



Bulletin

PARTNERSHIP VOLUNTEER NEWS

APRIL 1990

Welcome!

This is the very first issue of the *Bulletin*, Aga Khan Foundation Canada's Volunteer News! The *Bulletin* is part of an increased effort to promote a higher level of communication between you, our valuable Partnership Volunteers, and the Foundation. It is intended to help keep you more informed about the activities of the Foundation and other Volunteers, and to update you with news on the kinds of projects your efforts are supporting. Remember, your communications work is helping to improve the living conditions of the people of the developing world, and playing a crucial role in raising awareness among your fellow Canadians of the interdependent nature of our world. You are building Partnerships. We look forward to your continued support.

Partnership Walk 1990

With all the tax receipts and acknowledgment letters for the 1989 Walk safely out of the way, preparations for Partnership Walk 1990 are now in full swing. The Walk will be held on September 9, 1990, so make sure you, your family and friends are free that day and start making a mental list of all the people you know who might also like to get involved.

All those who wish to participate will, as they did last year, receive a Walker's booklet and pamphlets for use in obtaining sponsorships. The booklets will be available in July, but there's nothing to stop you getting in touch with your sponsors ahead of time. Posters will also be available in July for display in your offices and businesses.

For more information please write to:

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Volunteers discuss a project with a village organization in India.

Awareness Trip

In October 1989, 21 of AKFC's Partnership Volunteers were invited to participate in a trip to project areas in Pakistan and India. The two-week long trip was organized to give some volunteers an opportunity to see first-hand the results of their efforts, and to make them more aware of the realities of the developing world.

The participants visited health, education and rural development projects in Karachi, Gilgit, Hunza and Gujarat, India. The trip was intended to be an educational one, and the fun and the scenery were broken up by lectures and discussions. Dr. Alnoor Abdulla, a long-time Partnership Volunteer and cardiologist in Sudbury, Ontario, says his reaction to what he saw in the project areas was overwhelming. "I thought I knew what conditions in the developing world were like, but I just couldn't accept the degree of poverty of these people," Alnoor explains.

Most of the participants found the AKF projects they visited to be very appropriate. "They were simple, innovative ideas but very effective," says Dr. Saida Rasul, another staunch AKFC supporter. Saida, a dentist from Vancouver, was also struck by the fact that, "we were not giving charity but joining in a partnership with these people and leaving them their dignity."

In addition to the briefings given by project managers and personnel, participants were given a chance to sit down with the villagers and discuss how the projects had affected their lives. "It was very gratifying to see that they had played a part in deciding what was needed and that they had ownership of the project," says Alnoor. "They had learned to function as an organization, so that those villages involved in a second or third project found the process quicker and easier even if the project was more difficult. They had developed skills and mutual trust and were learning self-reliance."

Both Saida and Alnoor feel the trip has significantly affected their work as Partnership Volunteers and helped them to make others aware of the problems faced by the developing world and the kind of solutions that are available. "Now I can really talk from the heart because I know where the money is going and that it is being used well," says Saida.