

Pre- and post-implementation surveys show that AKDN's water and sanitation interventions, over a one year period, reduce child mortality and morbidity by half. These interventions reach over 50,000 households every year.



International Development Partners

American Red Cross
 Asian Development Bank
 Barclays Capital
 Chaine de l'Espoir
 Czech TV Foundation
 Enfants Afghans
 European Commission
 Food and Agriculture Organisation
 Government of Afghanistan
 Government of Canada
 Government of Germany
 Government of France
 Government of India
 Government of Italy
 Government of Japan
 Government of the Kingdom of Denmark
 Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
 Government of New Zealand
 Government of the Kingdom of Norway
 Government of Portugal
 Government of Switzerland
 Government of the United Kingdom
 Government of the United States of America
 International Centre of Agricultural Research in Dry Areas
 International Finance Corporation
 International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre
 International Organisation for Migration
 Johnson & Johnson
 Monaco Telecom International
 MCT Corp
 NetAid Foundation
 Novib
 UN Children's Fund
 UN Development Programme
 UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
 UN High Commission for Refugees
 UN Officer for Drugs and Crime
 World Bank
 World Food Programme
 World Health Organisation

garden containing the tomb of Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire.

AKDN works include the restoration of walls and the Queen's Palace, the re-laying of water channels, the reconstruction of a caravanserai which will offer space for a visitor's centre, shops and offices, and the replanting of trees favoured by the Mughals. A range of community upgrading activities has also been carried out, improving water and sanitation facilities for 10,000 inhabitants of the surrounding residential area, which has been the focus of joint area-planning initiatives with Kabul Municipality.

AKDN has restored an imposing 19th-century mausoleum in central Kabul over the grave of Timur Shah, the king who made Kabul the Afghan capital. The surrounding open space has been reclaimed and landscaped to create a green park in the heart of the city.

Since 2003, war-damaged quarters of the old city of Kabul have been the focus of an AKDN programme to conserve key historic buildings, including houses, mosques, shrines and public facilities. Upgrading works have also improved living conditions for some 15,000 residents of the old city in the neighbourhoods

of Asheqan wa Arefan, Chindawol and Kuche Kharabat.

In Herat, in western Afghanistan, documentation, conservation and upgrading work has also been carried out since 2005 in surviving historic sections of the old city. Two historic cisterns have been restored, along with an adjoining covered silk bazaar and a mosque. Five houses of particular architectural merit have also been repaired and conserved, while grants and other assistance have been provided to more than 70 householders to repair their traditional houses. In addition, restoration work has been undertaken on an important Timurid shrine complex in Gozargah, northeast of the city.

In another initiative to preserve and develop Afghanistan's cultural heritage, AKDN has established two schools of classical Afghan music in Kabul and Herat. The disruptions of the war have threatened the disappearance of the country's classical music tradition. Under the Ustad-Shagird training scheme begun in 2003, master musicians teach students, selected on merit, to preserve and pass on this musical tradition. Instruments taught include the rubab, delruba, sarinda, dutar and sitar.

AFGHANISTAN



Social, Cultural, and Economic Programmes of the Aga Khan Development Network in Afghanistan

At the conference on the reconstruction of Afghanistan, held in Tokyo in 2002, His Highness the Aga Khan made an initial pledge of US\$ 75 million to Afghanistan's reconstruction. To date, AKDN's assistance to Afghanistan has exceeded His Highness' original pledge by 80 per cent. With the support of its donors and partners, nearly US\$750 million has been channelled through the AKDN for Afghanistan's reconstruction. Among other things, this investment has helped to produce large-scale rural development, health, education and civil society programmes; the provision of a range of microfinance services; the safeguarding of historic landscapes and neighbourhoods in Kabul and Herat; a rapidly growing mobile phone network; and the renovation of a five-star hotel in Kabul.

In his statement at the Tokyo conference, His Highness identified three priorities for national recovery:

the creation of a "safety belt" in Central Asia through selective investments in areas within the wider region that remain volatile and fertile grounds for permanent instability; the repatriation of refugees and reintegration of former combatants in a manner that fully recognises and respects the rights, cultures and traditions of the country's ethnic communities; and the establishment of competent, stable, transparent and accountable institutions which emerge from, and respond to, the needs of the majority of the population, and through which the processes of building confidence, strengthening democracy and fostering development can be channelled.

