

Aga Khan Foundation, Tajikistan

Annual Report 2020



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION

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Introduction

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is a group of 10 private, non-denominational development agencies that work collectively to help communities, primarily in the poorest parts of Asia and Africa, become self-reliant and improve their quality of life. AKDN agencies conduct their programmes without regard to faith or origin and have over five decades of experience supporting integrated economic, social, and cultural development. A central feature of AKDN's approach is that successful development occurs when a continuum of development activities offers people in a given area not only a rise in income, but a broad, sustained improvement in the overall quality of life.

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) brings together human, financial and technical resources to address some of the challenges faced by the poorest and most marginalised communities in the world. Established in 1967, AKF is a private, not-for-profit international development agency working in 19 countries. Special emphasis is placed on investing in human potential, expanding opportunity and improving the overall quality of life, especially for women and girls. It works primarily in six areas: Agriculture and Food Security, Economic Inclusion, Education, Early Childhood Development, Health and Nutrition, and Civil Society.



AKF in Tajikistan

AKF Tajikistan began activities in 1993, when it mounted a humanitarian response to acute food shortages in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent civil war. The Foundation is characterised by its hallmark long-term commitment and community-driven approach. It has become a leader in implementing high-quality interventions to improve quality of life. AKF is one of Tajikistan's most trusted and effective socio-economic development partners, supporting Tajikistan in the realization of its National Development Strategy objectives and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. AKF's programmes cover a broad geographical area encompassing 36 districts in all four regions – GBAO, Khatlon, Districts of Republican Subordination (Rasht Valley) and Sughd – reaching approximately 1.9 million people.

AKF implements its programming through its trusted development partners, including AKDN sister agencies and local and international development actors.

THE MOUNTAIN SOCIETIES DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME (MSDSP) is an implementing arm of AKF, established in 1993. MSDSP's practical mission is to contribute to the improvement of quality of life in rural Tajikistan, founded on good governance and improved public and private services.

ACCELERATE PROSPERITY (AP) was established in 2016 as a joint initiative of AKF and the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development. Its mission is to inspire rising entrepreneurs in emerging regions to grow new markets, create sustainable employment, and strengthen communities.

The AGA KHAN AGENCY FOR HABITAT (AKAH) Tajikistan builds self-reliance and resilience, expands opportunity, and improves the quality of life for communities of all faiths, backgrounds, and origins. Its domain includes emergency response and humanitarian relief efforts, disaster preparedness and risk management, safe and sustainable habitats, and environmental stewardship and climate change adaptation.

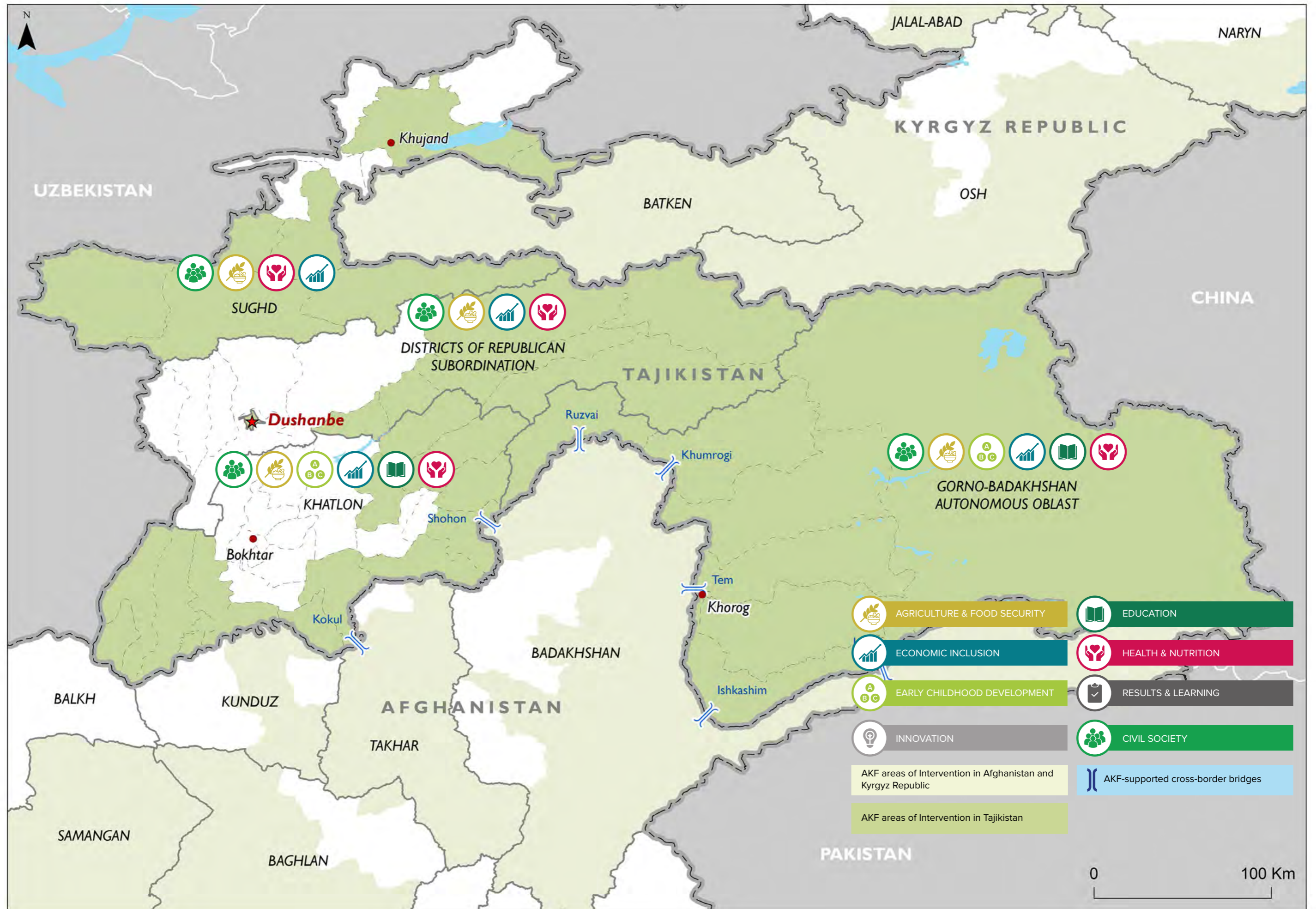
AGA KHAN EDUCATION SERVICES participates in the direct provision of quality education to children aged 3 to 18 years, facilitating the professional development of teachers, working collaboratively with government education institutions to support access in remote and rural areas, and providing merit scholarships to students from diverse backgrounds.

