



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION  
AFGHANISTAN

## Annual Report 2012



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AN AGENCY OF THE AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

# AKF and AKDN Activities in Afghanistan

# Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan

*“Development is sustainable only if the beneficiaries become, in a gradual manner, the masters of the process. This means that initiatives cannot be contemplated exclusively in terms of economics, but rather as an integrated programme that encompasses social and cultural dimensions as well. Education and skills training, health and public services, conservation of cultural heritage, infrastructure development, urban planning and rehabilitation, rural development, water and energy management, environmental control, and even policy and legislative development are among the various aspects that must be taken into account.”*

HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN,  
SPEAKING AT THE  
PRINCE CLAUS FUND'S  
CONFERENCE ON CULTURE  
AND DEVELOPMENT, AMSTERDAM,  
7 SEPTEMBER 2002.

**Front Cover Picture:** Many children in rural Afghanistan still have no access to schooling, AKF works to establish primary schools in remote villages.

**Photography:** Sandra Calligaro, Leslie Knott, Ahmad Muslim and AKF.

**Bottom:** Dr. Nazia Mitra shares a smile with midwives in training in the hallway of the Faizabad Hospital maternity ward. There are 21 midwifery students in Faizabad hospital who will graduate in February 2013 and return to work in their rural communities.



**Market Development:** AKF promotes horticulture as a valuable source of income for Afghan farmers, including the establishment of private nursery businesses to sell improved fruit varieties and saplings to local farmers.



**Health:** To reduce the high incidence of preventable deaths during childbirth among Afghan women, AKDN has trained over 400 nurses and midwives since 2003.



**Cross-border Development:** Many of AKDN's Central Asian programmes are regional in nature. Farmers and small entrepreneurs in Tajikistan are linked to Afghan markets by bridges built by the Network. These bridges also permit Afghans to seek care in Tajik hospitals and Tajik health professionals to provide services in Afghan clinics.



**Civil Society:** With assistance of the Badakhshan Development Forum, supported by AKDN, the provincial Department of Women's Affairs has expanded its literacy programme to cover more than 70 percent of the province.



**Industrial Promotion:** Roshan, an AKFED project company, provides wireless phone services to more than two million Afghans nationwide.



<p><b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>F</b> Financial Services</li> <li><b>I</b> Industrial Promotion</li> <li><b>T</b> Tourism Promotion</li> </ul>	<p><b>SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>H</b> Health</li> <li><b>R</b> Rural Development</li> <li><b>M</b> Microfinance</li> <li><b>F</b> Focus</li> <li><b>E</b> Education: Primary &amp; Secondary</li> <li><b>A</b> Aga Khan Academy planned</li> </ul>	<p><b>CULTURE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>R</b> Restoration</li> <li><b>M</b> Music</li> <li><b>U</b> Urban Planning</li> </ul>	<p><b>UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ASIA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>UCA</b> University of Central Asia</li> <li><b>ECD</b> Early Childhood Development</li> <li><b>CB</b> Cross-Border Development</li> <li><b>CS</b> Civil Society</li> <li><b>EV</b> Environment</li> </ul>
<p>0 200Km</p>		<p>● Capitals    ■ AKDN countries of activity    □ AKF activity areas</p>	



## Contents

Abbreviations	2
Foreword	3
About the Aga Khan Development Network	4
AKF coverage map	6
Executive Summary	8
The AKF Approach	10
Local Governance and Civil Society	12
Market Development	16
Natural Resource Management	21
Infrastructure	26
Education	30
Health	33
Afghan-Tajik Cross-Border Programme	37
Donors 2012	43

### Abbreviations

AFN	Afghani – Unit of Afghan currency
AKDN	Aga Khan Development Network
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
AKHS	Aga Khan Health Services
AKU	Aga Khan University
CBSG	Community-Based Savings Group
CDC	Community Development Council
DDA	District Development Assembly
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FFS	Farmer Field School
MIAD	Multi-Input Area Development
MSDSP	Mountain Societies Development Support Programme
NGO	Non-government organisation
NRM	Natural resource management
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
WUA	Water User Association

## Foreword

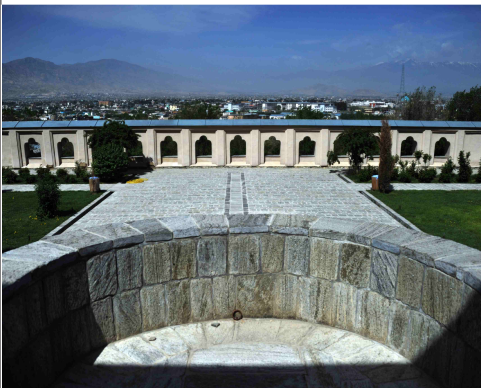
In 2012, the Aga Khan Foundation marked a decade in Afghanistan. With each passing year the Foundation and the country become stronger. Afghan communities have become more resilient, more children are in school than ever before, civil society groups have become more active and great gains have been made in the health sector. AKF, with the support of its donors, has made some of these successes possible in its programme areas. AKF, in 2012, saw continued success and growth for our programmes as existing donors renewed their commitments, and funded new programmes. AKF continues to invest in its staff with implementation of our localisation strategy as we look at the capacity and strengths of our local staff team: they are the future of our organisation and the country.

We have continued to work with communities in 2012, indirectly benefiting 2.8 million people. Our National Solidarity programming expanded to over 1,500 communities, including the implementation of AKF adaptations that have now been rolled out at a national level. More than US\$22 million of infrastructure projects were implemented in our programme areas, all prioritised and selected by the communities themselves. An innovative maternal neonatal and child health project began in Badakhshan, combining improved access to services with AKF's integrated approach to nutrition.

Following the Kabul Process, AKF has taken a strong role in national policy dialogue as the government and the international community have formulated their strategies. AKF contributed to the development of the government's National Priority Programming and applied lessons learned from the field at the national level. As we closely observe the process and contemplate the coming years, AKF and its sister agencies in the Aga Khan Development Network continue their long-term commitment to the people and country of Afghanistan. Looking forward, AKF will continue with multi-input implementation, working with government, civil society partners and the local community.

We reflect on our accomplishments in 2012 and AKF's contribution to Afghanistan across 53 districts in seven provinces our contributions present the continuum of development: natural resource management, market development, human and institutional development, infrastructure, health, education and cross border programmes.

*Akhtar Iqbal*  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*Aga Khan Foundation, Afghanistan*



**Left:** Barbur Gardens in Kabul after the reconstruction by AKTC. **Middle:** Women receive short term loans from FMFB branch in Faizabad. **Right:** Call centre of Roshan telecommunications provider in Afghanistan.

## About the Aga Khan Development Network and the Aga Khan Foundation

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which was founded by His Highness the Aga Khan, is a group of nine private, international, non-denominational development agencies. They work to improve the quality of life of people in the developing world, particularly in Asia and Africa, without regard to faith, origin or gender. Its programmes are designed to bring a critical mass of economic, social and cultural activities to bear on a given area. Its projects encompass many of the determinants of the quality of life, including the natural and built environments in both urban and rural areas, food security, health, education, access to financial services and economic opportunity, as well as the cultural areas of traditional music, architecture and art.

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is one of AKDN's constituent agencies, established by His Highness the Aga Khan in Switzerland in 1967. It seeks sustainable solutions to long-term problems of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, ill health, with special emphasis on the needs of rural communities in mountainous, coastal and other resource-poor areas. AKF has offices and affiliates in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, Geneva, India, Kenya, the Kyrgyz Republic, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Pakistan, Portugal, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. AKF began working in Afghanistan in 2002. Its programmes are implemented primarily in seven provinces across central and northern Afghanistan: Bamyan, Parwan, Baghlan, Samangan, Takhar, Kunduz and Badakhshan.

## AKDN Agencies Working in Afghanistan

### Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)

AKF carries out rural development programmes in agriculture, civil society, infrastructure, market development, health and education across seven provinces of central and northeastern Afghanistan.

### Aga Khan Education Service (AKES)

AKES provides training in English-language and computer skills and coaching for university entrance in Kabul, Badakhshan and Baghlan. These activities complement AKF's extensive education programmes in Afghanistan.

### Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS)

AKHS provides healthcare in more than thirty health centers and over 300 simple health posts in Bamyan, Baghlan and Badakhshan provinces. AKHS also manages the main government provincial hospitals in Bamyan and Badakhshan and three government community midwifery schools in Bamyan, Badakhshan and Baghlan.

### Aga Khan University (AKU)

AKU, founded in 1983, is an international institution with teaching programmes in eight countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Syria, Egypt and the United Kingdom. The University aims to promote human

*A group of farmers gather during a practical training of Apricot Dehydration, improving product quality and market competitiveness.*

welfare by disseminating knowledge and providing instruction, training, research and service in the health sciences, education and other branches of learning. In Afghanistan AKU supports the national nursing and midwifery training institute in Kabul and provides assistance for Kabul Medical University's teaching programmes. It also manages the French Medical Institute for Children in Kabul, a public-private partnership which is one of the country's most advanced hospitals.

### University of Central Asia (UCA)

UCA was founded in 2000 as a private university in Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan. UCA was established to offer an internationally recognized standard of higher education in Central Asia. UCA's mission is to foster the socio-economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain societies.

### Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)

AKTC works to preserve and develop Afghanistan's rich cultural heritage. The Trust has rehabilitated and preserved key historic buildings damaged by war in Kabul, Herat, Balkh and Badakhshan. The Aga Khan Music Initiative (AKMI) provides a platform for the training of a new generation of young Afghan musicians in classical Afghan music.

### Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance (AKAM)

AKAM is part of Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance (AKAM) and is the leading microfinance institution in the country with an outstanding portfolio of more than US\$80 million catering to various needs of microfinance and SME clients.

### Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED)

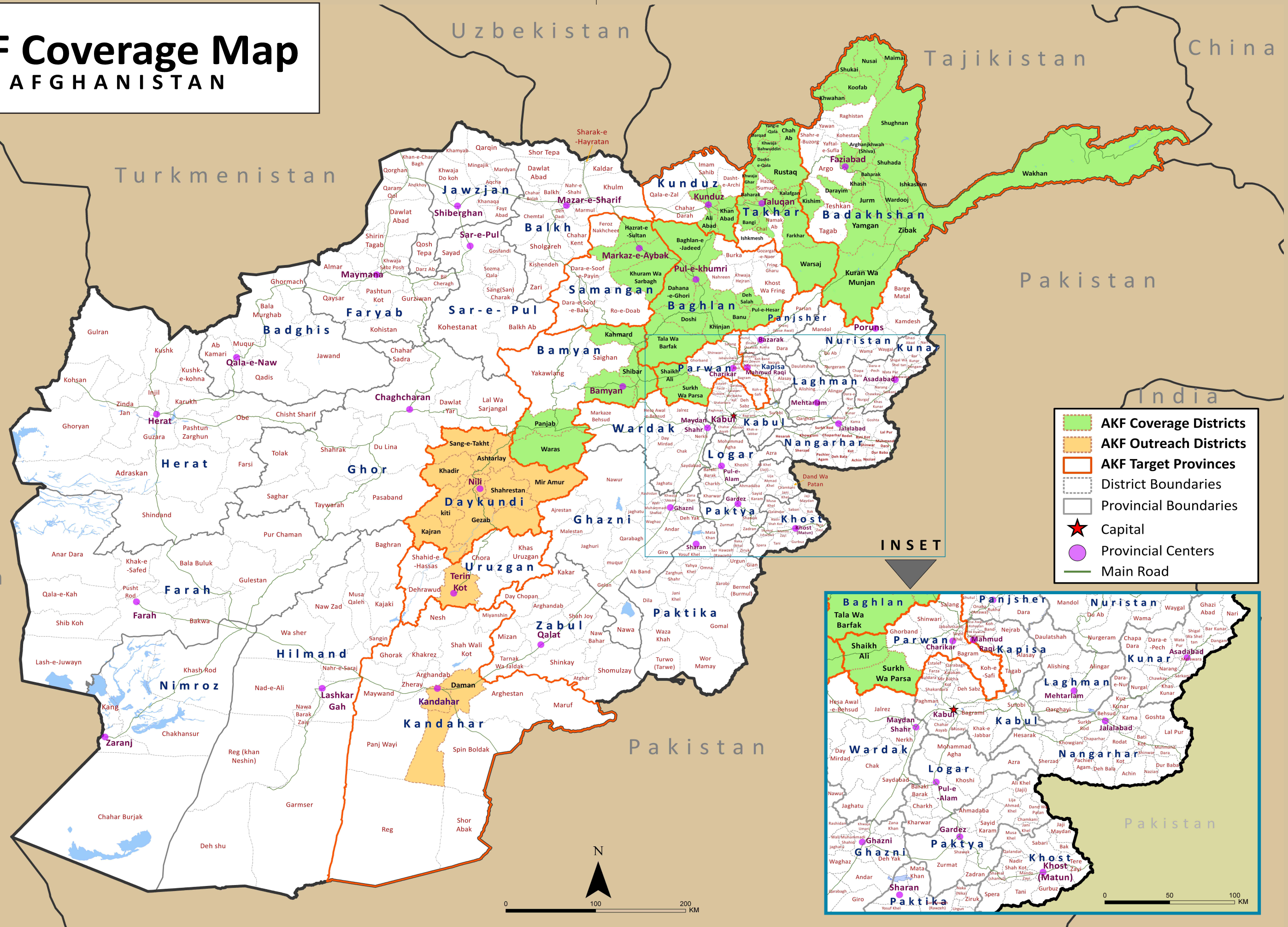
AKFED is the only for-profit institution which is part of AKDN. AKFED carries out AKDN's activities in economic development through strategic investments in socially-responsible, technologically appropriate, economically viable, and environmentally sensitive projects in telecommunications, hospitality and banking.

### Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS)

An AKDN affiliate, FOCUS implements disaster risk management programmes in mountainous and disaster-prone areas of Badakhshan and Baghlan, identifying potential natural disasters and instigating measures to prevent them or reduce their impact.

# AKF Coverage Map

## AFGHANISTAN



## Executive Summary

The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in Afghanistan continues to deliver an integrated multi-input development programme in seven of the country's 34 provinces, in central and northern Afghanistan. In 53 districts, AKF focuses on community development and governance, civil society, market development, natural resource management, infrastructure, education and health. The ultimate goal of the programme is to improve the quality of life of people in AKF's focus areas, working in close collaboration with the Foundation's sister agencies in the wider Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), the Afghan Government, and other national and international partners.

Across its core programme area, AKF indirectly benefits around 2.8 million people.

### Some of the key achievements in 2012 include the following:

- During 2012, AKF increased the scope of its overall National Solidarity Programme to a total of 1,552 Community Development Councils. New programming was introduced by the Afghan Government, which included many innovations started by AKF.
- With the establishment of 584 Community-Based Savings Groups (CBSGs) during 2012, the total number of groups assisted by AKF and its partners is now 2,210 with an overall membership of almost 38,000.
- AKF supported the organisation of three major annual tourism activities in Bamyan, including the Silk Road and Nawroz festivals in the spring and summer, and the Afghan Ski Challenge in the winter.
- One livestock development centre and three input supply shops were launched in Badakhshan Province. These centres provide livestock health and other services for local farmers.
- Four new Water User Associations (WUAs) were set up in Takhar, and 12 in Bamyan to carry out routine management of canals.
- AKF designed, contracted and supervised the implementation of US\$ 22 million worth of new infrastructure in AKF programme areas.
- AKF has provided ongoing support for more than 130,000 primary and secondary school students.
- Schools and communities were supported, which enabled 95 percent of Grade 6 girls to progress into lower secondary school and 92 percent of Grade 9 girls to progress into high school.
- A comprehensive and integrated Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) project was launched, designed to improve access to quality MNCH services and reduce disease rates.
- Bamyan Provincial Hospital and the Community Midwife Education Programme obtained an ISO 9001:2008 certification, highlighting an international standard of quality care.
- More than US\$ 1.15 million worth of goods were sold in three weekly cross-border markets established by AKF near three of the new "friendship bridges" connecting Afghanistan and Tajikistan. A fourth bridge is now complete with the fifth expected to open in 2013.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:**  
A mother at Bamyan provincial Hospital is feeding ORS to her baby after his recovery from diarrhea. Bamyan provincial Hospital is managed by AKHS.



## The AKF Approach

The Aga Khan Development Network and the Aga Khan Foundation believe that the most effective way to stimulate social and economic development is to promote improvements in a coordinated fashion across the full range of development sectors. This multi-sectoral approach is most effective when investments are focused on specific geographical areas over an extended period of time.

By focusing development interventions geographically, AKDN aims to bring a variety of disciplines to bear in a given area and create a critical mass of development activities that will eventually reinforce each other. For instance, support for education to increase literacy and vocational skills will help to stimulate entrepreneurialism and long-term economic development. Likewise, improvements in healthcare will enable a healthier population to seek gainful employment or to take a more active role in civil society and social regeneration.

AKDN refers to this approach as Multi-Input Area Development (MIAD) – a multi-sectoral effort to respond to development needs and opportunities in particular geographical areas by targeted interventions in education, healthcare, agriculture, private sector development and governance. Over time, AKF hopes

to foster a strong network of capable Afghan individuals and institutions that can drive their own indigenous development process.

In Afghanistan, AKF regional offices group the Foundation's programmes into a number of development areas. The integration process is most advanced in Badakhshan, Baghlan and Bamyan/Parwan, while Takhar is being developed as another geographical focus. In Badakhshan, area development is being taken a step further with the implementation of cross-border programmes aimed at improving social and economic ties between Afghanistan's Badakhshan province and the region of Gorno-Badakhshan in neighbouring Tajikistan. This integration process is aimed at promoting greater regional economic development for the benefit of both areas, which are amongst the most isolated in their respective countries.

AKF works together with other specialised AKDN agencies to support the MIAD approach to development. The following examples show how AKF collaborates with other AKDN agencies to support holistic, integrated development in Afghanistan:

- **Education.** AKF and the Aga Khan Education Services (AKES) collaborate in the promotion of early childhood

development. AKF works with the Aga Khan Health Services to promote health education and childhood well-being as part of its early childhood development programme. The Foundation also works with the University of Central Asia to improve English language and computer skills in Badakhshan.

- **Health.** AKF works with the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) and the Aga Khan University (AKU) to provide improved healthcare in Afghanistan. AKF provides social mobilisation skills and engineering services to build or repair health facilities, while AKHS trains and funds health staff for the facilities. AKU provides support for the training of nurses and midwives in government institutions.

- **Culture.** AKF and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) collaborate on cultural projects in Kabul and in Badakhshan.

Beyond its sister agencies in the Network, the Aga Khan Foundation works to strengthen broader systems of Afghan institutions. For example, AKF governance work is coordinated closely with the Afghan Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to ensure that its approach is

consistent with government priorities. In education, AKF coordinates with the Afghan Ministry of Education and works to build the skill levels of Ministry staff at provincial and district levels.

The Foundation also works closely with the private sector, including the national Chamber of Commerce and its regional affiliates, business associations and entrepreneurs that are creating jobs and income for vulnerable rural households. Local civil society organisations are also strengthened as critical partners. In Bamyan, for example, Afghan civil society groups supported by the Foundation have begun implementing community savings programmes in districts outside those areas where AKF works.

AKF's approach is based on the belief that comprehensive area development, led by Afghan institutions, built on partnerships between government, business and civil society, is the surest way to secure Afghanistan's transition to stability and prosperity. In order to achieve area development, all partners must make long-term commitments, and coordinated investments must respond to the priorities set by local communities and their elected representatives.

*Top: The Ministry of Public Health department in Faizabad, Badakhshan, was constructed by AKF to provide sufficient working environment for government employees.*

*Opposite Page: Students in class room of Khandud model school in Wakhan, Badkhshan. AKF supports Government primary schools and community classes in Afghanistan, working to improve the quality of teaching and the management of schools.*



## Local Governance and Civil Society

At the heart of AKF's work to promote sound development in Afghanistan is the imperative to allow local people and their institutions to take the lead. With training in human and institutional development and in other areas, financial support and ongoing, long-term dialogue, AKF is strengthening the institutional fabric of rural Afghanistan.

Evidence that this Afghan-led approach to development is working includes the fact that Community Development Councils (CDCs), District Development Assemblies (DDAs), local NGOs and Community-Based Savings Groups (CBSGs) are taking the initiative to raise funds and to lead development activities in their areas. These institutions have achieved this fund-raising ability through skills gained from AKF-training focused on building awareness of development needs, improving proposal writing skills and cultivating relations with possible donors.

### Some key achievements in 2012 include the following:

- The total number of CDCs supported by AKF increased to 1,552, with the addition of 40 CDCs incorporated into National Solidarity programming.
- These CDCs secured more than US\$ 153,000 in donor contributions to support the implementation of over 100 community-led development projects, while clusters of CDCs raised an additional US\$ 9.5 million in donor funds, and DDAs gathered contributions totalling US\$ 2 million for district-level development projects. AKF-supported institutions also showed progress in initiating and managing development projects based on their own priorities.
- To sustain the capacity building investments for CDCs, AKF has partnered with provincial-level line departments to build four CDC resource centres that will be managed by sub-national government to mentor the growth of these institutions over the long run.
- AKF staff helped establish 584 CBSGs, bringing the total number of groups assisted by AKF to 2,210 with an overall savings of US\$ 1,076,584.

### Local governance

AKF works to encourage sub-national governance institutions to identify development issues and implement development initiatives, to engage in participatory planning, to promote accountability, to support pluralism and to promote greater gender

equality in order to represent the varied interests of all constituents. The goal of AKF's sub-national governance programme is to develop participatory, democratic, inclusive, competent, transparent and accountable institutions, playing both development and governance roles within their respective domains.

Since 2003, AKF has based its local governance work on its role as a facilitating partner of the Afghan government's National Solidarity Programme (NSP). This programme has established Community Development Councils at the village level, and upgrades their ability to address development needs prioritised by the community. During 2012, AKF increased the scope of its overall NSP programming by providing support for a total of 1,552 CDCs, where an enhanced package of capacity building activities ("NSP Plus") is implemented. The Afghan government has praised AKF for the success of its NSP innovations, several of which have been included in national NSP plans and are now implemented across the country.

AKF also works with clusters of CDCs and District Development Assemblies to address both governance and development issues beyond the village level. AKF sees significant potential for clusters to address issues common to groups of communities (normally five to 12 villages) such as common natural and physical resources and inter-village disputes. DDAs play a similar role at the district level, and have been shown to also address issues such as gender, environment and poppy cultivation, and to provide effective linkages between provincial and community-level development planning processes. To date, a total of 284 clusters of CDCs and 35 DDAs have been supported using a comprehensive long-term and tailor-made capacity building programme that addresses the necessary capacities for these community-based institutions to fulfil their governance and development mandates.

As evidence of the impact AKF's capacity building training has on these institutions, in 2012, a total of US\$ 11.6 million was secured by AKF-supported CDCs, clusters of CDCs, and DDAs themselves, from government and international donors, to conduct local development initiatives such as small-scale infrastructure projects, reforestation campaigns, livelihoods development and school enrolment campaigns. In addition, these institutions have mobilised their constituents to undertake voluntary initiatives to further contribute to local development projects within their communities.

