



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION
An agency of the Aga Khan Development Network

PRESS RELEASE

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**HOUSTON MOVES TO BUILD BETTER FUTURES
AT AGA KHAN FOUNDATION WALK | RUN**

HOUSTON, TEXAS, NOVEMBER 14, 2015. Today, 5,000 Houstonians moved to invest in long-term solutions to improve the quality of life for communities worldwide at the annual [Aga Khan Foundation Walk | Run - Houston](#) at the Sam Houston Park. The event is an initiative of the [Aga Khan Foundation](#) (AKF) to raise awareness and funds for programs that work with communities around the world to build better futures.

This year's Houston Walk raised \$1.92 million, reflecting the enthusiastic outpouring of support from participants and sponsors across the metro area, including national sponsors, The Coca-Cola Company and Pioneer Finance. 100 percent of net proceeds from the event go directly to projects supported by the Aga Khan Foundation.

At the opening ceremony of the Houston AKF Walk, keynote speaker Neil Bush, Chairman of Points of Light, said "There is darkness across the globe and the Aga Khan Foundation and foundations alike bring light. They bring love, they bring hope, they bring the vital resources...not just the financial resources, which are so generous and plenty, but they call all of us to serve. My Father President George Herbert Walker Bush said that any successful life must include service to others."

Service and contributions make a tremendous impact in creating locally driven opportunities for girls in Afghanistan to attend school, farmers in Mali to feed their families, and mothers in India to lead healthy lives, to name a few. These are the cornerstones of a thriving community.

"When you think of the causes of conflict, of terrorism, of war – there is intolerance...there is lack of education...there is suffering, there is hunger," said Dr. William Flores, President of University of Houston-Downtown, as he explained the importance of balancing intolerance with understanding, lack of education and the hunger with food. "And that's what the Aga Khan Foundation does – it brings water, food, education, schools – the work that it does is part of that balance."

With 200 projects in 30 countries, Aga Khan Foundation cultivates deep partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, governments and community leaders to harness the best from people of all walks of life. Working with its partners, the Foundation makes long-term commitments to innovative programs that improve the quality of life, from early childhood education to green space preservation.

The Houston Walk attracted a range of participants eager to help communities in some of the poorest areas of Africa and Asia to improve their quality of life. In addition to distinguished guests Neil Bush, Chairman of the Points of Light Foundation and Dr. William Flores, President of University of Houston-Downtown, other key supporters included Mike Parsons, National Account Executive for The Coca-Cola Company; Sujiro Seam, Consul General of France; Sharron Melton, news personality; Aleem Walji, Chief Executive Officer of Aga Khan Foundation USA; along with many other civic, academic and corporate leaders.

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Run and Walk events for Aga Khan Foundation have taken place in 11 major U.S. cities this year. Since 1995, the Foundation's activities including the annual Walk and Golf events have attracted nearly a half million participants and raised \$75 million for poverty alleviation projects supported by the Foundation.

The Aga Khan Foundation is a private, not-for-profit international development organization committed to breaking the cycle of poverty in some of the poorest regions of the world. The Foundation helps communities around the world to build better futures by creating institutions like hospitals, making long-term investments to the most innovative programs, and cultivating strong local leadership. AKF is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Visit www.akfusa.org for more information.

Aga Khan Foundation is a member of the Aga Khan Development Network (www.akdn.org), one of the world's leading poverty solutions networks, established by His Highness the Aga Khan. The Network empowers communities and individuals, often in disadvantaged circumstances, to improve living conditions and grow opportunities. The Network's agencies work 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.

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