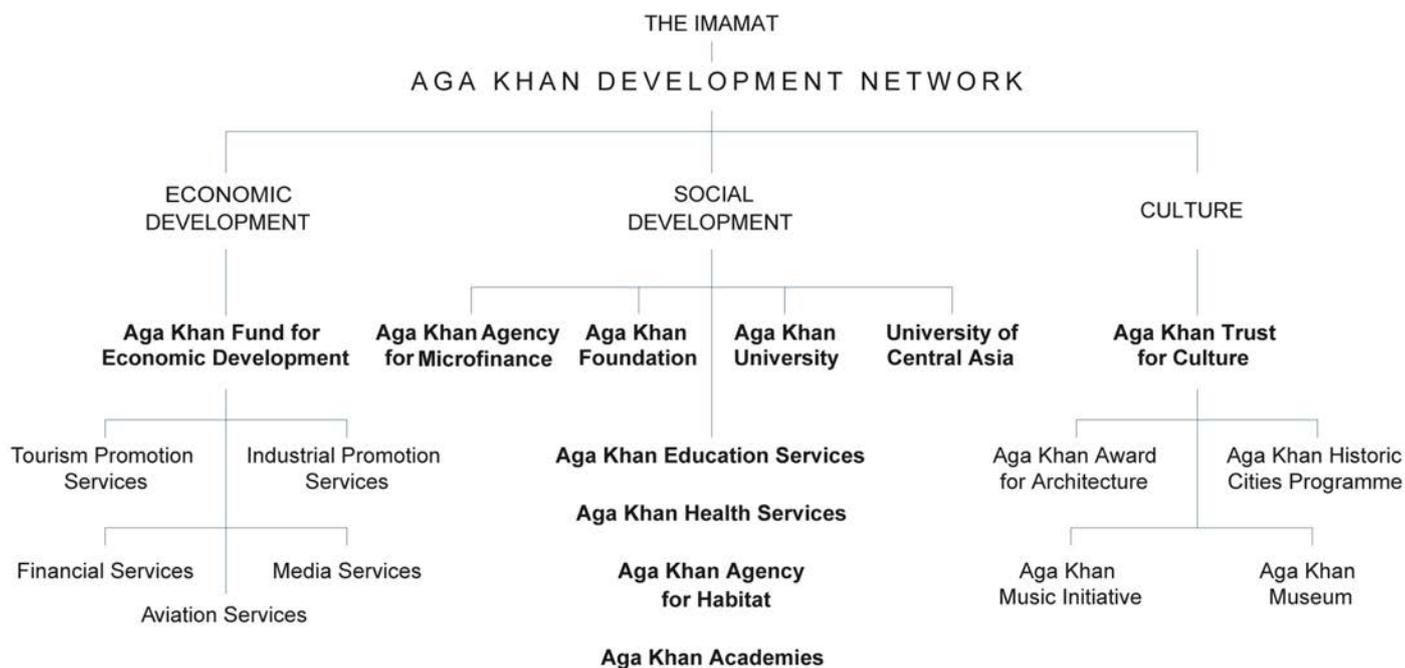




**AGA KHAN FOUNDATION**  
Afghanistan

**ANNUAL REPORT 2016**





**The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)** is a group of private, international non-denominational agencies working to improve living conditions and opportunities for people in some of the poorest parts of the developing world. The Network's organisations have individual mandates that range from the fields of health and education to architecture, rural development and the promotion of private-sector enterprise. Together AKDN's institutions and programmes work towards a common goal – to build a civil society that responds to the challenges of social, economic and cultural changes. The Network brings together a number of agencies, institutions and programmes that have been built up over the past 50 years and, in some cases, date back to the early twentieth century. AKDN agencies conduct their programmes without regard to the faith, origin or gender of the people they serve.

AKDN has agreements or protocols with the following countries and organisations: Afghanistan, Asian Development Bank, Bangladesh, Canada, the East African Community, the European Commission, France, Germany, India, Ivory Coast, Kazakhstan, Kenya, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mali, Mozambique, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations.

**The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)** is a non-denominational, international development agency established in 1967 by His Highness the Aga Khan. Its mission is to develop and promote creative solutions to problems that impede social development, primarily in Asia and East Africa. Created as a private, non-profit foundation under Swiss law, it has branches and independent affiliates in 19 countries.

For more information please visit our website: [www.akdn.org](http://www.akdn.org)

*Cover Photo: AKF through Girls' Education Support Programme (GESP), with Canadian government funding expanded the women's dormitory of Bamyan Teacher Training College (TTC) in 2015. Currently, around 70% of Bamyan TTC students are female, thus significantly increasing the number of qualified female teachers in Afghanistan.*

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Strengthening voice and representation



Increasing food security and nutrition



Improving resiliency of communities

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

*Dear Friends and Partners,*

*2016 was a year of resilience, forward thinking and high-level programme achievements that will support progress for future generations of Afghans. Despite the very challenging operating environment due to heightened security (the highest number of Afghanistan security incidents ever recorded in a single year) and frequent natural disasters, implementation rates were remarkably high in our programme regions: 94 percent in Bamyan; 97 percent in Baghlan; 83 percent in Takhar; and 98 percent in Badakhshan. We reached over two million people across seven provinces in some of the most remote and high-level conflict areas. Once again, my deepest appreciation goes out to all colleagues for the resiliency and commitment to our work at AKF in times of adversity.*



*This year, AKF invested in long-term growth and development through the establishment of a framework built on purpose, process and people. This included (1) drafting AKF's country strategy outlining its vision, mission and objectives over the next five years; (2) conducting an organisational review and analysis of key core and business support processes required to improve efficiency and effectiveness; (3) undertaking a structural response to the proposed changes; and (4) significantly advancing the organisation's localisation strategy through replacing international staff with Afghan staff to build strong local management teams.*

*In 2016, a number of high-level programme achievements were made. The new Bamyan Provincial Hospital, a project supported by Canada, France and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC), has been completed and all services were shifted from the old site to the new premises in September 2016. The new hospital has a total bed capacity of 141 beds and is operated by the Aga Khan Health Services. One of the three operating theatres is specifically devoted to a birthing unit, in a region where women's access to health-care has been severely limited. AKF successfully completed its Afghan government's National Solidarity Programme projects which were implemented since 2003. Through this programme AKF has piloted innovations, such as social audits, conflict resolution training and gender mainstreaming training, which have been scaled up by the new national Citizen's Charter programme.*

*The Steps Towards Afghan Girls' Education Success (STAGES) project, an AKF-led consortium of seven partners supported by the United Kingdom, entered its final year in 2016. At midline stage, STAGES has directly educated 24,000 girls and 11,000 boys through early childhood development, community-based education (CBE) and advanced learning programme classes, improved the learning environment of 112,000 girls and 99,000 boys through government school interventions and trained 5,000 community and government school teachers in up-to-date, learner-centred, gender-equitable teaching methodologies. In 2017, STAGES II will continue where STAGES left off by taking the current cohort of CBE students to the next cycle of education as they hit the challenging age of adolescence.*