AGA KHAN HEALTH SERVICES has helped to transform Tajikistan's health services towards decentralized, family medicine-driven care and community health interventions. It implements a wide range of private and community-based health programming and aligns its activities closely with the National Health Strategy of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ASIA is a private, not-for-profit, secular university established in 2000. UCA promotes the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain communities, by offering an internationally-recognised standard of higher education and enabling the peoples of the region to preserve their rich cultural heritage as assets for the future.

PAMIR ENERGY was formed in 2002 as the first Public-Private Partnership in Tajikistan. The company was awarded a 25-year Concession Agreement by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, under which it provides electricity to about 230,000 people across GBAO (96 percent of the population). Its projects under implementation will achieve 100 percent electrification by 2023, as well as providing electricity to over 50,000 people in the Badakhshan Province of Afghanistan.

Geographic Coverage



Civil Society

AKDN's experience in grassroots poverty alleviation has indicated that community-based civil society structures are the foundation of development.

AKF aims to develop resilient, values-based civil societies which demonstrate greater competency, legitimacy, accountability and sustainability.



GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

AKF establishes, strengthens and partners with mahalla committees and other community-based entities to implement the inclusive, efficient, transparent and accountable governance of development activities. To build the capacity of these grassroots civil society entities, AKF trains them on topics such as development planning, book-keeping, project implementation, fundraising and financial management.

AKF promotes the equal participation of women and men in community organisations and encourages women to take leadership roles. AKF ensures that there is at least one woman in one of the three leadership positions in the mahalla committees it supports. AKF also supports the women's affairs' subcommittees of the mahalla committees, which address the specific development issues in areas such as health, education and economic empowerment that women face.

Working with partners such as the Association of Tajik NGOs, AKF facilitates consultations and forum discussions between civil society actors.

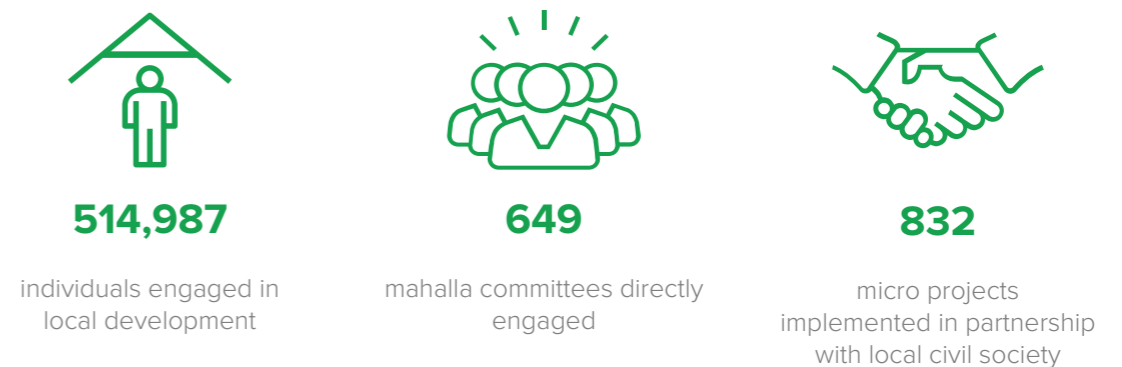
FACILITATING GOVERNMENT-CIVIL SOCIETY RELATIONS

AKF believes that one of the keys to progress and development is joint cooperation between the government, civil society and the private sector. Therefore, AKF has supported the regional governments in the drafting of their mid-term development plans (2021-2025), by ensuring that

the priorities of development partners and other stakeholders are integrated in the plans. AKF Tajikistan has supported the regional governments of Khatlon and GBAO with equipment to complete the drafting of the plans by December 2020. As well, AKF financed the analysis and guided the process of development planning with the regional economic development and trade departments. AKF supported a joint stakeholders' meeting where representatives of the government, non-government and private sectors discussed and revised the draft plans prior to their presentation to the people's representatives for approval.



IN THE LAST TWO YEARS (2019-2020) ...



PROMOTING VOLUNTEER WORK

AKF promotes volunteer work among community members to mobilize local resources and energy that build community resilience and enables them to respond in a timely way to threats, shocks and stresses as well as to engage in development interventions. The GBAO Regional Volunteer Forum initiated in October 2020 and supported by AKF in cooperation with the National Council and local governments, brought together civil society representatives, community groups, local governments and AKDN agencies. One of its areas of focus was to share community best practices in the COVID-19 response with local governments.

Another was to recognize the active participation of women and girls in community affairs- an emerging area for gender mainstreaming.

A joint resolution on strengthening cooperation between civil society, government and the private sector was made and shared with the local government of GBAO for endorsement.

POLICY ADVOCACY

AKF works alongside the National Parliament's Committee on Local Development, public associations and the media to review current laws with civil society organisations and other stakeholders, propose amendments and discuss other possible solutions. For example, AKF and the Committee on Local Development facilitated policy discussions on the Public Self Initiative Bodies Law of the Republic of Tajikistan (PSIB). The meeting brought together representatives of mahalla committees, public organisations, sub-districts and districts heads, town and regional governments, and members of the National Parliament. Participants shared their experiences on the implementation of the PSIB law at the mahalla committee level. Challenges such as the consistency of the PSIB Law with the Law on Public Associations, communities' control over community resources, and strengthening mahalla committees by granting them more authority were discussed. After this meeting, the participants presented recommendations for improving the PSIB Law to National Parliament, while members of Parliament presented possible amendments to the PSIB Law.



