

Autumn/Winter
2013-4



Contact us at: www.frok.org.uk—Reg Charity No: 1095857

FROK: UK Friends of Khwenddo Kor

Why civil rights for women matter

KK's work has four main themes: civil rights, health, education and economic empowerment. Our newsletters are covering each of these themes in turn, and this time it is the turn of civil rights. As will be seen in what follows civil rights is not an isolated theme but runs through all the others. This is a point made strongly in the section 'women's civil rights – are

they useful'. It is apparent in the work with Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) where lack of registration cards for women blocks their access to emergency government help. It is implicit in the work on education in Deen Dunya and with the children in the brick kiln villages. For not only is education a right in itself, it is central to enabling women to obtain and exercise their other rights. Finally civil

rights are central to the work on the viable village which is receiving further funding from the Clark Trust and where both men and women work on creating a better life for families in which women have a recognised part. Read on and find out more about what all this means in practice.



Women seeking help with civil registration

Update on the IDPs situation

Thanks to generosity of FROK members, we are delighted to say that we have been able to send £8,000 of unrestricted funds to KK for their work with the Waziristan IDPs.

Read inside for the challenges in obtaining funds from the international community and why YOUR speedy donations mattered so much.....

Educating girls from brick kiln families

The Misri Abad Mardan school was established by Khwenddo Kor for children from the brick kilns in 2001, one of many for the so-called urban working and indigent children (UWIC) and sustained with the support of FROK. Some were later handed over to a local organisation with KK providing technical and in-kind support only. UWIC girls are especially vulnerable to abuse of all kinds: sharing their mothers' workloads from an early age, caring for ill siblings, when being used as domestic labour by

brick kiln owners. Schools provide education and also a platform for awareness raising on gender issues. But schools are also vulnerable—not only from those opposed to education but also because of the poverty of the area and children being taken away to work. The Misri Abad Mardan school recently experienced such difficulties and was at risk of collapsing so KK stepped back in. It was restarted earlier this year in the home of the schoolteacher with equipment, school bags and some uniforms provided by KK and text books supplied by the

Bonded Labour Libration Fund.

On the first day, 39 students enrolled and today there are 64, prompting the hiring of an assistant teacher.

In November, on national Allama Iqbal Day to honour the great poet, students took part in different performances, watched by their mothers (see photo below). Photo at the top left is of Nuzhat Ameen, KK's Programme Manager Education, meeting some of the girls.



FROK Member, Naeema Hann, reports on her recent visit to KK project 'Deen Dunya'

We reported in our Spring newsletter on the unveiling of KK's new and unique project Deen Dunya, focussing on primary and lifelong learning sections, a community health centre, the Elma Sinclair Handicraft Development Centre and the Hazel Bines Training and Resource Centre for Teachers. Here, FROK committee member, Naeema Hann who hails originally from Peshawar, reports on her recent visit to KK to see how it is developing:

'Deen Dunya is about an hour's drive from Peshawar, near a picnic spot (Michni near Warsak Dam) which was very popular when I was at university in Peshawar and quite strategically positioned right next to where the tribal belt begins. Sights on the way show the thirst for education and also how this rural area is beginning to get small industry such as a marble chips centre. Compared to the area surrounding it, the centre itself was clean, organised and purposeful, almost a role model for maintaining public/shared spaces. Maryam Bibi explained that KK owned the building as this meant it was a neutral space: renting from someone in the area could mean that the owners may try to influence what the centre does. It was lovely to see KK workers (men and women) work closely and comfortably in this remote area. I met a number of people including a senior member of the Peshawar women's chamber of commerce,

Gul Lalai, KK's Director Programmes recently wrote:
'Every staff member of KK has contributed in one way or other to make Deen Dunya successful, because it is KK's own initiative and is not linked to any specific donor'.

a senior government official and also the young woman in-charge of training who was very aware of local training needs and talked to me at some length about the training which had taken place and future plans. I felt she knew what she was talking about as I also met some of the trainees.

Currently, goods produced by KK are sold through taking orders at exhibitions. The one I saw was well attended with local women coming in to buy things throughout the morning. I met a number of women who had developed their businesses with KK's help including one who did henna and produced jewellery from local materials such as rough jade. A woman selling kheer (rice pudding but much nicer!) and barfi (a sweet made with milk, similar to fudge) had started her business doing puddings for weddings with a micro-finance loan of Rs.5,000 and had now requested Rs75,000 as her business had expanded so much. I am not surprised, the barfi was delicious! There was great enthusiasm and spirit of entrepreneurship, tempered by staged training and awareness building of wider markets for the craftswomen as well as trainers (see photo back page). If KK expands to a wider national market, further work in terms of design training and quality control may be needed.

