



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION U.S.A.

PRESS RELEASE

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**PUBLIC-PRIVATE AGREEMENT BRINGS POWER TO NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN
AND INVESTMENT TO ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE IN CENTRAL ASIA**

WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 23, 2012 – This week, the [Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A.](#) (AKF USA) signed an agreement with the Regional Energy Security, Efficiency, and Trade (RESET) project, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), to carry out the Cross-Border Energy project in the Shugnan District. AKF USA, an agency of the [Aga Khan Development Network](#) (AKDN) and its project partner, Pamir Energy, will extend electrical service to remote northern Afghanistan from an existing power grid in Tajikistan, while helping to establish the infrastructure for regional growth in Central Asia.

Pamir Energy was founded in 2002, with major investment from the [Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development](#) (AKFED) and the International Finance Corporation, to restore sustainable electrical power to the Gorno-Badakhshan region of Tajikistan. Besides providing hydropower-generated electricity to an estimated 220,000 people in Tajikistan, Pamir Energy already extends power to over 1,000 households across the Panj River in some of the most isolated parts of northern Afghanistan. The new agreement builds on that foundation. Under the agreement, AKF USA and Pamir Energy will build additional transmission lines and distribution systems to northern Afghanistan, and train staff at the Afghan national utility company on systems maintenance and management.

The agreement follows comments made last fall by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton about Pamir Energy's success as a private-public partnership. Secretary Clinton noted in October that the U.S. should work with AKDN "to support Pamir Energy in building an integrated energy grid along the Tajik-Afghan Border."

The USAID RESET Project facilitates the development of a regional market for electricity in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan. Initiated in November 2010, the three-year project provides technical assistance and helps to mobilize investment for regional and national energy industries. One goal is to establish a regional electricity trading system.

Such regional investment, noted His Highness the Aga Khan in a recent speech in Paris, can cross national boundaries "to engage cross-border communities of cooperation" and thus "enhance growth opportunities – while also spreading risks more widely."

The new agreement, with nearly \$140,000 from AKF USA, leverages almost \$785,000 of U.S. government investment in infrastructure to help Afghanistan and Central Asia.

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About Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A.

AKF USA, established in 1981, is a private, non-denominational, not-for-profit international development organization committed to alleviating poverty, hunger, illiteracy and poor health. AKF USA works to address the root causes of poverty by supporting and sharing innovative solutions in the areas of health, education, rural development, civil society, and the environment. AKF USA is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code.

AKF USA is part of the Aga Khan Development Network (www.akdn.org), a network of private, non-denominational, development agencies around the world, established by His Highness the Aga Khan to empower communities and individuals, often in disadvantaged circumstances, improve living conditions and opportunities. The Network's agencies work for the common good of all citizens, regardless of their gender, origin or religion and its underlying impulse is the ethic of compassion for the vulnerable in society.

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