



*e x c e l l e n c e i n*  
EDUCATION

# AKDN Education Activities



## THE AGA KHAN ACADEMIES (*envisaged dates for the decade 2003-2013*)

### Africa

- Mombasa, Kenya (*August 2003*)
- Nairobi (Nyari), Kenya (*2006*)
- Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Antananarivo, Madagascar (*2007*)
- Bamako, Mali
- Maputo, Mozambique (*2007*)
- Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (*2008*)
- Kampala, Uganda

### Central Asia

- Kabul, Afghanistan
- Osh, Kyrgyz Republic
- Khorog, Tajikistan
- Dushanbe, Tajikistan

### Middle East

- Damascus, Syria
- Salamieh, Syria (*2009*)

### South Asia

- Dhaka, Bangladesh (*2006*)
- Mumbai, India (*2006*)
- Hyderabad, India (*2007*)
- Karachi, Pakistan

## EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

- △ (*International Academic Partnerships, Phillips Academy Andover, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Texas at Austin, University of Calgary, University of Toronto, Oxford University, Schule Schloss Salem, University of Central Asia, Aga Khan University*)





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We live in a time of rapid change – change that is often unpredictable and not always positive. My experience with development, as an observer and a practitioner, has led me to the conclusion that the best way to manage change, whether positive or negative, is to prepare for it, and that there is no greater form of preparation for change than investments in education.

These investments must focus, of course, on teachers of the highest quality – teachers who are creative and committed to their own life-long learning and self-improvement. It also means investments in facilities that provide an environment conducive to the less tangible but equally important elements of an education – self-esteem, leadership, tolerance, ethical judgment and moral reasoning.

However, as educators and parents have begun to make these investments, they are revisiting the age-old question: What does it mean to be an educated person? Many have come to realise that education must prepare students not only for the job market, but also for life. From Zanzibar's *madrassas* to Britain's public schools, from American university preparatory academies to government schools in Pakistan, there is a realisation that education must equip students with more than a narrowly focused curriculum based on reading, writing and mathematics. It must expose students to a broad and meaningful study of the humanities, including science, music and art. The teaching of history and world civilisations must be more broadly representative of the world's entire heritage than it has in the past. This is especially true in regard to Islamic civilisations, which have been misrepresented or ignored despite their vital contributions in a wide range of spheres, from science to architecture.

Education must include mastery of more than one language and an ability to communicate effectively in those languages. In the face of the most rapid advances in technology in history, education also must teach students how to master information technologies. These skills now form a critical part of the learning process, as well as essential qualifications for application in the workplace, but even these elements are not enough.

An education must equip students with the tools that enable them to adapt, and thrive, in a world characterised by change. In such an environment, technical proficiency is not enough. Education that prepares children for life must go beyond fundamental skills to stimulate creativity, intellectual curiosity and honest inquiry. Advancement and development, both personal and societal, are dependant on these elements. Innovation and progress arise from the ability to approach a challenge in a new way and offer a solution.

Education must also make the case for a pluralistic tradition in which other views, ethnicities, religions and perspectives are valued not only because that is just and good, but also because pluralism is the climate best suited for creativity, curiosity and inquiry to thrive. It must also stimulate students to consider a variety of perspectives on some of the fundamental questions posed by the human condition: “What is truth?” “What is reality?” and “What are my duties to my fellow man, to my country and to God?” At the same time, education must reinforce the foundations of identity in such a way as to reinvigorate and strengthen them so that they can withstand the shock of change.

What students know is therefore no longer the most important measure of an education. The true test is the ability of students and graduates to engage with what they do not know, and to work out a solution. They must also be able to reach conclusions that constitute the basis for informed judgements. The ability to make judgements that are grounded in solid information, and employ careful analysis, should be one of the most important goals for any educational endeavour. As students develop this capability, they can begin to grapple with the most important and difficult step: to learn to place such judgements in an ethical framework.

