



**Aga Khan Agency for Habitat and Tajikistan partner
To open an urban planning and design lab**



Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 19 August 2021 - The Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) signed a strategic partnership agreement with the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan's Committee of Architecture and Construction that will include measures for increased hazard mitigation, strategic densification and climate change adaptation for a city of 31,000 residents.

A key component of the agreement will be to update the 2010 Khorog Town Plan to include resilience components, part of a collaboration between the Committee of Architecture, UN-Habitat, AKAH and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

The Resilient Khorog Town Plan will be linked to an investment plan, leading to increased economic growth for the city as the population is expected to double over the next 20 years. The aim is to provide a model for resilient town plans in high mountain settlements, which can be replicated across Tajikistan, or in other parts of Central Asia.

The collaboration will support the Committee of Architecture in the areas of sustainable urban planning, resilience projects and rural planning. The Agreement is signed under the Khorog Urban Resilience Programme, a five-year partnership between the Government of Tajikistan, the international community and the people of Khorog to build long-term resilience for Khorog and for the people of Tajikistan.

Further areas of collaboration include capacity building to develop the technical expertise for modern, sustainable and resilient town planning, including tools for city action and resilience planning. AKAH and SECO are supporting with software and hardware for town plan development; city financial planning; demographic capacity assessments; planning for climate change adaptation for cities; and green construction processes. AKAH and the Committee of Architecture are collaborating on the "My Vision for Khorog" Competition, designed to gather community views on the development for the next 30 years, as Tajikistan celebrates the 30th anniversary of independence this year.

Welcoming the partnership, the Chairman for the Committee of Architecture and Construction, noted: "Tajikistan has a long history of urban planning. We are honoured to have partners like AKAH and the Government of Switzerland who are willing to share their knowledge, technical

expertise and support to address some of the challenges facing Tajikistan. We look forward to fruitful collaboration.”

Richard Chenevard, Deputy Director of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Tajikistan noted: "The Khorog Urban Resilience Programme is a very ambitious endeavour not only because of its intrinsic complexity but also because it aims at defining very long-term objectives. It prepares the future with and for the people involving experts and highly dedicated partners at government, oblast and city level. Switzerland, through its State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), is proud for being part of this challenging journey and looks forward to this renewed long-term relationship with Khorog and with the Republic of Tajikistan.”

Hadi Husani, the CEO of the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat applauded the historic partnership, noting that urbanisation is increasing, and “this brings great potential for climate friendly economic development for greater economic growth. However, with the growing impact of climate change and natural hazards, resilient urban planning is even more important than before. With the support of the Committee of Architecture and Construction, the Government of Tajikistan and the strong partnership with the Government of Switzerland, we will transform Khorog, and other towns in Tajikistan into resilient cities, improving the quality of life for future generations”.

For further information, please contact: AKAH Communications at akahcommunications@akdn.org

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About the Khorog Urban Resilience Programme (KURP): KURP is a five-year initiative designed to set up the structures, systems and capacity to transform Khorog into a model resilient city, promoting sustainable economic growth and investment. The programme links the Government of Tajikistan structures, planning and investments to initiatives by the community and national and international partners to build resilience and plan for opportunity for Khorog. Anchor funding is provided by the Economic Cooperation and Development Division of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), with co-funding from the agencies of the AKDN, the European Union and the Embassy of Japan. KURP is implemented by the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, with support from the Aga Khan Foundation

About the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat: The Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) works to ensure that people live in physical settings that are as safe as possible from the effects of climate change and natural disasters; that those who live in high-risk areas are prepared to cope with and respond to disasters; and that these settings have access to basic services providing opportunities for a better quality of life. AKAH aims to help communities living on the frontlines of climate change -- particularly in high mountains or urban centres -- adapt and thrive by building resilient habitats and reducing emissions. Established in 2015, AKAH combines several agencies and programs of the AKDN that had been operational since the 1990s in South and Central Asia, including Focus Humanitarian Assistance, the Aga Khan Planning and Building Services, the Disaster Risk Management Initiative and the Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Fund for the Environment. AKAH’s countries of operation include Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Syria, Pakistan and India. Read more about the agency at <http://www.akdn.org/our-agencies/aga-khan-agency-habitat>

About the Swiss Cooperation in Tajikistan: The Swiss Cooperation Office in Tajikistan represents the Swiss Government and supervises Swiss funded projects implemented in Tajikistan. There are actually f two Swiss Federal Agencies working in Tajikistan namely –

the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). Switzerland funds projects in the following domains: Water, infrastructure and climate change; Governance and Institution buildings; Employment and economic development; In addition, the Swiss Cooperation in Tajikistan promotes arts and culture through its Regional Arts and Culture Programme and supports small project proposals from local organisations.

Read online: <https://www.akdn.org/press-release/aga-khan-agency-habitat-and-tajikistan-partner-open-urban-planning-and-design-lab>