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# AKDN

AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Winter Newsletter: *Pakistan edition*



## Honorable President of Pakistan visits Altit Fort

**26 October 2018:** The Honorable President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi, during his visit to Gilgit-Baltistan, visited Altit Fort with his family. He was welcomed by Salman Beg, CEO, Aga Khan Cultural Service-Pakistan (AKCS-P) who briefed the President about AKCS-P's role in preserving historic monuments, indigenous values and introducing contemporary living standards through an inclusive development process. The Honorable President also visited CIQAM's workshop where the Manager, Aqeela Bano, gave him an

overview of the enterprise which has evolved into an environment-friendly entity training women in various crafts such as topographic and building surveys, carpentry, and plumbing. The Honorable President appreciated the interventions undertaken by AKCS-P and was pleased to find out that their projects had won UNESCO awards. He was grateful for the generous financial contribution by Norway and made a note to thank the Norwegian Government for their support in preserving the cultural heritage of the region. The Honorable President also attended a music performance by students at the Leif Larsen Music Centre.



*Aqeela Bano, Manager CIQAM (left), gives the Honorable President an overview of the enterprise*

Community members, whilst interacting with the President, appreciated the efforts of AKCS-P and the role the Aga Khan Development Network has played in empowering the women of surrounding communities by engaging them in economic activities. The President was gifted various publications of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and a locally made sitar (musical instrument). In his comments in the Altit Fort Visitors book, he wrote: "I enjoyed visiting the Altit Fort and am very impressed by the fact that the surroundings and houses have been restored so that our heritage is taken forward to next generations. Very impressed at the role of women in all activities. It is a pleasure to see a consciousness to preserve heritage and though I am concerned regarding development of tourism, I am sure it will be done in a responsible manner."



*The Honorable President amongst community members during his visit*

## Closing ceremony event: achievements of Satpara Development Project (SDP) lauded

**26 November 2018:** Dignitaries and officials from the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan, Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan (AKF(Pak)) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) gathered at the Serena Hotel Islamabad to commemorate the successful completion of the Satpara Development Project (SDP). Funded by USAID and implemented by AKF(Pak) and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP), SDP, which began in 2012, has benefitted 8,500 households. Key interventions under the project included the construction of irrigation channels; establishing Water User Associations, Farmers' Organizations and Farmers Enterprise Groups (FEGs); and setting up an extensive network of orchards, vegetable farms, nurseries, greenhouses, and fruit processing and dehydration units.

When asked about the project, Akbar Hussain, a beneficiary of SDP said: “I used to run a small dry fruit shop in Skardu. I saw an advertisement in the newspaper which stated that a fruit processing facility and training will be provided to interested individuals. I applied and got selected. AKRSP, under SDP, set me up with a fruit processing unit. They took me on exposure visits where they trained me, I started buying raw material from FEGs. Processing of fruits became easier for us because of the facility. Now we are thinking out of the box and developing an array of unique products for market consumption.”

The project also had an important impact on government policy: AKF, AKRSP, and government officials worked together to take lessons from SDP and apply them to Gilgit-Baltistan’s first-ever Agriculture and Livestock policies. Furthermore, the water management model pioneered under SDP led to the formulation of a Water Act and business plan for the region.



*Officials from the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan, along with representatives from USAID and AKDN leadership, came together to celebrate the completion of SDP*

The Chief Guest of the ceremony, Haji Akbar Taban, Senior Minister Water and Power, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan, and the Guest of Honor, Fida Mohammad Nashad, Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly, lauded the efforts of AKF(Pak) and USAID towards improving irrigation practices, enhancing productivity and providing policy support to the government. They expressed a commitment to replicate the interventions under SDP to ensure food security, improve nutrition and enhance livelihoods of local communities. Jeffery Goebel, Director Economic Growth and Agriculture, USAID expressed hope that the interventions undertaken would transform horticulture practices and livestock development. Other notable speakers at the ceremony included Mr. Iqbal Walji, Chairman National Committee AKF(Pak); Sajjad Haider, Secretary Agriculture, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan; Irshad Khan Abbasi, Director Rural Development, Civil Society and Habitat AKF(Pak); and Melad UI Karim, Chief of Party for SDP. Beneficiaries from the project area also shared their experiences with the audience. As a token of appreciation for their efforts, shields were distributed amongst project staff, beneficiaries and relevant officials from USAID.

