

AKDN supports local music schools to transmit musical traditions to future generations while also promoting contemporary music groups such as The Badakhshan Ensemble with audiences abroad.



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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.

Darwaz, Ishkashim and Vanj which now connect remote regions of Tajikistan and Afghanistan. A fifth bridge in Shorobod is currently under construction.

On the Afghan side, the bridges have provided better food security, access to critical social services at Tajik health centres and more efficient delivery channels for humanitarian aid. On the Tajik side, they are facilitating access to a wider variety of better-priced goods transited by Afghan traders. The bridges also facilitate the exchange of ideas and serve to strengthen relations across the border. They represent an important step towards achieving peace and stability in the region.

Disaster Management

Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS), an AKDN affiliate, implements a wide range of disaster prevention and response initiatives in local communities, including disaster preparedness trainings, vulnerability assessments, risk mitigation activities and disaster relief efforts.

FOCUS, in collaboration with local Government and non-government partners, also responds during emergency situations to provide relief

aid for affected communities. Since 1997 FOCUS has responded to more than 50 disasters in Tajikistan.

Cultural Development

AKDN supports the efforts of Central Asian musicians and communities to sustain, preserve, further develop and transmit musical traditions that are a vital part of their cultural heritage. The Network supports ustâd-shâgird (master-student) centres in Tajikistan including the Academy of Maqâm in Dushanbe and the Khunar ("Talent") Centre in Khujand. In collaboration with Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, it has produced an internationally acclaimed series of Central Asian music recordings, including an album by the Academy of Maqâm that was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2006.

The Network has rehabilitated the city park of Khorog, the administrative and economic capital of the mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan region in Tajikistan. The development of the park and its surrounding urban environment has created a significant public green space and represents a substantial step towards the revitalisation of the city as a whole.

TAJIKISTAN



Aga Khan Development Network

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) works towards the vision of an economically dynamic, politically stable, intellectually vibrant and culturally tolerant Tajikistan. This is achieved by supporting the establishment of programmes and institutions that allow the Government, private sector and civil society to play complementary roles in increasing prosperity and creativity within a pluralistic society.

The Network brings together individual agencies that operate in a range of areas – from economic development, education and rural development to cultural revitalisation, health care and financial services. Together these agencies collaborate towards a common goal – to build institutions and programmes that can respond to the contemporary challenges and opportunities of social, economic and cultural growth in Tajikistan.

Operating in Tajikistan since 1992, AKDN draws on a strong base of experience in

working with mountain societies. It works in all regions of the country and employs over 3,500 people through its operations and investments.

Economic Development

As part of its approach to economic development, AKDN makes long-term investments in Tajikistan in areas where essential infrastructure is lacking. In 2002, the Network and its partners founded the PamirEnergy Company. Under a public-private partnership agreement signed with the Government of Tajikistan, the company is managing the operation of all power generation, transmission and distribution facilities of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBO) for a 25-year concession period.

PamirEnergy has invested more than US\$ 37 million since 2002 to repair electrical infrastructure, expand hydroelectric capacity and establish a metering system in the region.

Following its rehabilitation, over 85 percent of the population of GBAO now has access to electricity and the total capacity of the Pamir 1 hydropower plant has increased to 44 Megawatts (MW), from 33 MW in 2002.

AKDN and its partners launched Indigo Tajikistan in 2001 to help meet the demand for improved service and increased offerings in the country's mobile services industry. In March 2010, Indigo and its sister brand Somoncom were re-branded under the name Tcell.

Today, Tcell is the largest mobile operator in Tajikistan by revenue, with annual figures in excess of US\$ 100 million. It is the second largest by subscriber base, with one-third of the industry market share in 2010. Tcell provides coverage to over 90 percent of the country's population and has set high standards for Tajik telecom companies for customer service and corporate business practices.

Photo credits: AKDN/Jean-Luc Ray, Arata Isozaki & Associates, AKTC/Gary Otte



The Dushanbe Serena is a state of the art, five-star hotel with over 100 units that supports Tajikistan's efforts to become a welcoming tourist destination.



AKDN agencies make a long-term commitment to the areas in which they work. They are guided by the philosophy that a humane, sustainable environment must reflect the choices, made by people themselves, of how to live and improve their prospects in harmony with the surrounding environment. Sustainability is, therefore, a central consideration from the outset.

While each agency pursues its own specific mandate, they all work together within the overarching framework of the Aga Khan Development Network so that their different pursuits can interact and reinforce one another. Their common goal is to help poor communities achieve a level of self-reliance whereby they are able to plan their own livelihoods and help those even more needy than themselves.

Cover Photo: FMFB's loans enable farmers to purchase agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, livestock, farm equipment and other capital investments. With these items, farmers can diversify their crops and achieve more productive yields.

