

The Foundation is working to transform the health-care system from a hospital-based model to a more sustainable and efficient community-based approach, including arranging for visits of nurses to homes.



Partners

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 Asian Development Bank/Japanese Fund for Poverty Reduction (ADB/JFPR)
 Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)
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 UK Department for International Development (DFID)
 US Agency for International Development (USAID)
 US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
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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.

geographic distribution and spectrum of activities so that "civil society," as a component of society at large, has an unmistakable positive impact on the quality of life of significant segments of the Tajik population.

With CSP's support, a survey was conducted by a team of nine Tajik researchers in late 2006 which established the first ever base-line survey of information regarding the status of CSOs in Tajikistan.

Regional Infrastructure

Since 2002, the Foundation has spent US \$1.7 million to build and rehabilitate four bridges over the Pyanj River at Tem, Darwaz, Langar and Ishkashim, which now connect remote regions of Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Rehabilitation efforts have significantly increased the capacity and safety of the bridges and have been accompanied by the building of border posts and cross-border marketplaces to facilitate the flow of trade.

For Afghans, the bridges have provided better food security, offered access

to critical social services such as emergency medical treatment at Tajik hospitals and created more efficient channels for delivery of humanitarian aid in what are otherwise remote and inaccessible areas.

On the Tajik side, they have facilitated access to a wider variety of better priced goods transited from China, Iran and Pakistan by Afghan traders. The local cost of tea on the bordering Tajik side has dropped by one third and more supplies like salt, cement, household goods and fabrics have become available to those in remote areas than ever before.

The bridges are also facilitating the exchange of ideas and the strengthening of relations across the border. These new connections represent important steps towards achieving peace and stability in the region. Two more bridges to be built by the Foundation at Vanj and Shurabad are currently in the planning stages.

The Foundation has contributed towards various infrastructure projects within Tajikistan, including road projects that serve its remote regions such as the Kulma pass, Khorog and Darwaz.

TAJIKISTAN



Aga Khan Foundation

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) has been implementing innovative development solutions in Tajikistan since 1993. Central to its efforts have been inclusive, community-based development approaches in which local organisations identify, prioritise and implement projects with the Foundation's assistance.

The Foundation's programmes in Tajikistan are focused in four areas: rural development, health, education and civil society. Many of its initiatives address cross-cutting concerns including gender issues, pluralism, human resource development and public awareness of development issues. Through its activities in all four regions of Tajikistan, AKF is reaching almost one million people.

Overview of Activities

One of the hallmarks of AKF's approach in Tajikistan is its long-

term commitment: it has been the Foundation's experience that quick fixes rarely take root; rather, sustainable development requires careful, culturally appropriate and disciplined application of best practices over periods that may be longer than typical funding cycles.

The Foundation's activity in Tajikistan began in 1993, when it mounted a response to acute food shortages in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ensuing civil war.

Since then, AKF has begun making grants and implementing projects with partners. When an appropriate partner does not exist, the Foundation will create one. To address rural development issues in Tajikistan, in 1998 AKF founded the Mountain Societies Development Support

Programme (MSDSP). MSDSP has evolved from a humanitarian relief programme into one of the most respected local non-governmental organisations in the country.

The Foundation also plays a catalytic role in the activities of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and other partners committed to development in Tajikistan, including in the mobilisation of financial and technical resources. AKF also operates an internal evaluation unit that conducts research studies for the Foundation, stakeholders and partners in order to review the impact of its activities and inform future efforts.

Rural Development

In its early years, MSDSP, the rural development programme set up by AKF, supported the GBAO region to increase levels of food self-sufficiency,

AKF's construction of the Roshorv Canal in GBAO's Bartang Valley has enabled the irrigation of more than 1000 hectares of land. Communities in the surrounding region can now grow wheat, potato and other vital food products after 10 years of water shortages.



The Foundation provides scholarships each year to outstanding students in Tajikistan for undergraduate and graduate studies.

The AKF International Scholarship Programme has enabled 27 Tajik students to pursue graduate studies at institutions of high quality in Central Asia, Europe and North America.

The Tajik Scholarship Programme, started in 1993, has allowed more than 200 students to pursue their undergraduate studies in Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. More than 65 of these scholarship recipients have then gone on for further study.

moving from approximately 15 percent in 1997 to 70 percent today. Since then, the Programme has worked to mobilise and organise local community-based organisations (CBOs) throughout Tajikistan on a self-help basis and provide support to strengthen their capacity to identify, prioritise and realise their development agendas.