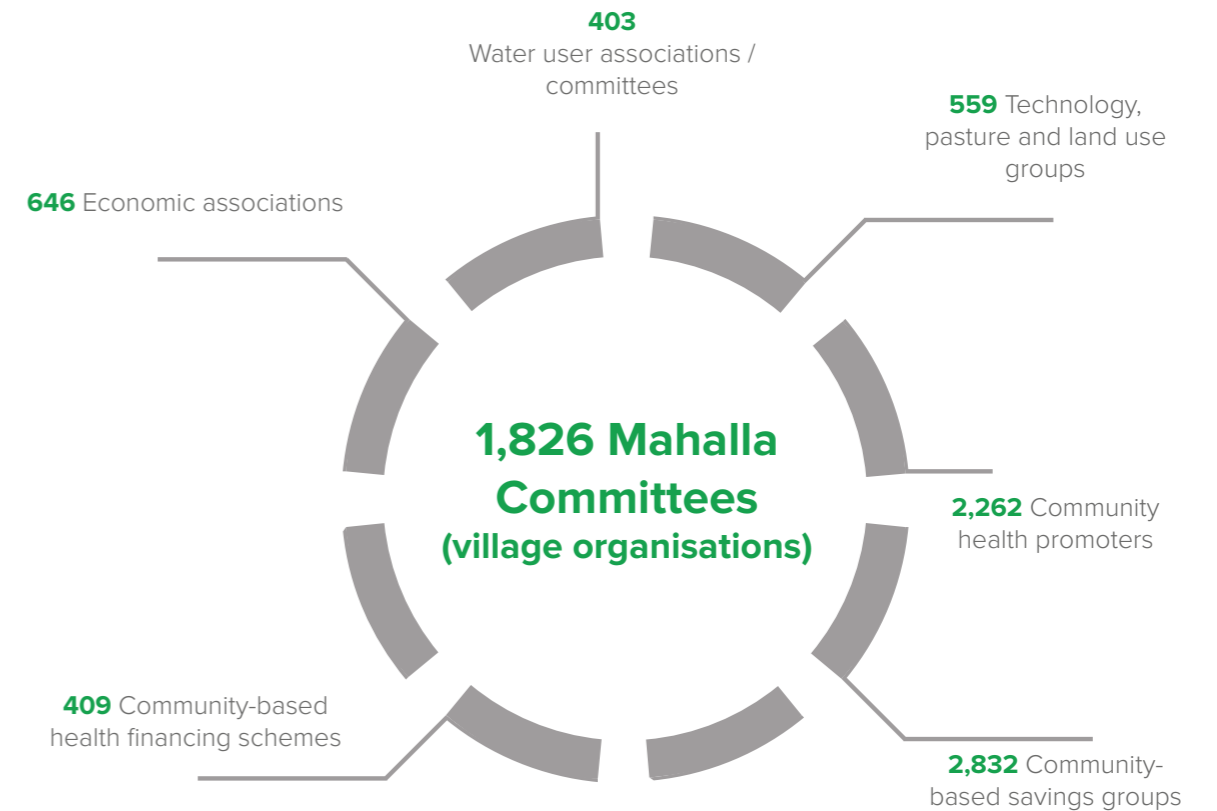
INNOVATION AND ACCELERATION

AKF Tajikistan capacitated the regional team of MSDSP on the use of the human-centred design (HCD) approach as part of the Accelerate Impact Initiative. The approach is an innovative process of solution generation for the challenges that communities face through the active participation of communities themselves. In 2020, HCD was embedded within various projects in AKF Tajikistan.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

AKF empowers all segments of the community – women, men, youth and the elderly – to participate meaningfully in local decision-making processes. AKF supports village development planning workshops for communities to identify their key priorities through a participatory process involving the most marginalised members of communities. AKF connects the demand and supply of governance by creating interfaces between citizens, mahalla committees, and local government to align public resources around community priorities and needs.

AKF-supported Community-based Organisations: 1993-2020



Community mobilization and mobilization of local resources have played a vital preventative role in rural areas during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Common interest groups (CIGs) have emerged from community-based saving groups and mahalla committees, all of which MSDSP has supported through introducing the organizational models and building governance capacity. CIGs help their members, small and micro enterprises, to pool knowledge and

resources, and members also engage in volunteerism and meaningful participation in community affairs through CIGs. The CIG “Kibriyo” has set up a centre where members sew clothes for women, sew locally designed “Chakan” Tajik traditional dresses and prepare wedding blankets and mattresses. In April 2020, the shortage of antiseptics and face masks was severe in Tajikistan after the COVID-19 outbreak and Rasht valley was not an exception.

The masks were made available through chemists/pharmacies, educational facilities, and other related agencies. The regional government expressed their gratitude to the CIG Kibriyo during the appreciation ceremonies for those who contributed and supported the regional government through awareness raising and preventative measures for COVID-19.



Kibriyo, the head of the CIG, states:

“The schoolchildren were the first to come to me and ask if I would make masks for them. I had some savings and even though I knew that making masks is not difficult, I did not do it earlier and had been worrying [about it]. I was also curious to what extent I could make use of the materials (fabrics) that were available to me at that time. We turned to MSDSP Rasht and we five CIGs of the Rasht region were invited to MSDSP’s office where we watched a video lesson on the preparation of the face masks. The working group that consisted of MSDSP, AKHS, representatives of the sanitation and epidemiological centres, a market specialist and the five CIGs chose the most appropriate material for the face masks.

We were also supported in the beginning to get materials and we soon started preparing and selling the face masks. Quickly, the issue of a shortage of face masks was addressed in the Rasht region. Our CIGs started to make an income as well but the most important thing for me was that I feel happy and proud that I have somehow contributed to the prevention of the COVID-19 pandemic even at the regional level”.



Economic Inclusion

AKF seeks to improve the economic wellbeing of women and men, with a focus on youth.

AKF's economic inclusion programming promotes increased incomes and employment opportunities while improving access to financial and business services.

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

AKF's value chain development interventions diversify economic activity and enhance productivity and market integration for thousands of small-scale producers and enterprises. AKF also engages Accelerate Prosperity to promote entrepreneurship and the growth of start-up and early-stage businesses, particularly among women and youth. During 2020, 236 companies went through AP's incubation stage where they were coached on creating a business model, fundamentals of taxation and pitching techniques. AP provided USD 830,242 in funding to 38 projects from various sectors including but not limited to agriculture, textile and commercial services. The invested businesses created a total of 274 new jobs (157 female, 117 male) throughout the country.



FINANCIAL INCLUSION

AKF empowers communities to use community-based savings groups (CBSGs) as a safe and convenient means to save regularly for both emergencies and investments. CBSGs are in wide demand, primarily from women. The CBSG platform assists members to grow income – generating activities and manage household expenses. In Khatlon, 432 CBSGs have been established to date with 7,535 members, 91 percent of whom are women. This is complemented by support for Rushdi Kuhiston, a community-owned micro-loan organisation which provides financing for investments in agriculture and non-farm enterprises as well as for consumer purposes such as education, health and house improvements to borrowers in rural and remote areas where commercial loans are unavailable, and investments are too large for savings groups. During 2020, approximately USD 1.3 million was disbursed for 1,676 clients, out of which 31 percent are women.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

AKF contributes to building the tourism ecosystem in Tajikistan, supporting the Pamirs Eco-Cultural Tourism Association (PECTA) to build the capacity of service providers to deliver quality services to tourists, and to promote Tajikistan as a destination of choice in foreign markets. The economic shock brought by COVID-19 has left millions of people jobless and further destabilized livelihoods. In Tajikistan, the impact of COVID-19 on the emerging tourism industry is felt even more strongly as there are limited economic opportunities, particularly in remote, high mountainous areas. Hotels and hostels have had to close their doors and furlough employees. Livelihoods have been jeopardized and millions of dollars have been lost due to the ongoing pandemic.

