



**AKF(PAK) AND PARC  
SIGN MOU TO  
SAFEGUARD  
LIVELIHOODS**  
P.2



**PRESIDENT ARIF ALVI  
CELEBRATES  
NOWRUZ WITH  
SERENA**  
P.3



**ACCELERATE  
PROSPERITY:  
HELPING  
ENTERPRISES  
FLOURISH**  
P.4



**AKS STUDENT WINS  
SKI COMPETITION IN  
CHITRAL**  
P.5

# AKDN

AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Spring Newsletter: *Pakistan edition*



## AKF(Pak) hosts the “Rays of Light” exhibition

**2 April 2019:** The Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan (AKF(Pak)) hosted the inaugural viewing of the Rays of Light exhibit in Serena Hotel Islamabad. The Honorable Mr. Aamir Mehmood Kiani, former Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination was the Chief Guest at the inaugural viewing and dinner. The exhibition was also attended by foreign diplomats, business leaders, officials from the Government, and representatives from civil society organizations and included speeches by senior Aga Khan Development Network

(AKDN) leadership. Addressing the audience, Mr. Iqbal Walji, Chairman National Committee AKF(Pak) spoke about the positive impact of AKDN's strong partnership with the Government of Pakistan, which shows "important complementarity between the long-term vision of the Government of Pakistan and of His Highness. Both acknowledge that meaningful change takes time, patience, and investment." Mr. Hafiz Sherahi, President Ismaili Council Pakistan spoke about His Highness the Aga Khan's, "emphasis on Islam as a thinking, spiritual faith that teaches compassion and tolerance and upholds the dignity of mankind."

Over the past six decades, His Highness the Aga Khan has transformed the quality of life for millions of people around the world. In the areas of health, education, cultural revitalization, and economic empowerment, he has worked to inspire excellence and improve living conditions and opportunities in some of the world's most remote and troubled regions. Rays of Light, first inaugurated in Paris in 2008, is a unique, experiential journey showcasing His Highness the Aga Khan's contributions to human development. The exhibition, which has been viewed by over 100,000 people globally, features over 250 powerful visuals in an immersive, multi-media interactive format using technology such as virtual reality.



*H.E. Marc Baretty, Ambassador of France and his wife visit the Rays of Light exhibit*



*H.E Wendy Gilmour, Canadian High Commissioner, and Daniel Joly, Head of Cooperation at the exhibit*

## Creating partnerships to safeguard livelihoods – AKF(Pak) signs MoU with PARC

**17 January 2019:** The Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan (AKF(Pak)) and the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) signed an MoU in which they pledged to work together to improve the food and livelihood security of people living in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. The MoU was signed by Mr. Akhtar Iqbal, CEO AKF(Pak), and Mr. Yusuf Zafar, Chairman PARC. Also present on the occasion were Mr. Munir Ahmed, Member PARC; Mr. Iqbal Walji, Chairman National Committee AKF(Pak); Mr. Muzaffar Ud Din, General Manager Aga Khan Rural Support Programme; Mr. Irshad Khan Abbasi, Director Rural Development, Civil Society and Habitat (AKF(Pak)); and senior management from AKF(Pak).

The MoU provides a framework for collaboration of efforts to foster development of agriculture, livestock and fishery sectors. The purpose is to catalyze investments in community infrastructure, community based water resource management, and mountain agriculture and agro-processing; strengthen community based associations and promote private-sector partnerships in agriculture value chains; introduce and replicate technologies to enhance the production, processing and marketing capacities of farmers and private sector actors; and improve knowledge sharing through workshops, research activities, and trainings.



*CEO AKF(Pak) and Chairman PARC at the MoU signing ceremony*

## Honorable President Dr. Arif Alvi graces Serena Hotel's Nowruz celebrations

**24 March 2019:** Honorable President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi, inaugurated an event to celebrate Nowruz – the Persian New Year. The event was hosted by Serena Hotels under its Cultural Diplomacy initiative. It was attended by ambassadors and delegates from the embassies of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan in Islamabad. Representatives from the United Nations, Pakistan National Council of Arts, and Pakistan Air Force Women Association were also present.



*Honorable President cutting cake with ambassadors of all Nowruz celebrating countries*

Stalls were set up by participants from various countries with a variety of items on display including local delicacies. The Honorable President took a keen interest in the paraphernalia on display and said that he saw a bright future for Central Asia. There were a number of cultural performances from each participating country, providing audiences with a distinctive insight to traditions and customs from other countries. The event provided visitors from different backgrounds with an opportunity to jointly celebrate Nowruz.