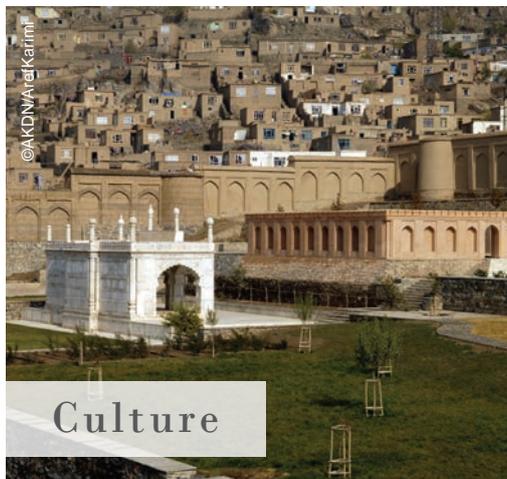
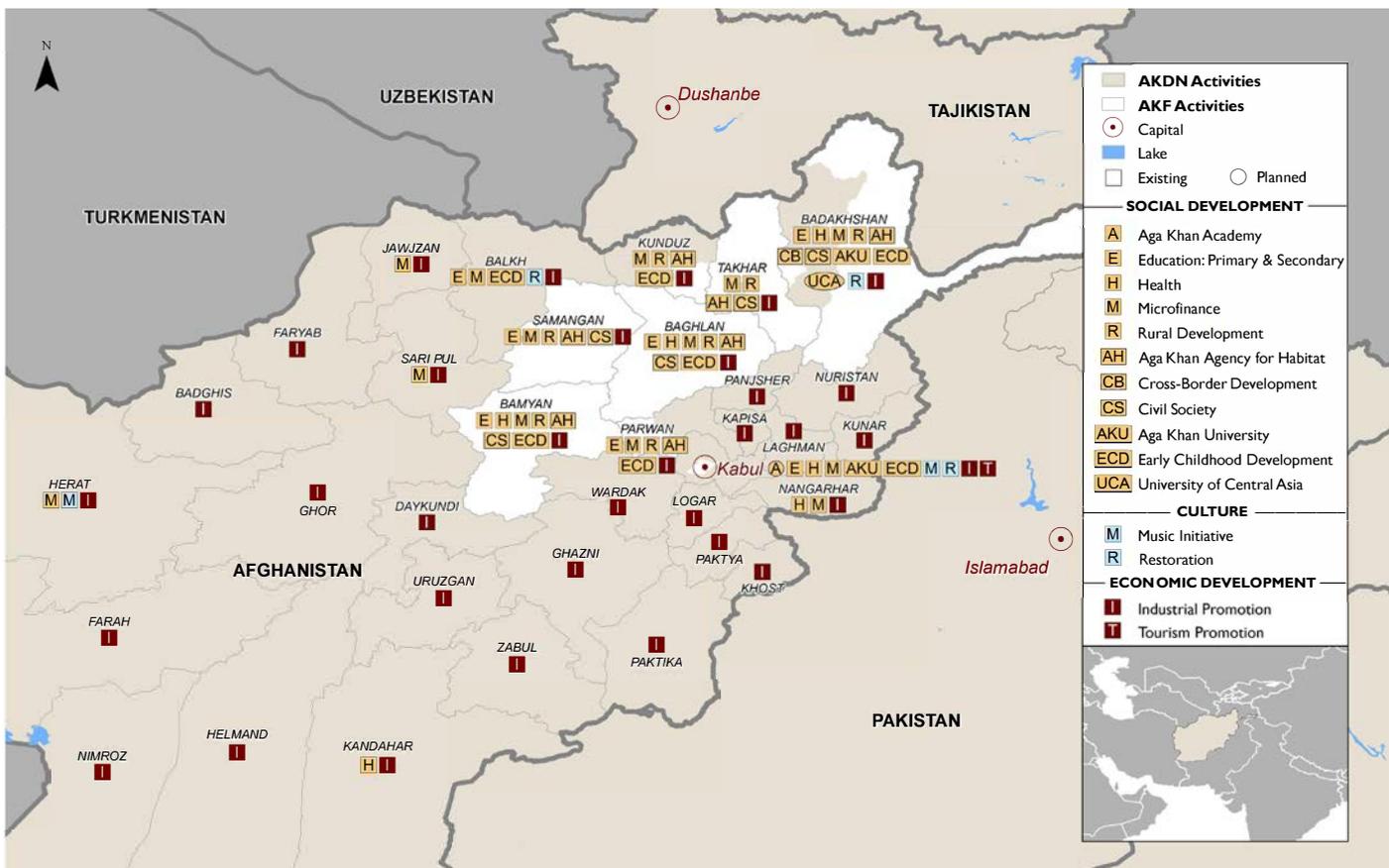
*In our Market Development sector, AKF is now fully implementing the Stimulating the Private Sector for Economic Development in Afghanistan (SPEDA) project supported by Sweden. SPEDA covers AKF's seven target provinces and aims to create opportunities for enterprises to develop within and across selected value chains while also building a gender inclusive enabling environment for private-sector growth.*

*In this report, I am proud to present some of our key successes from 2016. These achievements were only possible with the dedication and generosity of our partners, donors, and community members who continue to believe in our work, as well as our dedicated and hard-working staff.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jan Schollaert', written over a horizontal line.

*Chief Executive Officer*

# AKDN IN AFGHANISTAN



# ABOUT AKDN

Founded and guided by His Highness the Aga Khan, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) brings together a group of 10 private, international, non-denominational development agencies. These agencies work to improve the quality of life of people in the developing world, particularly in South and Central Asia, Africa and the Middle East. All programmes are conducted without regard to faith, origin or gender.

AKDN's engagement in Afghanistan began in 1996 during Afghanistan's civil war with the distribution of aid via Tajikistan. Six years later, AKDN began working to promote sustainable development in rural Afghanistan. Today AKDN's commitment to Afghanistan is long-term. It employs a Multi-Input Area Development (MIAD) approach, which seeks to build a critical mass of interventions in poor, isolated areas, connecting them to wider national and regional investments.

Since 2002, AKDN has mobilised over \$US 1 billion from its own resources and its donor partners for social, economic and cultural development.

In Afghanistan, AKDN works through the following nine agencies:



Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance (AKAM) works to expand access for the poor to financial services. AKAM has established the First MicroFinance Bank, the leading microfinance institution in Afghanistan with a portfolio of over \$60 million, including financing for agriculture, housing improvement and enterprise.



Aga Khan Education Services (AKES) aims to diminish obstacles to educational access, quality and achievement. In Afghanistan AKES provides teacher training and support; Early Childhood Development programmes; primary education; and coaching for university entrance examinations.



Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) seeks to provide sustainable solutions to long-term problems of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and ill health. In Afghanistan, AKF works with rural communities in mountainous, remote or resource poor areas to improve the quality of life in the areas of natural resource management, market development, governance, education and health.



Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED) is the Network's only for-profit institution. Collaborating with local and international partners, the Fund takes bold but calculated steps to invest in fragile and complex settings. In Afghanistan, the Fund has three major enterprises: Roshan, Afghanistan's leading telecommunications provider; The Kabul Serena Hotel; and Habib Bank Limited.



Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) provides healthcare services in more than 30 health centres and over 300 health posts in target regions, and through three government community midwifery schools in Bamyán, Baghlan, and Badakhshan Provinces. AKHS also manages the main government provincial hospitals in Bamyán and Badakhshan.