IN THE LAST TWO YEARS (2019-2020) ...



2,259

seasonal and temporary jobs created



115

enterprises supported



TJS 33.5 million

disbursed in microfinance loans



2,000

tourists visited Pamir Welcome Centres

EMPLOYABLE SKILLS

AKF provides access to market-oriented skills in vocational and technical trades through direct provision of training and facilitates access to services provided by AKDN agencies. Skills development includes entrepreneurship to encourage self-employment and create new job opportunities.

A sewing group in Nosiri Khusrav district was established through the community-based savings group "Omad" in 2020. It brought together six artisan women. They had previously sewn clothing and made handicrafts in their houses individually. This group gave them an opportunity to work together.

This small sewing workshop was able to achieve significant results in a short period of time, which encouraged them to further develop their activities. MSDSP provided training on the use of sewing machines, new designs and marketing. This training allowed the women to diversify their products and expand their market.

The head of the group, Ms. Ozoda shared her achievements: "We are very happy to have this small sewing workshop, since we did not have the necessary conditions at home before. Today, we have established a separate sewing workshop in the centre of the Jamoat and our customers have already increased. Each of us earns an average of TJS 35-40 per day, which encourages us to develop group businesses. At the same time, we are learning from each other's experience of the intricacies of the sewing profession."

RENEWABLE ENERGY

AKF supported Pamir Energy in the construction of a 450-kilowatt hydropower plant which brings clean, reliable, and affordable electricity - for the first time in almost two decades - to 1,131 people in Bartang Valley, one of the most remote and underserved areas of Tajikistan.

Agriculture and Food Security

AKF aims to ensure tangible food security, agricultural development and natural resource management, with special emphasis on the needs of rural communities in mountainous and resource-poor areas.

By supporting locally adapted interventions, AKF is contributing to better household nutrition and food security, while supporting farmers to adapt to climate change, realise greater economic opportunities and mitigate risks in disaster-prone areas.



The members of a community-based organization (CBO) in Kashkaterak village of Lakhsh district supported 10 local women from poor families to apply for a competition run by MSDSP to fund income generation projects for women and youth to improve their livelihoods. The 10 women received 10 bee boxes as well as necessary equipment, training and on-site mentoring for the efficient maintenance and operation of beehives. After one year, the beneficiaries have been able to generate additional income and significantly improve their livelihoods.



As Ms. Rajabova Oysulu, one of the beneficiaries, reflects:

“I am a housewife and not employed anywhere. My husband works in the Kyrgyz Republic and I live with my son. We have had neither bees nor honey to consume. I have never dealt with beekeeping as well.

In 2018, as a member of a poor family, I became the owner of 10 beehives along with nine other women. During this period, I constantly received mentorship on the effective maintenance of beehives from Ms. Tolipova Kholis - an experienced and qualified woman. This year I have harvested 300 kg of honey, an immense amount I never had before and became motivated. Now, I am intending to increase the number of beehives to harvest more honey next year. In our district, the cost of one kilogramme of honey varies from TJS 35 to TJS 40, and my 300 kg of honey will bring me up to TJS 12,000 income.

I am planning to keep a certain amount of honey for personal use and sell the remaining and use the income to rehabilitate my house and in the future collect money for the wedding ceremony of my son. I think that if I devote myself to this business, I will not have to work elsewhere”.



FARM LIVELIHOODS AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

AKF works to increase crop diversity, yields, quality, and nutritional value; to promote effective agroforestry, water and livestock management; to improve and protect land fertility and expand available farmland through irrigation and better soil management; and to bring technologies and best practices to public institutions, private service providers and rural communities. AKF adapts farming systems to climate change with a focus on new techniques and higher-quality inputs, including identifying appropriate seed varieties and water management innovations. In 2019 and 2020, 8,296 hectares of land were developed and rehabilitated throughout Tajikistan with support from AKF. AKF also catalyses investments in community-prioritised local and cross-border rural infrastructure, including bridges, roads, irrigation systems, and storage facilities.

FINANCING

AKF has set up 137 Agriculture Input Revolving Funds (AIRFs) since 2017, with 17, 684 members- 9,788 women and 7,896 men. AIRFs provide loans to smallholders who own or rent agricultural land in Tajikistan. Members of AIRF decide the interest rate of in-kind loans as well as the way they are to be repaid. Loans are mainly used for (1) high-quality seeds for cultivation or seed-multiplication (2) fertilizers; and (3)

agricultural production tools. They are helping increase productivity in rural areas, improving incomes and reducing poverty.



IN THE LAST TWO YEARS (2019-2020) ...



58,368

farmers supported with agriculture and food security interventions



100

rural infrastructure projects constructed or rehabilitated



38

irrigation canals constructed, upgraded, or rehabilitated

Arsovid is a remote highland village in Kuhistoni Mastchoh district, Sughd Oblast. It is very cold in winter and cool in the summertime. The severe climatic conditions and high-altitude atmosphere make income generation and food security an ongoing challenge. The main occupation of the villagers is potato growing and cattle breeding. As one villager says:

“Although potato is the main crop in the village, due to lack of quality seeds, its productivity and harvest have started to decrease substantially in the last few years. A bulk share of the annual potato yield of 2,500-3,000 kg was of poor quality, triggering many farmers to abandon cultivation of potato altogether.”

At the end of 2017, AKF with its partners, the SAROB cooperative, ACTED, Camp Kuhiston and MSDSP, supported 11 farmers to establish a local Agriculture Producer Group, as well as an Agriculture Input

Revolving Fund (AIRF). In spring 2018, the Producer Group received a total of 2,000 kg of reproductive “Big Rose” potato seeds to improve the quality of potato seed in the village. The harvest that year was excellent, and 4,000 kg of potato seeds were repaid to the AIRF.