I also saw two classes of girls—kindergarten 4 to 6 year olds and 7 to 10 year olds being taught by local female teachers who were themselves receiving further training, supported by KK.'

Primary children enjoying classes at the Deen Dunya centre

FROK congratulates Malala on the Nobel Peace Prize

FROK was delighted to offer its congratulations to Malala and her family on her recent award. The family's links with KK go back a long way. But FROK is also well aware that Malala's award is controversial in some sectors in Pakistan where attempts to discredit her surface regularly. We thought members would welcome access to a thought-provoking news piece from a Pakistan news outlet offering some interesting insights (hard copy available on request):
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1137319/a-letter-from-dr-abdus-salam-to-malala>



INTEREST IN KK and FROK GROWS IN OXFORDSHIRE

The last few months have seen a growing interest in the work of KK and FROK in Oxfordshire. Earlier talks given by Maryam Bibi and Gul Lalai have inspired people to arrange meetings where others can hear about their work.

In August, FROK member Maureen Hussain went to Aston Tirrold United Reformed Church (URC) service where they had a retiring collection for FROK, organised by Sheila Conacher who had heard both Maryam and Gul Lalai speak at events in Benson. Then Carla Grosch Miller, minister at URC Cumnor as well as St. Columba's in Oxford where she heard Maryam speak at Elma Sinclair's funeral, asked Maureen to be their first speaker at their monthly winter Friday supper evenings.

St. Columba's have adopted KK as an organisation for prayer and occasional financial support, including a retiring collection in July.

In the spring, after Maureen and her husband Del, FROK Committee member, returned from a very moving and enlightening visit to KK, two members of the Abingdon Peace Group overheard Maureen telling a colleague about it in OXFAM Wallingford, leading to another speaking engagement in October. In the current world situation, people seem to be very open to hear of a local organisation in Pakistan which is trying to 'make things better' and with some success.

Could you run a 'Frock for FROK' event, sell craft goods made in KK projects or run a second hand jewellery stall in your workplace? Contact us for start-up packs, posters etc.

Raising money to help women & girls in NW Pakistan through UK Friends of Khwendo Kor (FROK) (www.frok.org.uk) during International Women's Week!

Hear about the work of Khwendo Kor first hand!
Have a cup of tea and cake! Bring your friends!

'A FROCK FOR FROK'

Come to a women's clothes & accessories swap at
XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Time and date

Entry: £2.50 & bring minimum 3 items to 'swop' (clothes on coat hangers with size marked if poss.)
All items on sale @ £1 each

Raffle
Jewellery stall

Civil Rights for Women—how useful are they?

KK's Civil Rights programme aims to raise awareness and enable the rights of women, whether in personal, cultural or political arenas. One example that shows how KK's approach engages interlocking threads in a very complex system to create real emancipatory changes is their work to enable women's registration for computerized national identity cards (CNICs). In Pakistan, all citizens over 18 years of age can register, though this is not compulsory. Without a CNIC, it is not possible to open a bank account, undertake almost all substantial monetary transactions, ob-



A female head of a household registering with KK for help with getting her national identity card and other entitlements

tain a passport and so on. But many women do not register, leaving them with dependent status and reliant on family members - usually males - for many everyday transactions. One very concrete example of this for IDPs is that food and

financial assistance is only provided to heads of household with a CNIC and access to a mobile phone with a "Zong" sim card as this is how information about the assistance is communicated.

KK staff have been carefully supporting women from North Waziristan villages who find themselves and their families as IDPs through the system of registration and then making available the appropriate mobile phones. It makes all the difference between starvation and survival. For example, some women had husbands working abroad or were widowed and had never considered the importance of having a CNIC; some younger single women found themselves separated from their families in the migration.

It may seem that progress is slow, but from its beginning KK has enabled 12,485 women to obtain their CNIC and have encouraged 1,200 women to register to vote even before the current IDP crisis (and see earlier Newsletters, or ask us, about the TQK initiative). There are many setbacks. Under the surface of bare statistics lies a culture in which citizenship rights, inheritance rights, political rights, rights in family laws and rights to justice are frequently denied to women and girls by both women and men who themselves have little or no awareness of rights. The honour system permeates culture, permitting both the denial of rights and violence towards those who would seek them. Women may stay in violent homes be-



IDP children happily taking meat home to their families. Such boys received qurbani meat on behalf of their mothers due to constraints on women's movement outside their homes in some very strict areas.

cause otherwise they have no-one on whom to depend and they cannot be independent. Thus as well as offering psycho-social and legal support to the women who suffer violence, KK includes civil rights as one of its key concern in this area of work. As always, they try to influence developments at personal, village, district and provincial levels. The need to register is addressed in local interest groups, in awareness raising programmes, and in adult literacy education. On the wider stage, such as national radio, or at government departmental conferences, enabling policies are advocated and KK is an active member of EVAW [End Violence Against Women Alliance]. This way, both women and men come to realize that women registering for CNIC is worthwhile. In this area of NW Pakistan, 27 women were facilitated in the past by KK on to stand for election on their village councils and 13 were successful. Women have yet to stand at the higher levels of District, Provincial, or National elected bodies. There are now steering committees consisting of women from Women Leaders Groups at district level, rigorously trained by KK. These encourage action for civil rights in some areas where those representing citizens can meet with government representatives and identify issues for budget tracking or monitoring of government departments.