For all these reasons, there is no better investment that individuals, parents and the nation can make than an investment in education of the highest possible quality. Such investments are reflected, and endure, in the formation of the kind of social conscience that our world so desperately needs.

In 2000, His Highness the Aga Khan initiated a programme for the establishment of an integrated network of schools, called Aga Khan Academies, dedicated to expanding access to education of an international standard of excellence. The Academies, which will educate young men and women from pre-primary through higher secondary education, are planned for key locations in Africa and Asia (please see map). The first such school, the Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa, began operating in August of 2003.

Admission is based solely on merit. Admission is also needs blind – that is, selection is based not on the ability to pay but on merit determined by a wide range of criteria, including academic strength and overall potential. Socio-economic status will therefore no longer be a limiting factor in determining achievement.

## AN EMPHASIS ON THE HUMANITIES

The Academies offer a broad, multidisciplinary education with an emphasis on the humanities. Students study a range of subjects that include, but are not limited to, history; literature; the general sciences comprising physics, biology and chemistry; philosophy and ethics; the mastery of a foreign language and the study of foreign cultures; comparative religion; the history, theory and criticism of the arts; and the social sciences, including political science, government and global economics.

## THE GRADUATE

Graduates of the Academies are part of an international body of exceptional students who have studied a common curriculum recognised and accepted at schools and universities throughout the world.

They are self-reliant and confident in their abilities. They are secure in their own identities while understanding and respecting the cultures and traditions of others.

They aim to be leaders in the fields of their choice. They are equipped with the skills, qualifications and outlook necessary to take advantage of new opportunities.

They are able to think critically, to analyse and reflect. They are creative and flexible. They are curious and approach learning with a certain rigor and self discipline. They exhibit competence with technology, but also an engagement in sports and art.

BUILDING ON A  
CENTURY OF QUALITY  
IN EDUCATION

They are multilingual, with proficiency in English, the global language of advanced knowledge and research, as well as their own national language, and usually a second foreign language.

They have a strong grasp of moral reasoning, ethics and respect for others. They have a deep understanding and experience of the value of pluralism and how it contributes to building peaceful societies. They actively seek to foster mutual understanding between different societies and civilisations.

These Academies continue and enhance educational endeavours begun nearly 100 years ago by the Aga Khan's grandfather, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah, when self-help schools were started to expand educational opportunities and access in remote and underserved areas of Africa and Asia. Today, being part of the AKES' network is being part of a coordinated system of more than 300 schools that offer best practices in contemporary education, including student-centred and interactive learning.

This century of experience also means that every Academy will be able to draw from a range of resources, including long-standing programmes to improve educational quality. These programmes include Professional Development Centres (PDCs) dedicated to enriching existing curricula and developing new ones, creating innovations in teaching and learning environments, introducing student-centred teaching methods, disseminating best practices in the teaching of English, mathematics and science, pioneering the use of computers in the classroom and training school managers.

It means access to the resources and expertise of important international partners and associated institutions like Phillips Academy Andover, Harvard University, the University of Texas at Austin and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States, the Universities of Toronto and Calgary in Canada, Oxford University in the United Kingdom, the Schule Schloss Salem in Germany, and the Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development in Karachi, Pakistan. These resources will enrich what the Academies offer, and will help them fulfill the very high aspirations expected of them and their graduates.

## STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

The Academies offer student-centred teaching and learning environments designed to stimulate the joy of inquiry. Interactive education encourages students to ask questions, pursue independent lines of inquiry and develop interest and expertise in a broad range of knowledge.

Co-curricular subjects, such as music, art and dance, further enrich the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities, like after-school sports and clubs and programmes of community service, play an important part in extending learning to less tangible qualities, such as self-esteem, self-confidence, teamwork, self-discipline and sociability – qualities that play an important part in the development of the students' value systems.

Mastery of at least two languages, with English as one of them, grants access to far wider sources of information, than proficiency in one language only. It also prepares students for opportunities in an increasingly interdependent world.