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



Aga Khan University (AKU) is a major centre for education, training, and research based in Pakistan, with teaching sites in eight countries. In Afghanistan, support focuses on the national nursing and midwifery training institute in Kabul and assistance for Kabul Medical University's teaching programmes. It also manages the French Medical Institute for Children in Kabul, a public-private partnership and one of the country's most advanced hospitals.



Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS) – which is now part of the new Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) – provides emergency relief and services to victims of conflict and natural disasters. In Afghanistan, it 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.



University of Central Asia (UCA) was founded in 2000 with three campuses across Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan. UCA's mission is to foster the socioeconomic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain societies, and has recently begun work in Afghan Badakhshan.



# ABOUT THE AGA KHAN FOUNDATION

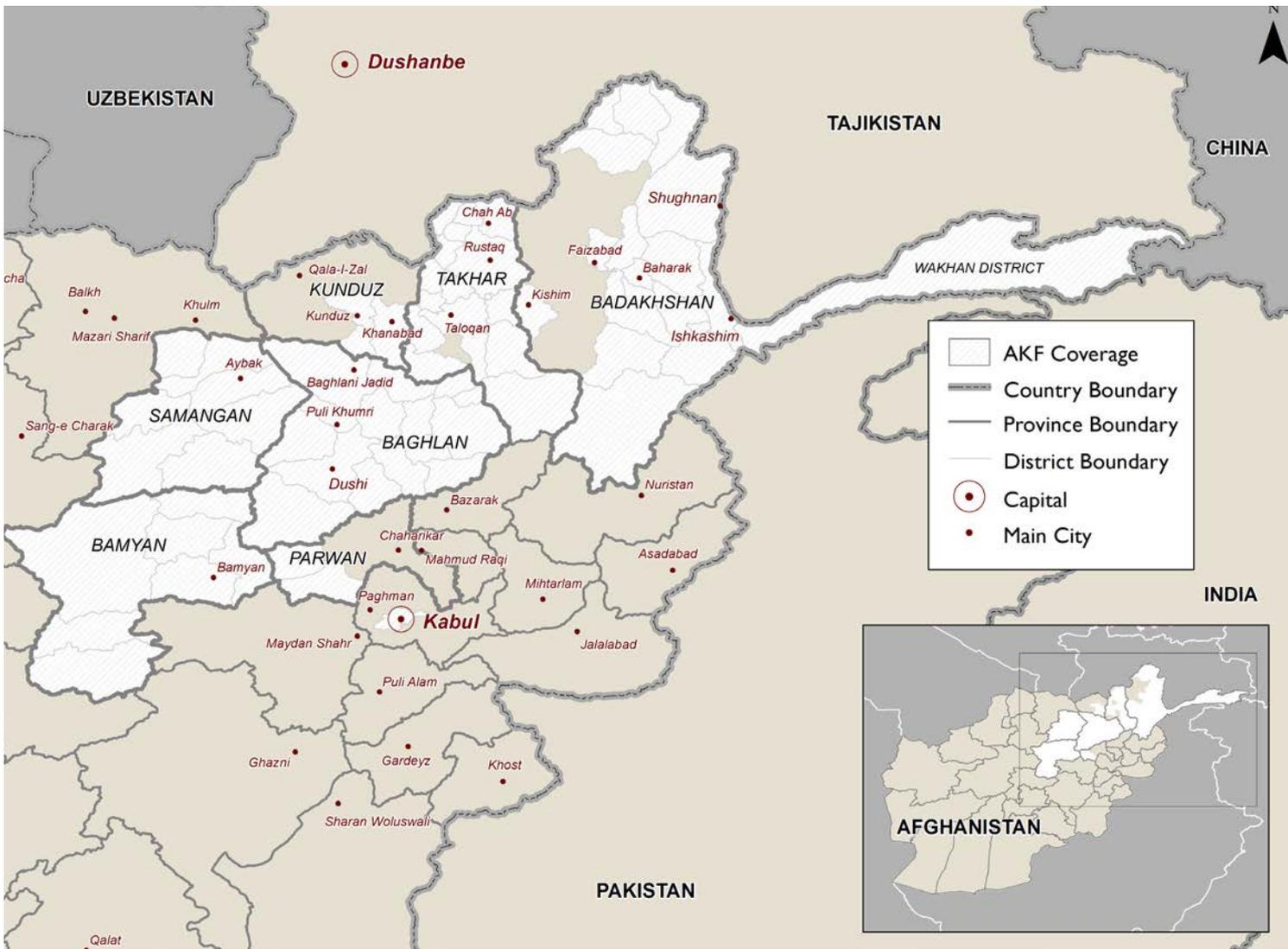
The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is a private, international, non-denominational, non-profit development agency that was established in 1967. It seeks sustainable solutions to long-term problems of poverty, hunger, illiteracy and ill health, with special emphasis on the needs of rural communities in mountainous, coastal and other resource-poor areas. The Foundation has branches and affiliates in 20 countries with its headquarters in Geneva.

AKF offices in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States play an important role in maintaining relationships with bilateral and multilateral development agencies and government, individual and corporate donors. Partnerships with donors, philanthropists and other peer organisations allow for technical and intellectual exchange on evolving development issues.

In programme offices, AKF works in collaboration with other AKDN agencies, believing the most effective mechanism to stimulate social and economic development is to work in a coordinated fashion across the full range of development sectors.

This multi-sectoral approach is most effective when investments are focused on specific geographic areas over an extended period of time. AKDN refers to this approach as Multi-Input Area Development (MIAD) – a multi-sector effort to respond to development needs and opportunities in particular geographic areas through targeted and complementary interventions.

Building on earlier humanitarian assistance, AKF began working in Afghanistan in 2002 and now works in seven of the country’s 34 provinces, primarily in Northern Afghanistan and the Central Highlands: Bamyan, Parwan, Baghlan, Samangan, Takhar, Kunduz and Badakhshan. In addition, AKF works with both international and local partners to expand its reach to a total of 16 provinces in total.



## THE AKF APPROACH

As part of the Aga Khan Development Network, AKF works closely with its sister agencies to mobilise resources and expertise across a wide range of areas, from telecommunications and microfinance, to health care, education, preservation of cultural heritage and rural development.

This approach goes hand-in-hand with AKF’s culture of knowledge sharing, which encourages staff to find new solutions to development challenges by cross-fertilising ideas and approaches, and to find synergies among different sectors. This ensures that AKF remains relevant and effective over time – important qualities in Afghanistan’s rapidly changing context.

With almost 50 years of development expertise, AKF invests in communities for the long term. AKF believes that local communities should drive development as they are best placed to identify their own development needs. At the same time, the organisation places great emphasis

on developing the capacity of local staff at the national, provincial and district level.

AKF continues to support the government in fulfilling its mandate to the Afghan people. AKF aligns its work with Afghanistan’s National Priority Programmes (NPPs) and the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF). In addition, AKF works closely with line ministries and sub-national governance bodies to ensure coordination of efforts and programme sustainability.

In 2016, AKF’s work has broadly been divided into six thematic focus areas:

- Strengthening Voice and Representation
- Improving Food Security and Nutrition
- Diversifying Incomes and Livelihoods
- Improving Resiliency of Communities
- Improving Access to Affordable Quality Health Care
- Increasing Access to Quality Education

# strengthening voice and representation

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Female and male residents of Kalan Guzar Village in Doshi District, Baghlan, participate in a Social Audit organised by their Community Development Council. The Social Audit provides an open forum for community members to ask questions or raise concerns with the CDCs about the details of project implementation and expenditure of funds.