Valy Valliev, a 60-year-old resident of the village and Producer Group member, along with 19 family members, received 400 kg seed potato and in the autumn harvested 4,700 kg of potato seeds from 0.10 ha of land. He returned 800 kg of his potato harvest to the mahalla committee on the basis of his contract with the AIRF. This seed was then distributed to another four members of the group. Currently, 59,200 kg of potato seed is under rotation in the village. With the AIRF in place, Mr. Valliev now intends to increase the area under potato production to further improve his family’s quality of life.

Health and Nutrition

AKF aims to enable individuals and communities to optimise their health and wellbeing and reach their full potential through a comprehensive and integrated range of interventions in communities, schools, facilities, and health systems.



SCHOOL HEALTH & NUTRITION

AKF supports teachers and students to incorporate hygiene, sanitation and nutrition into their lessons, lead school-based cooking demonstrations and organize awareness-raising events via school councils.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & NUTRITION

AKF partners with community health promoters, nutrition volunteers and primary healthcare professionals to identify and solve health and nutrition problems among women, adolescents and children and encourage behavioural changes by increasing knowledge and awareness on health and nutrition. The success of AKF's Central Asia Stunting Initiative in reducing severe and moderate malnutrition amongst low birthweight babies has resulted in the Ministry of Health and Social Protection changing its protocols on treatment of malnutrition. In 2020, AKF extended project activities to three new areas of GBAO- Shugnan, Murgab and Khorog- covering more than 50 villages and 38,000 people. The project has now reached 74,870 people in 158 villages.

INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES & SYSTEMS

AKF connects secondary facilities with national and international tertiary health facilities through tele-consultations and e-learning. It has established 239 community-based health financing schemes in GBAO and 15 in Khatlon and has developed systems for continuing professional development of health care professionals.



IN THE LAST TWO YEARS (2019-2020) ...



11

doctors trained in family medicine



64

nurses trained in family medicine



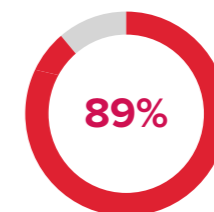
8

primary health care facilities constructed or rehabilitated and equipped

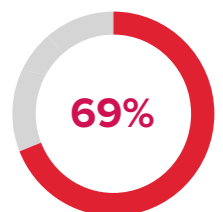


39,438

individuals with access to improved primary healthcare services



reduction in Hepatitis A respectively in target villages



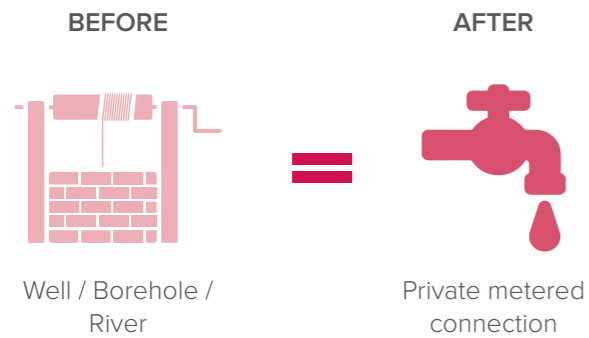
reduction in diarrhoea respectively in target villages

WATER, SANITATION and HYGIENE

AKF works with communities to develop sustainable water supply systems, sanitation and access to safe drinking water alongside improving hygienic practices. This contributes to the prevention of waterborne and water-related disease, reduces the burden on women, children and adolescents in fetching water, and improves nutritional outcomes and overall quality of life.

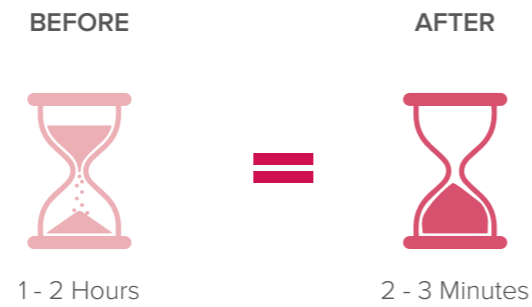


SOURCES OF WATER



Ms. Odinaeva Hanafiya – resident of Kapali village, Tojikobod district – says that for many years they have been fetching water from the village canal in the evenings and keeping it overnight to allow the sediment to settle so they can use the water for household needs the next day. Because of the poor quality of drinking water, family members, particularly children, often suffered from diarrheal diseases. Safe drinking water supply systems installed in Hanafiya have relieved her of this burden. Installed water meters allow Hanafiya to use drinking water effectively and minimize households water costs. Improved access to safe drinking water eased her daily household chores enabling her to spend more time on her children and other household tasks.

TIME SPENT ON WATER COLLECTION



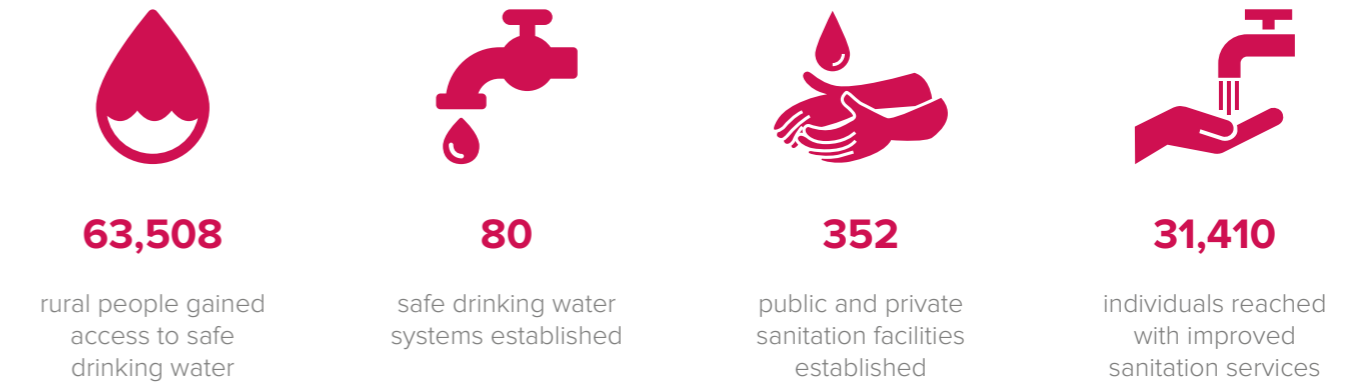
The main problem until recently is related to water and sanitation. If the whole community has poor hygiene, they get more disease and spend more time and money for treatment. Now we have clean drinking water and that is great.