Likewise, a programme of computer literacy provides students at all levels with an appropriate amount of hands-on experience with computers. The aim is to provide the tools for progressive mastery of computer and information technologies. To provide an environment conducive to this goal, the Academies are networked so that computers become a common resource for teachers and students.

## AN EXPERIENCED, MULTICULTURAL FACULTY

The quality of any teaching institution is dependant on its faculty and staff. Faculty at each Academy are therefore chosen first on the basis of quality. All must have at least a Bachelor's degree and five years of experience in interactive teaching environments. Faculty who are recruited are offered opportunities to enhance their teaching skills through a process of continuous improvement at the in-house Professional Development Centres (PDCs).

Faculty and staff are also expected to have experience in multicultural environments. As education at the Academies is intended to prepare students to live in pluralist societies, faculty promote, through practice and personal example, an appreciation and understanding of other cultures, religions and traditions.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

A vigorously encouraged programme of international student and teacher exchanges and year-abroad programmes between Academies in different countries, as well as with partner institutions, will play an important role in fostering cross-cultural understanding.

In addition to a programme of international exchanges, each Academy will incorporate a PDC aimed at research, development and the implementation of best practices in contemporary education.

Each faculty member can draw upon a broad programme of professional development courses. In addition, faculty will be actively involved in research activities at the PDC and curriculum development for their Academy.

PDCs offer courses in general pedagogical skills, interactive learning methods and student-centred teaching techniques. Through the Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development, teachers are able to pursue certificates in the teaching of English, science and mathematics, curriculum development, early childhood development, as well as school leadership and school management. Masters, PhD and post-graduate degree courses are also offered through the Aga Khan University.

These programmes are available not only to the Academies' staff, but to the faculties of other public and private schools. PDC programmes already train key teachers in a variety of schools throughout the developing world with the aim of having those teachers return to their schools to train others. Through the multiplier effect, the Academies aim to have a broad impact on the quality of education nationally and regionally.

## International Partnerships and Associations

The Academies are part of several unique partnerships and associations that have been formed with leading academic institutions, including institutions in North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. These partnerships contribute to the quality of the curriculum and to the professional development programmes. They also ensure that the Academies maintain and enhance their international standing.

Of particular note is the International Academic Partnership (IAP), which includes Phillips Academy in the United States, Schule Schloss Salem in Germany, Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development in Pakistan, and Aga Khan Education Services' schools in a number of countries.

IAP's objectives are to promote global education and student-centred teaching, with a particular focus on professional development for teachers and curricular innovation. Since its founding in 1993, the IAP has linked over 400 schools in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda and the United States. Sixty-four Phillips Academy faculty and five hundred AKES teachers have been involved in the programme. In addition, teachers from school districts in the United States are participating in the programme through an affiliation with the University of Texas at Austin.

Programmes include Islamic Cultural Studies, a multidisciplinary curriculum for the study of Islam and Muslim civilisations in a non-doctrinal, comparative, and historical context. Another course is Global Economics, which aims to develop skills in this field by drawing on examples from the international economy.

Several universities will also play a role in education development at the Academies. The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology will serve as a resource for the teaching of Islamic art and architecture. The University of Central Asia, which is located on three campuses in the Kyrgyz Republic,

## AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED CURRICULUM

Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, will provide expertise in the teaching of issues relating to development in mountain zones. The Aga Khan University, which now operates education programmes and institutes in Eastern Africa, Central Asia and the United Kingdom, including the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations in London, is an important resource for training and research in teacher education. AKU-IED's Professional Development Centres, based at the Academies, will help further improve the standards of education, not only at the AKES schools, but also State schools and other private schools.

The Academies follow the principles of the International Baccalaureate programme (IB), and will eventually adopt the IB throughout primary and higher secondary education. The IB's educational philosophy, which is embodied in a multidisciplinary course called "Theory of Knowledge", follows an integrated approach to learning that groups academic subjects while stressing critical thinking, creativity, active learning and problem solving.

