

THE AGA KHAN RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME

By

Raazia Attique¹

The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) is a private, non-denominational development support agency established by the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in 1982. It works to contribute to promoting inclusive human development and reduce poverty as well as gender inequalities in Gilgit - Baltistan and the Chitral District (GBC) through a comprehensive strategy of : 1) Social Development 2) Resource Development, and 3) Market Development.

Under the umbrella of Resource Development strategy in GBC, the **Community Physical Infrastructure Programme** is one of the key components of AKRSP; it includes irrigation development projects, link roads, bridges, protective works, water supply schemes and micro hydel plants. As shown in Table below, of the total 3,576 different kinds of projects initiated, AKRSP had completed 3,293 projects by the end of 2009.

Type of Projects	Gilgit	Chitral	Baltistan	Programme Area
	Cumulative No.	Cumulative No.	Cumulative No.	Cumulative No.
Irrigation Projects	529	499	556	1,584
Energy Projects	17	262	23	302
Land Development Projects	70	122	150	342
Water Supply / Sanitation Projects	117	37	73	227
Other Projects	229	324	285	838
Grand Total	962	1244	1087	3,293

Of the afore mentioned versatile engineering projects, the hydro development programme of AKRSP has gained world - wide recognition and as a result, AKRSP has received the prestigious '**Ashden Award**' also known as the '**Green Oscars**' in 2004. The award was bestowed upon AKRSP by HRH Prince Charles in London. In addition, AKRSP has received the Japan Government sponsored '**Global Development Network Award**' for the *Most Innovative Development Project* in 2005.

The successful accomplishment of the hydro development programme promoted AKRSP to initiate a Community – based Renewable Energy Development (CRED) project with the World Bank under the Community Development Carbon Fund (CDCF) project in 2009, to contribute to reduce greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. AKRSP has based the project on its past experience in developing clean energy in this field to support developing countries in the form of carbon finance, capacity building and technology transfer to mitigate adverse climatic effects caused by excessive emissions of greenhouse gases. With the active participation of communities in Northern Areas of Pakistan, AKRSP has already implemented more than 300 micro and mini- hydro power projects in the region in collaboration with Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and other partners.

In this programme area, AKRSP will implement 103 small and large CRED projects, with a minimum individual project capacity of 30 KW and a maximum of 600 KW. AKRSP will also provide technical support and engineering supervision during construction and maintenance

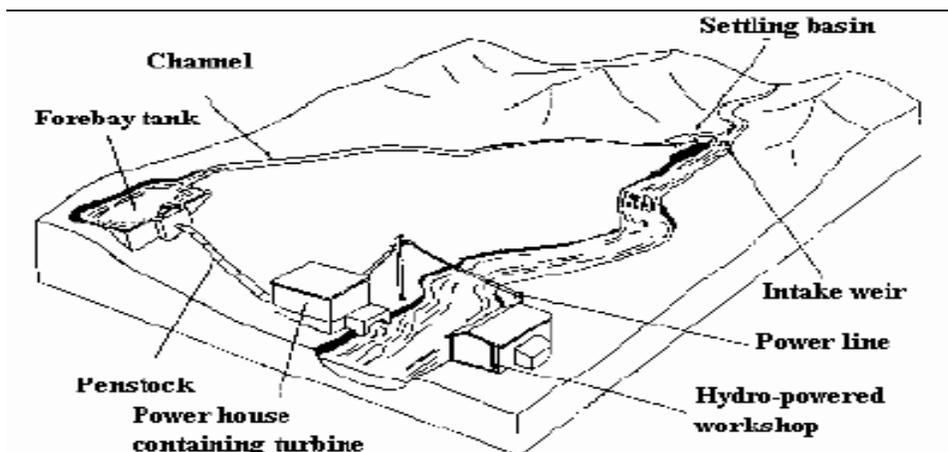
1. Programme Officer Infrastructure and Renewable Energy Agha Khan Rural Support Programme Level Nine, Serena Business Complex, Khyaban-e-Suharwardy, Opposite Convention Centre, Islamabad.

stages. Once completed, these projects will generate a total of 15 MW power to meet community energy needs, replace diesel fuel, thus reducing the carbon dioxide emissions. These projects will reduce an average of 91,980 tons of CO₂ per year and will also help trade



350,000 Certified Emission Reductions (CER) in the market every year through the World Bank. Moreover, the project will help reduce the logging of alpine forest resources that the population of Gilgit Baltistan & Chitral uses mainly for cooking and heating. The mini- grids powered by micro and mini- hydropower projects (MHPs) will provide electricity to around 21,000 households living in mountainous regions to use the power to operate the domestic appliances and establish productive enterprises and businesses in addition to contributing to a clean environment.

The following figure shows an overview of the methodology and technology being implemented in the mini or micro hydels. The turbine converts the energy of falling water to mechanical energy, which can be used directly or be converted to electrical energy, through an alternator, for use in lighting, refrigeration, milling or a number of other small productive uses.



Given are the pictorial views of established mini or micro hydels by AKRSP in Gilgit- Baltistan and Chitral region of Pakistan.



Fig. 1 View of Penstock running into the Power House.



Fig. 2 View of Power House water back into nullah after generation of Electricity.