In tourism, the AKDN currently manages a Serena Inn in Khorog and the Dushanbe Serena Hotel, a five-star hotel with over 100 units, which opened its doors to guests in 2011. Through Serena properties, AKDN aims to facilitate Tajikistan's efforts to become a more viable and friendly destination for visitors, ultimately translating into economic development and improved livelihoods.

Social Development

Education

The Aga Khan Lycée (AKL) in Khorog was established by the Network in 1998 as the first privately-operated school in the GBAO region. It provides over 900 students from Grades 1 to 11 with access to a professionally-trained teaching staff and offers education in three language streams: Tajik, Russian and English.

The Aga Khan Humanities Programme (AKHP), founded in 1997 and headquartered in Dushanbe, promotes pluralism in ideas, cultures and people through the development and implementation of innovative humanities curricula based on the cultural traditions of Central Asia. More than 35,000 students at over 30 universities in Central Asia have successfully completed an AKHP course, and over 650 faculty members have completed trainings in teaching methods in humanities.

The University of Central Asia (UCA) was founded by an international treaty and charter in 2000 by the Governments of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan and His Highness the Aga Khan. It was established to offer

an internationally recognised standard of higher education in Central Asia and create knowledgeable, skilled and creative graduates who will contribute leadership, ideas and innovations to the transitioning economies and communities of the region.

Operational since 2006, UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education is Central Asia's first provider of formal, university-based, non-degree educational programmes and offers vocational, professional development and personal improvement opportunities to youth and adults with the mission of fostering economic development. Construction on a UCA campus in Khorog, one of three campuses to be built in Central Asia, is currently in process and is being designed for approximately 1,000 students and 300 faculty members.

AKDN agencies also work with regional Government institutions, such as the Institute for Professional Development, to introduce innovative teaching methods and build relevant education capacities. It is currently developing an early childhood development strategy for GBAO that aims to provide children six years of age and younger enriching experiences before they reach primary school in order to maximise their learning potential thereafter.

Health

AKDN is working towards the sustained improvement in the health status of communities in Tajikistan, 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.

AKDN initiatives in health care have included the training of over 900 Community Health Promoters across Tajikistan to educate and support communities on various health issues; the creation of a Revolving Drug Fund as part of a programme to sustainably provide quality and affordable pharmaceuticals to some of the most remote parts of the country; development of a national Nursing curriculum in partnership with the World Health Organization; initiation of a community-based health financing scheme; and the rehabilitation of hospital and medical infrastructure.

Rural Development

Through the Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (MSDSP) of the Aga Khan Foundation, AKDN currently implements rural development throughout Tajikistan.

MSDSP facilitates the creation of Village Organisations (VOs) as the conduit for its programme activities, which it then supports with training, capacity building and community development funds. To date, MSDSP has supported over 1,400 VOs and nearly 100 VO Unions, with a total of over 140,000 village members, of which over 40 percent are women.

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. The programme also supports entrepreneurs with a wide range of integrated offerings, from technical training on production to advice on marketing, business regulations and financial services.

MSDSP also supports the construction and rehabilitation of economic and social infrastructure. It has completed work on over 2,500 projects, totalling approximately US\$ 16 million in investments.

Financial Services

The First MicroFinance Bank of Tajikistan (FMFB) was established in 2003 as the first fully licensed commercial bank in Tajikistan to have a principal focus on micro-credit lending. The Bank currently has branches in Dushanbe, Khorog, Rasht, Khujand, Kulyab and Kurgan Tube which are supported by a network of banking centres serving peri-urban and rural areas. Its objectives include reducing poverty, decreasing the vulnerability of poor populations and alleviating economic and social exclusion.

As of December 2010, FMFB had a total loan portfolio in excess of US\$ 25 million and a client base of over 12,000 people, over 25 percent of whom were female. FMFB's average loan size is about US\$ 2,500 with a repayment rate of over 99 percent.

Infrastructure

AKDN has built and rehabilitated four bridges over the Pyanj River at Tem,

"The problems of Central Asia are remarkably complex – their causes are multiple and defiantly inter-tangled. Progress requires a multi-faceted and multi-input approach... The learning curve is steep and there should be a sense of urgency – for all of us – and all the more so, because solutions can be elusive."

I have come to know the Central Asian peoples and their dreams and aspirations. I know of their proud entrepreneurial spirit – often manifested at the village and household level. It is critical – even as we plan for development at the 'macro' level – that we also build at the 'micro' level."

– Speech by His Highness the Aga Khan at the Conference on Central Asia and Europe: A New Economic Partnership for the 21st Century, Berlin, 13 November 2007.



When opened, the University of Central Asia campus in Khorog will offer a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programmes at an internationally recognised standard.