

PRESS RELEASE

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**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT & AGA KHAN FOUNDATION
OPEN NEW CROSS-BORDER TRANSMISSION LINE**



Khorog, Tajikistan, 27 May 2016 – Nearly 3,000 people in Deshor and Wiriz, Afghanistan now have access to clean, cheap, renewable energy for the first time in their history. The villages were connected to the grid as part of the Cross-Border Energy in Shugnan District project, funded with a \$1 million grant from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and a \$464,000 matching contribution from the Aga Khan Foundation.

In addition to the newly connected villages, the project helped Pamir Energy upgrade its existing systems and infrastructure, laying the groundwork for further expansion and service improvement to customers on both sides of the Tajik-Afghan border.

Reliable electricity leads directly to improvements in quality of life: incomes rise as businesses increase production and people are able to spend less money and effort gathering fuel for heat and light; educational outcomes improve as children have light to study by in the evening and during the dark winter months; and a reduction in indoor air pollution means sharp declines in the rate of lung and eye diseases. In combination with investments in bridges, markets, and connecting roads, electricity will foster trade and economic development, demonstrating the true benefits of cross-border linkages between Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

Today, representatives of the governments of the United States, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, and the [Aga Khan Development Network](#) met to commemorate the connection of two villages in Afghanistan to the electricity grid of Tajikistan's Pamir Energy Open Joint Stock Company. Nearly 100 members of the local community gathered to celebrate the occasion.

U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Leslie Hayden and Pamir Energy General Director Daler Jumaev jointly threw a switch on the transmission pole from which power lines cross the border, marking the flow of electricity between the two countries. Gorno-Badakhshon Autonomous Oblast First Deputy Governor Nourali Rioyev and Afghan First Secretary Abdulishoki Yakubi, along with other officials, also participated in the commemoration.

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An agency of the Aga Khan Development Network

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About Aga Khan Foundation

The Aga Khan Foundation partners with communities, nonprofits, businesses, governments and local leaders to make long-term investments, build permanent institutions and cultivate an active civil society to break the cycle of poverty and improve the quality of life for people across Africa and Asia. Driven by our belief in our shared humanity, for nearly 50 years we have been working for the common good of all citizens, regardless of gender, origin or religion. We believe in harnessing the best from people of all walks of life to build better futures together. The Aga Khan Foundation USA is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Foundation is a member of the Aga Khan Development Network, one of the world's leading poverty solutions networks, established by His Highness the Aga Khan. The Aga Khan Development Network helps improve the quality of life for tens of millions of people annually in 30 countries and the Aga Khan Foundation supports this work globally. AKDN's integrated multi-sector approach to development is grounded in its decades of experience, learning and evaluation. The Network employs over 80,000 people with a budget of about \$625 million for nonprofit social and cultural activities. The Network's for-profit, commercial arm builds economically sound enterprises in the developing world, generating annual revenues of about \$4.1 billion, with surpluses reinvested in activities to enhance development and improve the quality of life of communities living in fragile, remote or post-conflict regions.

About USAID

USAID is the leading American government agency building social and economic prosperity together with the people of Central Asia. Our work promotes regional cooperation and broad-based prosperity by expanding diverse and competitive trade and markets, enhancing regional cooperation on shared energy and water resources, and fostering more effective and inclusive governance institutions that serve the public good.

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