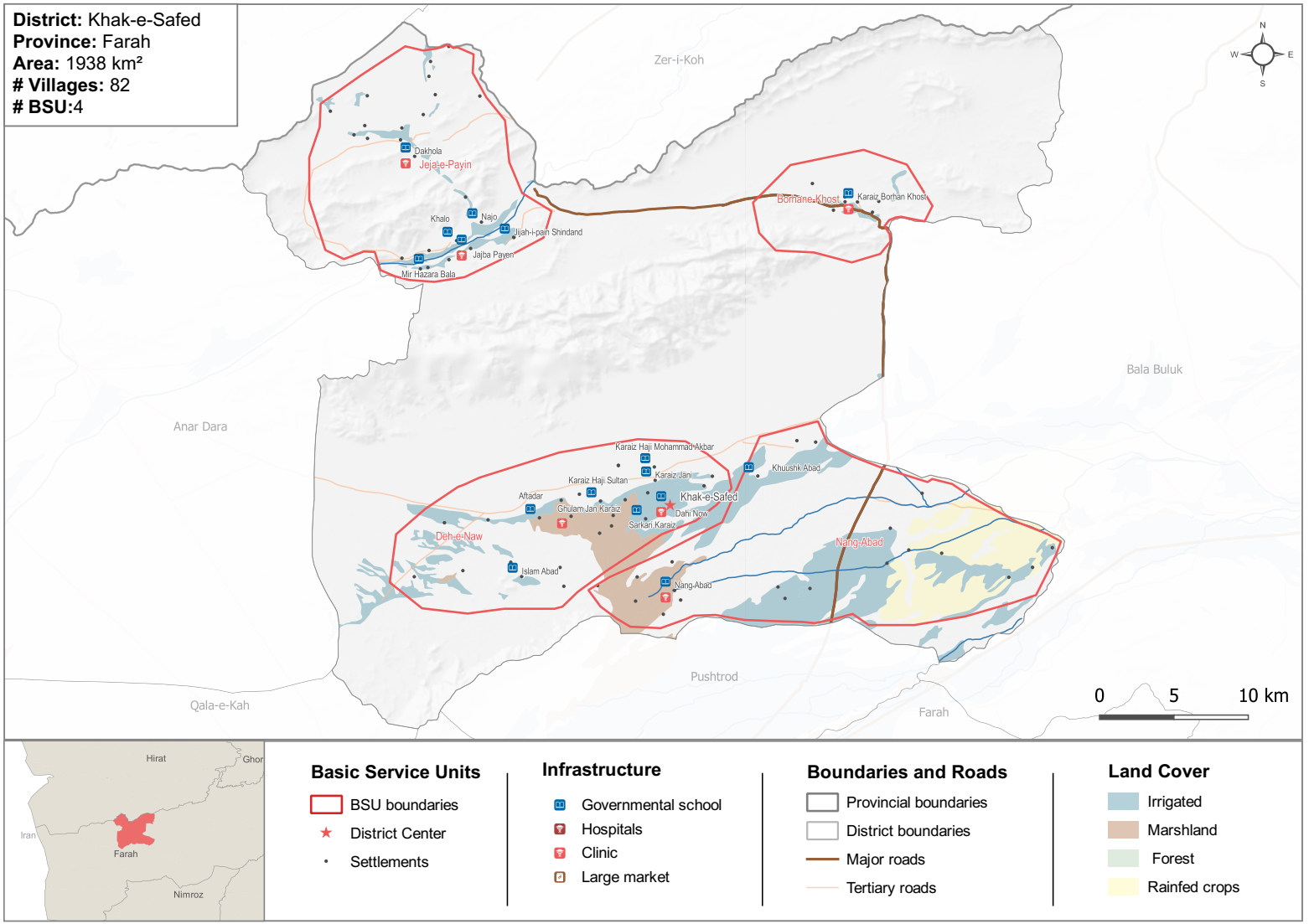
Farah
Khak-e Safed August 2019



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