The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in Kenya, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, has pivoted existing programs and is focusing its forward programming towards mitigating the crisis to better serve its network of communities.

AKF is leveraging its existing partnerships with over 700 Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and various county governments throughout Kenya, to better understand the rapidly evolving context on the ground. This includes adapting approaches and re-orientating resources accordingly to meet partner and community needs.

One key approach is to re-programme existing projects related to health systems strengthening; this includes increasing public awareness of COVID-19; scaling up psychosocial and mental health awareness; responding to community needs by leveraging data for rapid response; and strengthening health systems responsivity to COVID-19.

In alignment with the AKDN COVID-19 Response Framework, AKF has initiated fundraising to respond to the three key areas of the Framework including slowing and stopping transmission, preventing outbreaks and delaying / suppressing the spread; providing optimised care for all patients, especially for the severely and critically ill; and minimising impact on communities, the vulnerable, social services and economic activity.

In partnership with Aga Khan University and the Aga Khan Health Services, AKF fund-raising efforts will assist in the procurement of crucial equipment and supplies, including Personal Protection Equipment. This will support the immediate response efforts as well as the training of frontline health workers.

AKF continues to support civil society, and is working towards establishing a rapid response fund to deliver financial assistance to civil society organisations, with a priority focus on protecting women against increased prevalence of gender-based violence. There are ongoing efforts to support in the establishment of community surveillance and feedback mechanisms, as well as enhancing capacity support to CSO’s.

In education, AKF supports children and young people through partnership with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to identify and provide digital learning solutions to support distance learning. Children and young people can access educational materials online for free with close monitoring from their teachers and parents. This enables continuity of learning and constructive engagement for various cohorts.

AKF will also provide critical social safety-net support to households through direct cash transfers, as well as raise funds to assist and support Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SME’s) for core fixed costs. This will enhance SME resilience and ensure sustainable income for individual enterprises.