In 2012, AKF established four CDC resource centres at the provincial level in collaboration with the Provincial



*Representatives of the Community Development Councils study a map of Shibar District in Bamyan. AKF supports subnational governance groups to prioritise needs in their areas and how to revise their plans.*

Department for Rural Rehabilitation and Development. These centres provide support and guidance to the CDCs, interface with various government and development actors, bring common interests together for wider experience sharing events, and provide basic systems of development support to CDCs.

AKF also supports 26 provincial line departments and 58 district governors' offices to improve their accountability and overcome severe funding and capacity gaps that prevent the effective delivery of services. This is particularly important work in the current transition period as both security and development responsibilities are gradually transferred to the Afghan government. AKF also provides training and diversification support to these offices, helping them to expand or develop new programmes.

In 2012, AKF supported the training of 141 staff members from the district governors' offices on principles and best practices in good governance. As a result, 10 public audits, in which district governors stand before their constituents to present their achievements and also receive feedback, were self initiated by district governor offices in AKF's programming area. At the provincial level, AKF also supported 13 provincial line departments in 2012 to

expand their programmes and implement women-centric projects, livelihood initiatives and natural resource management activities.

In all its activities, AKF promotes greater awareness of gender issues as a development factor among both women and men. Afghan society is profoundly conservative in matters related to gender, particularly in the rural areas where most of AKF's programmes are implemented. While taking account of local social traditions, AKF encourages the inclusion of women in all its activities, as participants, as decision-makers and as leaders.

In 2012, a total of 9,460 participants (7,980 men and 1,480 women) from 793 CDCs, 80 clusters of CDCs, and 38 DDAs took part in training activities focusing on participatory development topics to enable them to effectively identify, prioritise, and implement development initiatives that are responsive to the needs of their communities. Following these trainings, 172 micro-grants were provided to CDCs, clusters of CDCs and DDAs to enable communities to implement local development initiatives in agriculture, health, education and market development that were identified in their trainings.

### Civil society

For Afghanistan to take advantage of the opportunities provided by transition, it is critical that a vibrant Afghan civil society emerges. One that is focused on development, is



participatory and non-discriminatory, supports pluralism and works to deepen democratic values. AKF aims to support a broad spectrum of civil society organisations that can work towards creating an enabling environment in which they can participate effectively in nation building. Civil society activities take place in the provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar, Baghlan and Bamyan, with outreach activities in Daikundi and Kandahar, as well as promotion of dialogue at a national level.

In 2012, the civil society programme built the capacity of 24 local NGOs through a civil society support institution that focuses on building the capacity of NGOs towards shared standards; expanded partnerships with regional civil society organisations; and expanded programmes that work with civil society leaders, youth and religious groups. Over the past year, 70 percent of local NGO partners established new programmes with AKF assistance, secured funding from other donors, extending beyond AKF's programme area. This project has been particularly successful in enabling local NGOs to establish community-based savings groups. In 2012, local NGOs were able to reach a total of 2,750 (2,565 women and 185 men) in over 12 districts.

AKF is continuing to work to create a model for a

national institution to provide long-term support to civil society organisations, and an enabling environment for civil society to take part in nation building. AKF participates in a working group made up of local civil society networks and key professionals to engage with other stakeholders, including the wider civil society sector, government and donors. This working group will finalise a civil society-led road map to establish this planned institution, which will streamline and sustain the civil society capacity building process.

At a regional level, AKF continues to support civil society forums and institutions to ensure that knowledge and skills are transferred to local institutions. In 2012, regional platforms such as the Badakhshan Development Forum, which has welcomed six new agencies into its membership, and Takhar Development Forum, established with AKF support, continued to promote capacity building efforts for partners such as local civil society organisations, media and sub-national governance bodies. These forums have also provided a platform for collaborative programmes between civil society and government, and the opportunity to replicate successful initiatives between regions.

AKF has also engaged with local media to improve development coverage in both print and electronic media. In Bamyan and Badakhshan, AKF provided support to local media networks and associations, trained 25 local journalists and provided institutional fellowship support for

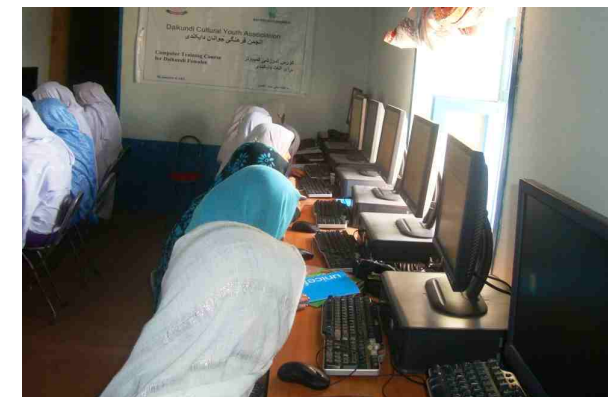
*CDC members during a reverse linkage building session in Shughnan, Badkshsh. This process connects communities with their government representatives.*



two print media organisations to help increase the scale and scope of their work.

### Community-Based Savings Groups

The resilience and initiative of rural Afghan communities is shown by their participation in community-based savings groups (CBSGs). With limited technical support and no financial input from AKF or other outside agencies, communities across the country have collectively saved more than US\$ 1,076,584. In 2012, 584 savings groups with a total of 8,000 members were formed, bringing the total number of savings groups to 2,784 with nearly 38,000 members (72 percent of them women).



*A female computer course in Daikundi highlights AKF's support to capacity building.*

CBSGs help to provide access to credit and savings for the most vulnerable members of rural communities and help to support other community initiatives. Members are normally people who have no access to formal banking or financial services either because they have too little collateral or because such services are not available locally. Savings group members make regular contributions to a central fund, from which they can then take out loans when they require money for a range of personal expenses. Typically such loans are made to cover medical expenses, children's school costs, household improvements, small business investments or various family emergencies. Borrowers are given assistance in planning their repayments. The savings groups are self-governing, making their own rules about contributions and repayments according to local conditions.



*A group of female CBSG members attending a monthly session.*

### Success Story: Civil society and Capacity Building

Green Way Organisation (GWO) has operated for nearly a decade in Afghanistan, working in education, female empowerment through work training, agriculture and human rights awareness. Originally starting operations in Daikundi in 2003, today the Afghan NGO has expanded to Bamyan and Wardak as well, providing services to Afghans in the provinces.

"GWO aims for a prosperous and self-reliant Afghanistan mainly focusing on the Central Highland provinces of Daikundi and Bamyan. When we first started our NGO, we faced a number of challenges since we had limited access to donors, a lack of organisational systems, and weak management practices," said Amir TajSirat, director of GWO.

Yet, while GWO's road has not always been easy – with the help of AKF's civil society capacity building programmes, the organisation has been able to expand its operations and offer Afghan-centric, Afghan-led projects.

"The fellowship granted by AKF in 2009 inspired us to take serious action for the growth of our organisation. Their training in civil society methods helped us develop our organisational systems, and increased our access to donors. In turn, this helped us to expand to more provinces and increase our ability to reach more deprived communities. In all of this, AKF has played an instrumental role in our current success and growth, said GWO's chief executive.

As Afghanistan moves towards transition, it is critical that a vibrant Afghan civil society movement emerge. For this to happen, non-governmental community organisations like GWO must focus on development, be participatory and non-discriminatory, support pluralism and work to deepen democratic values.

In 2012, GWO was able to add Ghor Province to its operations. Furthermore, the organisation received 12 projects from five donors, including an AKF micro-grant. GWO also increased its annual budget for 2012 to US\$ 325,000, up from a budget of US\$ 28,700 in 2011 and US\$ 171,000 in 2009 and 2010.

In addition, various trainings conducted by AKF have enabled GWO to improve its administrative systems in the field of human resources, procurement and finance, while staff members have also benefited from trainings. As a result, GWO has suitable and qualified staff members for each position within the organisation.

## Market Development

Economic growth is essential for Afghanistan to capitalise on the opportunities of transition. While most observers focus on the potential role of mineral extraction and other major foreign investments, AKF has been working with smaller-scale entrepreneurs in the northern and central regions to grow small and medium enterprises that create jobs and income opportunities for the rural population. The market development programme aims to promote inclusive economic growth by developing entrepreneurial and skilled jobs activity, and through strengthening sustainable local institutions such as producer associations, business development service providers, and provincial chambers of commerce that support economic activity by increasing the capacity of local actors to generate income independently.

**Some key achievements in 2012 include the following:**

- A total of 3,355 students (including 2,422 women) received vocational training in 18 different skills including motorbike repair, embroidery, hair dressing, computer literacy, media and journalism, carpet weaving, and food processing. Around 70 percent of these trainees have started their own small businesses or have joined existing entrepreneurs.

*Below: Afghan and Tajik merchants meet at the weekly cross-border market near Khorog, Tajikistan.*

- AKF supported the organisation of three major annual tourism activities in Bamyan, including the Silk Road and Nawroz festivals in the spring and summer, and the Afghan Ski Challenge in the winter.

- A total of 540 poor and marginalised women were trained in Baluchi handicrafts in three districts of Takhar. Of this group, 24 were trained as resource personnel responsible for providing raw materials and designs for trainees, collecting the finished work, and connecting these producers to local traders in Kunduz who export to Iran and Dubai.

- In Baghlan, seven women were trained as hairdressers, three of whom established beauty parlours in their respective villages.

- A total of 72 new and existing associations made up of 2,753 members received support from AKF.

The new Business Membership Organisations were established through awareness workshops to introduce them to the advantages of collective activities. Following their establishment, the cooperatives/associations were provided with workshops in vision building and were supported in developing their internal organisational structure, rules, regulations and three-year plans.

*Opposite Page: Water fall in Ban-e-Amir Bamyan. AKF's tourism programme has introduced hiking, skiing in Bamyan as an additional source of income for the local people.*



The primary target beneficiaries comprise unskilled and/or semi-skilled farmers, youths and entrepreneurs, both male and female. The programme works with various operators in its 16 selected value chains, including input suppliers, producers, processors, traders and consumers. Through its vocational trainings, the market development programme aims to upgrade youths' skills and enhance their employability. Capacity building is also given to business service providers so they can serve their entrepreneur clients.

In 2012, market development increased its efforts to shift from being a direct implementer to serving its target communities as a facilitator. The emphasis was on building and supporting institutions such as producer associations, provincial chambers of commerce and the Bamyan tourism development board. The aim was to allow these institutions to take lead roles in providing quality services and products to its members.

#### Tourism

In Bamyan, in addition to the training of 42 new local skiers on basic risk and proper use and care of ski equipment, four ski guides already trained by AKF received advanced training on avalanche and snowpack assessment. One of these skiers won the 2nd Annual Afghan Ski Challenge, organised in collaboration with national and international tour companies. The aim of organising such an event was to increase international interest in skiing in Bamyan.

Moreover, the Bamyan Tourism Development Board, with support from AKF, the Directorate of

Information and Culture, the Bamyan Chamber of Commerce, the Bamyan Governor's Office and local communities took the lead in organising the annual cultural festivals as well as campaigns for the protection of historical and natural sites. These festivals served as a platform to not only highlight Bamyan's cultural heritage but to also provide an opportunity for local producers, including AKF supported associations, to exhibit and market their products to a larger audience.

#### Dairy

In the dairy value chain, 60 female entrepreneurs in Bamyan improved their expertise in dairy processing by learning improved hygiene and milk storage practices, and were subsequently linked to a market in Kabul through a local dairy marketer. Currently, they sell their dairy products at a rate 15 percent higher than prior to the intervention. In Takhar, a 500-litre capacity dairy-processing centre became fully operational in 2012. The private entrepreneur was supported in development of a business plan, machinery, packaging material, training, promotional activities and establishment of four dairy cooperatives (135 milk producers) that were linked to the dairy plant. The plant, which employs four workers, has a daily processing rate of 230 litres of milk that generates a net profit of US\$ 30 per day.