In the area of strengthening voice and representation, AKF works to improve good governance for community institutions, representative bodies and local government, as well as to support the development of an enabling environment for civil society to play a vital role in shaping the future of Afghanistan. This work focuses on improving the capacity of women, youth and the ultra-poor to participate in governance processes and institutions. To do this, AKF focuses on both the demand and supply side of governance through innovations and tools such as social audits and downward accountability exercises, single-stop service centres, and Citizen Report Cards that enable individuals to demand quality public service from the relevant level of government.

AKF supports the development of a vibrant civil society by working at several levels, from informal community institutions (including traditional and religious leaders), to formal community institutions, such as Community Development Councils (CDCs) through to local non-government organisations (LNGOs), local media, regional networks and apex institutions such as the Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society (AICS).

To promote downward accountability between government and citizens, AKF supports district governor's offices in facilitating Public Audits – an open forum where governors face their constituents to share successes and receive feedback. In 2016, AKF facilitated 20 Public Audit events across four

provinces, including two Public Audit events for women in Badakhshan. Over 2,300 community members and government officials took part in these events.

In addition, for the first time in Afghanistan, public services can be assessed through the Citizen Report Card (CRC) – a formal feedback mechanism for citizens to monitor the quality, scale and scope of the services delivered to them by government and other institutions. It also ensures downward accountability, bottom-up planning and more effective implementation of services. The CRC was launched in 2015 by AKF with support from Norway; and in 2016, 2,462 CRCs were conducted in 27 clinical hospitals across five provinces. AKF analysed the data from the CRCs and shared with relevant health departments for follow up. Plans to facilitate CRCs in other sectors is currently underway for 2017.

In 2016, AKF organised training workshops for district governors, key line departments and provincial councils in four provinces to build staff capacity for better service delivery. As a result of this support, the Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) undertook a number of training initiatives in target provinces such as a 3-month computer training course for 120 college and school graduates in Samangan and establishing a learning centre in Baghlan for students, equipped with computers and over 900 books.

AKF continued to support CDCs, Cluster Community Development Councils (CCDCs) and District Development Assemblies (DDAs) to mobilise resources from the public and private sector to implement community-prioritised development projects. To enhance the accountability and transparency of these groups to community members, AKF facilitated 68 Social Audits – an open forum where community members can ask questions or raise concerns with these groups about the status of projects and expenditure of funds.

At the same time, AKF continues to invest heavily in the ability of local institutions to manage and drive their own development. In 2016, AKF-supported Local NGOs in Baghlan, Bamyan and Takhar secured a total of US\$ 258,000 from international donors (United States Institute for Peace, World Food Programme, Colombo Plan, and Counterpart International) for their programmes. In addition, three LNGOs from Baghlan, Daikuni and Kandahar that received capacity building support from AKF were certified against locally defined and internationally recognised standards by the Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society (AICS). AICS was established in 2014 by AKF with support from Counterpart International and USAID funding.

In 2016, AKF with support from the United Kingdom, piloted a new way of supporting Community Development Councils (CDCs) to develop Multi-Sector Community Development Plans. The plans take an integrated look at the resources, needs and priorities across health, education, agriculture, electricity and access to water, while also considering disaster- risk reduction, and the possible impacts of plans on gender issues, poppy reduction and other cross-cutting concerns. These plans enable CDCs to involve all relevant development actors and lead a holistic and pro-poor development agenda. In addition, multi-sector planning aims to strengthen the preparedness and capacity of CDCs to implement the Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project.

AKF piloted multi-sector development planning in CDCs in Bamyan, Parwan, Baghlan and Takhar. Once the selected CDCs developed their plans, exposure visits were conducted for members of other CDCs to share best practices. In all visits, participants effectively learned from the pilot CDCs and expressed their interest in conducting the same type of planning in their CDC.

## 2016 in numbers:

- 2,311 people attended 20 Public Audit events in 4 provinces, including 2 Public Audit events for women
- 2,462 Citizen Report Cards were conducted in 27 clinical hospitals across five provinces
- US\$ 292,031 mobilised by CDCs and communities, enabling them to implement 41 of their own projects
- US\$ 919,510 mobilised by CCDCs and DDAs to implement 33 of their own projects
- 68 Social Audits conducted for CDCs, CCDCs, and DDAs across 3 provinces and 24 health audits conducted in Badakhshan
- US\$ 258,000 mobilised by LNGOs from international donors to support programme activities
- 12 single-stop service centres established in 5 target provinces
- Multi-Sector Community Development Plan (MSCDP) launched in 4 provinces



Promoting a holistic and inclusive agenda

# improving food security and nutrition

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Produce from livestock including milk and meat are a source of income and nutrition in many poor households in rural areas. AKF works with male and female livestock farmers through Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Participatory Training and Development groups to improve livestock productivity.

Food security and nutrition are fundamental development needs, as inadequate nutritional intake harms physical and mental growth, which in turn reduces the ability to learn, work and participate in public life. Despite investments in enhancing agricultural and livestock productivity over the past 14 years, many parts of Afghanistan remain food insecure, with a food supply that is insufficiently diversified, fluctuates on a seasonal basis and is vulnerable to drought. Afghanistan continues to have one of the highest stunting prevalence rates in the world among children under five.

AKF works with subsistence farmers and vulnerable persons in rural areas to improve the availability of food by enhancing food production through dryland farming techniques and increasing off-season production; promoting domestic food diversification through kitchen gardens, simple greenhouses and backyard poultry farms; and, providing and supporting livestock services. To ensure that improvements in the availability of food also translates into improved nutritional status, AKF works through a holistic approach that encompasses health promotion to improve knowledge, attitudes and practices with respect to food. This work includes disseminating information at the community level on nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene.

To diversify diets and improve nutritional status, AKF promotes household food production and simple greenhouses. In 2016, AKF supported nearly 2,500 women in home-

based food production such as vegetable production, kitchen gardening, food processing and backyard poultry farming. Using low-cost, plastic film technology, AKF also established and supported 59 commercial and local greenhouses for the production of early seedlings of vegetables and for off-season vegetable production. The greenhouses allow families to grow a diverse supply of nutritious vegetable varieties and sell surplus vegetables to the market. In addition, over 1,400 farmers benefitted from demonstration plots for various nutritious crops including sunchoke, watermelon, red beans, green beans, flax seed and mustard. With support from Australia, 372 of these demonstration plots were cultivated on dryland areas through techniques such as plastic mulching and intercropping.

AKF promotes sustainable agricultural production through Integrated Crop Management (ICM) campaigns, which combines local knowledge with new techniques and technologies. Campaigns include the promotion of pruning, grafting, budding and pest control. In 2016, AKF conducted 337 ICT campaigns, benefitting nearly 15,300 farmers (30 percent women). AKF also supported four biological labs through which 38,000 trichogramma cards were produced and distributed to farmers for pest and disease control.

Even when nutritious food is available and accessible, food handling, preparation and distribution have a major impact

on whether food translates into improved nutritional status. To address this, AKF conducts campaigns on proper storage techniques, which preserve the nutritional value of crops and allow farmers to extend the time for which they can sell their produce and get a higher price during off season.