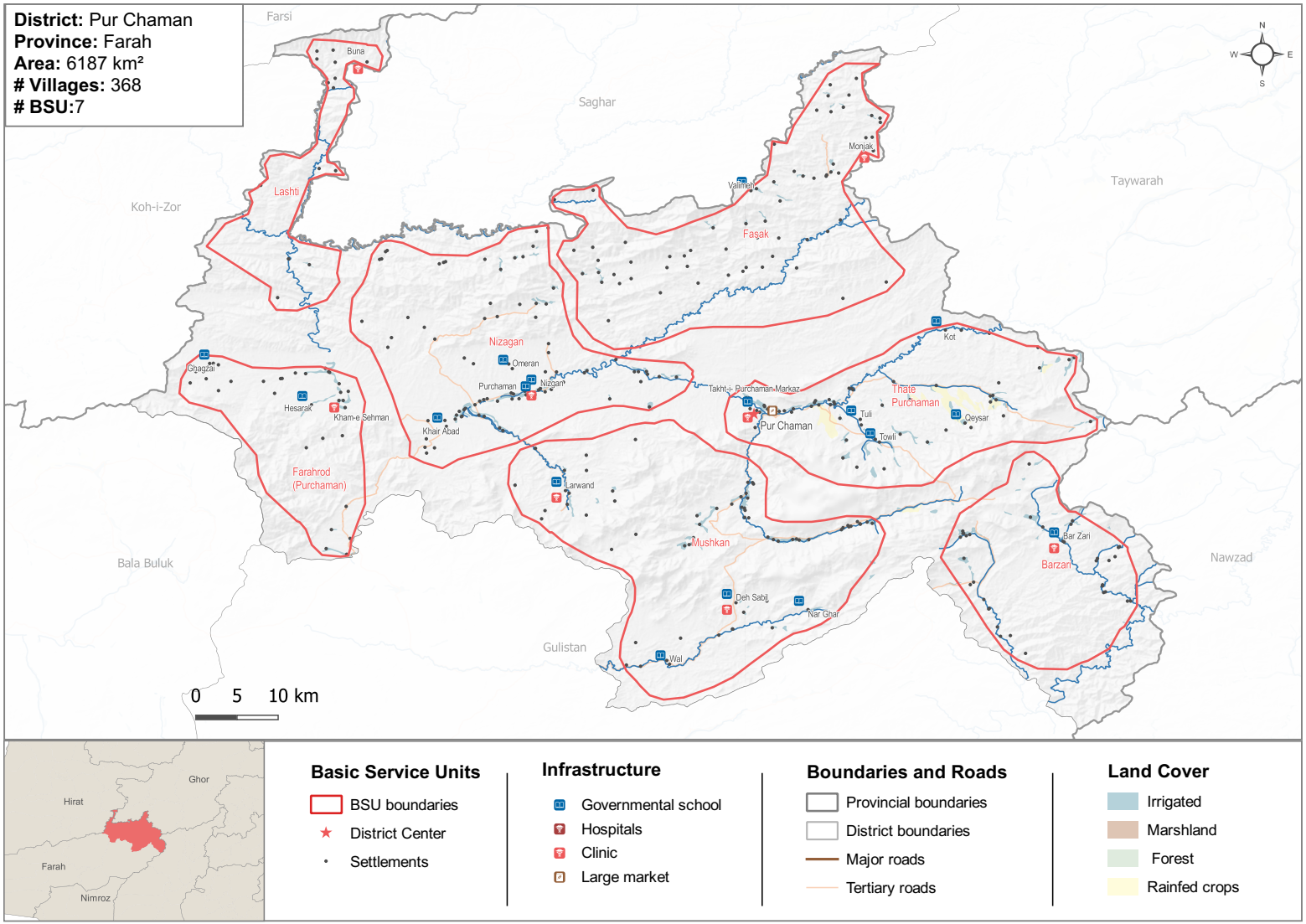
Pur Chaman July 2018

HTR I 2021
AFGHANISTAN



