

A Story of Compassion

USDA Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

The Aga Khan Foundation

Tajikistan and Afghanistan

The weather inside is chilly in rural Tajikistan during frigid winter months. The school uniform includes coats and hats as children try to stay warm while learning their lessons in an unheated classroom. A daily snack featuring flavored UHT milk helps ward off hunger and keep the children cozy and attentive.

The milk is distributed in 376 schools in Tajikistan and Afghanistan by Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A., with support from a USDA food donation.

With their milk cartons in front of them, school children in Tajikistan are ready to enjoy one of the highlights of their day. The milk comes in four flavors, but chocolate is their favorite.

22,000 children in Tajikistan and 16,000 in Afghanistan receive milk each school day because of the Aga Khan Foundation and the USDA donation.

“Many challenges remain,” said Iqbal Noor Ali chief executive officer of Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A., a nonprofit international development organization. Since the milk distribution began, however, teachers report that school attendance, test scores, and student grades have improved.

USDA donated 5,000 metric tons of nonfat dry milk through the Section 416(b) program to help support the Aga Khan Foundation’s food distribution efforts in Tajikistan and Afghanistan.



How the Initiative is Helping

The Faith-Based and Community Initiative is working to connect groups like the Aga Khan Foundation with the Foreign Agricultural Service programs, such as the Section 416(b) program.

About the Organization

The Aga Khan Foundation is a non-denominational, international development agency established in 1967 for traditional philanthropy in the Ismaili Muslim community under the leadership of the Aga Khan.

With a small staff, a host of co-operating agencies and thousands of volunteers, Aga Khan Foundation reaches out to vulnerable populations in four continents, irrespective of their race, religion, political affiliation or gender. In 2003, with a budget of US \$145 million, it funded 140 projects in 16 countries.

The Foundation is a private, international, non-profit, non-denominational development agency. It was established by His Highness the Aga Khan in Switzerland



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in 1967. It seeks sustainable solutions to long-term problems of poverty, with special emphasis on the needs of rural communities in mountainous, coastal and other resource poor areas. Its main areas of focus are health, education, rural development and strengthening civil society.

The Foundation focuses on a set of specific development problems by forming intellectual and financial partnerships with organizations sharing its objectives. Most Foundation grants are made to grassroots organizations that test innovative approaches in the field.