Livestock is another key subsector for AKF, which constitutes one of the most inclusive production activities in Afghanistan because of its effectiveness in reaching women and the ultra-poor. AKF has significant experience and success in providing livestock services, through a partially privatised model that improves household livelihoods through improved breeds, better management and feeding practices, and disease surveillance of herds and flocks. AKF has established and continues to support 35 Livestock Development Centres, 80 percent of which are now fully privatised, and 142 associated Livestock Development Field Units, which provide animal health and nutrition services for over 1.2 million people. In 2016, nearly 900,000 animals were treated and over 1 million animals vaccinated.

In 2016, over 5,600 cows were artificially inseminated and over 2,100 improved calves were born through artificial insemination in 2015 and 2016. Farmers reported a 35 to 40 percent increase in milk and meat production from artificially inseminated cows compared to normal breeding practices.

For the first time in Afghanistan, AKF with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) cultivated and tested the sunchoke crop. The corms were supplied by the Research Institute of Botany Physiology of Plants and Genetics in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Thirteen demonstration plots (5,000 square meters in total) were established with farmers in Takhar and Badakhshan. A total of 6,766 kg of sunchoke corms were harvested by the 13 farmers. Small-scale trials were also established with the Agriculture Faculty of the University of Faizabad and the Government Ganjabad Research Station in Ishkashim, Badakhshan.

Farmers learned about the benefits of sunchoke including: (1) one time cultivation lasts for over 30 years; (2) sunchoke's energy potential; from one hectare of sunchoke, farmers can harvest an average 100 metric tonnes of biomass – enough to provide 50 families a full year of biogas; and (3) sunchoke has medicinal uses such as the lowering of cholesterol and blood sugar levels. Also, at the Ganjabad Research Station, AKF conducted research on the effect of sunchoke feed (stems and leaves) on the milk production and milk fat of local cows. Within two weeks, cows that consumed sunchoke showed a 231percent increase in milk production and a 4.2 percent increase in milk fat compared to cows that did not consume sunchoke.

## 2016 in numbers:

- Nearly 2,500 women supported in home-based food production
- 59 new commercial and local greenhouses established and 200 existing greenhouses supported, enabling farmers to earn US\$ 145-US\$1,300 per season
- 610 commercial, semi-commercial, demonstration, home-based and school orchards established
- 876,398 animals treated and over 1 million animals vaccinated
- 337 Integrated Crop Management campaigns conducted, benefitting 15,297 farmers – 30% women
- 75 mother stock nurseries and associated stock nurseries established with 75 farmers, and supported by AKF; earning between US\$ 540 -US\$1,000 per year
- 15 seed banks (potato and wheat) established in 88 villages across Bamyan and Parwan through which 328 farmers purchased seeds
- 38,000 trichogramma cards produced and distributed to farmers for pest and disease control



Introducing new high-value crops

# improving resiliency of communities

©AKF/AndrewQuilty



In Dasht-e-Qala, Takhar, AKF trains District Development Assemblies to integrate disaster risk reduction into their development programmes. AKF also conducts this training for Community Development Councils and Cluster Community Development Councils in programme regions.

Afghanistan is a highly risk-prone country due to its geography, ecology and socio-economic volatility. As a result, households experience frequent shocks throughout the year. Working in some of the most remote areas of Afghanistan, AKF supports local communities to increase their resilience. Through this work, AKF supports local institutions and communities to rehabilitate and conserve natural resources; develop systems to equitably distribute benefits and manage conflicts related to common property resources; implement protection measures to strengthen community and household safety nets; and, scale up access to cleaner electricity. Through these efforts, communities are better able to respond to and mitigate the impact of natural and economic shocks.

To promote the sustainable management of natural resources, AKF in collaboration with Cluster Community Development Councils (CCDCs), the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL), and the Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW), establishes community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) groups, such as pasture management committees and Water User Associations (WUAs). CBNRM groups, which are subcommittees of CCDCs, manage and equitably distribute the benefits of natural resources in common property areas. In 2016, AKF facilitated the establishment of 45 CBNRM groups in

three provinces, and continued to support 143 pasture and forest management committees and 28 WUAs across programme areas. In Takhar, eight new WUAs were established in 2016.

AKF continues to support CDCs to implement land treatment measures that redress the extensive denudation of watersheds and rangelands. In 2016, 309 AKF-supported CDCs across all provinces collectively rehabilitated nearly 300 hectares of upper-watershed land to decrease flooding and landslide risks.

With support from Australia, AKF in collaboration with its sister agency, the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, trained 198 CDCs, CCDCs and District Development Assemblies (DDAs) to integrate disaster risk reduction into their development programmes.

To enhance resilience to economic shocks, AKF is fostering a culture of community philanthropy with a pro-poor focus. To do this, AKF uses the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) toolkit – a simple and easy-to-use questionnaire that enables CDCs, CCDCs and DDAs to identify the poorest and most vulnerable people in a given demographic. Once assessments are conducted, communities either direct external development partners to those who need the most help or design and implement

their own campaigns to reach these groups. Since 2009, more than 1,200 villages have used the PPA tool to categorise households and identify the poorest community members. AKF has shared the PPA process and results with local government partners, including district governors, to support their own development work. In 2016, CDCs, CCDCs and DDAs mobilised US\$ 102,586 from wealthy households to support nearly 3,000 poor households identified through the PPA.

The provision of electricity has significantly improved across the country, although many rural areas are poorly or under-served. In 2016, AKF worked with communities to establish 143 micro-hydro power (MHP) plants – which produce electricity through the natural flow of water – benefitting over 20,000 families across four provinces. Through MHPs, households, schools and businesses in rural areas now have increased access to reliable and renewable energy, which is helping to strengthen community resilience against shocks and disasters.

## 2016 in numbers:

- 45 Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) committees developed and 152 supported
- 28 Water User Associations supported through which 1,573 members were trained in conflict resolution, water measurement, planning, finance & management
- 294 hectares of upper-watershed land and rehabilitated by AKF-supported CDCs to decrease flooding and landslide risks, benefiting 128 villages communities
- 198 CDCs, CCDCs and DDAs trained to integrate disaster risk reduction into development programmes
- US\$ 102,586 raised by communities to support 2,979 poor households identified through the Participatory Poverty Analysis
- 143 micro-hydro power units established with communities benefitting 20,304 families across 4 provinces

In 2010, AKF formed Pasture Management Committees and Water Management Committees in the Zard Sang Valley in the Panjab district of Bamyan. These committees were trained in natural resource management, small water management, pasture management, forestry and vegetable cultivation. The implementation of watershed activities in Zard Sang Valley led to reductions in soil erosion, less water runoff, and mitigation of damage caused by avalanches and floods. However, not all of the villages were benefitting from these activities. Therefore, AKF introduced community planning exercises in target remote villages.

In 2016, the Zard Sang CDC identified water shortages and lack of infrastructure in the remote village of Gharak Ulya during the community planning exercises conducted by AKF with the support of Australia. As a result, the CDC channelled resources to construct a small water reservoir to store and manage water for irrigation, and this enabled the community to rehabilitate around 12 acres of barren land and conserve 8,300 trees. Mr. Qadam Ali, a farmer in the village of Gharak Uly who benefits from the water reservoir says, *“After participating at the committee meeting, my mind changed. I understand that there are other technologies and techniques to increase the availability of water other than sitting and praying for more rain.”*



Promoting social water management

# diversifying incomes and livelihoods

©AKF/AndrewQuilty



AKF trains young men and women in rural areas with vocational skills such as Baluchi Dozi (a type of embroidery), tailoring, car repairing and electrical work. These skills are responsive to the market and local community needs and provide employment to the youth within their villages and districts.