The IB has become the curriculum of choice at international schools and academies throughout the world. It allows students to move between institutions with similar curricula and examinations, which greatly facilitates international exchanges. In addition, the IB is accepted by over 1700 of the best universities in the world, including those in the United States and Canada, the United Kingdom, continental Europe, Australia and in many other regions. Recipients of the IB diploma enjoy a high rate of acceptance at these leading universities. The IB has come to be known not only for academic excellence but also for promoting pluralism – an understanding and appreciation of other cultures, languages and points of view.

The IB originated in Switzerland when teachers at the International School of Geneva, working with schools in Asia, Europe and the Americas, created the IB Diploma. The programme is administered by the International Baccalaureate Organisation, a non-profit institution based in Geneva, Switzerland.

## THE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

The Primary Years Programme, for students aged 3-11, focuses on the development of the whole child, addressing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs, while giving students a strong foundation in all of the major areas of knowledge. Through the Programme, children become aware of and sensitive to the points of view of people in other parts of the world.

## THE MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME

The Middle Years Programme, for students aged 11-16, integrates the study of all the major disciplines, including languages, sciences, literature and the social sciences, mathematics, arts, technology and physical education. The Programme normally includes a service component designed to encourage students to become involved with their communities.

## THE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

The Diploma Programme, for students aged 16-19, is a two-year course of study that prepares students for university. All DP students study languages, a social science, an experimental science, mathematics and, usually, an arts subject. At the same time as it provides a form of academic passport, the DP generally fulfils the requirements of a student's national education system. Each student's performance is evaluated by independent examiners and measured by his or her levels of knowledge and skills relative to set standards applied to all schools.

The international network of Academies will link students with their counterparts in Africa, South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East. Currently, there are 19 Academies envisaged or under development. International student exchanges between Academies in different countries, as well as with allied schools in Europe and North America, will offer students opportunities to broaden their worldview and learn to be at ease in multicultural settings. A common curriculum will allow students to study abroad without facing uncertainties regarding compatibility of course study or examinations. Although the medium of instruction will be English at all Academies, the study of a foreign language will be greatly enhanced through immersion in that language. Likewise, appreciation and respect for other nationalities, cultures and intellectual traditions will be greatly facilitated by direct contact with people in other countries.

Each Academy will have residential facilities in a safe, secure campus setting. Accommodation will be provided not only for international students, but also for boarding students from within the country or region. The campus is considered a vital part of the educational programme. Many of the least tangible but most important elements of an education – the development of practical leadership skills, the capacity to make ethical judgments, the ability to navigate through complex cultural settings – are formed outside the classroom. Meal times and other informal gatherings offer opportunities for discussion, meetings, language tables, and study groups. A campus therefore greatly extends and enriches international exchanges.

Additional opportunities exist for exchanges with schools outside the Academies system, including some of the 1300 International Baccalaureate (IB) schools throughout the world. IB student credentials are completely transferable. Students can even sit for examinations at their exchange school abroad.

## TEACHER EXCHANGES

A programme of teacher exchanges creates opportunities for teachers across the network of Academies to spend a year or more abroad at other academies. In addition, teachers take part in exchanges through international partnerships. Phillips Academy Teaching Fellows work in AKES schools; AKES teachers work in Andover's summer session; experienced teachers undertake summer or sabbatical visits to AKES schools and to Phillips Academy.

Professional Development Teacher workshops facilitated by Phillips Academy, AKU-IED and AKES offer up to two weeks of full-time study in content and pedagogy for teachers in AKES, government, and community schools. New initiatives include workshops on teaching about HIV/AIDS, integration of technology into the classroom, and the teaching of English through theatre arts.

## The Campus and Residential Facilities

The Academies feature campuses with exceptional facilities. Each campus is to be designed by renowned architects and will include a variety of best practices in facility design, including construction techniques that allow creative use for interior spaces and classroom environments more conducive to interactive learning.

