

Spring/Summer

2013



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**FROK: UK Friends of Khwendo Kor**

## We are defying the Taliban to attend school ... just like our heroine Malala .....

So read the headline in The Sun on 4<sup>th</sup> December when their reporter, Sharon Hendry, produced a 2 page spread in which stories of four young women involved with education provided by Khwendo Kor were featured: Saira aged 13; Nazish 13; Salma 12; and Irum 17 (not their real names and their faces are blurred to protect their identity)(Read more: <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/woman/article4679377.ece>). The Sun teamed up with Khwendo Kor with the help of FROK and Shahida Choudhary from the



The Sun built its headline feature story on work done by KK

UK Women's Networking Hub ( a supporter of KK and FROK), who had to fight hard for her own education, to take letters of support to Malala and petition for Malala to receive the Nobel Peace Prize . contd on backpage....

**STOP PRESS**  
**Malala & father to address FROK AGM**

**Sat aft, 22 June, Oxford**



LOOK magazine article features KK young women in the bottom right hand corner

## KK says: 'Sustainability is the key'

At the heart of KK's work is the idea of working "with" people rather than "for" them. When KK staff have to leave an area, "working with" can then become "working through" their local partners. The importance of this is becoming clear as the worldwide recession brings cut backs and uncertainty to KK's international donors. Projects are limited to shorter time spans (now often one year instead of five). Funding is sometimes renewed monthly (as by UN Women in the Jalozai IDP camp). Promised funds

may be interrupted as the donors themselves have to look for new sources of support to continue the work (as with UNICEF in Tank and Norwegian Church Aid in Mansehra). The worsening security situation may also force KK to withdraw from an area which donors consider too unsafe to work in.

*Scattered throughout this issue are stories which illustrate how KK's work and influence continue even when they are no longer actively working in an area.*

## FROK's 10th Birthday Appeal - a big thank you!

Thank you to everyone who donated so generously to, and spread word of, FROK's 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday Appeal as featured in the Autumn Newsletter. We raised almost £2000 with the Appeal, money that will be well spent in these days of austerity and reducing international aid for Khwendo Kor.



## 'A Frock for FROK' – Successful women's clothes swap event in York

York members decided to make the most of the publicity surrounding International Women's Week to put on a 'Clothes Swap' event alongside a showing of the very powerful and moving documentary



*Taking a break from clothes swapping and waiting for the documentary to start*

of the work of KK called 'Maryam's Mission'. We hired a local community hall, baked cakes, set up stalls selling second hand jewellery, crafts, jam & marmalade as well as the empty tables for women to use to 'swap' their unwanted clothes with others and waited for women to come. And they did!

We had a great afternoon, recruited new members, raised awareness of KK's work and raised a whacking £400+.

If members elsewhere are interested in doing something similar, we found it remarkably easy to set up and run and are happy to provide guidance. We also have a poster that can easily be adapted for publicity purposes, just let us know.

### FROK AND OXFAM

Maryam Bibi's recent visit to Geneva renewed her contact with Penny Lawrence, current acting head of Oxfam GB. This led to FROK arranging a meeting with Olga Ghazarian, Oxfam International Director, during Maryam's brief stop in Oxford on her way back to Pakistan. *contd back page*

## Recycling for Khwendo Kor

One of our supporters, Jane Lund, of the Dept of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of York, has turned her creativity into fundraising ideas for KK. She has used recycled parts of jewellery to fill bottle tops and make attractive gifts of brooches (£5) and keyrings/bag charms (£3) which also promote Khwendo Kor when you turn them over.



**Can you sell some of these? Or suggest ideas for extending this range?**

Jane met Maryam Bibi during her time here in York and is also one of the staff providing the eMasters course in Public Policy and Management that Ibrash Pasha successfully completed. Ibrash is a Regional Director for KK. He featured in the documentary 'Maryam's Mission' and was also the person that liaised with The Sun to make possible the inclusion of the brave stories of four young women carrying on the legacy of Malala (see front page).

## New FROK liaison person for Micro Credit

Maureen Hussain has volunteered to be FROK's link with KK's micro-credit department. She and her husband, Committee Member Del, were in Peshawar in March and visited producers with Fahad Saleem, head of the rapidly expanding KK micro-credit department, to find new products FROK may promote.

*Del and Maureen Hussain meeting with women in the Active Citizen Group in Nowshera District*

## A volunteer professional goes to Khwendo Kor with FROK's help

UK FROK liaises with KK supporters in The Netherlands, Germany and Australia. In 2009 Lisa and Kevin from Australia went to Peshawar to join Carol from UK FROK in helping KK with their 3-year strategic planning. Now the next 3-year plan is due and just at the right moment a new volunteer, Renate from The Netherlands, contacted FROK to ask if KK could use her accounting and HR skills. Renate has had 7 years accounting experience with a major international accounting firm and previously worked in Islamabad as an HR expert with Medecins sans Frontieres, so knows the area well. During Maryam's flying visit in early March, Renate came to the UK to meet her and FROK Committee members and then flew back to Peshawar with Maryam to spend her 4 weeks holiday helping KK prepare for their planning sessions.

