Excerpt: His Highness the Aga Khan on the common thread running through the AKDN institutions

by NANOWISDOMS ARCHIVE OF IMAMAT SPEECHES, INTERVIEWS AND WRITINGS

Pranay Gupte: As you look at your extensive network, what is the thread that runs through all of them?

Aga Khan: I think the starting premise is what are the inputs that are required in the parts of the world in which we are working that can have a beneficial impact on the quality of life if the people in those areas. Secondly, are those inputs capable of being addressed by one institution or do you need a number of institutions that have specialised knowledge and that can work together? And the third one is the capacity of those institutions and, indeed, the peoples for whom you’re working to make those institutions self-sustaining. Because ultimately sustainability of the process of development is what all of us are concerned about, frankly. So, that’s the nature of the approach and as time has gone by, I have tried to effectively add new institutions by simplifying and rationalising the network.

Although we have technology in a number of areas, we do not have a little empires or organisations that cannot work together. And one of the things which I find really pleasing at the moment -- in the work that’s being done -- is that there is more and more an empathy around strategies for development. And this empathy goes amongst the institutions. It didn’t start that way. I want to be very frank, in the 50s, the 60s, the 70s, I was concerned about instability within a given area such as health care of education. Today, development is such a multiple process that you really can only be effective if the agencies work together -- and that’s what’s happening.

His Highness the Aga Khan’s 1999 Interview with Pranay Gupte (United States, United Kingdom)
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References

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