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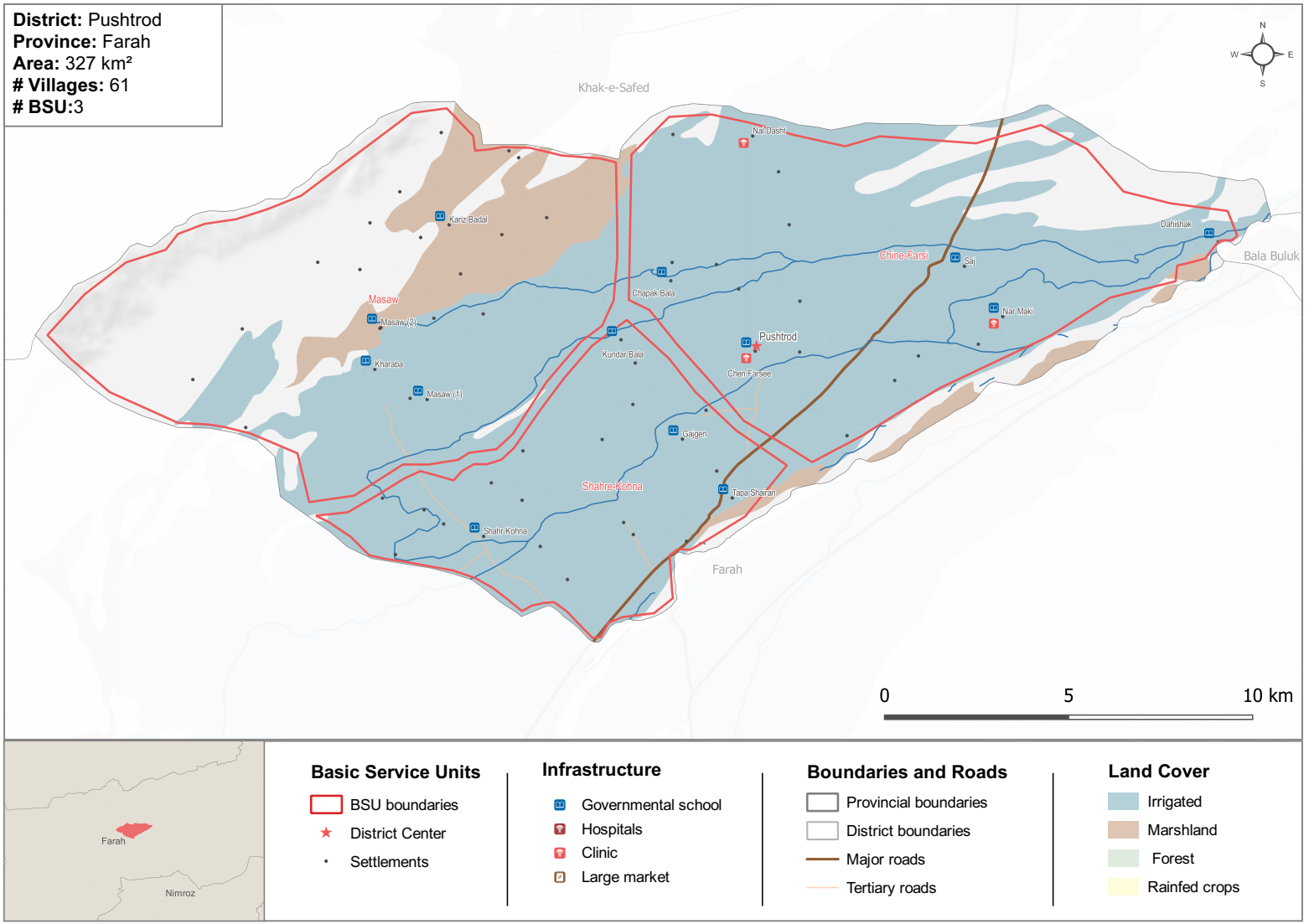