#### Beekeeping

In the beekeeping subsector, there was a 20 percent increase in the number of farmers earning an income through improved honey production and better marketing in Bamyan. Furthermore, through the adoption of skills through training provided by AKF, the production of each beekeeping farm increased by 20 to 30 percent. The beekeeping cooperatives in Badakhshan

began selling their products to major grocery stores in Kabul, in 2012.

#### Poultry

In the poultry subsector, AKF supported the establishment of two small-scale hatcheries in Baharak, Badakhshan. These hatcheries produce 600 day-old chicks per month that are then sold to neighbouring farmers and regional traders. The hatcheries plan to raise and sell broiler chickens for local consumption. AKF assisted the hatcheries by connecting them to semi-commercial poultry farms and other traders with backyard poultry farmers. The hatchery owners were given training on hatchery management, hatching techniques, hygiene and sanitation and marketing skills. It is expected that each business will earn approximately 8,000 AFN (US\$ 160) per month.

In Baghlan, interventions in the poultry subsector proved highly successful. During 2012, the number of commercial poultry farms increased from 20 to 40 farms with AKF providing technical support to commercial poultry farmers through partial financial support in purchasing day-old chicks, feed and medicines needed for the birds. In the second cycle, farmers took on more of the initial expenditures. All of the poultry farms have been linked with the Northern Farming Poultry Cooperative (NFPC) to ensure the sustainability of the farms. AKF also facilitated the hiring of a resource person for the NFPC to provide technical services and to conduct trainings for prospective or new farmers. For every cycle, which lasts 45 days, the poultry farms have a capacity of raising 1,000 to 3,000 birds, generating a net average income of 20,000 AFN (US\$ 400) to 50,000 AFN (US\$1,000) per cycle.

#### Market Development Programme and Women

AKF recognises the importance of the economic empowerment of women for social change. Therefore, despite socio-cultural constraints faced by rural women, the market development programme continues with efforts to incorporate a total of 2,013 women into its income-generation activities such as backyard poultry farming, beekeeping, fruit processing, wool spinning, dairy and fruit processing, and handicrafts and tailoring.

In the Baharak district of Badakhshan, 20 women received workshop trainings in poultry management, feeding techniques, shed construction, treatment and vaccination, marketing techniques, sanitation, and the analysis of different breeds of poultry best suited for egg versus meat production. Furthermore, the training of 15 women in qorsdozi embroidery was a success, as two of the women have already started their own enterprises while the others work with local service providers on a commission basis. Each woman earns around 3,500-7,000 AFN (US\$ 70-140) per month.

In Baghlan, 500 women received training in home-based apple processing (mainly jelly), tomato paste production and advanced apricot dehydration techniques in 2012. The aim of these trainings was to provide an income-generating opportunity for women by helping them prevent losses and productively use surplus, both for household consumption and sale in local markets. Further, around 300 women who received training in wool spinning in previous years were linked to 10 new service providers who provide the raw material, inspect the quality of the wool, and collect the finished products that are then sold to local and regional traders. An average wool spinner can produce around 20kg of wool per month, worth 1,000 AFN (US\$20).

Bottom: The 3rd Afghan Ski Challenge was organised by AKF, Bamyan Ski Club and Rah-e-Abresham Tours.



## Success Story: Handicraft Development

In the rural areas of Takhar Province, as in other rural areas in Afghanistan, women's movement is restricted and they usually do not engage in activities that require them to leave their homes.

When planning income-generating activities, it is imperative to take this into account. The Baluchi Handicraft Programme meets this criterion by allowing women to be economically productive from their homes by engaging in traditional manufacturing and production.

In Takhar, the Baluchi Handicraft Programme not only trains women in stitching skills, it also links these women to traders who are in turn linked to regional and international markets. An internal rapid market assessment of Baluchi handicrafts in 2011 showed that the subsector has immense growth potential and is a prominent activity in the area, involving 20,000 women and incorporating relatively well-established trade routes and sources in the neighbouring province of Kunduz.

In order to expand the subsector to more remote areas and involve impoverished women, AKF conducted a 10-day training in Baluchi stitching for 357 women from poor households from remote villages in Takhar. From this pool, around eight women were selected and trained as master trainers to facilitate trainings for more women.

Furthermore, a quality control system was developed by training 24 women as quality inspectors. Each of these women was assigned to a producer group that consisted of 20-25 members. These inspectors also serve as resource persons who not only ensure the good quality of the finished product, but also serve as a bridge connecting the producers with local traders. Once traders collect the finished products from the resource women, they sell it to other regional and international traders in Iran and Dubai. Women involved in Baluchi stitching earn an average of up to 1,500 AFN (US\$ 30) per month or more depending upon the quality and time devoted to this activity.

Ms. Noria, a master trainer in Taloqan, and mother of three children, believes her experience with the programme has transformed her life since she now provides significant financial support to her household. Because of her skills, Ms. Noria was contracted by AKF to provide a 15-day training in Baluchi stitching for a fee of 500 AFN (US\$ 10) per day. As she gained more experience conducting trainings, her daily wage for subsequent training contracts increased to 700 AFN (US\$ 14).

*Bottom: The Market Development Programme is supporting local women to learn skills in Baluchi Handicraft and connects them with local traders and markets.*

*Opposite page: A commercial apple orchard in Baharak, Badakhshan, under AKF support.*

## Natural Resource Management

Natural resource management (NRM), includes agricultural and livestock activities, as well as the conservation and management of rangeland and water resources. In Afghanistan, where approximately 80 percent of the population relies on the natural environment to earn a living, support for agriculture, livestock and common property management is essential. AKF works with local communities, producer groups, business associations, private traders, colleges, research institutes, universities and the Afghan government to improve management of the natural environment, thereby enabling greater food security and more productive opportunities for the rural population.

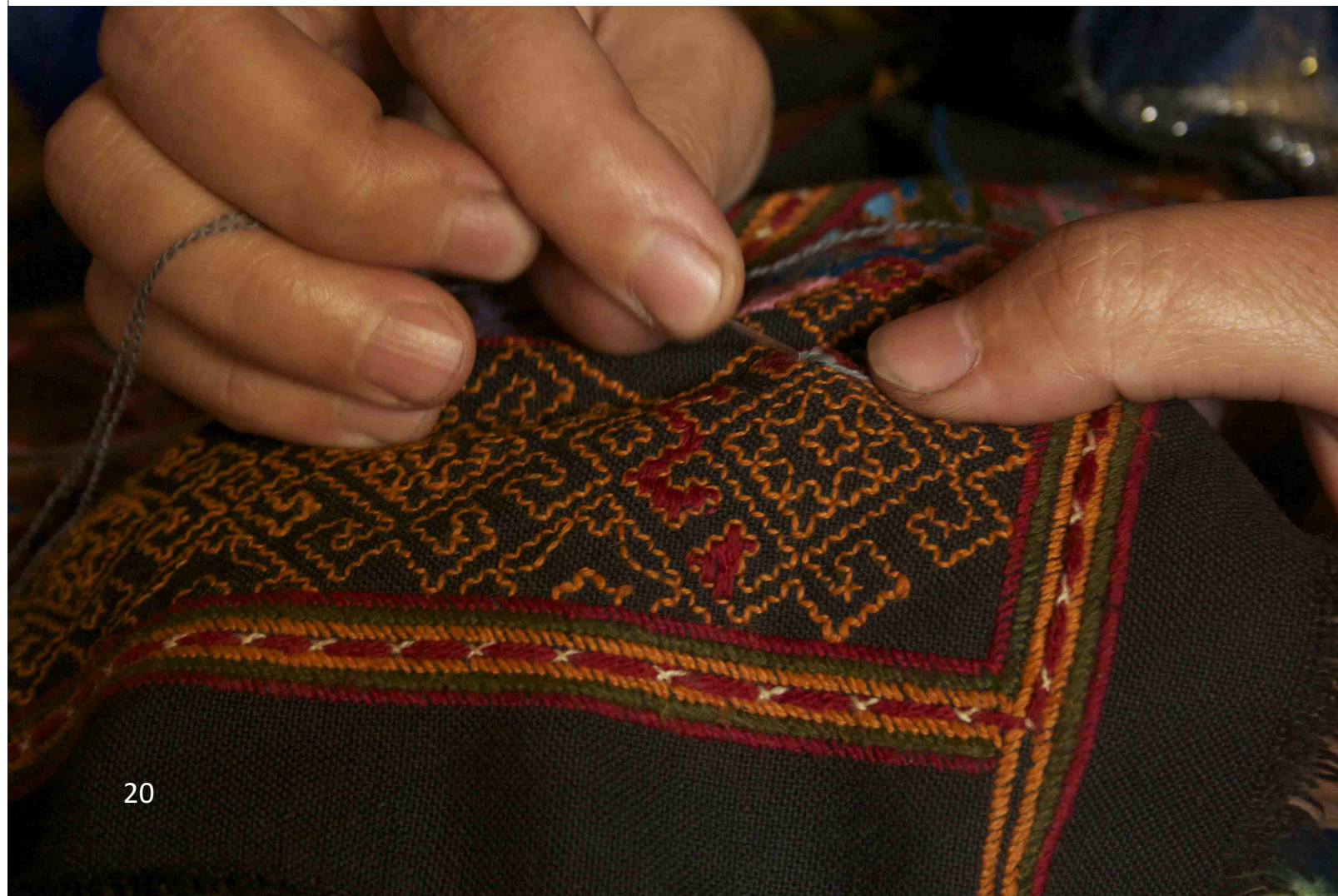
**Some key achievements in 2012 include the following:**

- One livestock development centre and one input supply shop were launched in Jurm District, Badakhshan Province. Two other input supply shops were launched in Ishkashim and Shughnan in Badakhshan. Together, these centres and shops provide livestock health and other services for local farmers.
- A total of 88 para-veterinarians and 11 doctors of veterinary medicine received refresher training on

artificial insemination techniques as well as new training on the embryo transfer technique, a new methodology for breed improvement. Artificial insemination implementation had a nearly 72 percent success rate, meaning 870 exotic-breed calves were born. These calves can have a market value four to six times higher than that of local-breed calves.

- Four new Water User Associations (WUAs) were set up in Takhar, for a total of 13 WUAs in Baghlan and Takhar. For the first time, these WUAs formulated user fee collection mechanisms, were trained to carry out routine operations, and submitted their documents to the Ministry of Energy and Water for official registration. Twelve new WUAs were established in Bamyan through a participatory process and are carrying out routine management of 19 canals in Shibar and Bamyan Centre.

AKF's NRM activities include interventions across integrated subsectors: livestock (health, nutrition, breed improvement), field crops and horticulture (perennial and seasonal), and land and water management. The NRM programme targets food insecurity through interventions to improve the quality, quantity and variety of food available to poorer households, and by expanding income opportunities. AKF works with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and the Ministry of





Energy and Water to build the capacities of government staff, and to ensure that programmes are designed within government development frameworks. The NRM programme reaches some more than 2.1 million beneficiaries.

During 2012, AKF continued to transfer the responsibility for carrying out a number of NRM activities to local institutions, allowing AKF to move in to a facilitating role, providing assistance where necessary but allowing local institutions to take the lead and to make key decisions.

#### Livestock

The livestock programme made significant progress in building the capacity of local farmers and agricultural institutions in 2012. AKF has established three livestock development services provider associations operating with 27 previously established and privatised Livestock Development Centres (LDCs), which provide animal health and nutrition services. In AKF target areas, livestock farmers have reported a perceived reduction in animal mortality and morbidity because of vaccination and treatment services, and have also reported an increase in income from livestock production. In 2012, close to one million doses of vaccine were administered by private LDCs against a variety of communicable and non-communicable diseases through a series of four seasonal campaigns.