## Accelerate Prosperity: helping enterprises flourish

Catalytic financing from Accelerate Prosperity (AP), the Aga Khan Development Network's enterprise growth accelerator, enabled Mamo Dairy, Gilgit-Baltistan's first milk processing and distribution company, to set up a state-of-the-art processing factory to increase its production and supply capacity. AP extended its business acceleration services to Mamo Dairy in 2017. Today, Mamo Dairy is one of Gilgit-Baltistan's fastest growing businesses, connecting hundreds of women dairy farmers to local retailers in Gilgit. Mamo Dairy co-founder Karim Uddin said, "We

had started this business seven years ago, but growth had been very slow. AP believed in our business when we were struggling to find external investment for our company. With AP's investment, we were also able to leverage additional PKR 14 million investment [from Economic Transformation Initiative of IFAD and Government of Gilgit-Baltistan] which enabled us to establish our new factory and increase revenues considerably."

Mamo Dairy was founded by Naseema Karim and her husband, Karim Uddin, with an initial investment of PKR 5,000. The couple soon realized that there was a big demand for fresh milk and dairy products in the market. Since most of the surplus milk in households across Gilgit-Baltistan often goes to waste, Mamo Dairy collects it from around 365 dairy farmers, primarily women. It then processes and sells the milk through existing retailers to around 1,500 clients. As of 2019, Mamo Dairy has created 12 full-time jobs and supported 1,620 individuals indirectly by providing them with a means to earn livelihood and has plans to expand its operations and staff in the future.



*Founders of Mamo Dairy working in the processing centre*

## Reimagining education in uncertain times

**5 March 2019:** The Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development organized a symposium in Karachi on 'Education in Uncertain Times' to discuss the idea of academic achievement and the changes needed to enable students to acquire necessary skills and values to thrive in an uncertain world. Educationists agreed that for most parents and schools, academic achievement means good grades. However, this instils a fear of failure amongst students, discouraging them from taking intellectual risks. "Curiosity, determination, freedom of imagination, collaboration and emotional intelligence are essential skills for today's world," said panelist Aine Afrin, Principal Bay View High School Karachi. "Unfortunately, these skills are rarely promoted or even encouraged in many educational institutions in our country. But in the future, these qualities will be far more important than scoring high on tests."



*Dr. Quratulain Bakhtiar shares her thoughts as a panelist during the symposium*

Teachers too, who are mostly trained for better teaching skills, lack the capacity to nurture creativity amongst students. "When we induct teachers, we don't test them on their soft skills.

Too much weightage is given to their pedagogical content knowledge. What we should start assessing is their communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills or building these," said Aneela Aziz, principal of the Aga Khan School Kharadar. Experts also voiced the need for providing opportunities for students to learn for themselves instead of being spoon-fed. Dr. Quratulain Bakhtiari, Chairperson Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP) Quetta, shared an example of student-centered learning at IDSP's University of Community Development, where students decide their syllabus, learning targets, mode of learning and assessment methods. The symposium ended with participants agreeing to set-up working groups to actively address the gaps in curriculum, teacher training programmes and teaching and learning practices to make education in Pakistan relevant to the needs of the 21st century.

## Aga Khan School student wins ski competition

**17 February 2019:** Ebad ur Rehman, a grade nine student at Aga Khan School (AKS) Madaklasht, District Chitral, won the first position in the Snow Skiing Sports Competition in the category of 13 to 16 years. The second position, in the same category, was awarded to Umaid Husain, also from AKS Madaklasht. The skiing competition, organized by the Hindukush Sports Snow Club, was the first of its kind in Chitral and had four age-based categories. The competition was inaugurated by Haji Maghfirat Shah, District Nazim of Chitral, with Colonel Muin ud Din, Commandant Chitral Scouts serving as the Chief Guest at the concluding ceremony.

The festival had around 300 participants and included a short training for participants in Naltar, Gilgit-Baltistan, where there is a professional skiing slope. Skiing is a popular sport in Madaklasht, given the area's terrain and heavy snowfall, with village competitions being held regularly. In many families, such as Ebad's, skiing is taught by one generation to the next. Ebad learned the sport from his father, using locally-made skiing equipment. So fond is Ebad's father of the sport that he too took part in the competition, but it was Ebad who brought the laurels home, making his family and friends proud. Given the potential of



*Ebad ur Rehman celebrating his win*

winter sports in Madaklasht and surrounding areas, the Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan is looking into the possibility of adding winter sports to its physical education curriculum.

