

Autumn/Winter
2013



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FROK: UK Friends of Khwendo Kor

Khwendo Kor in the spotlight

Since our Spring / Summer newsletter, there have been two major, if at first sight, disconnected, events in the life of KK. *First* it has produced a new Strategic Plan for the next three years. *Second* there have been elections in Pakistan, both in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and in Pakistan as a whole. This is the first time since Pakistan was formed in 1947 that the country has moved from one democratically elected government to another without an intervening period of military rule.

The new Strategic Plan maintains KK's traditional focus on women while adding to it a new emphasis on the creation of 'viable villages' within which women can thrive and play a full role. The new government in KPK is formed by the cricketer Imran Khan's party and has started a number of initiatives to improve the situation of women and girls and which thus offer opportunities for KK to exercise its influence.

KK restates its values

The Strategic Planning exercise this summer gave KK staff the chance to revisit together their Values as well as their approach and vision for the next 3 years:

- Commitment
- Accountability
- Mutual Respect
- Integrity

In this issue, we illustrate the way in which KK's strategic vision operates at grassroots village level, through its work on developing potential women leaders and through its political influence with parliamentarians and others, so necessary to underpin its grassroots work.



KK's work not only enables girls to receive an education (above left) but also encourages their mothers to obtain national identity cards (above right) as a prelude to being able to vote



KK's vision: A compassionate society where women live with dignity

What is a Viable Village?

KK works on priorities set by the villagers with the overall aim of developing a **viable village** where women have access to or are helped by:

- ◆ primary education
- ◆ basic health care,
- ◆ financial & training support to start their own businesses
- ◆ a plan in the case of 'disasters' such as floods
- ◆ support and training in dealing with politicians government departments

The long-term aim is to develop a village in which women play a full part in managing needed services and in dealing with politicians and local government to ensure that these services continue to be provided and improve. This in turn helps change the context within which aid is seen and the idea of the *viable village* spreads 'virally' as other villages seek KK's help.

ALL GUIDED BY KK'S VISION AND VALUES



KK's 6th Strategic Planning exercise got underway in August

Malala's father tells FROK Annual Meeting that '....the focus of all should be on the "peace dividend" no longer the "war dividend"' — see full report on p4

J.A. Clark Charitable Trust and KK—putting their best foot forward

We've talked in previous Newsletters about the J.A. Clark Charitable Trust but did you realise that the income for this Family Trust comes from the Clark's Shoe Company? They have a relationship with KK going back six years and one of their members, Caroline Pym, sits on the FROK Executive as a much valued *ex officio* member.

Starting with a 'Self Help Project' and women's learning centres, most recently, JACCT has been funding work in communities in FR Bannu and Khyber Agency which pilots a *viable village* approach (see front page). This has included training Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs); providing skills and adult literacy classes; helping in the

formation and strengthening of village women's and men's organisations; sensitising



KK provides education to women as well as girls; for Traditional Birth Attendants, in business methods and in citizenship as well as basic literacy/numeracy

communities to the importance of national identity cards and voter registration. JACCT's grant also helped to establish the TQK initiative reported on in our Spring issue.

The TBAs of Jamrud could be trained to the next level only because of KK's past painstaking work with them and their communities. In turn this led to the establishment of a Health Facilitation Point (HFP) in the village which provides basic supplies and a KK Community Health Facilitator visits regularly. Villagers recently told KK that the HFP is improving the health of women & their families and saving money previously spent on hiring vehicles to visit a doctor or dispensary and making it easier to refer women with obstetric complications to specialist help. Very slowly, such initiatives are enabling women to be less restricted and to take more of a lead in highlighting issues in their areas and seeking solutions.

How installing hand pumps helps girls get their education



Within KK's holistic *viable village* approach, communities themselves identify what their needs and priorities are and KK considers whether it can meet these by itself or in collaboration with others. As trust builds, so can they then promote the development of girls' education and so on. One practical example of this is at Jani Khel, a village in Bannu district, where KK—with the support of the Clark Trust—helped with the installation of a hand pump which not only provided clean drinking water on the doorstep but also freed females to attend primary schools who had previously had to spend their time bring drinking water from far flung areas.



KK goes to school—in the UK!

One of FROK's youngest supporters, Rosie, is the same age as Malala and was deeply moved by her being 'shot for going to school'. So when she heard that Gul Lalai was coming to York for 3 months (see page 3) she talked to her Mum about whether it might be possible for Gul Lalai to come into her school and talk to the staff and students about the work of Khwendo Kor. At the



time of this newsletter going to press, this is about to happen and who knows, it may even be the start of teenage girls in our two countries reaching out to each other across the waters on a regular basis. Rosie says: 'I

am Malala: we are all Malala: all girls deserve the right to go to school wherever we live in the world'.

Changes in attitudes and practices mean that men have to come on board. Here, KK staff are working with members of a village Men's Organisation

For World Literacy Day, KK arranged campaigns throughout the region in which hundreds of children, teachers, Parents Teachers Councils and mothers actively participated. Banners were inscribed with slogans stressing the importance of education, especially for girls. These include those carried by boys.

This is another example of KK's approach of working at different levels of influence: village; regional; national; international.