The Academies will have well-equipped laboratories for general science, physics, biology, chemistry, home science and computers, art and music rooms, a library and resource centre, a religion and culture room, a career counselling facility, a design and technology workshop, student and teacher lounges, a theatre, a multipurpose hall and a cafeteria and dining area.

In addition, facilities for sports will include swimming pools, fields for athletics such as soccer, hockey and athletics. A gymnasium will typically house facilities for a variety of sports such as basketball, badminton, volleyball, squash and gymnastics. Other facilities might include tennis courts, a cricket pitch or an ice-skating rink, where appropriate. These facilities are intended to allow students to progress physically as well as intellectually and, in the process, build self-confidence, self-esteem and self-reliance.

### RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

Residential facilities will accommodate students and teachers, both those boarding students requiring accommodation and those participating in the international student and faculty exchanges between Aga Khan Academies and other schools. Teachers' quarters on campus will house both resident and visiting faculty.

Aga Khan Academy students pursue a well-balanced education combining intellectual inquiry, academic excellence, sporting and cultural activities and a grounding in ethics and moral reasoning.

They are committed to rigor and self-discipline in their studies and subscribe to the principles of intellectual honesty in the preparation of their work.

They respect their teachers and fellow students. They extend their respect to the cultural, religious and political convictions of others in school and in society. They dedicate themselves to debate issues honestly and fairly. They aim to understand and recognise the value of other views even as they value their own.

They are self-aware and socially conscious. They are committed to the development of their communities, their nation and civil society in the world at large. They are motivated to help others less fortunate than themselves.

They strive to acquire knowledge as part of a balanced, lifelong process of inquiry that leads to intellectual and personal growth, as well as a means to fulfil material goals. The mastery of a particular discipline is balanced by a broad knowledge of several subjects, including science, art, literature and music.

They are also citizens of the world, and at ease in environments and settings other than their own. They are generous and tolerant towards other cultures and traditions. They are bilingual or multilingual.

They embrace the rich diversity of the world while valuing their own identity.

Aga Khan Education Services have a long tradition of leadership in educational development. The foundations of the present system were laid by Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah, Aga Khan III, under whose guidance over 200 schools were established during the first half of the 20th century, the first of them in 1905 in Zanzibar, Gwadur in Pakistan and Mundra in India.

AKES currently operates more than 300 schools and advanced educational programmes that provide quality pre-school, primary, secondary, and higher secondary education services to more than 54,000 students in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Uganda, Tanzania, and Tajikistan. Schools are also envisaged, or under development, in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique and Syria.

Programmes to improve educational quality have been built into the AKES system since the early-1980s. Field-based teacher training was launched in Pakistan's Northern Areas in 1983. School improvement experiments began at the same time in Sindh province in Pakistan, where AKES introduced student-centred teaching methods, and in Tanzania, where new techniques for secondary school teaching in English, mathematics, and science were implemented in Dar es Salaam. AKES, Kenya has been the pioneer in the use of computers in the classroom, while many Network initiatives in pre-school education began in AKES, India. Recent school improvement programmes have expanded the impact of these initiatives to public, private and government schools in Afghanistan, India, Kenya, Pakistan (Sindh and Northern Areas), Tajikistan and Uganda.

All of these experiments have been carried out in government schools as well as AKES institutions, thereby contributing to the improvement of education in the countries in which AKES operates. With both the national service companies and the Aga Khan Foundation acting as relays, this body of experience in teacher development and school

improvement is having an impact well beyond the confines of individual schools. The Institute for Educational Development of the Aga Khan University was created to provide a permanent institutional base that can sustain these and other initiatives in education.

