

AKTC is engaged in a town planning initiative in Khorog with a view towards sustainable development of communities in the city and heritage preservation.



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The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is a group of private development agencies working to empower communities and individuals, often in disadvantaged circumstances, to improve living conditions and opportunities, especially in Africa and Asia. Its agencies work in over 30 countries for the common good of all citizens, regardless of their gender, origin or religion. Its underlying impulse is the ethic of compassion for the vulnerable in society.

Khorog Town Planning Initiative

AKTC is also sponsoring a town planning initiative in Khorog with the aim of facilitating sustainable community development and heritage preservation. To this effect, in collaboration with representatives from the government and business, tourism and community groups, AKTC has developed a comprehensive master plan for the town of Khorog.

The aim of the initiative is to equip the town for the social, economic, cultural, demographic and administrative transformations that will accompany its future development, such as the growth of international tourism, the establishment of a new campus for the University of Central Asia, as well as increased relationships with neighbouring countries, especially Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and China.

Specifically, the master plan provides a framework for the following improvements in Khorog town:

- Upgrade sewer and water services, provide greater access to utilities

for new housing, alleviate traffic problems and establish preventive measures to better respond to natural disasters;

- Facilitate efficient land use, especially where land is in limited supply;
- Create a complete urban environment, with a range of housing forms, business spaces and cultural venues which respond to the diverse needs of the community;
- Reinvigorate the town centre and relocate housing growth away from peripheral areas in order to produce a stronger community focus, reliant upon pedestrian movement, efficient and affordable utilities and an environment conducive to tourism and university activities;
- Focus growth on safe sites to reduce the natural hazard risks and divert growth from unsafe areas;
- Promote green design to increase energy efficiency in housing and infrastructure.

TAJIKISTAN



Aga Khan Trust for Culture

For centuries, Central Asia has been home to a mix of diverse cultures, societies and traditions. The Soviet era witnessed great leaps in education in the region and the emergence of a literate society immersed in the rich fabric of the period's literature, arts and culture.

Since their independence from the Soviet Union, Central Asian states have begun the process of reviving the rich culture heritages which were often overlooked during the Soviet era. The Aga Khan Trust of Culture (AKTC) seeks to support these efforts of the peoples of Central Asia.

Through its programmes in Tajikistan, AKTC is helping to preserve, develop and promote local musical traditions, rehabilitate communal spaces, and facilitate effective urban planning.

Aga Khan Music Initiative in Central Asia

The Aga Khan Music Initiative (AKMI) was created to support the efforts of talented musicians and music educators to sustain, further develop and transmit musical traditions that are a vital part of their cultural heritage.

The Music Initiative was launched in response to the critical need in post-Soviet Central Asia, which included a lack of resources and knowledge to develop the artistic traditions that validate and sustain the local identities and cultural heritage of the region.

Among its activities, the Music Initiative identifies and supports outstanding musical talent, cultivates new approaches to musical performance and pedagogy, documents and disseminates the work of leading musical tradition-bearers,

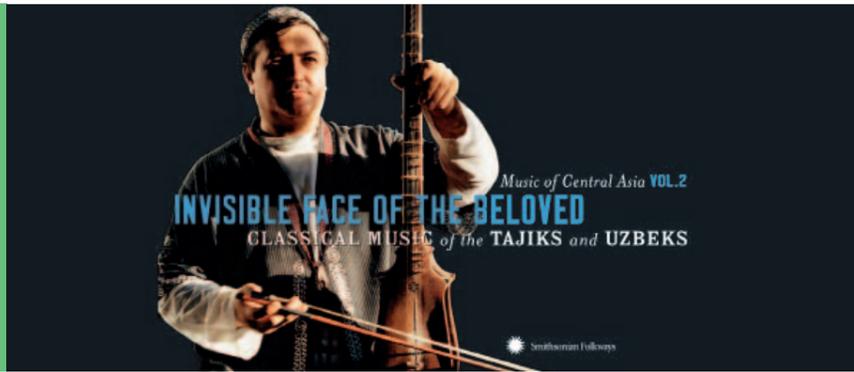
nurtures collaborations among musicians from different parts of Central Eurasia and beyond, and helps talented artists reformulate traditional music in contemporary languages of art.

Tradition-Bearers Programme

The Music Initiative supports master-musicians, or ustâds, who have demonstrated a commitment to the survival of their national heritage by taking on teaching positions in music centres, schools and other networks encouraging collegiality, creativity and communication.

The Academy of Maqâm in Dushanbe, one of the centres supported by AKMI, offers comprehensive training to highly qualified students in historical, theoretical and practical elements of the classical Tajik-Uzbek music

The Music Initiative is currently producing a 10-volume CD and DVD anthology of Central Asian musical traditions, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution. Volume 2 portrays the classical music of Tajiks and Uzbeks, in which vocalists set mystical, Sufi-inspired verses to lyrical melodies.



To date, more than 3,000 students and master musicians have benefited from the Aga Khan Music Initiative Tradition-Bearers Programme through its support of ustâd-shâgird (master-apprentice) centres and teacher training seminars.