To build on gains made in 2011, AKF provided refresher training to the livestock development team

and trained new inseminators in breed improvement aimed at enhancing animal productivity in 2012. AKF also established four new artificial insemination centres for better service delivery and to reach the majority of farmers in AKF target areas. And, in order to encourage farmers in breed improvement, AKF conducted six calf exhibitions, demonstrating the results of artificial insemination. In total 1,200 farmers showed in or observed the exhibitions.

During 2012, AKF continued its popular Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) on livestock topics providing training in animal health and nutrition, with the long-term aim of improving food security and farmers' income generating opportunities. These practical field schools, held once a week for the duration of a course, provide training for participating farmers, who then disseminate their new skills and knowledge to other farmers in their villages. In 2012, AKF provided agricultural training in 700 villages by this method. In total, 1,672 male farmers and 1,146 female farmers were trained through FFSs. Using the participatory technology development groups, a method that involves working with groups of local farmers to provide training or to seek solutions to agricultural problems, involving them in decision-making and the eventual choice of interventions, another 3,879 male and 3,208 female farmers were trained.

#### Field crops and horticulture

AKF's NRM programme works to revive production systems that performed well before the disruptions of the Afghan war; to reduce the need to import staples, such as wheat, potatoes and rice; and to assist producers to

compete in national and international markets. The regional competitiveness of Afghanistan's field crops and horticulture is important for the long-term future of the Afghan economy, one that is largely based on agriculture.

AKF's policy is to transfer input supply systems to the private sector whenever possible. Some mother stock nurseries supplying fruit tree saplings, originally established and supported by AKF and fully privatised in 2011, earned around 3.5 million AFN. Nursery saplings are in high demand and nursery owners report a steady increase in income.

AKF promotes the use of Integrated Crop Management (ICM) techniques, which have proved successful for farmers in AKF programme areas by using a system of crop production which aims to conserve and make the most efficient use of natural resources, using biological rather than chemical methods of pest and disease control. Based on an understanding of the relationship between biology, the environment and land management systems, ICM is particularly suitable for small farmers because it reduces dependence on purchased inputs and makes use of indigenous knowledge and land use practices.

Following this approach, in 2012, AKF promoted systems that support community access to quality

*Opposite page: True potato seed production in a green house in Ganjabad Research Station in Ishkashim, Badakhshan, supported by AKF.*

genetic inputs through on-farm seed production with eight seed producers groups and 35 nursery growers. In addition, more than 436 commercial orchards and home orchards were established with farmers across the target area with the supply of nearly 35,000 virus-free fruit tree saplings. Using the same method, new potato varieties introduced in Badakhshan and Bamyan have been judged to be the best alternative crop in terms of food productivity and food security, with 800 MT produced in 2012. At the same time, those farmers planting new varieties of potato averaged 35 MT per hectare, while the baselinewas 20 MT per hectare, marking a large increase. Furthermore, in Bamyan, and also in Parwan, 14 plant clinics strengthened their approach to plant health.

AKF's NRM team promotes farmers' skills development through FFSs, participatory technology development groups, demonstration orchards and field crop plots of improved varieties. In 2012, the use of these platforms enhanced the skills of 4,642 farmers in quality farm production of cereals, legumes, oil crops, and horticulture crops, resulting in an approximately 25 percent increase in yield and a 30 percent reduction in production cost. These farmers not only take on these new skills themselves, but also develop them in neighbouring farmers who may not have taken part in the trainings.

*Below picture: Farmer Field School training in Jurm, Badakhshan.*



To support the establishment of a national certification and quarantine scheme for fruit trees for the long-term health of the horticulture sector, AKF has been managing the Biological Control Lab, a virus-indexing laboratory in Kabul, since 2007. This laboratory was handed over in 2012 to the government's Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and the lab continues to function with standard operational procedures and strong insect rearing protocols.

#### Land and water management

AKF works to improve the ability of communities to preserve or exploit their local natural resources in a sustainable manner. In 2012, considerable progress was made in the development of locally based multi-layer institutions for common property resources management. AKF continues to promote area-based approaches for land and water use and conservation in all its programme regions through a "mountains to markets" strategy, designing multi-faceted interventions based on ecological zones. This strategy is currently being implemented in Takhar and Bamyan provinces, where it is showing positive results.

Across the target programme areas, 62 pasture or forest management committees and user groups were supported to manage their natural resources,

including providing support to 45 forestry nurseries, 42 forestation sites, and over 1,600 fodder planting sites for households through capacity building, networking and technical demonstrations. Another roughly 100 households participated in rice intensification projects and obtained more than 60 percent yield increases compared to traditional methods. In total, AKF trained 3,480 people, including villagers and government officials, in various subjects of land and water management.

In the irrigated agricultural lands of Baghlan and Takhar provinces, AKF works with groups of farmers and other interested individuals in Water User Associations (WUAs), which oversee and regulate the use of irrigation water. In 2012, 13 associations in Baghlan and Takhar formulated user fee collection mechanisms, carried out their routine operations and submitted their documents to the Ministry of Energy and Water for official registration. In Baghlan alone, compared with 2008 when the social water management project started, the total irrigated area of the four major canals has expanded by 1,937 hectares, mostly in midstream and downstream areas. In Bamyan 12 WUAs have been established, covering 19 canals. These associations have held a number of capacity building events and completed five infrastructure construction projects.



**Opposite Page:** Newly built irrigation canals in Aqrabat, Bamyan and Baharak, Badakhshan to help farmers irrigate their land. More than 10 such structures were built across AKF programme areas over 2012.

#### Success Story: Land and Water

When AKF first approached farmer Abdul Zaher in 2006, he had a big problem. Much of his rangeland, in the WakhshakBala village of Dahana-e-Ghori District of Baghlan Province, had been degraded by mismanagement and overgrazing.

With the support of AKF's forestry and pasture management team, Abdul planted and tended pistachio trees and ferula plants on a hectare of his land. In 2012, he selected 50 mature plants for sap collection. Altogether, he collected 6kg (120 grams from each plant) of ferula sap – which, when powdered, becomes a food flavouring. He sold it on the local market at 3,000 AFN/Kg and earned 18,000 AFN (around US\$ 360).

With the money he earned, he sent his children to school and bought things for his family from the bazaar. Abdul is very happy with his investment and hopes his ferula plot will continue to provide income to improve his life and the future of his family. Abdul is just one of the 150 farmers in Baghlan participating in an AKF initiative trying to reconcile conservation and development needs. Baghlan's rangelands were highly degraded and needed urgent conservation management, but the farmers there are so poor that they rely on local natural resources for bare subsistence – and so could not take conservation into account.

But AKF's team noted that the physical conditions of Baghlan are very suitable for growing pistachio and ferula. In the past, pistachios have been one of the major export products of Afghanistan and ferula produces a sap (locally called hing) that is highly valued on the international market. At the same time, both plants are deep-rooted and so are well suited to erosion control.

Thus, AKF helped integrate the objectives of environmental conservation and economic development, by supporting the farmers in WakhshakBala village of Baghlan in the cultivation of pistachio and ferula on their degraded rangelands. Altogether, 150 households cultivated 150 hectares of their land with ferula and pistachio seedlings in 2006. AKF provided the farmers with seeds and technical guidance and training in cultivation, after-sowing management, product harvesting, and processing and marketing skills. In 2012, many of the farmers started to harvest and sell ferula sap. Since farmers have halted grazing on the hectares planted with cash crops, plant cover on certain areas of the rangelands have begun to grow, resulting in a win-win situation for both environmental conservation and the economic development of local communities.



# Infrastructure

Creating viable infrastructure in Afghanistan – from roads and irrigation canals to schools and clinics – is an essential pillar for a successful transition. AKF works closely with local residents, not only to ensure that new constructions are of high quality, but also that the process of selecting and building is participatory and reflects local needs, not international assumptions.

**Some key achievements in 2012 include the following:**

- AKF designed, contracted and supervised the implementation of US\$ 22 million worth of new infrastructure in AKF programme areas.
- Infrastructure projects enabled wide-ranging capacity building of sub-national governance institutions, such as Community Development Councils (CDCs), District Development Assemblies (DDAs) and Provincial Development Councils, which oversaw the implementation of construction projects.

- Through German funding, AKF built district-level infrastructure projects in 25 districts that have directly or indirectly benefited about 1.7 million people. To date, 31 infrastructure projects have been completed, and 37 others are under construction. Another 44 projects were surveyed, designed and contracted, and construction will begin in early 2013. Another five school and bridge infrastructure projects through Japanese funding are also ready to begin construction in 2013.

### Construction and rehabilitation of medium-scale infrastructure

AKF constructs and rehabilitates essential infrastructure either directly through the work of its own engineers, or by subcontracting to private local companies. Whenever possible, AKF contracts experienced local Afghan companies to carry out these community projects. Using Afghan companies channels development funds directly into the local economy and helps to keep costs low.

*Below: Bibi Hawa Girls High School in Takhar was one of 28 schools constructed or rehabilitated in 2012 by AKF.  
Opposite top: A girls dormitory in Taloqan constructed by AKF, Takhar supports access to school for those living too far away to travel everyday.  
Opposite bottom: On the banks of the Faizabad river, the new phase of Faizabad Hospital is under construction.*



Since 2004, CDCs formed under the Afghan government's National Solidarity Programme (NSP) have completed a total of 2,544 projects at the community level, with assistance from AKF. An additional 304 projects are currently underway. These projects are selected by members of the councils themselves, and complement the capacity building activities of the community development team. Most frequently, communities chose to build micro-hydropower units, roads, canals and school buildings.

#### **Bridges, canals and water pipe schemes**

During 2012, AKF built 19 bridges in its programme areas and committed to building 11 more. Six irrigation structures (intakes, wash culverts and canals) were built and 13 more canals designed and contracted. Five gravity water pipe supply schemes were completed and five more are ongoing. Health and hygiene promotion presentations were made to communities which received water supply schemes to explain how basic hygiene principles can be incorporated into daily life.

#### **Construction and rehabilitation of schools**

In 2012, 28 schools were selected and approved for

rehabilitation or construction from DDAs. Existing schools chosen under this project are in desperate need of proper permanent infrastructure facilities, such as classrooms, toilet buildings and boundary walls. Many pupils who will benefit from the planned new infrastructure are currently taught in tents or dilapidated buildings. Most projects chosen through district-level decision-making processes are schools, highlighting the importance which communities place on education.

#### **Construction and rehabilitation of health infrastructure**

AKF is carrying out an extensive rehabilitation and expansion of Faizabad Provincial Hospital in Badakhshan. Construction of an Essential Health Service Unit started in March 2012 and will be completed by the end of 2013. Also in Badakhshan, the construction of district hospitals in Kishim and Baharak and of a community health centre in Wardooj began in March 2012, again for completion by the end of 2013.

#### **Energy**

This year AKF completed phases I and II of the Light up Bamyan project. The project provides power to one village and the main bazaar in Bamyan town. In Badakhshan, 25 micro-hydro projects have been constructed and installed under NSP programming.

*Opposite page: A micro-hydropower unit built in Yomgan, Badakhshan by AKF that can generate 100kw of electricity.*

### **Success Story: Suspension Bridge**

Torrential rains, bad roads, remote villages, rugged mountains and a thousand other difficulties all make getting from one place to another in Afghanistan a big challenge. Good transportation infrastructure like roads and bridges can vastly improve the lives of people – helping them in everything from getting to clinics in time to get care to transporting the latest crop of melons to market with minimal damage.

For this very reason, the 80-metre long Qezelsia Cable Bridge in Aliabad District, Kunduz Province is one of the most important bridges in the district since it connects five villages and provides easy access to more than 8,000 people living in the area to a school, a clinic and a market situated on the other side of the river.