Humanitarian Assistance

Focus Humanitarian Assistance, an AKDN affiliate, started emergency and relief work in northeast Afghanistan in 1995, before AKDN's main development

programmes began. Rugged terrain and the absence of roads meant that humanitarian aid often had to be transported on inflatable boats across the Pyanj River from Tajikistan. At its peak in 2001, Focus delivered more than 20,000 metric tonnes of emergency food and non-food aid to 500,000 beneficiaries in the country. Food aid was later complemented by agricultural support to farmers, and grants, transport, reception services, vocational training and shelter provision to returning refugees. High-energy rations and milk were distributed to schoolchildren, and tens of thousands of children were immunised.

Local communities were involved in the construction of more than 1,600 km of irrigation channels and 700 km of roads through food-for-work initiatives. Schools, clinics and other community infrastructure were also rehabilitated through similar programmes. This humanitarian assist-

For further information: Aga Khan Development Network, House 297, Street 17, Wazir Akbar Khan Road, Kabul, Afghanistan. Tel: +93 799 300 082; E-mail: info@akdn-afg.org; Website: www.akdn.org/afghanistan

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is a group of private development agencies working to empower communities and individuals, often in disadvantaged circumstances, to improve living conditions and opportunities, especially in Africa and Asia. Its agencies work in over 30 countries for the common good of all citizens, regardless of their gender, origin or religion. Its underlying impulse is the ethic of compassion for the vulnerable in society.

Photo credits: AKF/Jean-Luc Ray, AKTC/Gary Otte

© AKDN, November 2008. Information contained in this brief can be reproduced with acknowledgement to AKDN.



AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK
 www.akdn.org

AKDN provides financial services to a number of small businesses, like this pharmacy, which in turn create employment and fill urgent gaps in the market.



AKDN is a facilitating partner of the Government's National Solidarity Programme (NSP). Under the NSP, AKDN assists villages to establish village-based Community Development Councils, elect an accountable and transparent Council leadership, formulate village development plans, and prioritise village needs. A 2004 World Bank-commissioned external evaluation of AKDN's community development approach found that it is both innovative and effective in forming credible, legitimate and self-reliant community institutions and is making a significant contribution to democratic governance and civil society in the country.

Building on its work with Community Development Councils, AKDN is engaged in a number of other activities to enhance rural livelihoods including business development services, vocational training, adult literacy classes, and training in watershed management. Since 2007, AKDN has been working with more than 1,200 Community Development Councils in the country.

Cover Photo: *The Aga Khan Trust for Culture has restored the Babur's Gardens in Kabul. Work includes the restoration of the walls, the Queen's Palace, the re-laying of water channels and the replanting of plants and trees favoured by the Mughals.*

ance paved the way for AKDN's long-term development programmes in Afghanistan. Today, Focus continues to be involved in emergency response, disaster mitigation and shelter provision in the country.

Social Development

In 2002, AKDN's rural development programme responded to food shortages in Afghanistan by distributing quality seeds and fertilisers aimed at improving agricultural yields and productivity. Shortly after, AKDN began working with local communities to build infrastructure projects, including water supply schemes, latrines, irrigation channels, micro-hydroelectric plants, roads, bridges, schools and health centres. Such projects are part of a comprehensive rural development programme aimed at enabling people to improve their quality of life. This programme, including community development, natural resource management and enterprise development, is mainly implemented through community development councils organised under the Afghan Government's National Solidarity Programme. AKDN currently assists more than 1,200 community councils in seven provinces of northern and central Afghanistan.

AKDN has established health centres and medical services in northeast and central Afghanistan to assist the Afghan Ministry of Public Health in its delivery of basic health and hospital services. AKDN manages the flagship French Medical Institute for Children in Kabul and the Bamyan Provincial Hospital, both among the best hospitals in the country. AKDN staff work in about 30 health centres and clinics and in some 200 health posts across north-eastern and central provinces.