These activities encompass rigorous training for a new generation of elite performers and master musicians, and programmes that build a future audience base for traditional music by cultivating an appreciation of it among secondary school students.

Since 2002, the Music Initiative's International Performance and Outreach Programme has produced numerous concerts in Europe, the United States, Africa and Asia.

Cover Photo: The Academy of Maqâm offers comprehensive training to qualified students in historical, theoretical and practical elements of the classical Tajik-Uzbek music of Shashmaqâm.

of Shashmaqâm. The Academy's key objective is to revitalise the core repertoire of Tajik classical music (Shashmaqâm) as an active performance tradition by training a new generation of accomplished musical performers and publishing new critical editions as part of a complete repertoire.

Since 2007, 20 graduate students have completed an intensive, four-year course of study and remain professionally involved in performing and teaching Tajik classical music. These graduates are also engaged in publishing a six-volume edition on the music of Shashmaqâm, in an effort to promote this musical tradition.

The Khunar ("Talent") Centre, operating with a multi-year grant from the Music Initiative, sponsors ustâd-shâgird (master-apprentice) programmes in five cities of northern Tajikistan: Khujand, Istaravshan, Isfara, Penjikent and Kanibadam. The Centre's key objective is to preserve, revitalise and further develop indigenous musical traditions of Northern Tajikistan.

In contrast to the Academy of Maqâm, the Khunar Centre accepts secondary-school students (ages 11 to 16); the Centre's 92 ustâds and teachers instruct 377 students. The Centre sponsors frequent concerts, prepares cassettes and CDs for its students and publishes music method books.

Many Khunar Centre teachers are pensioners with limited income and

have found the opportunity to teach young people to be an economically as well as socially beneficial endeavour.

Additionally, several students from among the group of graduates of the Academy of Maqâm have assumed leadership roles in the rising generation of Tajik musicians. Among their activities, they are involved in training groups of future musical leaders, cultivating outstanding performing ensembles, and producing publications that are sought by music teachers and musicians. Several graduates are pursuing career trajectories leading towards cultural leadership at the national level.

Documentation and Dissemination Programme

The Music Initiative is currently producing Music of Central Asia, a 10-volume CD and DVD anthology of Central Asian musical traditions, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution's Centre for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. As of March 2010, nine volumes of the series had been released.

As part of the series, Tajikistan's Academy of Maqâm released "Invisible Face of the Beloved", a recording of Maqâm-i Râst, one of the six song cycles that comprise the Shashmaqâm. The CD was subsequently nominated in 2006 for a Grammy Award - considered the American music industry's highest honour - in the category of "Best Traditional World Music Album".

Performance and Outreach Programme

AKMI's Performance and Outreach Programme presents Central Asian musical traditions to audiences worldwide, helping to build relationships between musicians from Central Asia and a global network of music-presenting institutions. It seeks to stimulate interest and increase knowledge of Central Asian cultures around the world.

AKMI uses its curatorial expertise to select outstanding performers, develop innovative concert productions and organise worldwide concert tours including educational outreach activities and workshops.

Through the activities of the Music Initiative, local musicians have gained prestige in their home communities, secured their economic well-being and are serving as models of a viable career in music for aspiring students. At the same time, Western audiences have been exposed to the finest contemporary representatives of Central Asian musical arts.

The next priority for the Performance and Outreach Programme is to develop an infrastructure for regional touring within Central Asia itself. The Music Initiative plans to collaborate with local

governments, civil society organisations, its own network of music schools, as well as with other agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network in order to create an active and self-sustaining concert touring mechanism.

Khorog Park

Through its Historic Cities Programme, AKTC has rehabilitated the city park of Khorog, the administrative and economic capital of the mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan region in Tajikistan.

The Park was presented as a gift from the city to His Highness the Aga Khan on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of his Imamate in 1997. It is situated in the city centre of Khorog, along the banks of the Gunt River that flows through the town. The Park is protected from the river waters by stone dykes, one of which also serves as a picturesque pedestrian pathway.

Through its rehabilitation efforts, the Trust has offered the city a communal space in which to hold public gatherings and to reflect, relax and enjoy nature. The Park is well-integrated into the city network and serves as an urban green space. Its revival has represented a substantial step towards the revitalisation of the city as a whole.

"From Afghanistan to Zanzibar, from India to Mali, the [Aga Khan Trust for Culture's] support to historic communities demonstrates how conservation and revitalisation of the cultural heritage—in many cases the only asset at the disposal of the community—can provide a springboard for social development. We have also seen how such projects can have a positive impact well beyond conservation, promoting good governance, the growth of civil society, a rise in incomes and economic opportunities, greater respect for human rights and better stewardship of the environment."

"We have also seen how the preservation and promotion of other forms of heritage, such as traditional music, play an important role in supporting and validating traditional culture in the face of a homogenising world. This is important because culture remains a source of personal pride. It still has the power to inspire and unify an entire nation. And it can reveal that nation, at its best, to the outside world."

—His Highness the Aga Khan



The revival of Khorog Park has represented a substantial step towards the revitalisation of the city as a whole.