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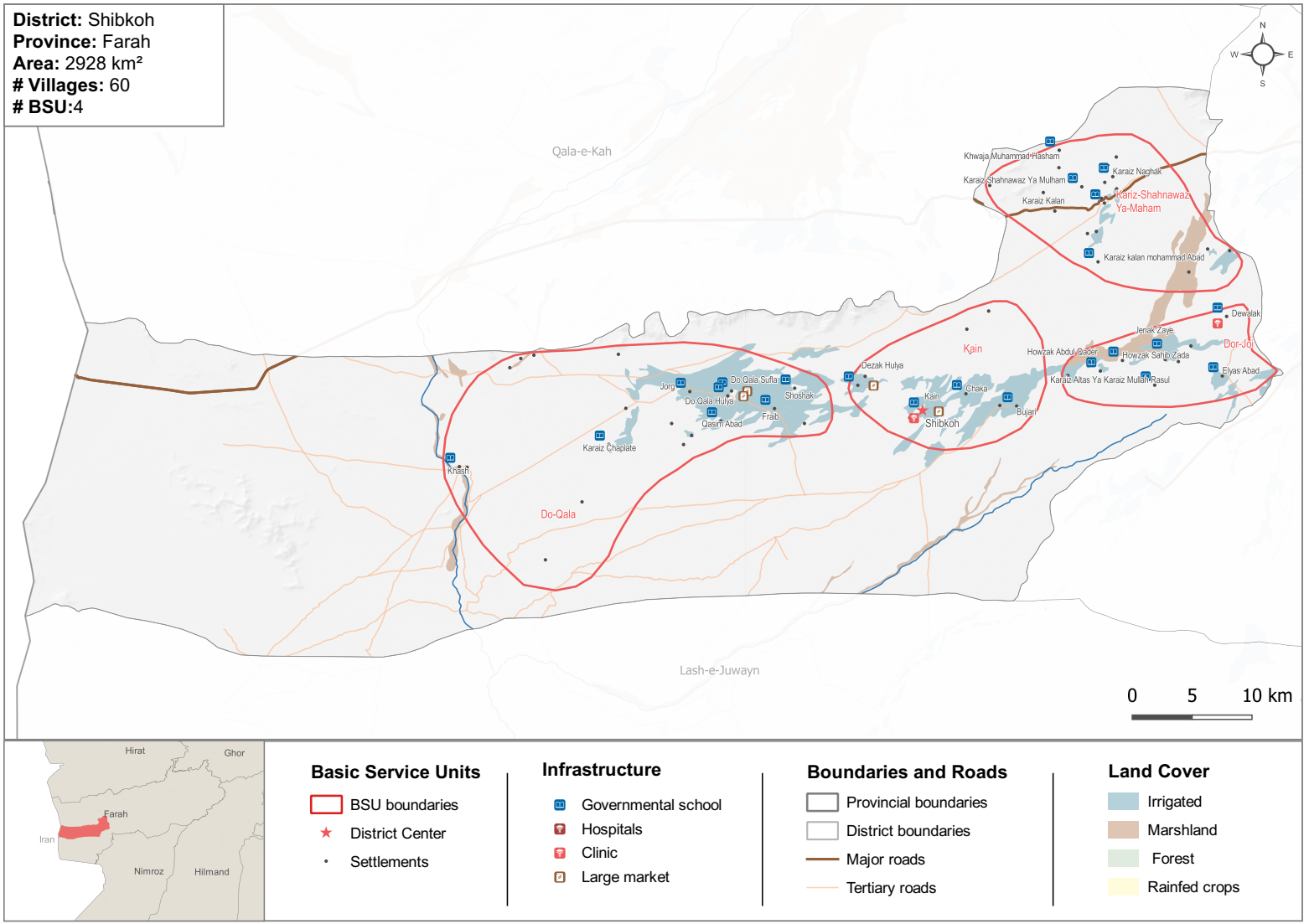