**IF YOU KNOW ANYONE WITH SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE TO SHARE BY GOING OUT TO KK OR FROM HOME, GET IN TOUCH WITH US!**

## FROK on facebook

*Penny Bainbridge writes:* "UK Friends of Khwendo Kor", FROK's facebook page, has been going for about a year. Using social media is a great way to spread the word about FROK and Khwendo Kor, so the more supporters getting involved the better.

If you already are signed up to facebook the only thing you need to know is the name of the 'official' page, written above. Any similar pages are out of date and no longer moderated to remove abusive or detrimental material.

If you are NOT signed up to facebook it is not too late to start. You will be in control of your own involvement, restricting the amount of information about your-

self that you divulge to what you are comfortable with. You can do what I have done - I have decided to have no facebook friends - so there are no people I receive constant updates from. Go to the website facebook.com to sign up. There are clear instructions and a useful Help section.



# TAKRRA QABAILEE KHWENDAY (BRAVE TRIBAL SISTERS)



In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), a combination of Special Administrative Status and traditional practice (where the honour of men is paramount) means that human rights and pro-women laws are poorly implemented and women do not have political representation. Formerly women could express themselves through community activity, but this has been changed drastically by Talibanization and the “war on terrorism”. Poverty, illiteracy, child and maternal mortality rates have increased. Mobility and social life is restricted.

TQK is an initiative begun by KK to provide a forum for those interested in responding to the need for both social support and a representation system for the women of FATA.

*The Mission of TQK is to create space through an alliance of civil society, academia and enterprising individuals to em-*

*power tribal women. The vision of the forum is to enable tribal women to contribute and influence political, developmental and social decision making processes.*

The driving and inspirational force behind TQK should be the tribal women and men working for change. Since a first meeting in September 2012, four themes have been identified:

**Governance and Legal Reforms:** TQK will provide a forum to oversee and lobby for the implementation of recent governance-related reforms in FATA.

**Peace and Tolerance:** TQK is a forum to analyze the impact of armed conflict and militancy on women in FATA and adjacent areas, to lobby for the inclusion of women in peace building processes, and to facilitate the capacity of tribal women to develop conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation skills.

**Economic Empowerment:** TQK supports initiatives that will bring change in the economic condition of women in FATA

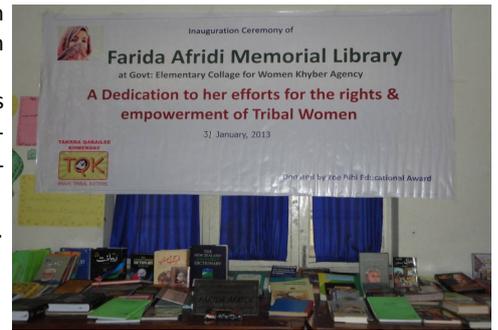
**Education:** TQK supports improvements in education, particularly provisions for connecting female education with livelihood.

*Contd on back page.....*

## Sustainability: Schoolgirls

During Maryam Bibi’s brief stopover in the UK in March (see p2) and while meeting some of the FROK Committee, she received a text message. It was from one of the workers who had run the KK Child and Women Friendly Centres for Waziri IDPs in Tank, a project for which UNICEF funding had run out. He wanted to let her know that he had met the Headmistress of a government girls’ school in Tank. When she heard that he had worked for KK, she asked him to tell Maryam that she had 39 girls in her school who had enrolled because their contact with KK had convinced them and their parents of the importance of girls’ education.

## TQK founds Farida Afridi Memorial Library: see p4



## Sustainability: Village Women



*Brave village women in white burqas support TQK demonstration*

parliament.”

On 25<sup>th</sup> February, as Maryam (4<sup>th</sup> from left) watched the release of doves at a TQK demonstration presenting these demands at Peshawar Press Club, she felt a

tug at her arm. Turning, she saw a group of women in white burqas. “Maryam Bibi,” said their leader, “I am Naseem (not her real name) from the Women’s Group which KK ran in our village. We have come to support you.” In their remote Khyber village, these women had heard about the demonstration from another NGO. They demonstrated the meaning of “Brave Tribal Sisters” (TQK) by setting out in their burqas to travel to the city to demand their rights and show their continuing loyalty to KK.

