



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION U.S.A.

PRESS RELEASE

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**AGA KHAN FOUNDATION U.S.A. JOINS
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

WASHINGTON, DC, NOVEMBER 26, 2013 – The [Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A.](#) (AKF USA) and the [World Bank Group \(WBG\)](#) signed an agreement making AKF USA a donor and partner to the [Global Partnership for Social Accountability](#) (GPSA) as it supports civil society engagement and capacity building. Under the agreement, AKF USA will contribute \$500,000, including \$250,000 in-kind support to the GPSA, a multi-million program managed by the World Bank Group. Aga Khan University's Graduate School of Media and Communications, based in Nairobi, will also train selected civil society organizations (CSOs) to better engage and strengthen the role of media in promoting accountability and transparency. When CSOs have the skills and ability to work with communities, media and government, it benefits society at large.

The GPSA partnership builds on the World Bank Group's direct engagement with public sector actors to create an enabling environment in which citizen feedback is used to solve critical problems in service delivery and to strengthen public institutions.

Supporting civil society is central to AKF's approach to development and that of its sister agencies in the Aga Khan Development Network. This agreement, the first of its kind between AKF USA and the World Bank Group, places the issues of CSOs firmly on the development agenda and actively in the Bank's portfolio. Dr. Mirza Jahani, Chief Executive Officer of AKF USA, noted, "We are very encouraged by the World Bank Group's initiative to form the Global Partnership for Social Accountability, which bridges its work with host governments to civil society organizations. It builds momentum for giving people a voice while simultaneously giving governments a better ear to listen to their people so that civic engagement can be better actualized. Our hope is to create evidence that demonstrates to governments that working with civil society is not only positive but a key element for sustaining accountability."

Representing the World Bank Group, Mr. Sanjay Pradhan, Vice President for Change, Knowledge and Learning, said, "We very much welcome AKF USA's support to the GPSA. The Foundation brings a wealth of knowledge and learning of how citizens and governments can work jointly for development. The GPSA will help bring government and citizens together to improve governance and accountability."

With the agreement, AKF USA joins other leading foundations that contribute to the GPSA including the Ford Foundation and the Open Society Foundations.

In October 2013, the [GPSA awarded 13 grants](#) for projects proposed by CSOs in response to the GPSA's first Call for Proposals. An [upcoming Call for proposals](#) will be open until January 6, 2014. The GPSA also is building a knowledge sharing agenda that fosters support and awareness about the practical ways to implement, spread and evaluate social accountability initiatives.

An agency of the Aga Khan Development Network

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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.

About the GPSA:

The **Global Partnership for Social Accountability** (GPSA) supports civil society and governments to work together to solve critical governance challenges in developing countries. To achieve this objective, the GPSA provides strategic and sustained support to CSOs' social accountability initiatives aimed at strengthening transparency and accountability. The GPSA Global Partners include more than 80 civil society organizations, multilateral institutions, foundations, and academia, which collaborate with GPSA in terms of knowledge sharing, technical assistance and networking.

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