## Talha, the community librarian of Garam Chashma

*By Dr. Sughra Choudhry Khan and Dr. Rafat Nabi, AKF(Pak)*

Our four-wheeler approached a settlement on the dusty and bumpy road on our wayback from Garam Chashma to Chitral. Suddenly we saw young children in uniform, their faces and eyes lit up with enthusiasm as they held books on their way home - some were actually reading!

We were told that these eye-catching scenes were a result of a library set up in a veterinary shop with assistance from the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) Professional Development Centre Chitral (PDCC) under the Aga Khan Foundation,



*Talha, issuing books to school girls at his shop in Garam Chashma*

Pakistan's (AKF(Pak)) School Improvement Programme. A library in a shop? How can that be? With heightened curiosity, we entered the shop. The owner of the shop, Talha, ushered us in; two other customers were reading books while waiting for him. Talha was busy issuing story books to a group of bubbly students while some boys and girls were busy in an animated conversation about which book to borrow. A little boy was pulling his elder sister's kurta (shirt) asking her to show him the pictures in the book she was reading.

Talha's shop library offers a wonderful platform to students, senior citizens, youth, out of school children, bus drivers and many more in the community to access story books. The children were especially enjoying selecting and reading story books, and entering the world of curiosity and imagination. Talha's shop library in remote Garam Chashma shows how just a few hundred books have started to create a reading culture here. Talha, serving his community, has become a beacon of light and an inspiration to others. In Chitral, there are currently 21 shop libraries with more to come.



*A school girl carrying story books borrowed from Talha's shop*

*"Zaranum ho tu ye mitti bohat zarkhaiz hay saqi"*

Translation: "A little rain and harvests shall wave at last, oh Saqi" (Poet Iqbal)

## Serena Hotels wins Employer of Choice for Gender Balance award

**17 December 2018:** Serena Hotels became the proud recipient of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) Employer of Choice for Gender Balance Awards 2018. Serena was selected based on key quantifiable objectives that measure the company's progress with respect to gender diversity. In the case of Serena, these included: employing 12% more female staff in comparison with the previous year; participation of Aziz Boolani, CEO, Serena Hotels, in the Male Champion of Change Pakistan programme that unites male corporate leaders in encouraging



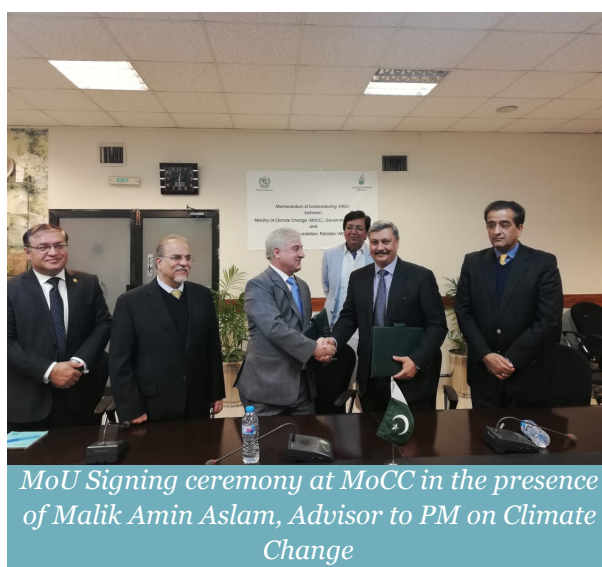
*Female associates of Serena Hotels celebrating the award along with Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels*

women's participation at all levels of employment; capacity building of potential female associates to take up leadership roles; sponsoring a National, Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) training program where 24 women were trained with hospitality operations skills and knowledge; and Karighar, Serena Hotels' CSR initiative, which has trained around 70 women in local crafts and honey processing making them financially secure. Karighar merchandise is being sold at Serena Hotels and used as giveaways. The affirmation of Serena Hotels' efforts to reduce the gender gap at work place and the community level comes at a time when Pakistan has ranked second to last on the World Economic Forum's "Global Gender Gap Report 2018".