## AKCS-P: restoring heritage sites and empowering communities

**15 January 2019:** The Aga Khan Cultural Service-Pakistan (AKCS-P) organized a ceremony to celebrate the second annual dividend pay-out to its community partners in Baltistan. Mr. Akbarali Pesnani, Chairman AKCS-P; and Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels, presented

cheques to the leaders of the Baltistan Culture and Development Foundation (BCDF) and the Shigar and Khaplu Town Management and Development Societies (TMDS). These cheques, for between Rs 1.7 million and 3.5 million, represent a share of the profits of the Shigar Fort and Khaplu Palace Hotels. AKCS-P restored these two major landmark monuments, the 400-year-old Shigar Fort and 200-year-old Khaplu Palace, in 2004 and 2011 respectively. These are now managed by Serena Hotels at just 1% of total running cost and are used as anchors for community development, for example by serving as a source of well-paying jobs for local men and women.



*Akbarali Pesnani, Chairman AKCS-P, along with AKDN leadership and partners at the ceremony*

To initiate community-based conservation and restoration of cultural heritage sites in Baltistan, the BCDF was founded in late 1990s and the Shigar and Khaplu TMDS were constituted as BCDF's local chapters. A Framework for Collaboration was signed between AKCS-P and BCDF in 2005, to collaborate on conservation of heritage sites and set up a mechanism for allocating funds to finance such interventions. With these latest pay-outs, the communities have earned Rs 9 million from a total of 30 million.

## Faculty appointed to Prime Minister's science and technology taskforce

Professor Dr. Mohammad Wasay, a faculty member of the Aga Khan University, has been appointed to Prime Minister Imran Khan's 13 Member National Taskforce on Science and Technology. The task force will contribute to the process of equitable, inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development by making positive contributions to national policies, supporting the development and implementation of innovative projects, and working to promote high-quality education and research on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Speaking about the achievement, Dr. Wasay remarked, "I'm honored to be a part of this wide-ranging and influential body that will play a leading role in supporting the country's economic development and help Pakistan meet targets under the global sustainable development goals."



*Dr. Wasay has been appointed to the Prime Minister's taskforce on science and technology*

Dr. Wasay has published more than 136 scientific papers in peer-reviewed medical journals and has been cited over 1,400 times in international journals. He has presented his research in over 70 conferences across the world and received global recognition for his efforts. Dr. Wasay has

been the recipient of several national and international awards for education, research, and advocacy work including the Advocacy Leader of the Year Award from the American Academy of Neurology and a gold medal from the Pakistan Academy of Medical Sciences.

## AKAH,P participates in Pakistan's first earthquake engineering conference

**21 February 2019:** The Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, Pakistan (AKAH,P) participated in and was one of the gold sponsors at the South Asian Conference on Earthquake Engineering (SACEE), held this year for the first time in Pakistan. SACEE is organized under the auspices of the South Asia Earthquake Network, a multi-national initiative for seismic risk mitigation. AKAH,P used the conference as an opportunity to share its experiences in seismic engineering and building safer habitats in disaster-prone areas across Pakistan. Staff from AKAH's global office shared research on various topics including 'AKDN's Methodology for Seismic Risk Mitigation and Management' and 'Integrated Rapid Visual Survey for Habitat Improvement'. AKAH,P's learning materials and prototypes of products from the Building and Construction Improvement Programme (BACIP) were also displayed at the conference.

A prototype of a house constructed using mesh wire and insulation material, a technology used to make seismically resistant and thermally comfortable buildings, was received particularly well by the participants. International researchers, scholars, and students of NED University of Engineering also showed a keen interest AKAH,P's research. The participation of AKAH,P at SACEE will create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with institutions working in seismic engineering to achieve the common goal of building safer habitats and improving safety and security of communities prone to natural disasters.