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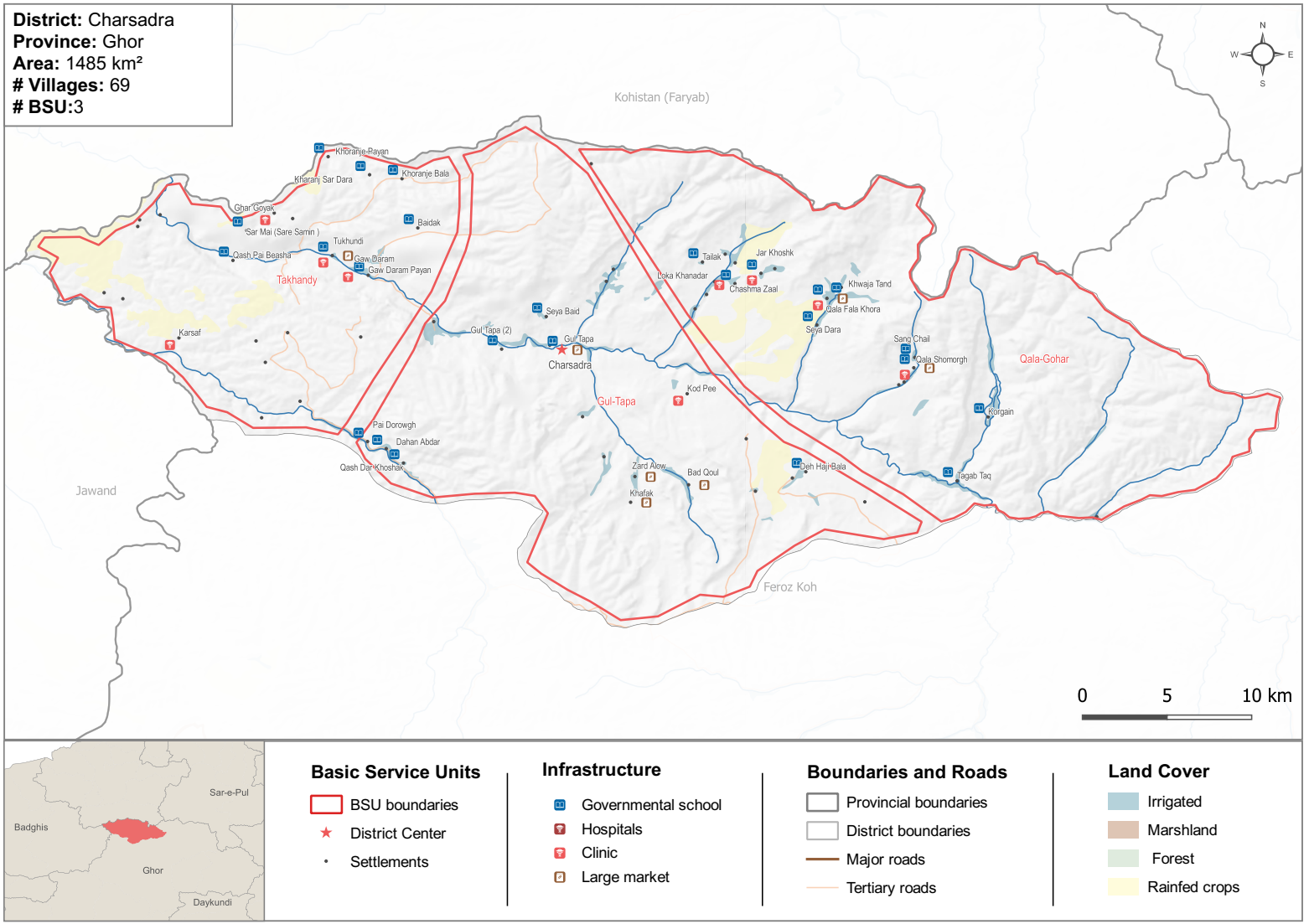