Serena Hotels has made a commitment to mainstream gender across all tiers of the organization in appreciation of the fact that unequal access to resources and opportunities has economic and social costs not just for women but also for children and the economy at large. Ensuring a work environment that is supportive and equitable for women not only empowers them economically but also benefits the company.

## MoCC and AFK(Pak) sign MoU to safeguard livelihoods

**28 December 2018:** The Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan (AKF(Pak)) and the Federal Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) signed an MoU in which they pledged to work together on safeguarding the livelihoods of people living in rural areas, especially in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. The MoU will enable AKF(Pak) and MoCC to synergize their efforts in addressing the challenges posed by climate change in rural areas through policy support and joint resource mobilization towards knowledge sharing, research, and capacity building. The MoU was signed by Shahrukh Nusrat, Secretary, MoCC, and Akhtar Iqbal, CEO, AKF(Pak).



The signing ceremony was attended by Malik Amin Aslam, Advisor to Prime Minister on Climate Change; Babar Hayat Tarar, Additional Secretary, MoCC; Irfan Tariq, Director General Environment; Syed Mahmood Nasir, Inspector General Forests; Iqbal Walji, Chairman National Committee AKF(Pak); Muzaffar Ud Din, General Manager, Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP); and Irshad Khan Abbasi, Director Rural Development, Civil Society & Habitat, AKF(Pak). As a result of the growing partnership between MoCC and AKF(Pak), AKRSP has submitted two PC-1's to MoCC relating to the Prime Minister's 10 Billion Tree Tsunami plantation drive and Clean Energy Development in the climate-sensitive regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

## AKES,P gets a new school campus in Hunza

**9 September 2018:** The Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan (AKES,P) has a new school campus in Murtaza Abad, Gilgit-Baltistan. Previously known as the Al-Murtaza Academy, the school was taken over by AKES,P at the request of the Al-Murtaza Educational and Social Welfare Organization (AMWESO). The state-of-the-art campus, with 13 classrooms, a library, science and ICT laboratories, was built by Mrs Diana MacArthur, in memory of her late daughter Elisabeth “Leeza” Tschursin, who having completed her university degree in the United States, travelled to Hunza and taught science at what was then a small, private school.



*Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Minister for Public Works in Gilgit-Baltistan and President Hafiz presenting a shield to Mrs. MacArthur*

Speaking at the ceremony to transfer the school, the Chief Guest, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Minister for Public Works, Gilgit-Baltistan, welcomed the addition of a world-class school in the region and lauded the hard work and determination of Mrs. MacArthur. Imtiaz Momin, CEO AKES,P, expressed his gratitude to AMWESO for entrusting the school to AKES,P and for recognizing the contribution made by the Aga Khan education model. He also spoke about the Aga Khan’s vision for education and its transformative role in the lives of individuals and



*A teacher at AKS Murtaza Abad interacting with students*

communities. Mrs. MacArthur also addressed the gathering, saying, “The students are inspired to learn and thrilled to know that this beautiful, safe building and grounds were meant for them.” She expressed satisfaction with the school’s affiliation with the Aga Khan University Examination Board. Other guests at the ceremony included Naem Uddin, President, AMESWO; Hafiz Sherali, President Ismaili National Council Pakistan; officials from AKES,P and sister AKDN agencies; and leaders from the Ismaili community.

## MoU signed between AKHS,P and Population Welfare Department, Sindh

**8 October 2018:** The Aga Khan Health Service, Pakistan (AKHS,P) and the Population Welfare Department, Sindh, signed an MoU focusing on the supply of contraceptives and pledged to collaborate for the promotion of reproductive healthcare and family planning. The purpose of the MoU is to expand the coverage of family planning services through the private sector, while the Population Welfare Department will provide free of cost contraceptive commodities to 16 family,

maternal and child health centres. As outlined by the MoU, AKHS,P will provide health services through 16 centres in districts Sujawal, Thatta, Hyderabad, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allhayar, Badin and Matairi. The MoU was signed at the office of the Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Government of Sindh by Abdul Rahim Amwani, AKHS,P's Acting In-charge of Sindh Community Program and Allahdino Ansari, Director of Public Private Sector Organization (PPSO), Population Welfare Department, Sindh. High level officials present included Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, Minister for Health and Population, Government of Sindh, and Laeeq Ahmed Khan, Secretary Population Welfare Department, Government of Sindh. Dr. Azra appreciated the role of the private sector in providing better health facilities and emphasized the need for creating awareness about the importance of reproductive healthcare.