So how is the FROK IDPs Appeal money being used?

Among the many challenges faced by KK in responding quickly to the IDP crisis are the restrictions placed on the use of funds from donors together with the time required to develop fully costed proposals for them; and the time and money required to obtain official permission to gain access permits to the IDPs inside and outside the camps. FROK's donation came without restrictions and provided immediate funds to kickstart the process of obtaining official access permissions documents. FROK has also been delighted to be in contact with women activists working successfully within Pakistan itself to raise



Women and children waiting at a mobile Medical Service Unit.

funds for KK.

One of the important achievements has been the establishment of the mobile MSU (Medical Service Unit). The first medical camp served IDP families on 25th Oct in Koshi, Khandar Khan Khel, FR Bannu. The MSU team comprised a doctor, a female Lady Health Visitor (LHV) and a male technician who dispensed medicines based on the doctor's prescription.

The LHV conducted individual and group sessions on personal hygiene. IDP women who were ill and constrained to stay indoors were sought out by KK team and proper medicines were dispensed to them.

Dr Shakeel Malik speaks of KK's work with IDPs at a World Bank seminar in Washington in August

The seminar was telecast globally and significant personnel including Pakistan's Ambassador in the US (who was present at the seminar) have been sent hard copies of the presentations by the organisers.

So how is the FROK IDPs Appeal money being used? *Contd from page 3*

A total of 50 patients were provided with medical check-ups, diagnoses, awareness raising, referrals and medicines. Amongst these were 24 women, 26 children (15 girls and 11 boys). Three camps a week are now conducted in different villages.



Images from October & November KK medical camps for IDPs

In addition, KK is working closely with Handicap International and have been completing an assessment of children's needs for them – a group so easily made invisible in situations like this.

J A Clark Charitable Trust renews its funding for KK for a further 3 years

FROK was delighted to hear that the JA Clark Charitable Trust, (JACCT) with whom it has close links and whose KK project was featured in our Spring newsletter, has decided to commit a further 3 years of funding to KK. This is good news indeed and enables KK to develop further its 'viable villages' approach. A recent evaluation of the JACCT funded project reported that: *'All of the findings from the evaluation taken together suggest that this was a successful project with a reasonable chance of having lasting impact. The implementing organization and the linkages developed with the local authorities were critical to the success of the project. KK's familiarity with local culture and institutions, its position of trust in communities, and its expertise all contributed to project success. The good capacity of the implanting organization also raises prospects for sustainability, since it has a track record of attracting support..... The positive factors for sustainability are the good track record of KK and the fact that many women has obtained their national identity cards and income generation activities and most importantly they have registered their children in school as a result of the project interventions'.*



Naeema Hann on her visit to Deen Dunya with some of the women developing businesses through KKs' microcredit scheme

Want to Donate to FROK this Christmas?

Advice from our Treasurer

On our website at www.frok.org.uk, you can access a form for a **standing order** or fill in a **gift aid** form if you are sending a **cheque**. For those with Charity Aid Foundation (**CAF**) accounts you can send me a voucher or set up regular payments

You can now also donate up to £10 by sending a **text** to 70070 with the following message:

FROK10 £[put here the number of pounds you want to donate - choose from 1,2,3,4,5 or 10].

The other online method of donating is to google "FROK **Justgiving**" or log on to www.justgiving.com/frok/Donate. If you declare you are a UK tax payer, Justgiving will add gift aid to any donation. It is also possible to set up a regular payment through the Justgiving site.

You can send me a donation direct (Jonathan French, FROK Treasurer, 85, East Parade, Heworth, York, YO31 7YD), but it is best to use the form so we can claim gift aid. (Cheques made out to FROK). If you have already completed a form, it will not be necessary to do it on every occasion. I will come back to you if there is a problem.

Those with **online banking** can do a direct transfer, using the bank account details on the form, but in this case it is helpful if you indicate who is sending it. You can do this by

putting your surname in 'payee reference' or email me at Jonathanfrench97@gmail.com.

An email to me would be a good idea on the first occasion you go down this route so I can confirm receipt.

Finally, you can now support FROK when you make **on-line purchases** by

using the **THEGIVINGMACHINE**.

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Helping women and children in North West Pakistan
www.frok.org.uk