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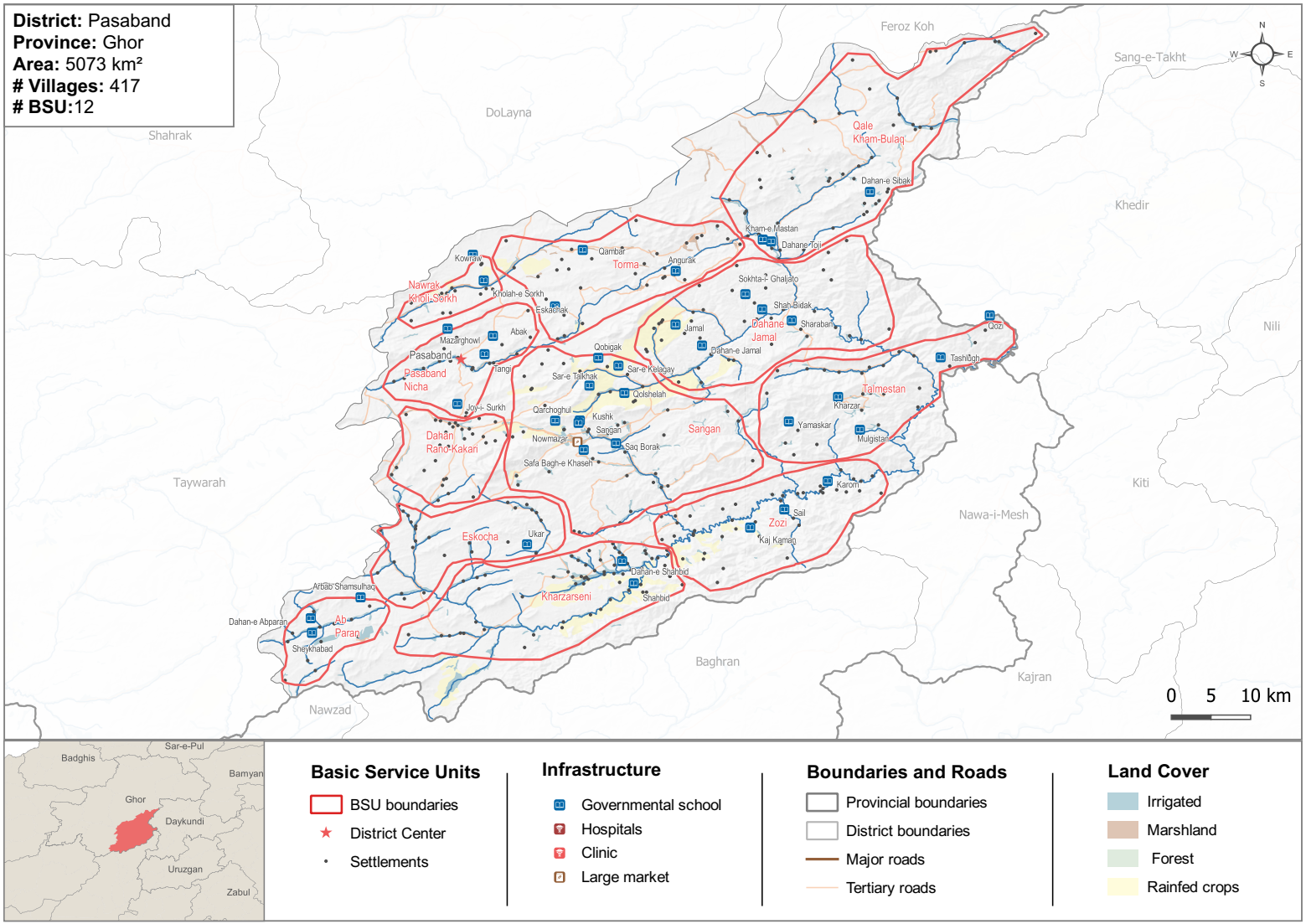

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