



International Development Management fellow, Paula Palaez, in Bangladesh.

Overview of Aga Khan Foundation Canada

Aga Khan Foundation Canada is a private, non-denominational development agency established in 1980. As a member of the worldwide Aga Khan Development Network, AKFC is committed to promoting equitable and sustainable development in Asia, Africa and the Middle East without regard to faith, origin or gender.

AKFC's programs address the interconnected causes of poverty in ways that make the most of the Foundation's resources. Concentrating on rural development, education, health and the strengthening of civil society, AKFC often combines these programs into integrated initiatives, sharing knowledge and expertise with other AKDN agencies.

Every program includes a concern for gender equity, the environment, pluralism and human resource development. Many programs are undertaken in partnership with the Canadian government through

the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Within Canada, AKFC acts as a catalyst for the discussion and understanding of critical global issues, links Canadian institutions and expertise with counterparts in the developing world and runs several professional development programs aimed at enhancing the quality of Canada's development assistance.

Every year, tens of thousands of Canadians support AKFC's work, through donations of time, expertise and resources, in a collective effort to bring new economic and social opportunities to families and communities in the developing world.

Rural Development

From the high mountain valleys of Pakistan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan to the fragile coastal zones of

Mozambique and Kenya, AKFC has a special commitment to reducing poverty in remote, resource-poor, or degraded environments.

Rural development programs integrate social, economic and physical elements of development with a central concern for local participation and decision-making. With the support of community organizations, local men and women determine common priorities, then design and implement initiatives to address them.

More than twenty years ago, CIDA and AKFC helped to pioneer an innovative approach to rural poverty alleviation in one of the poorest, most isolated environments on earth: the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in northern Pakistan. In 2003, a World Bank survey hailed the success of the AKRSP model, calling it a "laboratory for rural development."





Children in Mozambique where AKFC supports the Coastal Rural Support Programme (CRSP).
Photo: Jacques Toureille / AKDN

Part of AKFC's effectiveness stems from its focus and long attention span over the years, taking a basic theme and sticking with it despite the flow of development fads and fancies.

-- Independent evaluation for the Canadian International Development Agency.

Education

Education creates boundless social and economic opportunities, breaking the destructive cycle of poverty and creating a more secure and prosperous future for all. Recognizing this, AKFC and its partners support education programs that take a multi-dimensional approach, simultaneously fostering institutional change while nurturing the individual child.

From pre-primary to post-secondary, from skills training to post-graduate as well as professional programs, the goal of education programming is to improve educational outcomes, such as increased enrolment rates particularly for girls, and enhanced teaching and academic performance.

Civil Society

By strengthening community organizations, building the skills and capacities of local leaders, and fostering positive relationships between communities, government and the private sector, AKFC-supported programs are helping to create an

“enabling environment” for civil society to contribute effectively to national development.

Health

Despite unprecedented advances in global health, citizens of the developing world continue to suffer from entirely preventable diseases. AKFC-supported health programs seek to strengthen professional health care systems with a multi-pronged approach. Primary health care programs target preventative and curative health services, water and sanitation. At the same time, professional development programs are working to improve the skills of health care professionals particularly nurses who are the front-line health providers in many communities.

Public Engagement

Public engagement in Canada is the cornerstone of AKFC's success. The Foundation works with partners in all fields of Canadian life, from the public and private sectors, to universities and voluntary organizations, in an effort to

leverage Canada's human, intellectual and financial resources in the developing world.

AKFC plays an active role in promoting policy dialogue and the sharing of best practices within Canada on critical global issues and regularly brings together development professionals from Canada and abroad.

Human resource development programs are fostering Canada's capacity to send development professionals abroad while helping to build the capacities of partners in Africa and Asia.

AKFC's annual fundraising events, organized and managed by hundreds of dedicated volunteers, are perhaps the most visible sign of the willingness of Canadians to tackle global poverty. World Partnership Walk and World Partnership Golf attract tens of thousands of Canadians in support of international development efforts. Millions of dollars have been raised, with every cent going to far-reaching development projects in Asia and Africa.



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