Community health provider, Buni village, Shughnon district, GBAO

Most of the people understand the importance of consuming clean water now. That is why they rarely suffer from diarrhoea. After installing the water pipe, most people have access to safe drinking water and cases of waterborne diseases have decreased.

Community health provider, Corj village, Roshqala district, GBAO

IN THE LAST 2 YEARS (2019-2020)...



Early Childhood Development

AKF's Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme ensures girls and boys have a good start in life by influencing the contexts and environments in which they are growing.

ECD plays a pivotal role in the cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of young children aged 0-6. What happens - or doesn't happen - to children at this time affects not only their immediate well-being but also the foundations for their future and those of their society.

Evidence from ECD programmes world-wide has demonstrated conclusively that intervention in early childhood provides a unique opportunity to avoid future learning and other problems.



Our ECD class is equipped with all needed equipment and learning resources. As you also see, children are very interested and excited to be in ECD. I'm very grateful also for our trainers from the Institute for Professional Development (IPD) who teach us what is ECD and how it differs from general preschools. Now with confidence I can say that it is different from getting children to school as our ECD helps children learn through play and develop their cognitive, social and emotional skills. Many parents have requested that our school director find an opportunity and create an additional class, which means that in our mahalla there is a great need. Our ECD gives children a good start at the beginning of their life and will help them achieve the best results in their future life.

Gulbahor Abdurakhmonova, ECD Teacher at School 34 Dahana, Oltoyul village



NURTURING CARE

In 2020, AKF adopted the World Health Organisation's Nurturing Care Framework which supports the holistic development of children from birth to age six through health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, security and safety and early learning to develop its comprehensive ECD programme. NCF takes a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach to promote and strengthen the nurturing care of young children and supports not only the child, but also their caregivers. It highlights the importance of comprehensive care and multi-sectoral collaboration to support families and children to survive, thrive and transform. Subsequent efforts to enable further replication are essential to adapt the model to new regional contexts and maintain a trajectory of growth in early learning and development for young children across Tajikistan. Therefore, after expanding its model to the Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS) in 2019, AKF then expanded to Khatlon in 2020 with cooperation from OXFAM and the Islamic Bank of Development.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

AKF scales and improves its community, health facility and school-based ECD learning centre model, through constructing, rehabilitating, or equipping ECD

centres. AKF also strengthens the capacity of primary healthcare facilities to provide nurturing care to best support child development.

ENGAGING WITH PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

AKF ensures that parents and caregivers develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to support their children's development by capacitating community health promoters and health professionals to offer counselling services, while ensuring optimal pre- and post-natal care for mothers and adolescent girls. AKF engages community volunteers to improve teaching and learning environments and support operations through ECD support groups. AKF has also been piloting a "Responsible Fatherhood" programme in remote areas of GBAO which helps men understand the role they play in the development of their children and become more involved in their children's lives. The pilot will be scaled up in GBAO in 2021.

AKF is expanding the resource base for teachers and learners, developing interactive mobile applications and 52 age-appropriate original storybooks in both English and Tajik.

TRANSFORMING ECD PROFESSIONALS

AKF professionalises the ECD workforce through capacity development of ECD teachers, mentorship to reinforce practical application of best practices, and a new ECD professional training programme. Best practices have been demonstrated at the national level through the establishment of five strategically

placed ECD Centres in districts surrounding Dushanbe, and through a study visit for senior Tajik government officials to the United Kingdom, to demonstrate the institutionalization of quality standards, alternative and low-cost ECD models, and national mechanisms and tools for measuring ECD results.

IN THE LAST TWO YEARS (2019-2020)...



3,523

children aged 3-6 attended ECD early learning centres



37

ECD early learning centres established



65%

of young children in GBAO have access to early learning services



4,832

children aged 0-4 reached through child care counselling sessions for caregivers



Education

AKF improves the quality of education in public schools with the aim to equip boys, girls and young adults with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to help them interact effectively with the world and contribute to society.

AKF works closely with the government, private sector, civil society, academic institutions, and students to develop and scale accessible, innovative solutions that raise the quality of public education.



A LIFE-LONG LEARNING CONTINUUM



ACCELERATING STUDENT LEARNING

AKF seeks to accelerate and improve the quality of learning in public schools. Through the Education Improvement Programme (EIP) initiative, AKF enriches public schools with extracurricular materials, books, visual aids, and digital learning resources to reinforce student learning outcomes and progress as well as improve 21st century skills. Strengthening gender equality is mainstreamed throughout curriculum resources and teacher training, and a specific module on gender equality has been developed as part of the Student Council training modules on AKF's

Blended Learning platform. AKF also motivates and promotes student learning through student forums, conferences, projects, sciences, and languages clubs. To develop student employability and leadership skills, student councils in public schools are supported and strengthened. AKF also supports science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and foreign languages improvement in AKF programme secondary schools by enhancing the development of contextually relevant teaching and learning resources as well as testing and piloting best teaching and learning practices related to STEM and foreign languages.





Working on the research projects in our schools and presenting it at regional forums helped us not only to improve our content knowledge, but also developed our creativity, problem solving and analytical skills. It also gave us an opportunity to look more broadly into the subject that we study and find that we have a lot of potential to seek our career path while improving these competences.

Ghulomshoev Saidsho, Grade Nine student from Roshtqala district and winner of the Best Research Project Forum, held by AKF in November, 2020

TRANSFORMING TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP

AKF aims to transform the quality, status, and professionalism of teaching and educational leadership. This includes strengthening school-based professional development systems through ongoing in-service teacher-training, methodological units and innovative teaching practices with a focus on interactive pedagogy and problem-based learning. AKF supports Education Institutions and schools in developing management and leadership competencies and in improving their capacity to deliver professional development training and mentoring support to educators and teachers at the school level. AKF has developed a range of training courses and materials. It supports Teacher Training Institutes through providing access to AKF's Blended Learning platform to make teacher training needs-based, cost effective and more accessible. AKF also organizes events and exposure visits for school directors and Education Institutions' management staff to improve schools' teaching and management systems.

ACTION RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

Schools2030, an AKF Global EIP Initiative, is a new, globally informed, locally rooted 10-year (2020-2030) longitudinal action research and learning improvement programme working with 1,000 pioneering pre-schools, primary schools, and secondary schools across 10 countries. During these 10 years, Schools2030 will help 100 schools in Tajikistan to take the initiative to implement innovative, research-based approaches to improve quality lifelong learning for all, train 5,000 teachers in design and action research, find 1,000 new school-level solutions for learning and support them with funding, as well as conduct 100 national/global forums about what works in education in the context of Tajikistan. This aims to help the Tajikistan government achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 Education and will benefit 1,000,000 children or more.