After AKF consultations with the community, it was decided that that cable bridge needed to be built to replace the wooden raft people were using to cross the river, since using the raft came with great risk – especially when flash floods would tear through the area – sometimes killing those on the raft. Besides being dangerous, the raft could only carry limited quantities of local agricultural produce to sell in the market and could only bring small amounts of daily necessities back to the villagers. What is more, the boat owners only allowed certain people to cross, while some had to sit and wait all day for a ride.

After a proposal by the local community AKF promised to help the local residents. AKF engineers did a technical survey and prepared the designs and the construction contract for the bridge was awarded through a public tender to a local private contractor.

Taking more than a year, construction was completed in May 2012. During the building, more than 150 local workers laboured on the project. Today, the completed suspension bridge provides farmers, traders and villagers easier access to area markets and to Kunduz, while villagers can more easily carry food and other necessary goods in.







## Education

Perhaps the most essential investment that the international community can make in the future of Afghanistan is education. AKF works with the government and communities to improve the quality and reach of the state education system, while also developing literacy skills among parents and strengthening the management of schools.

### Some key achievements in 2012 include the following:

- Provided ongoing support for more than 130,000 primary and secondary students.
- Supported schools and communities to enable 95 percent of Grade 6 girls to progress into lower secondary school and 92 percent of Grade 9 girls to progress into high school.
- Established over 200 community-based primary classes.
- Learning environments supported for more than 130,000 pupils (40 percent of them girls) in 23 districts in the provinces of Badakhshan, Baghlan, Bamiyan and Parwan.
- AKF implements a range of education

interventions in Afghanistan aimed at strengthening the government's capacity to deliver high-quality education, and at promoting better educational access for all children, particularly girls, in the most remote rural areas of central and north-eastern Afghanistan.

AKF has expanded its support for community-based primary classrooms in 2012, establishing an additional 215 classes. Community-based classes are very simple classrooms supported by local residents in remote villages beyond the reach of government schools. In addition, ongoing assistance to 216 government primary schools helped to increase access to primary education for out-of-school children in its programme areas to 87 percent of children of the relevant age. Overall, 95 percent of children in Grade 6 from AKF-supported primary schools progress on to secondary school. This figure shows that the quality of education and access to school facilities are improving, and that communities are taking a growing interest in education for their children. AKF helps children to stay in school longer by working to overcome the obstacles that prevent many children from continuing their education.

Girls are particularly likely to stop attending school because of constraints related to distance, lack of girls' schools, social customs or lack of facilities in schools. To overcome these obstacles, AKF provides assistance to repair school infrastructure and build toilets for girls; provides incentives and accelerated learning programmes for women teachers; and promotes dialogue with community and religious leaders to promote a better understanding of the importance of education. In 2012, the number of pupils attending AKF-supported secondary schools increased to 32,450.

School Shuras, formerly known as Parent Teacher Student associations, are established in all AKF-supported schools to help improve and oversee their day-to-day operations and to ensure the sustainability of educational improvements by closely involving parents and the community in their children's education. In 2012, over 450 School Shuras were established, supported and trained in government schools, community-based classes and pre-schools, ensuring community involvement in all schools and pre-schools supported by AKF. In 2012, 94 percent of these were deemed to be actively engaged in supporting and running their schools, promoting school enrolment and attendance, as well as assisting in areas of child-protection, such as preventing early marriage.

At the district and provincial levels, AKF has provided training and support for all school inspectors and supervisors in the 23 districts covered by the education programme, improving their ability to assist schools effectively. AKF provides practical assistance, such as transport to enable district and provincial education staff to visit the schools and community classes under their supervision.

In addition, AKF supports Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) to enable improved instructional quality and improved learning environments for pre-service and in-service teachers in three core and six satellite TTCs in Bamiyan, Baghlan, and Badakhshan. AKF supports TTCs and their staff through in-service professional development courses and mentoring for faculty, and by providing resources, and infrastructure projects, with an emphasis on the needs of female pupils. Furthermore, AKF works with the Ministry of Education's provincial and district departments to better support schoolteachers and management in hosting and building the capacity of student teachers during their fourth semester teaching practicum at designated schools.

Engagement with government educational bodies at the provincial and national levels is an important part of AKF's education activities. Education staff takes part in a number of working groups and partner meetings, helping to influence national education policies.

*Opposite page: An early childhood education (ECD) class in Khinjan Model School, Baghlan  
Bottom picture: Students observing a science experiment in Khinjan Model School, Baghlan*



Involvement with the education authorities at national, regional and district levels has in some cases led to significant influence, such as in the development of the government's draft Community-Based Education guidelines.

### Early Childhood Development

Recognising the importance of early childhood development (ECD), AKF has established a number of pre-schools and ECD centres in its programme areas. These enable access to a supportive, stimulating environment for pre-school children. AKF takes the view that early childhood development can best be achieved through a combined approach of the health and education sectors. AKF focuses on the operation of community-based pre-schools, located in the

home of a community member who receives special training in ECD teaching methods. This training is linked to parenting education and mothers' literacy classes.

During 2012, AKF supported over 3,186 children (54 percent girls) through 69 early childhood development centres. ECD teachers employed in the centres – 138 in total – are all women. The ECD programme is still in a pilot phase and its impact cannot be fully evaluated yet, but anecdotal evidence from primary schools – which many of the ECD pupils enter – indicates that children who took part in the programme are better able to adjust to the new primary school environment. Increasing children's school readiness will also contribute to the ministry's aims of increasing enrolment and transition rates of school-aged children.



**Top Picture:** English class in Bamyan Girls High School, a government school supported by AKF.

**Opposite page:** Baby Zaibrahman is weighed before his examination at the Faizabad Hospital. Malnutrition is of one of the biggest challenge faced by new born babies.

### Success Story: Pre-schools

The advantage of a child who has gone to pre-school over one who has not is very clear. As more pre-schools are opened in Afghanistan, this is becoming more and more apparent to the people.

"They have lots of learning strategies and know how to behave in class," said Rabia, a Grade 1-teacher in Khinjan, Baghlan Province, when asked about the advantage students from AKF-supported pre-schools have over their peers.

"They already know how to hold a pencil, open a book and work quietly. They don't shout at each other, or hit other children when they get angry or frustrated. They are active in class, ask lots of questions and move quickly and eagerly when I give them instructions," Rabia said, enthusiastically. "Also, when I leave the classroom, the pre-school students carry on with their work – and if I haven't given them any work, they start looking at their books or drawing all on their own. The other children don't know these things when they come in. But they watch the pre-school students and learn from them, so it is also good for their behaviour."

Rabia, having seen the difference in these children, went to visit one of the pre-schools to see for herself what it is they were doing. After her visit, she recommends other Grade 1 teachers, as well as District Education Department representatives, do the same to learn how well children can learn in this different environment.

## Health

Improvements in healthcare in Afghanistan are one of the country's most significant success stories of the past decade. AKF, together with its sister agencies in the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), supports the public health system – aligned with national priorities – through technical and operational assistance, and by bringing together international partners around shared objectives.

### Some key achievements in 2012 include the following:

- After construction of the new in-patient ward is completed, construction will continue to increase Faizabad Hospital's capacity to 126 beds.
- Launched a comprehensive and integrated Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) project designed to improve access to quality MNCH services and reduce disease rates.
- Launched a Post Graduate Medical Education (PGME) programme to increase the quality of speciality medical services and to strengthen the national healthcare system and teaching institutions with appropriately trained faculty and consultants. Under this programme, six trainees were enrolled in the PGME programme in paediatric surgery and paediatric medicine.
- Bamyan Provincial Hospital and the Community Midwife Education Programme obtained an ISO 9001:2008 certification, highlighting an international standard of quality care.

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) carries out an extensive range of health activities in Afghanistan. These activities are implemented primarily by two agencies within the Network – the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) and the Aga Khan University (AKU) programmes for Afghanistan (including the French Medical Institute for Children in Kabul). AKF assists these two sister agencies in mobilising resources, managing grants and maintaining donor relationships whereas AKF itself implements projects such as health infrastructure; clean water and sanitation projects; health promotion; and integrated multi-sector nutrition. These AKDN health programmes work to improve the health status particularly of those living in remote or inaccessible areas, paying special attention to the needs of women of childbearing age and children under five.

In 2012, AKF and AKDN continued implementing critical health programmes such as the government Basic Package of Health Services in Badakhshan, Baghlan and Bamyan; Essential Package of Hospital Services in Badakhshan and Bamyan; community health nursing and community midwife education; maternal and child health initiatives in Badakhshan; e-health activities; rehabilitation of district hospitals and comprehensive health centres; and healthcare education faculty training; as well as a number of other programmes designed to improve the health status of target populations, with a focus on mothers, newborns and children.



In 2012, AKF launched a comprehensive programme for improving mother and child health in Badakhshan province. Activities include the establishment of a diploma nursing course in Faizabad; a midwife education programme in Kabul; providing technical support to the Badakhshan and Bamyan Provincial Public Health Directorates and the Reproductive and Child and Adolescent Health departments; enhancing community participation and local governance; and holistic intervention for improving nutrition. The programme also includes the Post Graduate Medical Education at the French Medical Institute for Children and a diploma in midwife education components and is supported by the Canadian International Development Agency.

In central and western Badakhshan, rehabilitation work has begun on government district hospitals in Baharak and Kishim and on a Comprehensive Health Centre in Wardooj. AKF and AKHS are carrying out a major renovation and expansion of Faizabad Provincial Hospital, the chief government hospital in Badakhshan. The hospital is managed by AKHS under agreement with the Ministry of Public Health. The renovation has progressed during 2012 with rehabilitation work, equipping and staff training. The hospital's total number of beds for maternity cases has increased to 56 with the addition of the new maternity ward, and all necessary equipment is now available for reproductive healthcare services. Construction of the site's flagship infrastructure project, the new Essential Health Services Unit, was started at the beginning of 2012.

In line with the Afghan government's policy to prioritise the professional development of health workers, AKDN has worked both to improve the skills of existing health professionals and to introduce new skilled personnel into the health system, with a focus on female midwives and nurses. In 2012, more than 3,600 trainings were delivered to health facilities and management staff, including training abroad, in-house and training via e-health facilities. E-health is particularly useful for training female staff in Afghanistan because it means that women trainees do not have to travel far. (Families are often reluctant to allow women members to travel unless they are accompanied.)

The Aga Khan Health Services and the Aga Khan University Programs for Afghanistan have expanded their efforts to build nursing and midwife capacity. AKHS manages three community midwife schools in Faizabad, Badakhshan Province, Pul-i-Khumri, Baghlan Province and Bamyan town, Bamyan

Province, which select women from rural villages and provide them with a two-year training course to enable them to work as professional midwives in their home communities. The agency has begun training its sixth cohort of female community midwives in Badakhshan and Bamyan, a total of 92 students, while an additional cohort was recruited in both provinces in 2012. In Baghlan, the second cohort of community midwifery students graduated in mid-2012. The total number of community midwives trained by AKHS by the end of 2012 was 294.

The Aga Khan University has been assisting Afghanistan's main national training institute for nurses, the Ghazanfar Institute of Health Sciences (GIHS) in Kabul, since 2002. Support has been provided particularly for the institute's midwifery education programme, with a total of 658 midwives graduating with diplomas with AKU support since 2006. AKU has also provided technical and other support for the development of the institute's diploma nursing programme at GIHS, with 716 nurses graduating since 2003. The University will continue its engagement with the GIHS and the Ministry of Public Health by providing technical support and guidance in faculty development for the ministry's community health nursing education programme.

Bamyan Provincial Hospital is managed by AKHS through an agreement with the Ministry of Public Health. In both Faizabad Provincial Hospital and Bamyan Provincial Hospital, E-health services are improving the provision of quality healthcare. These services, provided in collaboration with the AKDN E-health center at the AKU Hospital in Karachi, Pakistan, operate via a dedicated telecommunications link to the French Medical Institute for Children in Kabul and to the AKU Hospital. E-health enables immediate video and audio consultations with medical specialists in Kabul. The link also enables staff training and important management meetings to be carried out via video and audio teleconferencing facilities.