To date, MSDSP has supported over 1,150 Village Organisations and 60 VO Unions, with a total of 132,705 village members, of which 47 percent are women. It is also working increasingly with sub-district and district authorities to strengthen the overall capacity of local government institutions.

Among its other activities, MSDSP seeks to increase rural incomes and employment by fostering the development of micro and small-enterprises and facilitating their access to capital and business development services.

Through its Centres for Business Development Services, the Programme supports entrepreneurs with a wide range of integrated offerings, from technical training on production to advice on marketing, business regulations and financial services. Currently, MSDSP's activities in the sector are benefiting over 3000 people in local markets of which approximately 30 percent are women.

The Programme is encouraging more innovative and productive approaches to natural resource management by promoting community-based resource management systems, facilitating access

to appropriate technologies and inputs and improving the conditions for market-based agriculture and processing.

MSDSP also supports the construction and rehabilitation of economic and social infrastructure works; it has completed work on over 400 water and sanitation projects, 860 irrigation projects, 270 roads and bridges, 280 health facilities, 150 schools and 25 mini hydels. It collaborates with local government and community-based organisations to ensure the continued maintenance of these works over the long term.

Education

AKF activities in the education sector seek to improve the skills and pedagogical knowledge of teachers while supporting reforms at the national level.

The Foundation has recognised the need for a strong partner that can offer continuous assistance and development opportunities to teachers. In this vein, it works closely with the Institute of Professional Development (IPD), an agency of the Government of Tajikistan, in implementing its initiatives.

IPD is currently implementing the Whole School Improvement Programme (WSIP) in GBAO, which employs a holistic approach to undertake comprehensive improvements to primary and secondary education systems in the region.

WSIP activities include mentoring initiatives, trainings to introduce

teachers and school administrators to innovative methods, the establishment of Learning Resource Centres and the engagement of community members through Parent Committees. During 2006, 105 schools benefited from SIP programs, including over 1,000 teachers, 500 school administrators and 15,000 students. By 2011, SIP is expected to have fully reached all GBAO schools and serve as a model for wider replication.

The Foundation is also supporting a decentralised curriculum development process at the national level as well as assisting in the implementation of a pilot project studying the feasibility and benefits of a per capita funding structure for Tajikistan's education system.

Health

In the area of health care, the Foundation supports the work of the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS), especially with regards to mobilisation of funds.

The goal of the AKHS Health Programme is to have a sustained improvement in the health status of communities, especially of children younger than five years of age and women of reproductive age, by working alongside the government to provide culturally appropriate and problem-oriented health education, disease prophylaxis, early detection, referrals and medical follow-up services.

In Phase I of the Programme, which took place from 1997 to 2004,

interventions emphasised preventative and primary care with appropriate referral. This represented a significant shift in focus from the former systems of hospital-based curative care to more community-based services.

The main components of this phase of the Programme were to promote the provision of primary care in the community and at the first level of the health system; encourage the active involvement of the community in measures to promote health and prevent illness; rehabilitate and equip health facilities; expose health providers at all levels of the system to up-to-date-clinical, managerial and English language training; and influence policies which support primary health care and community involvement.

During Phase II, currently in place until 2010, the Programme is working to forge enduring partnerships between community-based health committees and public-sector health professionals and systems. The focus of its efforts is on consolidating community involvement in health care, expanding the geographic reach of the Programme, documenting the impact of interventions on the health status of the target population and contributing to health sector reform.

Civil Society

Launched in 2006, the aim of AKF's Civil Society Programme (CSP) is to ensure that, over time, there are a sufficient number of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in quality,

"It has always seemed to me that bridges are among the most powerful and important symbols in human society—symbols of connection, of cooperation and of harmony.

In the recent past, in this region, bridges have opened at Tem, Darwaz and Langar. Like them, the Ishkashim Bridge is a concrete expression of cooperation amongst the Governments of Tajikistan and Afghanistan and the Aga Khan Development Network. It symbolizes our common determination to help open up the region to new development and improved prosperity.

Links and meeting places created by the bridges do more than simply facilitate commerce. We exchange questions and answers. We trade in products, but we can also trade in ideas. Communities on each side of the border will know one another better and be better able to help one another grow, prosper and share the lessons of life."

— Remarks by His Highness the Aga Khan at the Inauguration of the Ishkashim Bridge, 31 October 2006



In collaboration with the Institute for Professional Development, the Foundation has designed national Curriculum Enrichment Frameworks that have been endorsed by Tajikistan's Ministry of Education for use in all schools nationwide.