In Afghanistan, 80 percent of the population relies on the natural environment to earn a living. However, agricultural production on its own is an insufficient source of income and livelihood for most households. AKF works at all stages of the value chain to build a more robust and inclusive private sector that can act as an economic driver for the agricultural sector and is capable of producing high quality-off-farm employment. To do this, AKF contributes to the diversification of livelihoods and income generation through:

- i. improving agricultural productivity through access to appropriate technologies, inputs and agricultural extension services;
- ii. supporting value chains that link high-potential agricultural products with local, national and regional markets;
- iii. engagement in the labour market, particularly focused on linking women, youth and the ultra-poor to non-farm employment; and
- iv. supporting an enabling environment for business through access to finance and productive infrastructure.

To improve agricultural productivity, AKF establishes and supports Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) and Participatory Technology Development groups (PTDs), which teach

farmers new and improved techniques and technologies in livestock management, horticulture and agriculture. In 2016, 278 FFS events were conducted through which over 6,700 farmers (43 percent women) learned new skills in areas such as animal housing, disease control, urea straw treatment and nutrition. 688 PTD events were conducted through which over 4,000 farmers (37 percent women) were trained on realistic modern tech- or science-based solutions to help with common issues, particularly around livestock management.

To improve the business ecosystem in Afghanistan, AKF established 20 new Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs) across programme regions and continued to support 179 BDSPs to improve their services and expand their reach, so that they can in turn assist local producers. In 2016, 7,698 farmers and small producers were integrated into value chains through BDSPs.

At the same time, AKF established 72 Business Membership Organisations (BMOs) and continued to strengthen the capacity of 139 BMOs, of which over 50 percent were women-led BMOs. BMOs are groups of individual farmers organised into associations that utilise collective bargaining power to sell their products and better connect to the market.

AKF is providing industry-relevant vocational training for men and women in rural areas to increase their employability and entrepreneurship. In 2016, AKF provided vocational training to 844 people (83 percent women) in 14 different vocations including automobile mechanics, handicrafts, beautification, mobile repair and carpentry. About 75 percent of participants found employment or started their own business and are earning a monthly income of between US\$ 90 and US\$ 180.

Access to finance is also a key enabler of diversified livelihoods and income. AKF has established and supported community-based savings groups (CBSGs), which are local support organisations operating at grass-roots level to provides access to finance to some of the poorest and most marginalised people in rural areas. As of December 2016, AKF has been supporting over 3,900 CBSGs with over 52,000 members, 70 percent of whom are women. During 2016, the savings value of CBSGs was US\$ 700,000, increasing cumulative savings to US\$ 2.5 million. With support from Britain and Australia, six Cluster CBSGs (10-15 CBSGs) in Badakhshan, Bamyan and Takhar were established in 2016 and supported with capacity building, vocational skills and a revolving loan fund in order to stimulate larger community-driven local development initiatives at the cluster/village level, paying particular attention to women's empowerment initiatives.

## 2016 in numbers:

- 10,769 farmers (41% women) trained through Farmer Field Schools and Participatory Technology Development groups, which has helped increase their productivity between 20% to 30% per hectare
- 123 service providers/extension workers supported, reaching 3,871 farmers, and earning an average income of US\$ 215 per working season (3-4 months)
- 11 value chains supported including cashmere, baluchi, poultry, honey and dry fruit and nuts
- 844 participants (83% women) received vocational training in 14 different vocations, 75% of whom found employment or started their own business
- 21 new Business Membership Organisations established across seven provinces started saving and lending practices with an average revolving loan fund of US\$ 10,940 from which US\$ 9,000 was disbursed as loans to 31 people
- 56 youth with disabilities trained in market-driven vocations across 3 provinces
- 3,973 Community Based Savings Groups (CBSGs) established in six provinces and 6 Cluster CBSGs established across 3 provinces

Two years ago, AKF with the support of the United States, trained local farmers in Koofab, Badakhshan in beekeeping, honey processing and trade. 55 year-old Abdulqodir, a Farsi and history teacher at a local school was the first in his community to express interest in the honey business. The income he earned as a teacher was barely enough to support his family of ten. Abdulqodir received two boxes of beehives imported from the cross-border areas of Tajikistan and participated in training sessions conducted by AKF. In a year, Abdulqodir grew his beehives to 20 boxes and generated US\$ 3,100 from sales in 2016. Abdulqodir's successful honey business has encouraged the majority of people in his village to consume locally produced honey and to join the honey business. To help facilitate this, Abdulqodir recently opened a shop in the centre of Koofab with the support of AKF, where he sells beehive boxes, bee colonies, frames and honey. He has sold over 80 beehive colonies to date. In addition, Abdulqodir voluntarily supports new beekeepers by conducting trainings, passing on his learning, and promoting the transfer of knowledge across communities.



Promoting inclusive growth

# increasing access to quality health care



The number of major operations in new Bamyan Provincial hospital has risen by 400 percent from 150 in 2004 to 600 in 2016.

Health care improvements 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.

AKDN carries out a wide range of health activities in Afghanistan. These are implemented primarily by three agencies within the Network – AKF, 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's Health Department assists sister agencies in mobilising resources, managing grants and maintaining donor relationships.

In addition to providing support, AKF directly implements programming in communities to complement clinical and health promotion interventions. In a holistic and complementary manner, AKDN health programmes work to improve the health status of those living in remote or inaccessible areas, paying special attention to the needs of women of reproductive age and children under five.

In 2016, 1.5 million people directly benefited from AKDN's health programmes. Through this work, significant results

have been achieved in improving health indicators in beneficiary communities, in particular child immunization, skilled birth attendance and human resource development.

AKDN continues to implement critical health interventions including the Government's Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) in Badakhshan and the Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS) in Badakhshan and Bamyan; community health nursing and midwifery education programmes; maternal and child health initiatives; and public health system strengthening interventions.

With support from Canada, France and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada, in 2016 AKF implemented the Health Action Plan for Afghanistan (HAPA), aimed at improving maternal, newborn and child health, particularly in Badakhshan, Baghlan and Bamyan provinces, as well as national level interventions in Kabul. Activities include, establishing a nursing diploma course in Faizabad, supporting midwifery diploma and nursing education programmes at the Ghanzanfar Institute of Health and Science (GIHS) in Kabul and providing technical support to the National Institute of Health Sciences in nine regions. In 2016, 55 midwifery students graduated from GIHS with support from the Academic Projects Afghanistan, Aga Khan University. The HAPA programme also includes Post Graduate Medical Education at the

French Medical Institute for Children (FMIC) in Kabul.

Under HAPA, the French Medical Institute for Children (FMIC) established the Mothers and Children Hospital Wing in 2016 and provided 52 beds for the maternal unit and 14 beds for the neonatal intensive care unit. Since the new wing began offering services in November 2016, over 800 obstetrics and gynaecology consultations took place, and 12 deliveries had been carried out by the end of December 2016. With the addition of this new wing, FMIC now has a 160-bed capacity, making FMIC the largest public-private partnership for a hospital in Afghanistan.