During 2012, AKF expanded its involvement in promoting public health at the community level. In Badakhshan province, AKF provides training in health promotion to community leaders, including teachers, religious clerics, community health workers, community health committees, and to women's groups in Community Development Councils. These community leaders then lead health campaigns and awareness sessions in local villages.



*Opposite page: Midwifery student works in the maternity ward of Faizabad hospital during her practical training.*



**Above:** Midwifery student checking her patient in the Basic Health Clinic in Kalo, Bamyan.  
**Opposite page:** Vanj bridge connecting the Maimai district of Afghanistan to the Wanj district of Tajikistan.

### Success story: Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health

Waseema and her husband face many daily problems in their lives, working as farmers in the remote northern province of Badakhshan. But Waseema, 34, faces other burdens beyond those faced by her husband – as do all women in Afghanistan when it comes to maternal, neonatal and children's health.

“When I was five months pregnant, I used to carry out very heavy physical work and loads. During some small construction on our farm, my husband would pour the water and I would mix mud for the building. Later, my husband was building a wall and I would hand him up the bricks,” said Waseema.

“I was pregnant and I was facing many problems. When I complained about the pain caused by the work, my husband replied that all women needed to do the same work in the same manner. So there was nothing else to do except tolerate the pain,” she said.

In a country where newborn and child mortality rates remain extremely high and the health of mothers is not looked after to the degree it should be, Waseema was facing a common and difficult situation. But as she was facing this dilemma, one of AKF's maternal, neonatal and child health teams came to WejinjePayaan, their village in the Baharak District, Badakhshan Province.

With villagers lacking community health awareness, AKF health workers provided training for both male and female residents of the village to enhance their understanding of health and nutrition practices. The trainings aim to help communities improve their own health.

“In early 2012, AKF health workers came to our village and they taught both men and women about health promotion and its impact on life. When I listened to the words of the AKF health workers, my thoughts about hygiene and sanitation changed. The following day, the AKF health workers conducted a training on the enhancement of health for men and women in our village,” said Waseema.

“After my husband and I attended the same training in our village, we returned to our home and discussed the training outlines in detail. Since then, my husband has behaved in a proper way, not letting me carry out hard physical activity anymore,” she said.

“In addition, encouraged by the AKF health team, my husband took me to the district clinic to get a tetanus vaccination. When I was informed of the condition of my pregnancy and of the twins I had, my husband and I started to be more careful about my health,” the new mother said.

“Ultimately my twins were born. Now my children are healthy and I also feel quite well. Now I try to feed them with my own milk, so I can feed my children better. I also pay more attention to their hygiene and cleanliness as instructed by the AKF health team. If I properly consider these hygiene measures, I will not need to pay the doctor unnecessarily,” said Waseema.

## Afghan-Tajik Cross-Border Programme

AKDN has been working across borders, between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, since 1996. Cross-border programmes are aimed at building positive relationships between citizens of Afghanistan and Tajikistan through cooperative activities in human and institutional development, market development, natural resource management, infrastructure, education and health. The programme acknowledges the development paths of Tajikistan and Afghanistan, capitalising on these differences as opportunities to promote development for mutual benefit.

### Some key achievements in 2012 include the following:

- More than US\$ 1.15 million worth of goods were sold in three weekly cross-border markets established by AKF near three of the new “friendship bridges” over the Panj River (Amu Darya).
- An Agro Fair was initiated at the Shughnan market to expand economic opportunities for both sides of the border by promoting the sale of agricultural products. This resulted in an unprecedented 4,500 participants.
- A fifth cross-border bridge linking Khwahan District in Badakhshan, Afghanistan, with Shurobad

District in Khatlon, Tajikistan, and will be finished by mid 2013.

- Four Farmer Field Schools (FFS) focusing on horticulture and livestock were established. Each will develop the skills of farmers by sharing their experiences under the guidance of facilitators.
- Four watersheds were established in Shughnan, Maimai, Nusai, and Shukai, and five rangeland sites in Shughnan, Maimai, Nusai, Shukai, and Koofab were rehabilitated.
- Five Livestock Development Centres (LDCs) were supported, each overseeing activities in their districts, including: vaccinations, treatment, trainings, workshops, and all other activities for livestock.
- Capacity development programmes were developed for District Development Assemblies (DDAs) to improve local governance, train participants at the district-level and create projects based on community-based decisions.

AKF first began cross-border activities linking Afghanistan and Tajikistan in 1996 when emergency relief was delivered to Afghan Badakhshan via Tajikistan. Since 2001 this early work has developed into an innovative programme of varied cross-border development activities. AKF and other agencies of the



Aga Khan Development Network, which work extensively in both countries, are uniquely positioned to implement such a programme, which builds on a common cultural heritage and shared ecosystems to reinforce existing ties and to build new partnerships for the benefit of citizens in both countries.

Activities are carried out in cooperation with the Afghan and Tajik governments through the collaborative work of the following institutions:

- Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in Afghanistan and Tajikistan
- Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (MSDSP, a project of AKF Tajikistan)
- Aga Khan Health Services in Afghanistan and Tajikistan
- Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS) in Afghanistan and Tajikistan
- University of Central Asia (a multinational AKDN institution)
- Institute for Professional Development, GBAO (a Tajik government body, supported by AKF Tajikistan)
- Aga Khan Education Services in Afghanistan and Tajikistan
- Pamir Biological Institute, Khorog (a Tajik government body)
- Agricultural Research Academy, Khorog (a Tajik government body)
- Voluntary Service Overseas International

The cross-border programme aims to develop human and institutional capacities to secure the region's future; to diversify the region's economic base; and to reduce barriers to transport, trade, and access within and beyond the region.

Working across an international border in two countries with very different systems of community and state governance presents particular challenges. Cooperation with the Tajik authorities and access to the more developed infrastructure on the Tajik side of the border, however, has enabled AKF and other Aga Khan Development Network agencies to bring important and beneficial changes to communities and government institutions on the Afghan side of the border, which are among the most isolated and impoverished in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, renewed contact with their Tajik neighbours is beginning to end the extreme isolation in which residents on the Afghan side of the border have lived for decades.

#### Human and institutional development

A cross-border programme centred on the capacity development of District Development Assemblies is being implemented through training sessions focused on DDA-prioritised infrastructure projects, with the combined support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). As of the end of 2012, after taking part in the first set of training activities, the DDAs are in the process of prioritizing infrastructure projects for their constituents.

A similar programme took place with district-level institutions on the Tajik side of the border and in 2012a

cross-border experience-sharing took place between institutions on either side of the border to allow members to learn from each other's experiences and better understand the role that each organisation plays.

#### Market development

Weekly cross-border markets are organised at three locations where "friendship bridges" have been built or renovated to promote greater Afghan-Tajik trade and interchange. Traders from both countries are allowed visa-free access to the market sites and are popular with both Afghan and Tajik traders and businesspeople and have spurred improvements in the quantity and quality of agricultural and handicraft products sold by local people on both sides of the border. During 2012, the total value of goods sold at the three markets was more than US\$1.1 million, according to AKF data.

In 2012, the first Agricultural Fair at the Shughnan Cross-Border Market was held, which was a designated occasion for farmers to sell their products. More than 150 farmers attended and sold agricultural goods. In particular, Afghan farmers brought products that were "forgotten" long ago by their Tajik neighbours, which were in high demand, such as a wide variety of beans. The

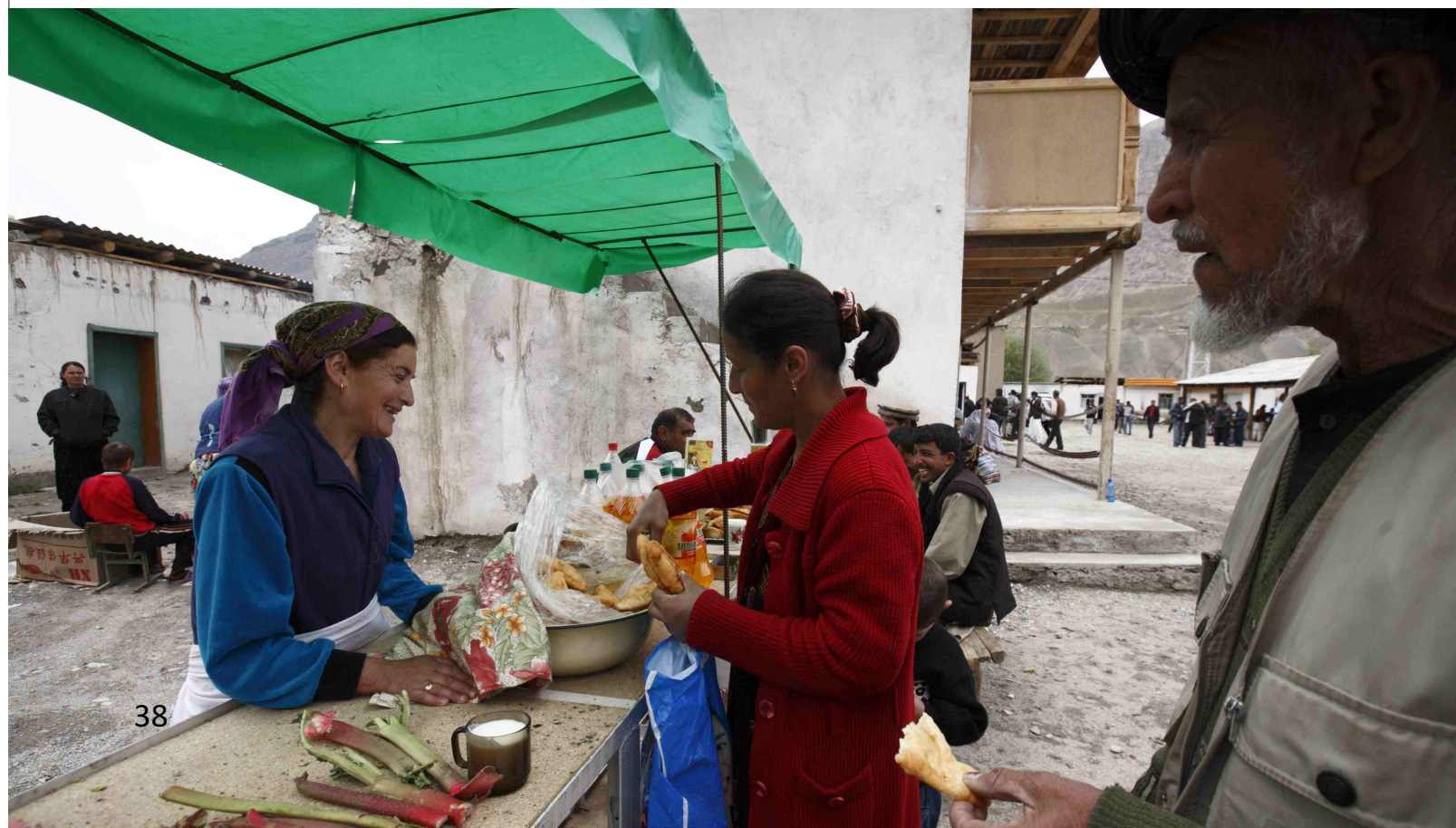
diversity of the products being sold at the fair led to an increase in interest in the market, provided an expanded variety of products, diversified the market, and thus increased economic competition. The market received an unprecedented 4,500 participants.

This year marked the fifth annual "Roof of the World" cultural festival in Khorog, which aimed to promote and share the cultural heritage of the various peoples of the Pamir region. This event encourages cultural exchange between the border communities, and attracts tourists to the area. In 2012, approximately 3,500 local people participated in the festival, exhibiting handicrafts originating in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and displaying traditional musical talents.