As part of the Education Improvement Program activities, AKF Tajikistan, in collaboration with the Branch of Republican Institute for Professional Development in Education in GBAO, organized exposure visits for 41 AKF project school directors in October 2020. The purpose of this exchange visit was to provide school directors from rural and urban districts in GBAO to gain first-hand exposure to the best learning environments created in GBAO schools.

Latofat Tolibbekova, Director of School #24, Sponj village in Rushan district, described her experience:

“So interesting to ascertain the different types of schools, innovative approaches, and real examples to create child-friendly environments for holistic student learning improvement. It was enjoyable and motivational to talk with the teachers and students in

each school and see how this environment provides an opportunity for students to grow and shape their future. It was also inspiring to see how these schools use existing resources effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. The approach in these schools changed my understanding of how schools should be managed in the context of our region, especially in rural areas.”

IN THE LAST TWO YEARS (2019-2020)...



140

schools enhanced by training **1,932** teachers on best pedagogical practices



34,457

students benefitted from improved learning environments and teaching



108

schools with improved learning environments through infrastructure improvements and resources

Adolescent Wellbeing

AKF works with communities and young people to mobilize and support influencers to maximize their contributions to adolescent health and wellbeing, to increase young people's access to appropriate health and other services that respond to their needs, thus improving the transition from childhood through adolescence to adulthood.

Through an extensive human-centred design process, AKF developed a pilot that supports this transition. Key components of the pilot include:

- Establishing and mentoring of girls' and boys' groups to equip adolescents with knowledge and skills to navigate social and physiological changes in adolescence and pathways to adulthood.
- Establishing and facilitating a Second Decade Development programme to strengthen the knowledge and skills of parents and caregivers, helping to create an enabling environment for adolescents to make the transition to adulthood.
- Fostering a community of practice around adolescent wellbeing to enhance coordination of service providers and partners to improve support systems for adolescents.

TAILORED APPROACH

During community consultations with adolescents and caregivers, the design team became aware of a persistent communication gap between adolescents and adults.

My parents do not pay attention to most of the concerns I have. Sometimes they do not have time for me. They are interested only in the marks I get at school. When I have a problem and am in a bad mood, or something disturbs me, I never approach my parents for help and support.

Amina, 15 years old

Similarly, caregivers expressed that they do not have the knowledge and skills on how to behave with their children, particularly aged 10-16, when they are depressed or face other issues. The adolescent health and well-being pilot is supporting healthy communication between adolescents and caregivers as it is implemented in five locations in GBAO.

Pluralism

An ethic of respect for diversity



When societies value rather than fear group-based differences, diversity can become an asset. AKF sees enhancing appreciation, tolerance, and openness towards other peoples' cultures, social structures, values and beliefs as critical for the welfare and progress of human society.

“What a wonderful, liberating thing it would be if more of us, more of the time, could see diversity not as a burden, but as a blessing; not as a threat, but as an opportunity.”

—His Highness the Aga Khan

AKF places pluralism at the centre of its practice, by

- Working with teachers, parents and student councils to foster inclusive and pluralistic learning environments and prepare learners to become responsible and empathetic adults, including developing 52 original children's books and mobile applications promoting social cohesion and critical thinking.
- Supporting economic and social cooperation and exchange in border areas through a cross-border health programme and critical investments in cross-border infrastructure, including bridges, markets, irrigation and energy transmission.
- Increasing the capacity of communities in border areas to sustainably manage natural resources, such as water and pasture land, including tools and approaches to mitigate and deescalate conflict.
- Supporting local governance structures to develop participatory systems involving all segments of the community – with a special emphasis on the most marginalised.

Gender Equality

To contribute to eradicating poverty, we must address inequality.

AKF's work ensures that women and girls in Tajikistan are empowered to reach their full potential—and can play an active role in transforming their households, communities and economies.

The institutional predecessors of the Aga Khan Foundation have been addressing gender equality for over 100 years. Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah called publicly for the education of girls as early as 1906. He is famously quoted as saying, "Personally, if I had two children and one was a boy and the other a girl, and if I could afford to educate only one, I would have no hesitation in giving the higher education to the girl".

Gender mainstreaming of activities has significantly improved...

- Male involvement in early learning and health promotion activities.
- Community attitudes towards women's health.
- Economic freedom through increased access to financial services.
- Female participation in decision-making and planning for community development.
- Access to quality primary health care services for women of reproductive age and children under five.
- Access to basic services such as water and sanitation.

Future Directions

PROMOTE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND FOOD SECURITY

Reconstruct or rehabilitate over 15 irrigation canals and improve the availability of seeds, fertilizers, storage facilities, greenhouses, and technical expertise for local farmers and families, with more targeted support to the most vulnerable households. These actions will enhance the quality and quantity of crop production and improve food security for thousands of citizens across the country.

DRAW-IN BEST PRACTICES WITHIN EDUCATION

Launch a new, ten-year longitudinal action research programme with 100 schools across Tajikistan, searching for positive deviance about 'what works' in equipping children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to successfully navigate uncertainty and become contributing members of society.

SPARK INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

Apply human-centred design processes to generate new solutions for inclusive economic growth, strong local institutions, pluralistic societies and improved basic services - with a focus on clean energy - through a new multi-sector and multi-country partnership with USAID.

ADVANCE NUTRITION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Roll out a comprehensive approach to enhance the nutritional status of women and children in remote mountain communities, complemented by holistic early childhood development activities. Intensified efforts to improve the capacity of public and private service providers will strengthen the sustainable delivery of health, nutrition, and early learning services and enable a stronger next generation.

EXPAND SAFE DRINKING WATER SYSTEMS

Implement 49 water supply systems across all four regions of Tajikistan to further increase access to safe and clean water for approximately 23,000 rural community members living in vulnerable conditions. These metered systems with private household connections will reinforce best practices within Tajikistan's amended Water Code.

ENHANCE TRANSBOUNDARY CONNECTIVITY AND COHESION

Tackle current and emerging transboundary water and environmental challenges within the region. Targeted infrastructure investments, environmental data generation and capacity building of local institutions will improve cross-border cooperation and natural resource management, while supporting equitable growth and social cohesion across Tajikistan and its neighbours.

