

# FROK

**The UK Friends of Khwendo Kor**  
**UK registered charity no: 1095857**

## **Annual Report for 2014-2015**

This is my fourth Chair's Annual Report of activities undertaken by UK Friends of Khwendo Kor (FROK) National Executive and members and covers the year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. FROK exists in order to support Khwendo Kor (KK) in its work for women and their families in FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP, formerly the Northwest Frontier Province) and to promote the values that KK stands for. No matter how big or how small the contributions we receive from members and donors – financial and otherwise - they are all valued.

As I and my predecessors in this role have (sadly) reported each year, KK works in a highly pressurised context where security issues dominate and attitudes towards females remain deeply conservative and slow to change. In such an atmosphere, KK staff and others who work for improvements to the lives of females and those living in poverty do so knowing that this increases their personal risks as well as those to KK as a whole. Few organisations are able to combine delivering services on the ground with advocating for structural and lasting change with those holding power. Yet that is what KK is achieving and, in doing so, it commands respect on many sides. Led by Maryam Bibi, KK's vision holds firm of 'A compassionate society where women live with dignity and self reliance'. Members will have noticed that FROK has highlighted four key areas of KK's work in our recent Newsletters, namely Education, Civil Rights, Health and Women's Economic Empowerment.

This past year has seen two major 'developments' (and I use that word guardedly) in KP and FATA, one which attracted the attention of the international media and one that did not. I refer to the dreadful murders of schoolchildren in the army school in Peshawar and the displacement of many thousands of people from North Waziristan. Each in their own way has impacted greatly on KK and its staff. The murders of the schoolchildren struck at the heart of Peshawar and reminded us all of our vulnerability in the face of the determination and capacity of a few to wreak havoc when they have lost their moral code and consider children in their classrooms to be a legitimate target. Some KK staff knew the children and families concerned; all regularly travel on the road where the school was situated. The other major challenge for KK this year has been the plight of what were formerly called Internally Displaced Persons, now renamed 'Temporarily Displaced Persons'. Here, thousands of people, regardless of age or infirmity, had to leave their homes and head for the uncertainty and hardship that accompanies such mass movements. KK has extended its work to try and meet even in a small way this humanitarian need and we have reported on that regularly through our newsletter. I wish to thank FROK members and supporters again for their generous support for KKs work which enabled us to

transfer £8000 very quickly. It remains difficult to believe that the plight of these TDPs has never really come to the attention of the world, despite the fact that months later, little has changed for them. Indeed the numbers are swelling as the activity causing them to flee extends into other areas.

Even with these additional financial, physical and emotional pressures, KK continues to operate to a high standard and to be sought out by other organisations and individuals who recognise its expertise in working with women and girls in the most challenging parts of the region. It has attracted sufficient funding to be secure for the next year but, of course, its fundraising efforts can never let up. Its '*Viable Villages*' model continues to attract interest as being an important sustainable approach to building strong communities, though it has yet to attract the high level of funding that it deserves. And, as I have already said, KK's continuing role in advocacy, including seeking to influence legislative and policy change as well as delivering services is both unique in the area and, I believe, increasingly effective. The growing attacks on NGOs and rights activists in this part of the world resonate with those seen elsewhere with many overt and covert attempts to discredit their activities and those who work for them. The need for solidarity by creating and sustaining strong networks has never been keener. KK remains at the core of such initiatives.

### **FROK's activities during 2014-2015**

We are pleased to say that membership remains steady with 93 members at the end of the subscription year (31 March 2015). We are tantalisingly short of the '100 milestone' and it would be great if we could all try to recruit friends, family, work colleagues and get there in 2015-16! Our membership base forms the backbone of our fundraising: the reliable core of annual subscriptions, Standing Orders and members' donations enables us to feel confident of meeting, together with additional fundraising activities, our annual target of sending at least £12,000 to KK in unrestricted funds.

Our twice yearly Newsletter remains an important way of keeping in touch with our members, supporters, donors and those otherwise interested in KK's work both in the UK and overseas. We are pleased with the growing interest in the FROK Facebook page and in our website, both of which are also an important part of our profile. We are always on the lookout for members with an interest in such areas to get involved.