AKES is committed to achieving excellence by continuous improvement of its programmes, services and processes, which are planned, organised, and financed primarily through national service companies and boards. The boards operate facilities and programmes in close collaboration with other AKDN institutions, government agencies, and selected external partner agencies. The national service companies are officially registered as not-for-profit, non-governmental organisations in each country of operation. Their international sponsor is the Aga Khan Education Services S.A., which is incorporated as a not-for-profit company in Geneva, Switzerland.

## Aga Khan Development Network Activities in Education

Founded and guided by His Highness the Aga Khan, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) brings together a number of development agencies, institutions, and programmes that work primarily in the poorest parts of Asia and Africa. AKDN is a contemporary endeavour of the Ismaili Imamat to realise the social conscience of Islam through institutional action. In every country, AKDN institutions work for the common good of all citizens, regardless of their gender, origin, religion or political persuasion.

In addition to the Aga Khan Education Services (AKES), AKDN's other social development agencies contribute in a variety of ways and at many levels to the educational needs of developed and developing countries. The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) works to improve the quality of basic education through grants to governments and civil society institutions. Within a wide agenda that also encompasses health, rural development, gender and human resource development, the Foundation works to ensure better early caring and learning environments for young children, to increase access to education, to keep children in school longer and to raise levels of academic achievement. Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) works closely with AKES and other agencies to build and promote healthy environments in schools and homes. It also provides primary and curative health care in India, Pakistan, Kenya, Tajikistan and Tanzania through a network of 325 health centres, dispensaries, hospitals, diagnostic centres and community health outlets. The Aga Khan Planning and Building Services (AKPBS) provides material, technical assistance, construction management and project implementation services for the construction of schools in rural and urban areas. Its overall aims are to improve the built environment through design and construction, village planning, natural hazard mitigation, environmental sanitation and improved water supply systems.

The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED), with its affiliates Tourism Promotion Services, Industrial Promotion Services, Financial Services, Aviation Services and Media Services, seeks to strengthen the role of the private sector in developing countries by supporting private sector initiatives in the development process.

The Fund and the Foundation also encourage government policies that foster what the Aga Khan first called an “enabling environment” of favourable legislative and fiscal structures. Through its extensive human resource development programmes and promotion of local staff, it has raised standards and provided employment for some of the best and brightest.

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture’s (AKTC) education activities range from financial support for the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States and ArchNet, a growing archive of resources for the study of architecture in Islamic societies, to the Humanities Project in Central Asia, which is developing a core, introductory humanities curriculum based on a wide range of cultural traditions for use in the universities of Central Asia. The Trust also administers the Music Initiative in Central Asia, which works to preserve and promote the music of the region through support to tradition bearers and their students.

The University of Central Asia, the world’s first university dedicated to education and research on mountain regions and societies, offers programmes in continuing education and training, degree programmes in the development professions and undergraduate degrees. It is located on three campuses in Khorog, Tajikistan, Tekeli, Kazakhstan and Naryn, Kyrgyz Republic.

Aga Khan University, headquartered in Karachi, is a major centre for education, training and research in the health sciences and teacher education. Chartered as Pakistan’s first private international university in 1983, it has since established education programmes and institutes in Eastern Africa, Central Asia and the United Kingdom.

While each agency pursues its own mandate, all of them work together within the overarching framework of the Aga Khan Development Network so that their different pursuits can interact and reinforce one another. Their common goal is to help the poor achieve a level of self-reliance whereby they are able to plan their own livelihoods and help those even more needy than themselves.

IMAMAT  
*Areas  
of  
activities*

AKDN  
*Aga Khan  
Development  
Network*

AKES  
*Aga Khan  
Education  
Services*

*Aga Khan  
Academies  
Worldwide*

*Aga Khan  
Academy Mombasa  
Kenya (2003)*

*Aga Khan Trust  
for Culture*

*Aga Khan  
University*

*Institute for  
Educational  
Development*

*Institute for the  
Study of Muslim  
Civilisations*

*University of  
Central Asia*

*International  
Academic  
Partnership*

*Aga Khan  
Foundation*

