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CANADA

# Spark of Knowledge

KNOWLEDGE DISCOVERY CHALLENGE  
ISSUE STATEMENTS





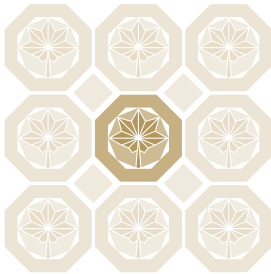
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## THE FOLLOWING AKDN PRIORITY AREAS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR THE KNOWLEDGE DISCOVERY CHALLENGE:

1. CARING FOR THE AGED - AGING IN A SUPPORTIVE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT
2. ULTRA-POVERTY - TURNING THE TIDE OF POVERTY
3. THE ROLE OF MICROFINANCE IN UNLEASHING OPPORTUNITIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
4. CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
5. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS - LIMITING THE LOSS OF LIFE AND ASSETS
6. ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE
7. ALTERNATIVE AKDN PRIORITY AREA

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## ISSUE CATEGORY #5:

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS - LIMITING THE LOSS OF LIFE AND ASSETS

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#### BACKGROUND

With the Jamat now spread to all corners of the globe, certain segments are exposed to risks that may not be felt by the Jamat as a whole. Whether it is because of poorly planned human design or as a result of elemental forces, members of these communities either already suffer from high loss of life or assets, or live on the brink of impending disaster. Equipping these individuals to deal with their circumstances is what emergency preparedness is all about.

The climate and terrain in certain regions of the world may affect the development of infrastructure and the creation of a community. A lack of understanding of these issues often results in communities in these regions being at risk for loss of life or assets.

This is where agencies such as FOCUS come into play. Not only do they provide emergency aid for disaster and crisis stricken areas, but they also assess these areas to see how best to prevent further or repetitive damage from occurring. However, FOCUS does not only deal with an issue after the fact. It is also continually on the lookout for areas that are prone to disaster. Using its own resources, as well as those of local governments and collaborating partners, FOCUS sets up the necessary measures to prepare the community at risk should anything happen so that the community is able to respond immediately and not have to wait for external help.

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#### PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

FOCUS' activities can be found wherever there have been severe losses to communities. Two such areas are Pakistan and Tajikistan. The Sonoghore Village of Chitral, Pakistan had been hit by a glacier break that resulted in mudflow destroying houses, elds and livestock. Under the FOCUS hazard preparation program, an evacuation route had previously been constructed to ensure communities reached a safe location during times of risk.



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The village of Okmamad, in Badakhshan, was faced with the constant threat of mudslides and rockfall from mudflows brought on by rain or melting snow. FOCUS targeted this vulnerable village for intervention under the second phase of the Fostering Disaster Resilient Communities in Isolated Mountain Environments project, funded by the European Union's Disaster Preparedness ECHO (DIPECHO) program. FOCUS geologists, social mobilizers and engineers conducted a comprehensive risk assessment and built a channel to retain debris.

Emergency preparedness is also about being ready for disaster before it happens. This is precisely what FOCUS does with its disaster awareness training sessions. In August 2007, twenty-two such sessions for young individuals were conducted throughout Badakhshan. An important objective of the camp was to ensure that youth were able to pass critical learning onto their families and communities.

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## ISSUE STATEMENT

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Identify a disaster prone area. How do you propose to mitigate threats to this area?





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