Since the last AGM, FROK's Executive Committee has met face to face three times, had regular email and phone contact with each other and has produced two Newsletters. We are also in regular contact with KK staff which allows us to keep up to date with developments within the organisation itself as well as in the wider region. Sadly, the security situation continues to make it difficult for FROK members to travel to the region but I am pleased to report that Naeema Hann, committee member, did so in connection with her UK academic role and Del Hussain (committee member) and Maureen Hussain (lead person for micro-credit goods) did so on a family visit. All three were able to spend some time with KK. Such visits strengthen our ties as

well as allowing far more KK staff to have direct contact with FROK than can be possible through phone and email. As always, all were greeted with immense hospitality and were able to see many sections of the staff hard at work.

In addition to matters reported above, the following summarises FROK's activities:

**(i) Financial Support of KK:**

As always, the money that we raise in FROK is 'unrestricted', it is not tied to a specific project unless we have undertaken a specific fundraising appeal such as that for the Waziristan Internally Displaced Persons' (now TDPs') emergency. Having unrestricted funds is of great benefit for any organisation as it enables new opportunities to be seized as well as providing additional protection against emergencies or other unexpected shortfalls. I'm pleased to report that in the current reporting year, we once again achieved our target of £12,000 comfortably and look to be able to send even more in 2015-16.

Funds have been raised in various ways, many of which we report in the Newsletter. These include the ever popular stalls selling jewellery, home produce and micro credit goods. York members once again ran a 'clothes swap' and documentary showing during International Women's Week (IWW). This is rapidly turning into a 'must go' event on the York calendar! Another York member ran a yoga class during IWW and donated the profit to FROK. One Oxford member has been busy giving talks about KK to church groups and an Oxfam branch, combining awareness-raising with fundraising while another keeps its profile high among local Quakers. And law students at Brunel University have run stalls to raise awareness about the work of KK. I would like to thank all these members and supporters as well as all those of you that sent individual donations.

We have not had any members doing sponsored events this year so if any of you have always felt attracted to sky diving, abseiling or other such ventures then do have a go and use our Just Giving site to collect sponsorship money. Remember, it's never too late to try!

For members interested in any type of fundraising, we can supply collection boxes, posters, laminated photos and a DVD of KK's work as well as brooches and keyrings/bag charms designed specifically for FROK/KK in the UK. There are also starter packs of second hand jewellery.

As previously reported, the Hazel Bines memorial fund was established following the untimely death of Hazel, an active FROK supporter as well a distinguished educationalist who had worked in Pakistan. I'm pleased to inform you that the remainder of the fund has now been transferred to KK for teacher development programmes mainly run from the Deen Dunya Hazel Bines Training and Resource Centre, a fitting legacy to Hazel.

Finally one of our members, Carol Morris, continues to raise funds specifically for the UWIC schools in the region. This year a total of £600 was transferred to KK.

**(ii) Technical Support**

FROK continues to offer technical support to KK staff as needed. FROK has also committed to helping fund staff development initiatives for KK staff. This includes enabling some staff to travel to conferences or training events that might not otherwise be possible.

**(iii) Rukhshanda Naz**

Some of you had contact with Rukhshanda Naz, member of the KK Board of Directors, while she was studying at Coventry University for a postgraduate international law degree. Rukhshanda attended FROK committee meetings and was an important source of advice and information to us. I reported last year that Rukhshanda had been successful in completing her degree and am pleased to tell you that she has since gained an MA in Peace and Reconciliation Studies also at Coventry. She hopes to come to her graduation ceremony in July. I'm sure that you'll join me in sending our heartfelt congratulations.

**(iv) Micro credit activities**

Maureen Hussain continues to hold the lead role on liaison with KK over their micro-credit goods, especially mazri goods. She works hard at marketing them here in the UK often alongside giving talks about the work of KK. This is undoubtedly helped by her regular visits to KK when she is able to meet with the women making such goods as part of KK's work on female economic empowerment. FROK is pleased to continue to support such economic activity even if only in a small way.

**(v) Links with the Pakistani community living in the UK**

We continue to build contacts with UK-based Pakistani organisations and look forward to extending these where possible.

**In summary**, I hope that you find this Annual Report informative and interesting but I also hope that it inspires you to continue your much needed support for KK, both financially and in solidarity with their aims. As always, if you are able to contribute ideas and suggestions to enhance the work that FROK does in supporting Khwendo Kor or if you wish to get more involved then so get in touch.

**Marilyn Crawshaw, Chair**

**June 2015**