Campaigning on World Literacy Day in FATA

EDUCATING THE WOMEN LEADERS OF TOMORROW

KK understands the importance of trying to influence policies, practices and attitudes at all levels. As well as working directly with communities, KK works at regional and national levels within Pakistan. One example is their initiative to bring key players together to form a Working Group for Promoting Girls Education and Initiative (WGGEI) whose aim is to bring about reforms at policy level in KPK and FATA. WGGEI comprises representatives from the Education Ministry, Civil Societies, Pakistan Girl Guides Association, Provincial Boy Scouts Association, lawyers, media and sports bodies (*see below*). Their most recent



KK at the heart: the importance of networking

forwarded to Parliamentarians in the Provincial Assembly.

In addition, KK in collaboration with UNICEF recently held a consultation meeting with Parliamentarians in order to establish a Parliamentarian caucus to highlight the need for reforms in education especially gender balanced budgeting. Eight female Parliamentarians from different political parties attended the meeting and agreed to make recommendations to the relevant Standing Committees to establish a sub group on education and health (*see right*).



meeting considered a desk-based review by KK staff of all research conducted by government and non-government organisations in the last 3 years and developed legislative recommendations to be

An interview with Gul Lalai on her experience of visiting the UK

Gul Lalai spoke with FROK members about her experiences on a 3 month fellowship for Human Rights Defenders in the UK.

What is your job at KK and how long have you worked there? I started at Khwendo Kor in 2009, and am now the Director of Programmes. I ensure the effective implementation of projects: coordinating with stakeholders and networks (government and NGOs), developing new projects, internally building staff capacity and co-ordinating the departments of KK.

As a fellow at the Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York this autumn, what do you hope



to achieve? I want to actively participate in all the courses, interact thoroughly with other HR Defenders and students and build upon their learning and experiences. My message to all students working on human rights is that women's empowerment should be taken very seriously and it needs a holistic and long term approach. I will also

network with UK based bodies that might or do provide funding and support to KK, including FROK of course.

What surprised you about English life? What did you not expect? Everything came as a shock to me - food, weather, language, level of one's independence, computerised world and busy routine. I realise I am most bothered that I don't understand English body language. Asians are very casual people

Spreading the word internationally, Norway September 2013—

Maryam Bibi addressed a Norwegian conference in celebration of the national 100th anniversary of Women's Right to Vote. The conference was organised by the International Health & Social Group and the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.



Dealing with the unexpected...

Natural emergencies are never far away in KPK and FATA. In early August, flash floods hit Khyber Agency and Hayatabad areas leading to a small loss of life and people having to leave their homes. KK, including Maryam Bibi (*see below*), was one of the organisations that responded, distributing 110 food packages to flood affected families and making sure that women and children were included.



Flood relief in Kyber Agency & Hayatabad

and they just show if they like or dislike something, but English people are formal and say so many things between the lines. Figuring out those things is not an easy job for a casual Asian like me even though I am considered as very westernized in my country because of my work on women rights.

For the full interview, please go to the FROK website or facebook

Malala's father addresses FROK Annual Meeting

FROK's AGM in June opened with a moment to remember Elma Sinclair who campaigned tirelessly for women's rights in Pakistan through Khwendo Kor and who continues to be deeply missed as an inspirational figure. After presentation of the Annual Report by FROK Chair, Marilyn Crawshaw (www.frok.org.uk/news) and discussion of FROK business, the meeting was honoured to be addressed by the father of Malala, Ziauddin Yousafzai. He talked about Khwendo Khor building an "international sisterhood," promoting good values in relation to the Talibanisation that the world has been sadly witnessing. He spoke of how he felt on walking into the building today with its Quaker message of "being open to the new light from wherever it comes". Such messages give him renewed hope that people can indeed become de-radicalised and demagnetised, and that the focus of all should be on the "peace dividend" no longer the "war dividend" if we are to harness the power of the majority of peace-lovers and promote understanding between peoples.

Malala's father described how Talib means 'seeker of truth and knowledge' but said the term has been hijacked and misinterpreted to oppress and control people, to undermine the integrity of women and girls and to threaten and intimidate families who believe in equal rights. He talked about how brave Malala had been to write a diary of a girl's education requested by a BBC correspondent, after many other families had refused, knowing the risks involved. By raising her head above the parapet and speaking out for girls' rights in the Taliban region, we all know what happened to Malala, who got brutally shot in the head on her way back from school for simply promoting girls' rights to education.

After her long hospitalisation period in Birmingham, Malala has risen to new heights to speak up for girls' education across the world. However her father gave us an example of how she remains a normal teenager: despite recently been asked to write a speech for the UN, her pressing concern at this time was to get her homework done on time!

Ziauddin Yousafzai concluded his talk by saying that we can all make a difference by using our freedom to promote the freedom of others: that education allows us to be who we want to be, rather than what others tell us we ought to be. He was an inspiration to listen to, a humble and self-effacing man whose suffering showed clearly on his face but whose courage shone out without any signs of resentment or bitterness at what has happened to him and his family.

We were also delighted to have other distinguished visitors at the event. Professor Shaheen Sardar Ali is a former government Minister in KPK and now Professor of Law at Warwick University and Vice-Chair, United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. Ann Keen, Professor of Health Innovation, Policy and Prac-

tice at the University of Bedfordshire is a former UK Under-Secretary for Health. Professor Keen agreed to provide feedback to the Office of Sarah and Gordon Brown who have a special interest in promoting education in the developing world and who are supporting Malala's cause.

Donating 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 7070 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 (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**.

We are sending you a separate letter that explains how to do this.

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Helping women and children in North West Pakistan

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