*Exchanging signed MoUs in the presence of Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, Provincial Minister of Health and Population, Sindh*

## AKAH,P celebrates DRR week across Pakistan

**8 October 2018:** The high frequency of natural disasters in Pakistan, particularly in the mountainous north, has displaced thousands of people, affected community livelihoods, and destroyed public and private infrastructure resulting in massive economic losses. To stress the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, Pakistan (AKAH,P) celebrated DRR Week across Pakistan from 8th to 13th October 2018. The celebrations were aligned with Pakistan's National Disaster Awareness Day celebrated on 8th October, and the International Day for Disaster Reduction celebrated worldwide on 13th October.



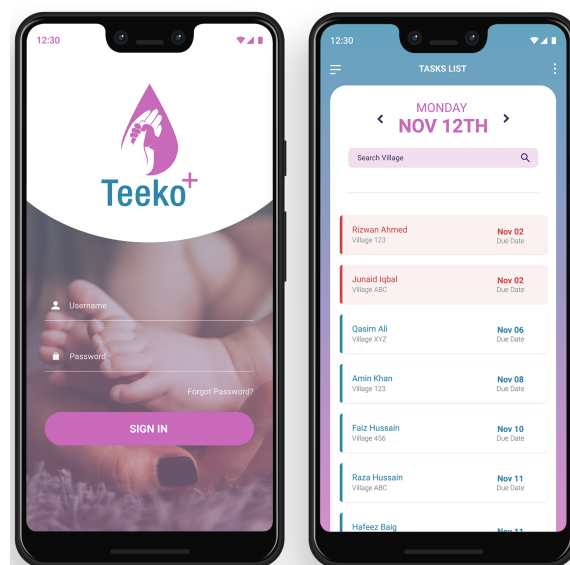
*Representatives of government institutions, disaster management authorities and students holding play cards to highlight importance of DRR day*

The celebrations included activities like awareness raising sessions for rural and urban communities, seminars, speech competitions, transect walks and scenario-based drills for students from various schools, colleges and universities on disaster preparedness. In addition, it engaged with relevant government departments to strengthen institutional coordination when responding to disaster situations. AKAH,P used these events as a platform to reaffirm that losses from natural disasters can be reduced if there are strong institutional mechanisms and communal systems in place. The efforts draw on AKAH,P's legacy of community-driven humanitarian initiatives in Pakistan since 1998.

## Transforming routine immunization

**19 December 2018:** Teeko, a mobile application and health portal developed by the Aga Khan Development Network's Digital Health Resource Centre (AKDN eHRC), will be scaled up to 23 health facilities in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral in Pakistan and seven health facilities in the provinces of Badakhshan and Bamyan in Afghanistan in 2019. The scale-up, called Teeko+, is supported in funding by Grand Challenges Canada and Aga Khan Foundation Canada.

In 2014-2016, Teeko was piloted in Tando Mohammad Khan district, in Sindh, to assist with vaccinator and immunization tracking and monitoring. The pilot delivered a tripling in coverage rates for key vaccines, enhanced the performance and accountability of healthcare officials, and boosted access to essential mother and child health services. As a result of the successful pilot, the government adopted the source code of Teeko into a new application which will be available in every public health facility in Sindh. The app provides real-time data on a vaccinator's field movements and the number of children being immunized. It is used by health workers during community visits, while the web portal is used by district health officers and supervisory staff. Data about the health system's performance is shared with policymakers and government officials through the app's web portal to strengthen immunization programs through increased transparency, accountability and improved governance. "This application represents an accurate, low-cost and efficient way to track and strengthen the performance of an area's health facilities," said Saleem Sayani, Director AKDN eHRC.