**Oxford member, Patricia Wright, persuaded her Quaker Meeting to donate a week’s collection to FROK and raised £400+. Do you belong to an organisation which might do something similar?**



*Maryam Bibi explaining the difficulties facing KK to Hugh Bayley MP on a DfID visit to Pakistan, Dec 2012 (see over page)*

## TQK ...contd from page 3

The name was selected to promote a positive image of Tribal Women: *Takrra* means positively strong, *Qabailee* a sense of ownership and *Khwenday* is a culturally respectable name for women. It is particularly apt in the Pashto language as "TQK" (pronounced "tuc") can also mean hitting a nail with a hammer and is a metaphor for speaking out.

Half the membership (both men and women) will come from tribal areas and half from non-tribal areas, including members from civil society organizations, professionals, academics, and all those who can expedite change in FATA.

Achievements already include :

Lobbying Members of the National Assembly followed by meetings and expressions of support, and meetings with the Governor and Norin Taj (FATA Secretariat)

Media coverage in local and national press.

A Charter of Demand presented to the Human Rights Standing Committee at the National Assembly of Pakistan by a TQK delegation on January 9<sup>th</sup> 2013.

The "Farida Afridi Memorial Library" at Government Elementary College for Women, Khyber opened on 31, January 2013.

### UK Parliamentary Committee meet with Maryam Bibi and Khalid Usman *see picture, p3*

Khwendo Kor were delighted to be consulted on a fact-finding visit organised by the Department for International Development to look at the effectiveness of UK overseas aid. The delegation that went to the North West region of Pakistan included York MP, Hugh Bayley (a stalwart supporter of FROK since he officially launched it at our first event), as well as Chris White MP and Pauline Latham MP. Maryam Bibi and Khalid Usman met with the party in Haripur on 1<sup>st</sup> December and were able to discuss at first hand the challenges that are faced when trying to reach women and girls and provide sustainable improvements.

### SUSTAINABILITY: YOUNG WAZIRI VOLUNTEERS

KK had been working in South Waziristan from its office in FR Bannu for some time when military operations led to the whole area being closed to civilians, including NGOs. Many of KK's Waziri partners became IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) in this no-go area.

Maryam wrote:

" More and more people are contacting us for help and one clever young Wazir man said, we are organizing a volunteer group of young Wazirs from FR Bannu who will take

responsibility for everything, IDP records, distribution and future needs. They will do all this in an area not far from Bannu." This was the trigger for FROK's 2009 Waziristan Appeal which raised around £10,000 to buy supplies for the Waziri volunteers to distribute. This in turn influenced UNICEF to choose KK to run Children's Centres for the IDPs in Tank (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iL5HJZjmHs4>). UNICEF funding ceased last year, but the work with IDPs had already ensured that when the Bannu Regional Office reopened, KK's access to Waziri villages was easily re-established.

## We are defying the Taliban to attend school .... contd from front page

The petition was later delivered to Downing St.

And the story doesn't end there. 'LOOK' magazine then took up the story in their 31<sup>st</sup> December edition and FROK again provided information for their article 'The girl who moved the world' and 'We are carrying on Malala's legacy'.

The Sun and Look magazine may not be obvious allies in our work but they took a keen interest and have been highly supportive of the work of KK. What's more their reach is wide, not only from their circulation sales but also because many more people read these publications in workplaces, doctors' waiting rooms and so on.

### SUSTAINABILITY: COMMUNITIES

KK recently worked with Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) in Mansehra to create awareness of women's rights to inheritance and consent in marriage as we have reported in previous Newsletters. Before funding ran out, two booklets of case studies were produced (<http://www.khwendokor.org.pk/downloads/csfile.pdf>). These show KK working to raise community consciousness of rights, rather than simply address individual cases.

For example, Rabab's parents married her to Latif without her consent. Before long, disputes arose between her, her husband and her in-laws. She became a regular victim of violence. When Rabab came to KK's Community Facilitation Centre (CFC) for help, she said that Latif wanted separation and would leave her impoverished.

CFC staff visited her village and facilitated a panel of elders to seek resolution. The panel informed Latif about Rabab's rights according to the Koran and constitutional law. Following the decision of the elders' meeting, Latif gave Rabab those rights and a separate home.

Working within Islam, legal requirements and cultural traditions, KK had developed community understanding of rights of property and the negative results of arranged marriages. While NCA seeks funding to restart the work, this new understanding spreads within the communities of Mansehra and the booklets carry the message further.

### FROK AND OXFAM *contd from page 2*

The meeting enabled Maryam to set out her vision for KK and its approach. In response, Olga expressed strong support, suggested that Maryam might come and talk to the staff at Oxfam House, and made a number of positive suggestions about approaching donors. All this is a long way from actually getting the funds! It does, however, illustrate one of the ways in which FROK can help KK make useful contacts and further its work

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*Helping women and children in North West Pakistan*