

BANGLADESH



The Aga Khan Foundation

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), is a private, not-for-profit, non-denominational, international development agency established in 1967 by His Highness the Aga Khan. Working in 19 countries, with special emphasis on the needs of rural communities in mountainous, coastal and other resource-poor areas, AKF seeks to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged populations in South and Central Asia, Eastern and Western Africa, and the Middle East. Internationally, the Foundation works in the areas of health, education, early childhood development, rural development, civil society strengthening, and the built environment.

Established in 1980, AKF in Bangladesh began its work in the health sector, implementing an urban community health programme and supporting the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh in successfully testing the first cereal-based oral rehydration therapies.

Starting in 1990, AKF, along with a consortium of international donors, began supporting BRAC's rural development, non-formal primary education and ultra-poor programmes. Together, these BRAC programmes substantially improved the lives of more than eight million Bangladeshis over a period of 17 years.

In 2008, with the support of the Canadian Department for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (formerly CIDA), AKF embarked upon a new programme, the Early Childhood Development Support Programme - Bangladesh (ECDSP-B). In partnership with 12 NGOs working in Sylhet, Dhaka, Chittagong and Barisal, and BRAC University's Institute of Educational Development, ECDSP-B has improved local capacity to deliver quality ECD services to hard-to-reach families, including those living in tea gardens, *haor* (seasonally flooded) areas, urban slums and disaster-prone areas.

ECD programmes are important because they help to set the foundation for all future

learning, behaviour and health of young children from conception to eight years of age. Through ECDSP-B, AKF and its partners have implemented parenting programmes and established pre-schools, early learning centres and daycare centres for working families. Over five years, the programme has reached nearly 29,000 beneficiaries. In addition, the programme also provides technical assistance to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in the area of pre-primary education.

In addition to ECD, the Foundation also implemented a project with the Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh from 2009 to 2011, to provide training on governance and financial management to 1,800 staff and board members from 560 small grassroots NGOs from across the country.

In the future, AKF expects to continue investing in ECD in Bangladesh, as well as in strengthening local civil society organisations by building their capacity, improving their accountability and transparency, and increasing their local

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Development Partners

Canadian Department for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD, formerly CIDA)

resource base. It will also consider other initiatives where it can play a clear value-added role by bringing the considerable expertise of the larger Aga Khan Development Network to bear within the Bangladeshi context.

which operates the Aga Khan School Dhaka, established in 1988 and considered one of the leading English medium schools in the country, offering international quality education to more than 1,200 students.

AKF and AKDN

AKF is part of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which has worked for over three decades in Bangladesh in the fields of early childhood development, pre-tertiary education and financial services.

The AKDN is committed to enhancing substantially its investments in the education sector in Bangladesh. These include a new Aga Khan Academy, to be located in Bashundara, Dhaka, encompassing world class facilities and international standard education as part of a global network of 18 Academies.

For further information

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The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED), a founding shareholder in the Industrial Promotion and Development Company of Bangladesh Limited (IPDC), remains an important catalyst for industrial development in the country. In addition, HBL, majority-owned by AKFED, commenced operations in Bangladesh in 1976. The HBL network now includes seven branches in Bangladesh offering a wide choice of innovative and convenient commercial banking solutions to cater to the demands of its growing customer base in Bangladesh.

With the respect to culture, three Bangladeshi institutions received the prestigious Aga Khan Award for Architecture, in 1983, 1989 and 2007.

Cover photo: ECD programmes are important because they help to set the foundation for all future learning, behaviour and health of young children from conception to eight years of age.

In the area of education, AKF's activities are complemented by those of the Aga Khan Education Services (AKES),

On September 16, 2013, the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the AKDN agreed to intensify cooperation on improving the quality of life of the people of Bangladesh. A Protocol Agreement signed by His Highness the Aga Khan, founder and chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network, and the Foreign Minister, Dr Dipu Moni, in the presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, established an enhanced framework for collaboration in the areas of social, cultural and economic development.

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.