Financial Statement

Thank you to our 2020 Donors & Partners

Financial Statement, USD '000	2020 Audited	2019 Restated	2018 Restated	2017 Audited	2016 Audited
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Assets

Property and equipment	35,865	36,545	37,577	1,775	1,814
Intangible assets	2	3	4	-	-
Right-of-use assets	32	57	-	-	-
Investments	656	684	713	524	499
Equity investment	687	722	648	-	-
Cash and bank balances	14,529	14,561	14,190	14,811	12,965
Advances, receivables and prepayments	1,216	1,361	1,804	1,205	1,140
Total Assets	52,984	53,933	54,936	18,316	16,417

Accumulated Funds and Liabilities

Payables and liabilities	19,316	19,764	19,219	15,704	14,032
Accumulated Fund	33,668	34,169	35,717	2,612	2,385
Total Accumulated Funds and Liabilities	52,984	53,933	54,936	18,316	16,417

Revenue and Expenditure

Revenue

Grants and donations	17,931	14,226	13,549	13,387	12,696
Revenue from properties	172	219	225	216	197
Other revenue: fixed assets, depreciation, etc	462	33	49	141	102
Total Revenue	18,565	14,478	13,823	13,744	12,995

Expenditure

Programme grants	16,812	12,655	12,277	12,220	11,525
Administration	2,031	2,997	1,276	1,151	1,159
Properties	187	207	179	170	148
Other expenses: exchange rate gains/loss, depreciations, etc	35	167	(109)	(24)	242
Total Expenditure	19,065	16,026	13,623	13,517	13,071

Excess of Revenue over Expenses	500	(1,548)	200	227	(76)
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*All numbers are audited

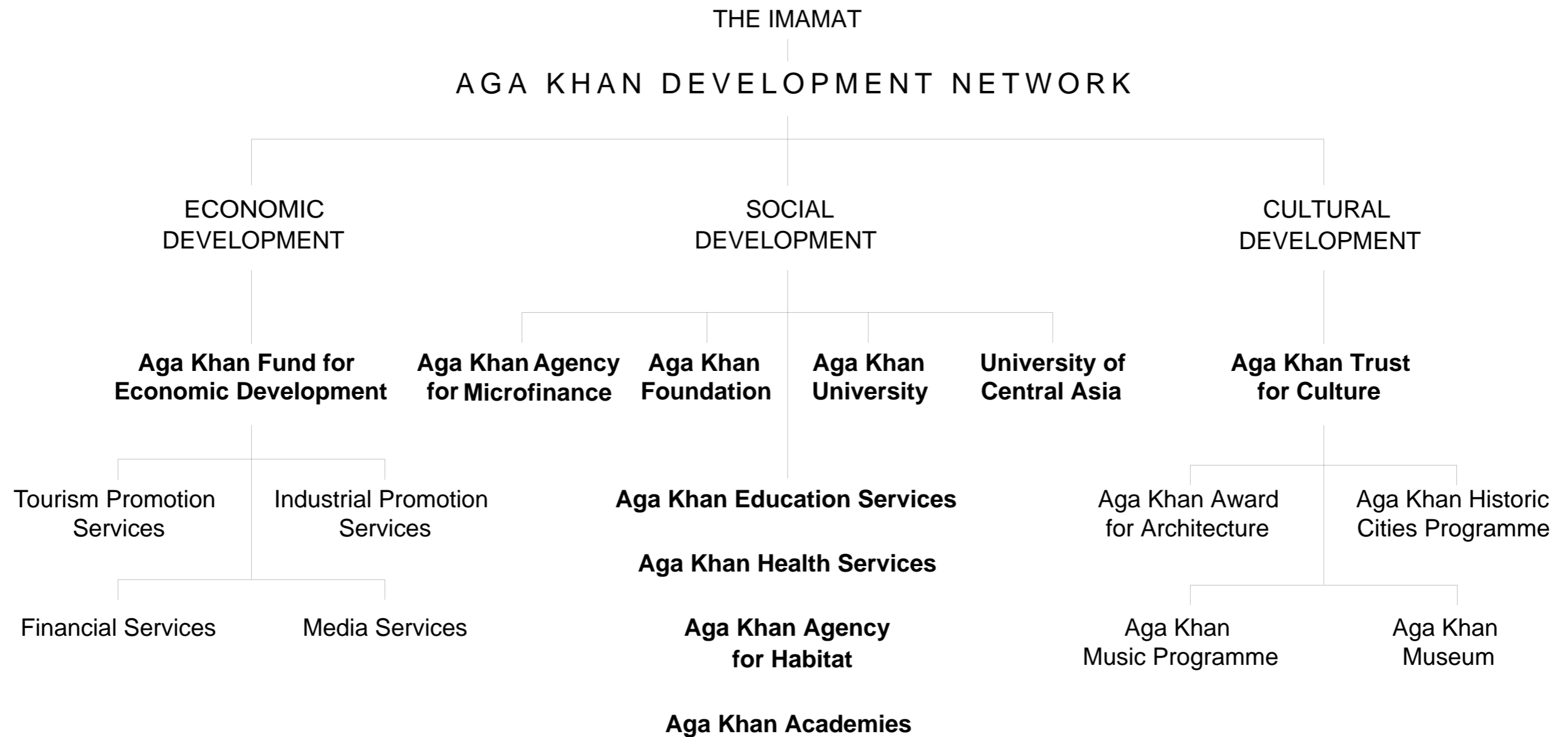
DONORS

- Australian Embassy Moscow
- Department for International Development (DFID)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Embassy of Japan in Tajikistan (EOJ)
- European Commission (EC)
- Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
- German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)
- I Learn Matters Foundation (ILMF)
- KfW Development Bank
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA Finland)
- OXFAM GB in Tajikistan
- Pakistan Afghanistan Tajikistan Regional Integration Programme (PATRIP)
- Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Fund for Environment (PSAKFE).
- Private Donors
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
- The Christensen Fund (TCF)
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- World Bank (WB)

IMPLEMENTING AND TECHNICAL PARTNERS

- Accelerate Prosperity
- Aga Khan Agency for Habitat
- Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance
- Aga Khan Education Services
- Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development
- Aga Khan Health Services
- Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique Et au Développement
- CAMP Kuhiston
- Cooperative Sarob
- First MicroFinanceBank Tajikistan
- Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Institute for Professional Development in Education
- Micro-loan Organisation Rushdi Kuhiston
- Pamir Energy
- Pamirs Eco-Cultural Tourism Association
- Tcell
- University of Central Asia

Our Agencies





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