#### Natural Resources Management

Through an established partnership with two Tajikistan government institutions based in Khorog – the Pamir Biological Institute (PBI) and the Agricultural Research Academy – AKF and the Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (MSDSP) in Tajikistan have facilitated ongoing research in areas on both sides of the Afghan-Tajik border. In one instance, the PBI transported soil samples from the land of 28 Afghan farmers in Wakhan, Ishkashim, and Shughnan districts to Khorog for analysis and testing, after which a report on usage and management of fertilizers was submitted to the Afghan farmers.

*Bottom picture:* In the remote Wakhan district of Badakhshan farmers use livestock dips for controlling of animal parasites.  
*Opposite page:* Afghan and Tajik traders meet once a week to exchange goods and services in the cross-border market in Khorog.



Innovative research was carried out in 2012, with a special focus on True Potato Seeds. As a result, the establishment of new technology, including two large greenhouses and two plastic tunnels, were made in Ishkashim. In the districts of Khorog and Ishkashim, four Farmer Field Schools were established, each with a focus on horticulture and livestock. Within these centres, farmers developed skills by sharing their experience, under the guidance of facilitators. In Afghanistan, a field day was conducted for approximately 100 female farmers from different villages to train them on the usage of the plastic tunnel, resulting in women's empowerment in agricultural production and an increase in the productivity of households.

Watershed management is another focus of NRM. This year, training was conducted for six border Community Development Councils (CDCs) on pasture and grazing management. Moreover, an awareness workshop was conducted among 35 CDCs concerning the importance of watershed management for sustainable development, with 25 CDCs developing rangeland rehabilitation plans that became government-validated. In two areas, four watersheds were established this year, and five rangeland sites were rehabilitated, including initiatives towards soil conservation. In addition, two small bridges were constructed with CDCs to enable the crossing of livestock to pastureland. Throughout the year, a programme helped to develop fodder crops on 2.5 hectares of barren and marginal land across the districts.

In 2012, the livestock programme extended to over 306 villages, directly benefiting 25,000 farmers and owners of livestock. Treatments and vaccinations were given to approximately 170,900 animals. In 2012, five Livestock Development Centres were supported, each controlling the relevant district activities, including vaccinations, treatment, trainings, workshops and all other activities for livestock. In Wakhan District, the programme mobilised a Pamir seasonal mobile team of para-veterinarians from the Livestock Development Field Unit for vaccination and treatment of animals. Practical training and awareness sessions were also provided in four districts, demonstrating the usage of animal dips for controlling livestock ectoparasites. A pasture management conference was held in Nusai, in which government guests, heads of CDCs and para-veterinarians participated.

### Infrastructure

Infrastructure projects in the cross-border region are aimed at constructing necessary social buildings, increasing access to services and to social and economic networks, and improving the region's economic base. New bridges and road infrastructure being built to connect communities within Badakhshan and along the Tajik-Afghan border are opening up new economic and social opportunities for local people. They ease the burden of travel in this isolated region and improve access to health and education facilities. Natural hazards such as avalanches, landslides and earthquakes are common in these border districts and throughout Badakhshan, but better roads and communications can dramatically improve the response to natural disasters and disaster risk management efforts.

Before 2012, AKF built or renovated four bridges over the Panj River (Amu Darya) to link communities in Afghanistan and Tajikistan. A fifth bridge will link Khwahan District in Badakhshan, Afghanistan, with Shurobad District in Khatlon, Tajikistan, which is expected to begin operations in 2013. In addition, the infrastructure programme had previously completed the construction of three cross-border markets on both sides of the three recently built bridges. This year, the programme has planned the construction of market infrastructure on the Tajik side of the fifth bridge in Shurobad.

AKF is also actively involved in the construction of the "ring road" around northern Badakhshan along the Panj River, particularly in the Darwaz area and Shughnan District. This road is now beginning to connect isolated communities that have never had vehicle access to local markets, to the new cross-border markets or to the provincial capital, Faizabad, and other parts of the province.

Notably, the 110-kilometre stretch of track from Ishkashim north along the Panj River to central Shughnan – formerly travelled on foot, by donkey or on horseback – has now been widened into a vehicle road. The actual construction work was done by local engineers and labour, overseen by Community Development Councils, with minimal outside technical assistance. Road improvements also began from central Shughnan to Chosnud-e-Payan, the northernmost village in Shughnan District.

Up to 2012, the infrastructure programme has completed the construction of two water exchange pipelines, one between Shikev, Tajikistan to Zingirio, Afghanistan, and another between Roqak, Tajikistan and Sharisabz,



Opposite page: Part of a 110km road linking rural villages in Ishkashim and Shughnan districts of Badakhshan.



*Above: Teachers and education staff prepare low cost education materials for use in school.*

Afghanistan. This year, the programme expanded and completed the construction of a water exchange pipeline between Zigar, Tajikistan and Laroon, Afghanistan. The outcome of these projects led to the irrigation of 80 hectares of land in Tajikistan and 40 hectares of land in Afghanistan.

For the past three years funds to construct essential infrastructure in the border regions have been provided through its Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan Regional Integration Programme (PATRIP) Foundation, which aims to improve economic opportunities and cooperation between border communities. Under this programme, two significant riverbank stabilisation projects have been carried out in Afghanistan, in Dehmorghhan and Pojwar villages in Shughnan District. On the Tajik side of the river border, nearly opposite Dehmorghhan and Pojwar, the riverbanks are in their final stages of being stabilised under the same programme. As well as the physical infrastructure, this approach to cross-border development helps to reduce the potential for disagreement or conflict between communities and governments of the two countries.

The cross-border electricity programme, through Pamir Energy, expanded its services in 2012. Using

cross-border electricity lines, the sale of electricity has now been facilitated to over 2,000 households on the Afghan side of the border.

#### **Education**

In an effort to improve the quality of education in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, AKF Afghanistan and AKF Tajikistan have continued to provide in-service training to teachers working on both sides of the border. Facilitated by mentors from the Institute for Professional Development (IPD), a Tajik government in-service teacher training institute, pedagogical training has been delivered to 109 key teachers to date. When returning to their schools, these key teachers have facilitated monthly training days, passing on their skills to a total of 1,007 teachers. A total of 16 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres are now operational in the cross-border areas, with trainers from IPD supporting 46 ECD facilitators through training and ongoing mentoring.

The University of Central Asia (UCA) is a multinational AKDN institution with campuses in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Its aim is to provide tertiary education specifically tailored for the mountain regions of Central Asia. In 2012, the School of Professional and Continuing Education provided education to 3,927 learners in Khorog and trained future Afghan instructors in English, IT,

accounting, and vocational skills. While providing opportunities for learners in both countries to improve skills and education, it also increases the quality of the labour market by focusing on future trainers. In Shughnan, Afghanistan, the programme is implementing training and professional development programmes to increase the capacity of Teacher's Training Centre staff and instructors. In addition, it provides training to improve the subject knowledge of future teachers in English. The teaching and learning environment has been improved through the renovation of classrooms, establishment of an IT lab with new equipment, and the establishment of a testing centre to facilitate international certification in IT. A total of 1,039 Afghan learners have been trained in IT and English. UCA's Institute of Public Policy and Administration continues to support applied research on regional cooperation with Afghanistan and its neighbours.

#### **Health**

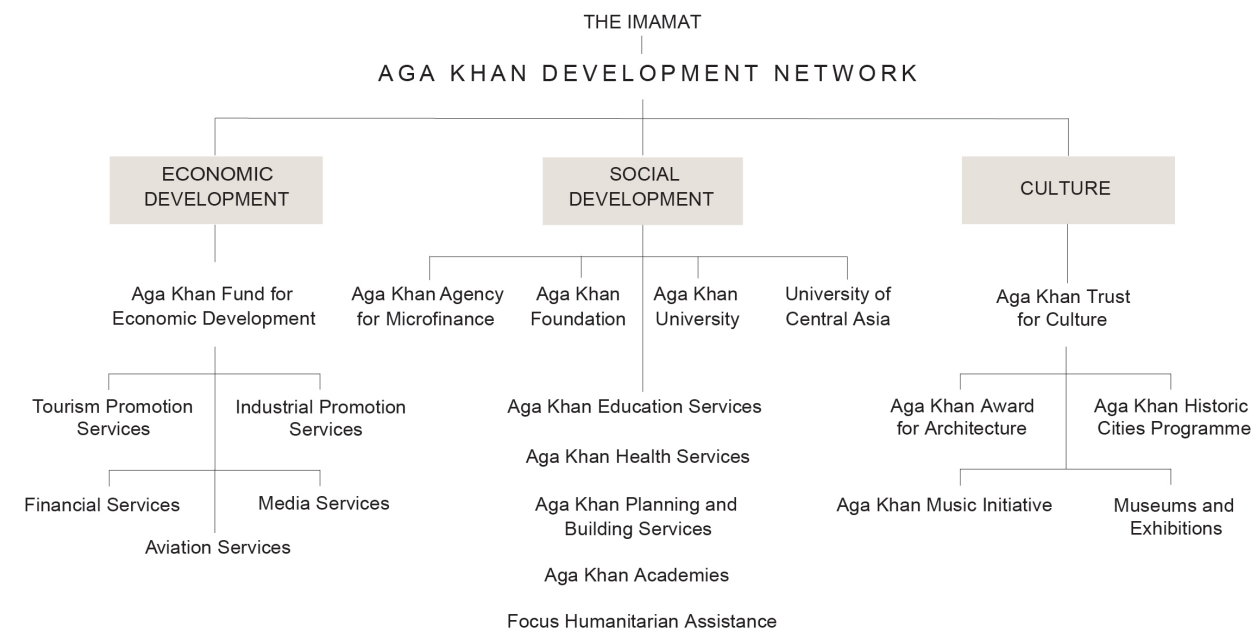
To improve healthcare provisioning in these isolated regions, collaboration between the Aga Khan Health Services in Afghanistan and Tajikistan allows

patients from Afghanistan requiring emergency healthcare to cross to Tajikistan to receive treatment in the regional hospital in Khorog. In 2012, 34 patients from Afghanistan were able to receive this specialised health care. Tajik health professionals also make regular visits to health centres in Afghanistan to provide specialist treatment. In 2012, Tajik medical specialists saw just over 2,000 Afghan patients, with 190 patients operated on by Tajik doctors. In addition, 37 samples from Shughnan, Afghanistan were sent for testing to the Research Diagnostic Unit (RDU) and reports were returned to allow for appropriate treatment.

In 2012, other activities to promote better healthcare in the border regions included the training of staff for local healthcare facilities, provision of equipment, support for speciality service clinics and the operation of mobile health units that provide services in remote communities without a permanent health facility. In Dushanbe, a range of visits and training activities were organised for Tajik medical workers, including courses on ultrasound, emergency care, endocrinology, reproductive health and neurology. Similarly, courses for Afghan health professionals were offered at the RDU in Khorog.

## **Donors 2012**

- Government of Afghanistan
- Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD)
- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
- Embassy of Belgium
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- CHEF International
- CONCERN Worldwide
- European Union (EU)
- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
- German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
- Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau (KfW)
- New Zealand Aid Programme (NZ Aid)
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMOFA)
- Roshan
- Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA)
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- UNICEF
- World Food Programme (WFP)



## AKF programme areas population

Geographical area	Total population	Target population* (inhabitants)	Target population* (households)	Target population* (villages)	Target population* as percentage of total population
Takhar (+Kunduz)	1,754,000	1,009,000	112,000	985	58%
Badakhshan	846,000	492,000	61,000	663	58%
Baghlan (+Samangan)	1,148,000	858,000	135,000	801	75%
Bamyan (+Parwan)	988,000	457,000	66,000	1,750	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,736,000</b>	<b>2,816,000</b>	<b>374,800</b>	<b>4,199</b>	<b>59%</b>

\*Target population includes only the 53 districts within provinces where AKF works.

