

NEWS ARCHIVES

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Aga Khan Planning and Building Service in Pakistan Receives World Habitat Award 2006

Leicestershire, United Kingdom, 4 September 2006 – The Aga Khan Planning and Building Service, Pakistan (AKPBS, P) has received the World Habitat Award 2006 for its efforts to improve housing conditions in Pakistan through its **Building and Construction Improvement Programme (BACIP)**. It is the second time in the Award's history that a Pakistani organisation has received this prestigious award.



The World Habitat Awards are presented each year at the global celebration of World Habitat Day, organised each year on the first Monday of October by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).

A BACIP smoke-free stove in Northern Pakistan. In addition to dramatically reducing the amount of smoke in the kitchen, the stove also reduces annual expenditures on wood by 50 percent. Another BACIP product can be attached to the stove to warm water.

Established in 1985 by the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF) as part of its contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, the World Habitat Awards provide a unique opportunity to focus attention on the importance of shelter in people's lives. Two awards are given annually to projects that provide practical and innovative solutions to current housing needs and problems.

Every year a prize of UK £10,000 is presented to each of the two winners at the annual United Nations global celebration of World Habitat Day. Organisations or Governments who have an innovative and practical solution to housing needs and problems from any country of the world are eligible to participate. Projects are sought that demonstrate practical, innovative and sustainable solutions to current housing issues faced by countries of the North as well as the South and are versatile in terms of being transferred or adapted for use as appropriate. The previous award winner for Pakistan was the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) in 2001.

In March this year, the Aga Khan Planning and Building Service, Pakistan received the US \$1 million Alcan Prize for Sustainability for its efforts to improve housing conditions as well as water and sanitation facilities in Pakistan.

AKPBS, P was established in 1980 as an agency of the worldwide Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The agency's mandate is to plan and implement infrastructure and technology-related development initiatives to improve the built environment and to enhance living conditions for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged populations in order to eliminate poverty.

It does this by providing material, technical assistance and applied research, as well as planning and construction management services for communities in both rural and urban areas.

The AKPBS, P's Building and Construction Improvement Programme (BACIP) is designed to improve living conditions by developing solutions to issues relating to housing and the built environment. The programme has developed low-cost, seismic-resistant, energy and resource-efficient housing construction methods and standards. Over 15,000 fuel-efficient products have been installed in 7,000 households to date, benefiting more than 50,000 people. BACIP has been listed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Global Environmental Facility (GEF)/ Small Grants Programme (SGP) as Best Practice in UNDP/GEF-SGP 10 years of operations in Pakistan. The project director of BACIP is architect engineer Sjoerd Nienhuys.

Programme activities of the AKPBS, P have been supported by the local communities and local governments, the German funding agency Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW); Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); United States Agency for International Development (USAID); United Nations Development Program, Pakistan, (UNDP, P) / Global Environmental Facility (GEF) - Small Grants Programme (SGP); European Commission (EC); Austrian Development Agency (AusAID), Hundreds of Original Projects for Employment (HOPE 87), United Nations Development Program, Pakistan, (UNDP, P), Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF); the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), and many other development organizations and foundations.

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NOTES

1. Aga Khan Planning and Building Service, Pakistan has been working to improve the built environment in Pakistan since 1980. Its areas of focus include housing design and construction, institutional construction management, village planning, natural hazard mitigation, water supply and sanitation, and improved indoor living conditions for the most disadvantaged members of society. AKPBS, P achieves its goals by providing material and technical expertise and training to rural and urban areas. Currently, AKPBS, P is focusing on developing technology related to earthquake-resistant buildings, solar energy use, thermal efficiency, village planning, and other quality-of-life issues.

2. The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) was founded by His Highness the Aga Khan, 49th Hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the Ismaili Muslims. It is a group of private, non-denominational development agencies working to empower communities and individuals to improve living conditions and opportunities, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South Asia, and the Middle East. The Network's nine development agencies focus on social, cultural and economic development for all citizens, regardless of faith, origin or gender.