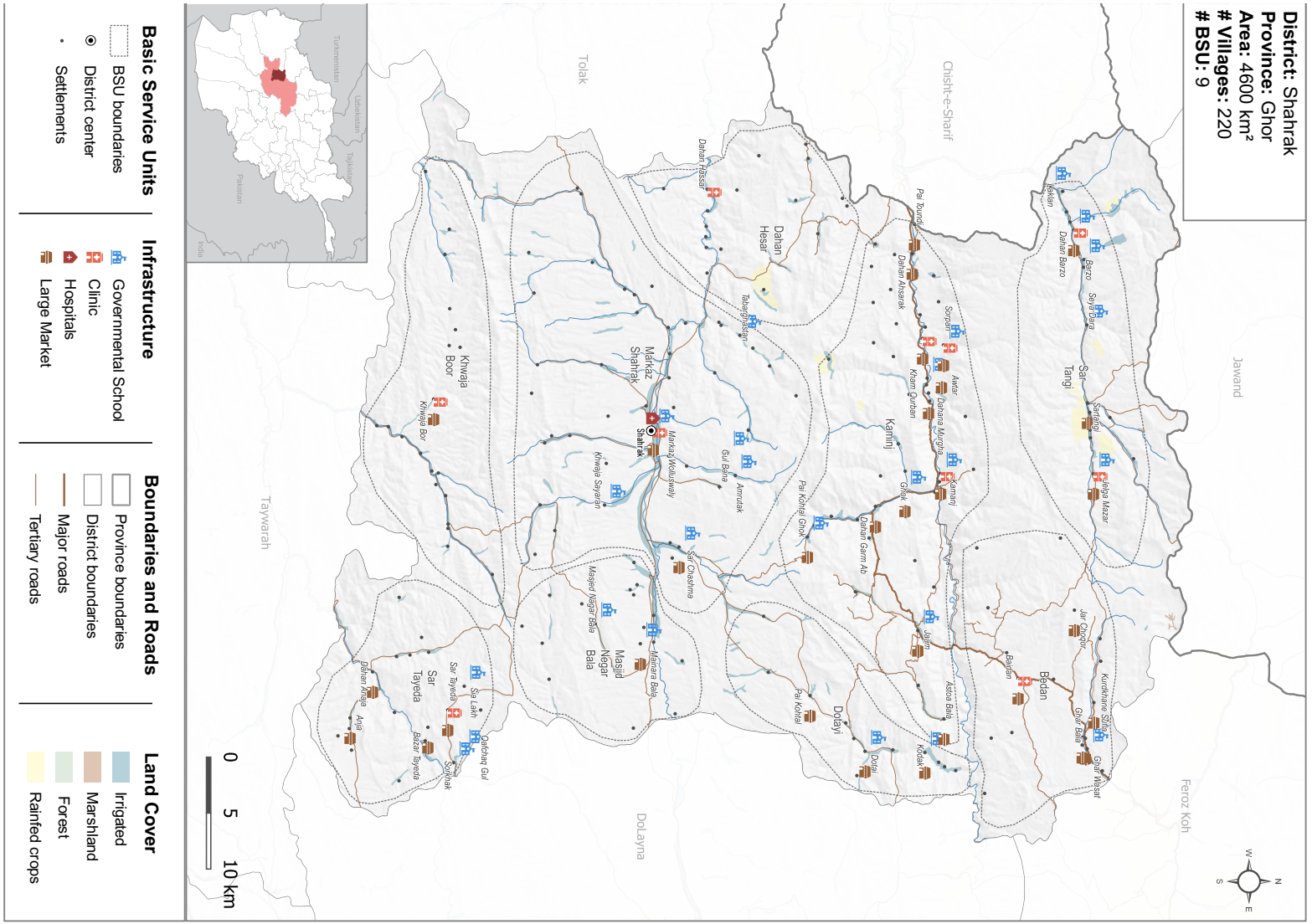

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