Working through the Aga Khan University's School of Nursing (Karachi), AKDN has revised Afghanistan's nursing curriculum. Today, all of the country's pre-service nurses are trained using this curriculum. To improve the skills of existing and future health professionals, AKDN conducts refresher training for doctors, nurses and midwives; trains community midwives in two schools in Badakhshan and Bamyan; and assists in the management of the Government's Institute for Health Sciences in Kabul, the country's main centre for the training of nurses.

AKDN activities in education include the construction and rehabilitation of schools, the construction of facilities for two Government teacher training colleges, provision of adult literacy classes and in-service teacher training, the distribution of learning aids, and tutorial assistance and extra-curricular programmes in English and information technology. The Network supports the Afghan Ministry of Education's national education strategy, paying special attention to female pupils and teachers. More than 80,000 pupils and 3,000 teachers benefit from AKDN activities to provide better access to quality education.

AKDN has pioneered the provision of innovative and flexible microfinance products in Afghanistan, which play an important role in driving economic development in rural areas. One aim is to discourage the cultivation and trafficking of opium and heroin. Microfinance has eased the burden on indebted farmers, in some cases allowing them to buy back land sold to drug traffickers.

Since 2002, AKDN's Rural Microcredit Programme has disbursed more than 90,000 loans, totaling more than US\$71 million. With nearly 30,000 active clients, the programme now operates in more than 50 rural districts across 12 provinces to create income-generating businesses and to encourage entrepreneurship.

In 2004, AKDN launched the First MicroFinanceBank of Afghanistan to operate primarily in urban areas, the first bank of its kind under the country's new regulatory structure. FMFB provides microfinance to small businesses, helping Afghans to create productive and sustainable sources of income. It is the largest microfinance provider in Afghanistan, serving some 38,000 borrowers and savers in towns and cities in eight provinces. Since 2002, it has disbursed more than 60,000 loans, totaling US\$100 million.

Economic Development

AKDN aims to create replicable models of success and encourage other investors to follow suit by making strategic large-scale investments in Afghanistan's economic development. Investment decisions are based on whether a particular investment will improve the quality of life of those affected by it, and not simply on bottom-line profitability. Any profits are then reinvested in other development initiatives.

In 2003, AKDN and its partners launched Roshan, which has become Afghanistan's largest mobile GSM provider. In 2003 there were less than 50,000 working fixed and mobile telephone lines in the country, but Roshan has now invested more than US\$380 million in Afghanistan and its network coverage includes over 180 cities

and towns, with over a million subscribers. Roshan directly employs more than 900 people, making it one of the largest private sector employers in the country. Indirectly, the company provides employment for nearly 20,000 people through distributors, contractors and suppliers.

The Kabul Serena Hotel was inaugurated in 2005, the first five-star hotel to open in Afghanistan in more than 35 years. The hotel, representing a US\$39 million commitment, was built at the request of the Afghan Government to provide accommodation of an international standard for diplomats, investors and other travellers visiting the country. The hotel aims to aid the revival and development of central Kabul, and to help revive the crucial hospitality and tourism industries in Afghanistan. It directly employs nearly 400 people and emphasises the sourcing of materials from local producers, craftsmen and artists.

Through investments in Habib Bank, AKDN is making financial services available to Afghanistan's entrepreneurs and burgeoning private sector. The Habib Bank has been able to draw on its experience in 30 countries to help update Afghanistan's banking laws and regulations and to build capacity in the industry.

Cultural Development

The goal of AKDN's cultural development activities is to conserve and restore Afghanistan's cultural heritage, while stimulating local economic development and improving the quality of life of people living in surrounding neighbourhoods. In 2002, AKDN began the rehabilitation of Bagh-e-Babur, a terraced and walled

"We would like to reiterate our long-term commitment to this region, of which Afghanistan and we are an integral part of its peoples. The Development Network is already scaling up its efforts, in collaboration and with the support of the international community, to enable Afghans to transform their existence from extreme poverty to choice and opportunity within a context that safeguards, for each of them, their right to their own identities, and to preserve and practise their faiths and traditions."

— His Highness the Aga Khan, in a statement delivered on his behalf, at the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, Tokyo, Japan, 20 January 2002



Through demonstration plots, field schools for farmers and other agriculture extension techniques, AKDN has contributed to overall food security in northeast Afghanistan. Combined with other interventions, this has improved livelihoods for many families in AKDN's programme areas.