AKF also promotes healthy behaviours and practices in target provinces. This work focuses on changing community behaviours around personal health and hygiene, nutrition, reproductive care and environmental cleanliness. To do this, AKF trains volunteers on health promotion topics and facilitates health promotion campaigns in communities, including schools. In 2016, over 85,000 people benefitted from health campaigns.

## 2016 in numbers:

- 1.5 million people benefited from AKDN's health programmes – 58% women
- 565 Community Health Workers trained in Bamyan, Badakhshan & Baghlan – 51% women
- 18,066 volunteers trained on health promotion topics, over 65% of whom were women
- 85,037 individuals benefited from health promotion campaigns – 58% women
- 51,432 women received antenatal and postnatal care consultations and services
- 44,092 children immunised across 3 provinces
- 852 health staff trained by AKHS – 49% female health staff
- 118,936 children under-5 reached under AKF's nutrition programme – 35% girls
- Construction of Chaab District hospital, Takhar, now serving a population of 57,000.

The new Bamyan Provincial Hospital, a project supported by Canada, France and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC), has been completed and all services were moved from the old site to the new premises in September 2016. The Aga Khan Health Services is managing the new hospital – which has a total bed capacity of 141 beds – including the provision of Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS) and e-Health with connections to the French Medical Institute for Children (FMIC) and Aga Khan University hospitals. Of the three operating theatres in the new hospital, one is specifically devoted to the birthing unit in a region where women's access to healthcare has been severely limited.

The new hospital serves a population of around 670,000 people in the region. Due to the unavailability of electricity in Bamyan, a solar plant was established to provide 65 percent of the hospital's power requirement on land donated by the Provincial Government of Bamyan. Around 200 members from the local community benefitted through direct employment related to the construction of the hospital. Since the transition, 30 new staff have been hired and the new hospital receives around 500 patients per day.



Building quality hospitals

# increasing access to quality education

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In 2016, AKF improved the quality of education for over 233,000 students in 320 government schools. Through this work, AKF is supporting the overall objective of the Ministry of Education's National Education Strategic Plan (NESP), which is to have learners at all levels acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable them to be productive, healthy and responsible citizens.

Education in Afghanistan has seen some notable gains over the last 10 years, particularly in levels of attainment, gender equality and access. More children have access to education as the number of schools has increased five-fold compared to a few years back. However, the quality of education remains as challenging as ever for the government and stakeholders.

AKF works to improve access to quality education for all pre-primary and school-age children to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and values that help them become contributing members of society. To do this, AKF uses its Whole School Improvement (WSI) approach and engages with the Ministry of Education and its line departments in the process. Through the WSI approach, AKF is working to improve access to schools; enhance the capacity of teachers and school leadership; increase community engagement; expand and improve physical facilities for children and teachers; and strengthen government capacity and systems to provide quality education services.

In 2016, AKF reached nearly 245,000 children (43 percent girls) across 561 communities in four provinces, increasing access to quality education in Early Childhood Development (ECD), Community-Based Education (CBE), government schools and Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). AKF is fostering community-led education through the

establishment, support and handover of ECD classes to communities and CBE centres to the government. AKF provides technical and pedagogical support training to school Shuras (community representative bodies or councils) and local teachers and builds links between community and education departments to encourage government support of community-based schools. In 2016, AKF continued to support 130 ECD classes, reaching nearly 2,000 pre-school children. In addition, AKF reached over 11,300 children (50 percent girls) through supporting 392 CBE classes, of which 70 were handed over to the Ministry of Education (MoE) through a gradual process between the community and government.

In close collaboration with Community Development Councils (CDCs), AKF also engages families, community members and school Shuras in educational activities and school development plans. In 2016, AKF continued to support over 600 school Shuras that successfully mobilised nearly US\$ 150,000 from the community to support the establishment of libraries, ECD and CBE learning spaces; upgrade school facilities; and cover labour wages.

Recognising that the lack of adequate infrastructure for schools remains one of the major challenges in Afghanistan, AKF supported nearly 100 classroom improvement projects, benefiting over 46,000 children (50 percent girls).

## 2016 in numbers:

At the highest level, AKF engages with government bodies at the provincial and national level to provide capacity building, share best practices and support policy development. In 2016, AKF supported the development of the Operational Plan for the National Education Strategic Plan III (2017-2021) in coordination with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and development organisations. In collaboration with Save the Children, AKF supported the development of the ECD curriculum for the MoE. In addition, AKF supported the MoE with developing the Education in Emergency Operational Plan which targets internally displaced people and returnees.

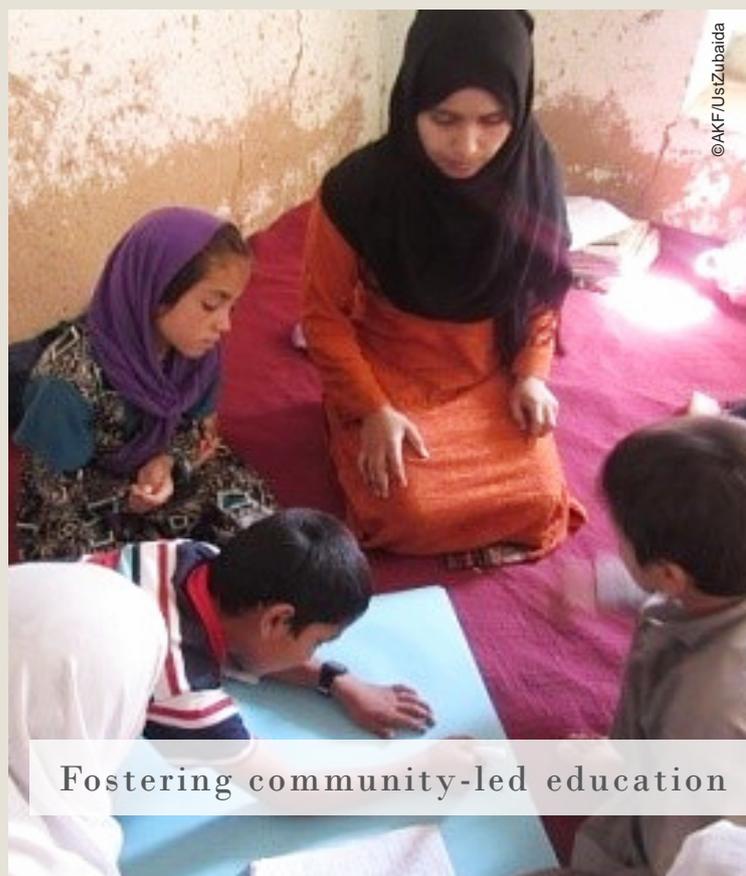
STAGES, an AKF-led consortium of seven partners supported by the United Kingdom, entered its final year in 2016. The project engages a holistic approach to educating marginalised girls living in remote rural communities through the provision of community based education (CBE), interventions to improve government schools and mobilising local communities to support girls' education. At midline stage, STAGES directly educated 24,000 girls and 11,000 boys through ECD, CBE and Advanced Learning Programme classes, improved the learning environment of 112,000 girls and 99,000 boys through government school interventions and trained 5,000 community and government school teachers in up-to-date, learner-centred, gender-equitable teaching methodologies.