*AKAH,P's learning materials, including BACIP models, at display during SACEE*

## 'Every Light is not the Sun': a farewell to Basharatullah, a true teacher

This quote of Alexander the Great aptly describes Basharatullah, a teacher and educator who hailed from Darel, a remote valley of District Diamer in Gilgit-Baltistan. Basharatullah's death on 17 April left his family, friends, colleagues, and students in a state of shock and pain. Basharatullah championed girls' education throughout his life and even established a girl's school in Diamer, which has some of the poorest educational indicators in Pakistan. Over the last year, Basharatullah served as the Aga Khan Development Network's (AKDN) School Improvement Programme (SIP) Coordinator for Manikal and Gabbar clusters. He strongly

believed that education would positively change his region, saying, “We have seen the transformation that has come about in Hunza and Ghizer as a result of our new generation being educated. Our people are now getting more and more convinced that education is our only salvation and that AKDN and the Education Department of Gilgit-Baltistan are our reliable torchbearers in the field of education.”

Basharatullah was the force behind the positive changes in SIP-supported government schools in his clusters. Acknowledging that more teachers would benefit from his knowledge, experience and dedication, the Government had promoted him to Area Coordinator, a position created especially for him. He was considered a role model by AKU-IED’s Professional Development Centre North’s faculty and his fellow teachers. Remembering how dedicated he was, one of his fellow teacher commented: “Basharat visits the cluster schools regularly, observes classes conducted by his colleague teachers, gives model lessons, discusses with the teachers the targets set for the improvement in the learning of weaker students, and then follows up regularly. Heavy snow or hot weather does not prevent him from visiting schools.” His efforts have paved the way for Darel to continue to benefit from the light of education. We salute you, Basharatullah and pray that your soul rests in eternal peace. Amen.



*Basharatullah (centre) was a key driver of positive change in SIP supported schools in his clusters*

## Pari Gul and the Snow Avalanche: an animated video to sensitize communities on safety

In 2019, the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, Pakistan (AKAH,P) redesigned its winter preparedness curriculum to include an animated documentary titled “Pari Gul aur Barfani Toda” (Pari Gul and the Snow Avalanche). The documentary presents the story of a young girl living in northern Pakistan in a village vulnerable to snow avalanches. The video starts with Pari going to school when she hears the roaring sound of an avalanche advancing her way. Alarmed, Pari remembers the training sessions and drills AKAH,P had conducted in her village, in which community members were taught of ways to respond during an avalanche. Pari recalls the instructions provided during those sessions, and ensures that she escapes safely. The animated story presents a powerful imagery of how mountain communities



*A screenshot from the animated documentary*

can ensure personal safety during snow avalanches and rescue those who may be affected. The story has been shown in several schools and community centers as part of AKAH,P's winter preparedness program in Pakistan. Use of the animated story allowed AKAH,P to expand its coverage and deliver a critical message to people of all age groups. According to community members, the use of visuals in the documentary made it easier to understand and remember the key steps of responding to an avalanche. The effectiveness of using technology to sensitize communities has convinced AKAH,P to produce animated videos on other themes, including emergency first aid, to make its disaster preparedness campaigns more effective.

## Meet the nursing and midwifery team at AKMC,G

At the Aga Khan Medical Centre, Gilgit (AKMC,G), patients from across the region receive care, often with nurses or midwives being the primary caregiver. The following photo story is a glimpse into the daily routine of the nursing and midwifery team at AKMC,G and also takes a look at some of the roles they perform.



The Operating Rooms team at AKMC,G. *From Right to left: Shah Hussain, Anesthesia Technician; Ali Ahmad, Senior Technician; Margus Rahim, Nurse In-charge; Imtiaz, Senior Technician; and Saleem, Technician.*

The OR team consists of highly skilled staff who provide quality surgical services. They ensure that the OR remains sterilized, and the surgical treatments are provided with the safe use of equipment and instruments.



*Hanifa Munir (left) Assistant Head Nurse with a pediatrics patient and her mother.*

Hanifa Munir is a registered nurse also acting as Assistant Head Nurse. She conducts rounds every morning and is regarded as a supportive supervisor by other nurses. Besides ensuring that the quality of care provided is satisfactory, she also trains staff and conducts online sessions for the nurses working in other AKHS,P facilities.



*Mehnaz Hameed, Nurse Instructor, during a Basic Life Support (BLS) course. Mehnaz was one of four nurses trained at the Aga Khan University to become a trainer for BLS course.*



*Razgul (right), a senior midwife, administering postnatal care to a newborn. Razgul is a role model for young midwives, have successfully delivered more than 5,000 babies since joining.*



*Eirham Hussain a Nurse Specialist for the Neonatal Unit (NNU) and Pediatrics Ward, seen here caring for a neonate admitted in the NNU.*

*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 Summer 2019. For more information, visit our website: [www.akdn.org/Pakistan](http://www.akdn.org/Pakistan)*