*Teeko app interface*

## AKU-IED wins grants to study social capabilities and life skills of secondary school students

The Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) has won a research grant of PKR 3.7 million to explore the social capabilities and life skills of secondary school students in Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. The study is funded by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan through its National Research Program for Universities. The research study will include 2500 respondents from 60 schools in three regions over three years. Using a mixed-method study (quantitative and qualitative), key stakeholders including students, teachers, school leaders, and parents or community members will be participating in the study. The study will identify the levels of students' social capabilities in public and private schools and determine how these skills and capabilities are linked with educational arrangements in the schools. The findings will help in generating indigenous knowledge to identify and understand issues related to secondary education in Pakistan, enhancing understanding of the social gains achieved, in terms of social capabilities and life skills of students, by educational investment.



The insight will catalyze efforts to reform policy and practice of secondary education with focusing on curriculum, teacher education, accountability, financial allocation, and school organization.

## High level government delegation visits AKHS,P facilities in Chitral

**21 December 2018:** A high level delegation made up of members of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), led by Naveed Kamran Baloch, Chief Secretary, KP, visited the Aga Khan Medical Centre Booni, District Headquarters Hospital Chitral, Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Booni, and two hospitals operating under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP): the Rural Health Centre, Shagram, and Tehsil Headquarters Hospital, Garam Chashma.

The purpose of the visit was to observe the existing services and resources available at the facilities and to explore future collaboration between the Department of Health and Aga Khan Health Service, Pakistan (AKHS,P). The government's delegation included Dr. Shehzad Khan Bangash, Additional Chief Secretary; Mr. Syed Zaheer Ul Islam, Commissioner Malakand; Dr Syed Farooq Jamil, Secretary Health; and Dr Shahid Younis, Chief, Health Sector Reforms Support Unit (HSRU). The feedback of the visiting delegation was positive, and its members appreciated AKHS,P's services in the PPP-run facilities. The PPP model has proven to be an effective means for governments to improve operations of and expand access to public health services, leverage private investment for the benefit of public services, formalize arrangements with non-profit partners who deliver an important share of public services, and provide partnership opportunities as private healthcare sector matures.



*From L to R: Dr. Ijaz Ahmad, Deputy Director SHPI; Dr. Mohammad Riaz Tanoli, Director SHPI; Dr. Zafar Ahmed, Head of Community Health & Government Relations AKHS,P; Mr. Naveed Kamran Baloch, Chief Secretary KP; and Syed Nadeem Husain Abbas, CEO AKHS,P*

## AKAH,P provides quality solar energy products to communities in northern Pakistan

In line with global efforts to prioritize renewable energy sources, the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, Pakistan (AKAH,P) is working with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) under its 'Lighting Pakistan' initiative to improve access to affordable solar energy products in Pakistan. The initiative is designed to bridge the gap in Pakistan's energy woes, particularly for communities living in mountain areas of northern Pakistan who suffer due prolonged load shedding and spend a considerable amount of their income on candles, kerosene oil and other

arrangements for temporary lightning. Through a chain of Local Support Organizations (LSOs) and local vendors, the project has already sold solar energy products to over 500 households, many of which have seen a drastic improvement in their quality of life.

Wali Ahmed, a resident of Gilgit said: “Using solar products has affected our life in many ways: our children can study with ease at night, our expenditure on lightening has reduced, and I am also able to pursue my small-scale business with constant supply of electricity”. The project aligns with AKAH,P’s

efforts under it’s internationally recognized Building and Construction Program (BACIP) which has provided energy efficiency products to more than 40,000 households over the last two decades. The project also builds on AKAH’s contribution in the installation of a 400 kilowatt solar plant in the recently constructed Bamyán Provincial Hospital in Afghanistan. Moving forward, AKAH,P aims to continue its efforts in promoting solar energy products as a viable energy solution, and lighting up the lives of low-income households across Pakistan.



*A portable solar pannel mounted in Ghizer to generate light*

*Dear Readers,*

*Thank you for taking the time to learn about AKDN's work in Pakistan. If you have any questions about the articles, please contact Maria Hayat Khan, Programme Officer Partnerships, AKF Pakistan, at [maria.khan@akdn.org](mailto:maria.khan@akdn.org).*

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*Please look for the next volume of the AKDN Newsletter in Spring 2019. For more information, visit our website: [www.akdn.org/Pakistan](http://www.akdn.org/Pakistan)*