- 244,269 children reached through AKF's education programme across 561 communities – 43% girls
- 95 classroom improvement projects conducted, benefitting 41,190 children – 50% girls
- 7,199 students from more than 350 schools benefitted from learning materials
- 130 ECD centres supported, reaching nearly 2,000 pre-school children – 50% girls
- 392 CBE classes supported, reaching 11,387 children – 53% girls
- 2,355 teachers trained on inclusive education, student-centered teaching methodologies, subject-specific knowledge, child safeguarding, gender equality, and health and hygiene
- 10 Teacher Training Colleges supported in Bamyan and Badakhshan, from which 1,372 potential future teachers graduated, 900 of whom were women
- 76 high school girls enrolled in apprenticeship programme, providing them practical and theoretical training to become teachers in the future
- 10 classrooms established and 20 literacy classes supported for women in Takhar

Neela and Najia are neighbours. They both come from large rural, low-income families. Since graduating from high school, both Neela and Najia wanted to become teachers. But their income was insufficient to cover the US\$ 1.28 daily transport cost to the nearest Teacher Training College.

STAGES provided 31 teaching candidates like Najia and Neela with transport support from AKF's Flexible Response Fund (micro-grants) to remove daily barriers to education and teacher training. Because they could now afford transport, both Najia and Neela were able to complete their training and graduated as teachers in 2015.

Neela (20 years old) is now teaching fourth grade students, enabling dozens of girls from her local community to attend school for the first time. Najia (23 years old) is now teaching a class for disabled children. *"I was so fortunate to receive support from the Aga Khan Foundation and STAGES to become a teacher. As I work with the disabled children, I am proud of myself for supporting these children and giving them a bright future,"* Najia said.



Fostering community-led education

# building quality infrastructure



Through the construction of district hospitals, schools, teacher training centres, clinics, bridges, irrigation canals, roads, micro-hydropower units and protection walls, AKF is providing the bedrock for sustainable development and stability. Much of this work has been supported by Germany through the Stabilisation Programme for Northern Afghanistan.

AKF's social development programmes are supported by the construction of physical infrastructure, which helps to improve the quality of life for beneficiaries in target areas. AKF builds high-impact, community-driven infrastructure to enhance access to crucial services and create new livelihood opportunities. By planning at the local level, AKF infrastructure projects benefit a wide range of people, build collective ownership of local infrastructure assets and encourage participatory approaches to development. AKF selects Afghan companies to carry out infrastructure development projects in order to support the local economy and build local capacity.

In 2016, AKF completed 32 infrastructure projects, benefiting over 250,000 people across 19 districts and four provinces, much of which has been supported by Germany. Thirteen were economic infrastructure projects (7 bridges; 3 water supply networks; 2 irrigation canals; 1 road) completed in Badakhshan and Baghlan.

One project was the construction of the Hawz-e-Shiwa bridge in Badakhshan, which is 24 metres in length, linking Shughnan District to Baharak District previously separated by a river. On each side of the bridge, AKF reconstructed 500 metres of the approach road leading to each district. The new bridge and reconstructed roads are now increasing access to markets, health centres and government institutions for around 55,000 people.

Nineteen public and private buildings, such as schools, hospitals, and teacher training centres were constructed, benefitting nearly 150,000 people in 16 districts across Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz and Baghlan. All public service buildings were furnished with water and sanitation facilities.

One project was the construction of a 30-bed hospital in the remote district of Chaab, Takhar. Previously, there was only one clinic with limited bed capacity and facilities to sufficiently serve a population of 57,000 people. The new hospital in Chaab is now equipped with male and female wards, a lab system, water and sanitation facilities, and is serving communities in nearby villages who no longer have to navigate dangerous geographical terrain to reach hospitals in Faizabad.





Diversifying incomes and livelihoods



Increasing access to quality health care



Increasing access to quality education

# WITH THANKS TO OUR DONORS IN 2016

AKF works with many institutional partners across the world, as well as in close collaboration with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Foundation's work in 2016, highlighted in this report, would not be possible without partner support. Partners in 2016 include:

*Agence Française de Développement*

*Aga Khan Foundation Canada*

*Aga Khan Foundation USA*

*Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*

*Department for International Development, United Kingdom*

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia*

*Dubai Cares*

*European Union*

*Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK*

*German Federal Foreign Office via KfW Development Bank*

*Global Affairs Canada*

*International Fund for Agriculture and Development*

*Johnson & Johnson*

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France*

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway*

*Ministry of Public Health, Afghanistan*

*Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Afghanistan*

*Pakistan Afghanistan Tajikistan Regional Integration Program Foundation (KfW Development Bank)*

*Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency*

*Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*

*United Nations Children's Emergency Fund*

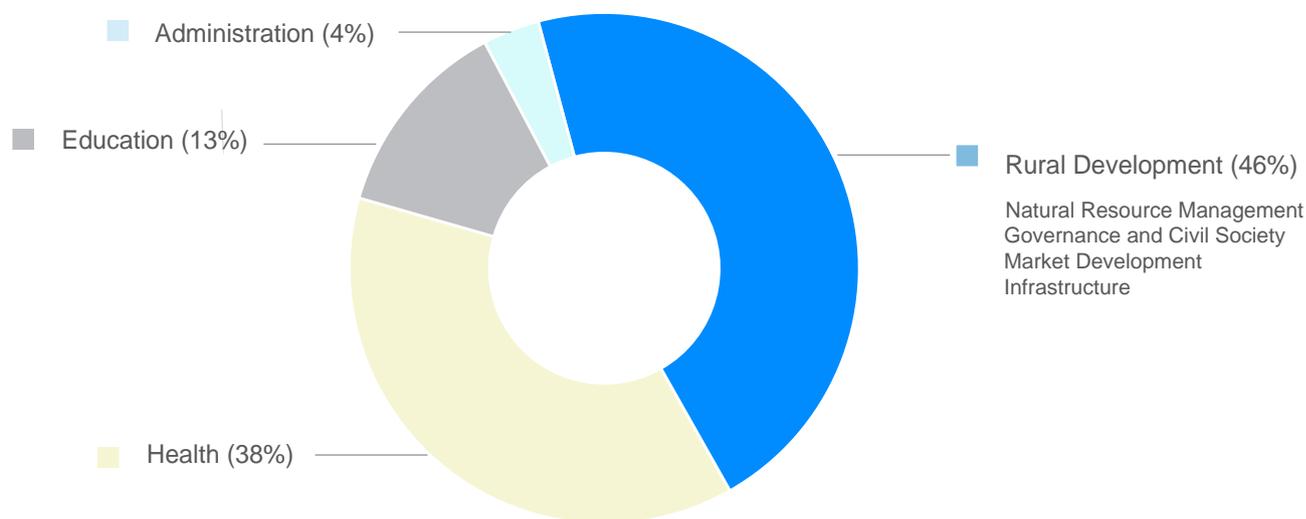
*United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*

*United States Agency for International Development*

*United States Department of State*

*World Food Programme*

## 2016 EXPENDITURE BY THEMATIC AREA



Total Expenditure: US\$ 68,684,000



Improving the Quality of Life





**AGA KHAN FOUNDATION**  
*Afghanistan*

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