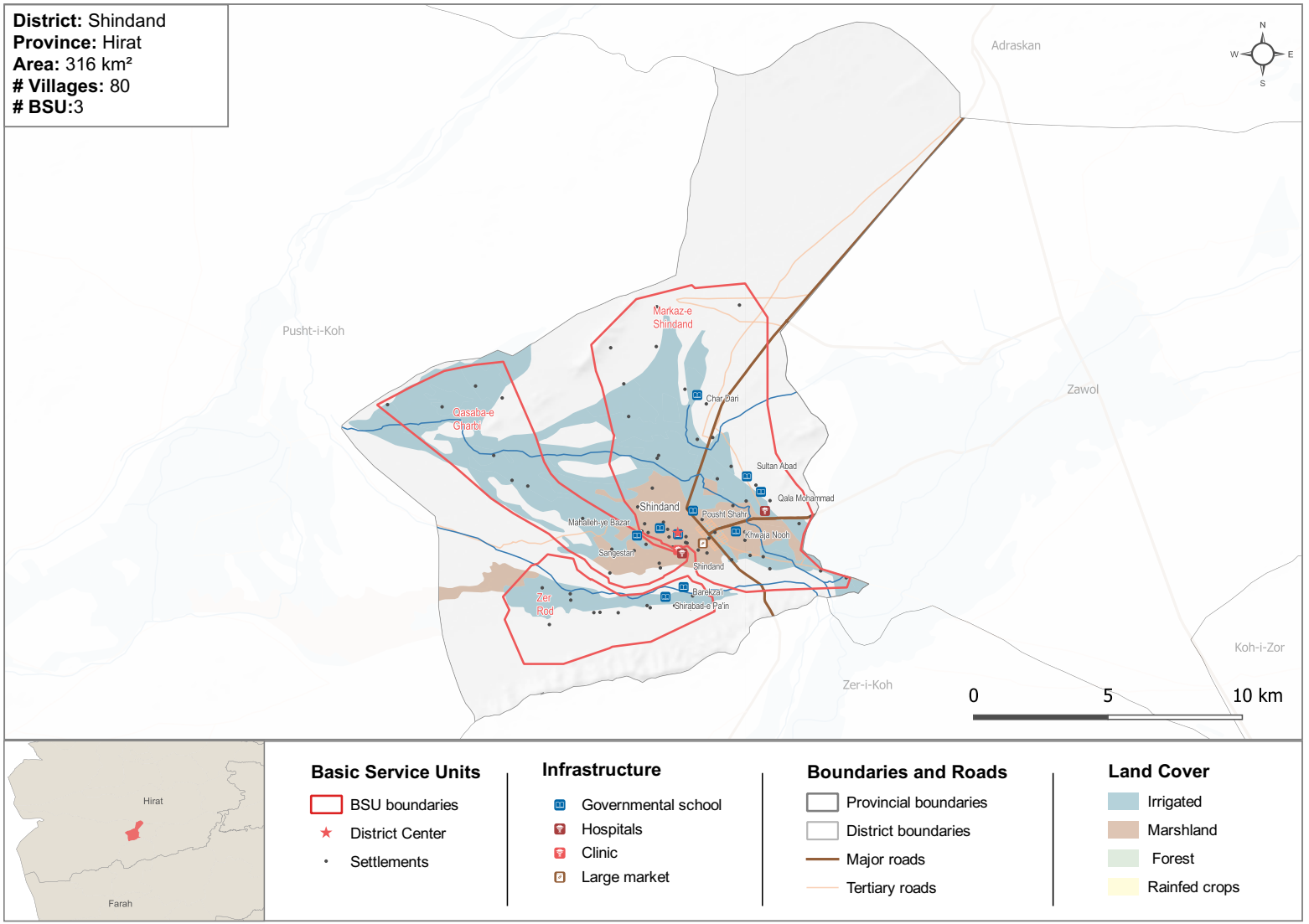

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