In whatever we do, at whatever level, we have always been reliant upon volunteers. I would like to leave you with a final thought. It is that, especially in today’s difficult circumstances, we must never lose sight of nor undervalue the secret of our Aga Khan Network’s success, the element which underpins its professionalism. The heart and lifeblood of our network [are] the voluntary workers; the Boards, the Committees, the volunteers young and old who contribute their time and efforts. [1]

We live in a world in which there is increasingly more information that people can employ. The question is, how we access it and how we employ it.... Sharing time and knowledge is saying that I will make available the knowledge that I have to those people who, otherwise, would not have access to it ... in such a form that this knowledge could be employed in building capacities for the future ... [4]

Volunteering can take many forms - funds, time, ideas, and professional skills. Everyone can and should be a donor, not just the wealthy, and all forms of giving should be encouraged and recognised. Volunteerism is critical, and is obtaining greater and greater recognition and encouragement. [5]

I submit that one of our great goals, if we are to create an Enabling Environment of hope and determination, is to give our volunteers opportunities to become more expert and professional - more rational and skilled, without killing their passion. At the same time, our leaders of government and business must arouse in their professionals, the will and conviction of the volunteer. [2]

The voluntary ethos has been extraordinarily important among the people of Africa. Perhaps ninety per cent of African housing is the result of family and community efforts. In Kenya education, the Harambee movement has been extremely significant and there is an equivalent in Botswana. In health, it is now widely recognised that the future lies in community-based systems. [2]

[It is] my conviction that the indigenous voluntary sector must be encouraged to enlarge its role in the development process. These agencies have the potential to draw hundreds of millions of people into direct participation in development. They can be cost-effective and innovative. [3]

[4] Paroquias de Portugal Interview, António Marujo and Faranaz Keshavjee, ‘The West should accept that Islam does not separate the world and faith’ (Lisbon, Portugal) 23 July 2008

www.NanoWisdoms.org © NANOWISDOMS.ORG 2011 • NANOWISDOMS@SENT.COM