

## **UK Friends of Khwendo Kor: Annual Report for 2010/11**

The core task of the UK Friends of Khwendo Kor (FROK) is to support Khwendo Kor (KK) in its work for women and their families in FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (formerly the Northwest Frontier Province or NWFP). This annual report on FROK's work must therefore outline developments in KK and the way FROK has responded to them.

Last year's report described the background to KK's work: the deteriorating security situation and the influx of refugees – probably the largest movement of people in South East Asia since India was partitioned - the fighting, American drone attacks and the Taliban response through suicide bombers and large scale insurgency. All this combined with the chronic under-development and deeply conservative culture to pose KK formidable challenges.

And as if this was not enough, this year has brought the Pakistan Floods, which the United Nations rated at the time “the greatest humanitarian crisis in recent human history”. The scale of this disaster is far worse than the previous Asian tsunami or Haiti earthquake. Since then other disasters, most recently the Japanese tsunami, has driven the Pakistan floods from the news. But their effects live on. A small but to us vivid example is in the effect on those KK staff whose houses have been wrecked, but who still have to continue with their work.

Faced with this new challenge, KK had to learn new skills. At the start of the emergency KK staff were already on ‘the ground’, and using money from their own pockets, local supporters, other small donors and FROK they started immediately on the tasks of identifying need, giving out food parcels and other necessities, organising mobile medical camps, building links with the Provincial Disaster Management Agency, and planning for the future.

Overall KK provided medical camps for around 4500 flood victims, and also engaged in activities less usual for KK, such as providing water purification tablets along with lessons on their use, registering women or child-headed IDP families and setting up 30 centres for them which served around 9000 people in total. It is now working with communities on plans for responding to future emergencies. Although the activities were unusual for KK, the basic approach was not. Typically, it worked with men's and women's committees set up by those whom it sought to help, in remote areas not easily accessible to large agencies, and was acutely sensitive to the needs of women which can be hard to meet in emergencies. As a result KK was sought out by agencies (including UNICEF) that needed to ally with it in reaching those whom they were unable to reach on their own.

KK has made other innovations. For example, it has now opened 15 secondary schools for older girls to add to the 79 primary schools which it is currently supporting. In this way it ensures that its primary school pupils, 80 per cent of whom are girls, can continue their education if they wish. In another innovation, KK staff have been trained in radio journalism and using the radio to promote their campaigns for women's rights and against domestic abuse. Another new development is the involvement of KK in the ‘Free and Fair Election Network’ (FAFEN). This sets out to increase voter registration. Among other things the NGOs involved bring together groups of influential local individuals who are able to present

the needs of their local communities to their elected representatives. Different NGOs work in different areas. Khwendo Kor has been given the areas of North and South Waziristan and Tank/D.I. Khan, surely the most challenging assignment of this kind in the whole of Pakistan.

These initiatives build on the bedrock of Khwendo Kor's ongoing work in the rural villages of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Tribal Areas. This remains impressive in its extent and in the trust that it has been able to foster in the local villages. This trust gives KK the access that it needs to carry on projects like the FAFEN initiative. Other funders rely on this access when they commission KK to rebuild government schools, undertake flood relief work, rebuild health centres or work with the agricultural department to introduce new methods. However, it is the basic groundwork for this trust and the flexible approach associated with it that will be under threat when the key grant from Oxfam-Novib ceases at the end of 2012.

### **FROK's Activities, 2010 – 11**

*Interaction with KK* – To keep in touch with these changes and provide effective help, FROK has needed frequent email contact with KK's Operations Director, Finance Officer, and CEO. Maryam Bibi (CEO) will be visiting in July 2011 and attend the AGM. As usual her visit will be arranged by FROK and she will stay with FROK members while here.

*Financial Support of KK:* KK's key financial need is for money which is not tied to specific grants. This allows a flexible response to opportunities, provides a cushion against emergencies, and allows new ideas to be tried out on a pilot basis. It is not something that donors typically wish to support. In keeping with these objectives, FROK transferred £5000 to KK for flood relief in the financial year 2010/2011 and a further £4,000 in May following a special appeal. It also transferred £10,000 untied money for the financial year 2010 and expects to transfer £12,000 in 2011, thus meeting our current annual target. The money for flood relief was by far the most significant of the initial donations to KK at the time of the floods and enabled it to start the work that in time led to really large funding from UNICEF. The untied money is a small amount relative to KK's overall budget, but if repeated over time could come to constitute a meaningful reserve.

*Micro-credit* – Further support for KK's village work has come from FROK's efforts to develop outlets for KK micro-credit goods in the UK. There is now a well-established system for supplying the goods which currently sell through three shops (two in Oxford, one in York). In addition there is now a sizeable order for goods for the Amnesty and New Internationalist Catalogue. In the financial year 2010/11, £1,800 was transferred to KK for goods ordered, something that should make a small but significant contribution to their micro-credit programme. In addition the shops and stalls bring publicity and contacts – for example, a chapter in an Open University text book on KK's microcredit work, significant donations for the Flood Appeal from the shops, some new members through contacts at stalls, and the New Internationalist order which resulted from a stall.

A special contribution has been made by the Hazel Bines memorial fund. This has raised a total of £10,100 in memory of Hazel, who was an active FROK supporter as well a distinguished educationalist. FROK is looking after this money while discussions are held with KK on the use they can make of it in training their teachers.

*'Technical Support'* – A key part of KK's unfunded work lies in the preparation of proposals. Funders expect KK to conduct its business in English and to present their reports and

proposals in a way that meets Western expectations. They may also ask for the KK annual report and expect similar standards. This is a difficult task for staff whose first languages are Pashto and Urdu, who have not been educated in Western Universities, and who are much less well paid than Pakistani staff working for International Agencies. As was the case last year, FROK members have commented on and edited the English of some KK proposals and similar documents. This is done by email and it is not always easy for those in the UK to understand why those in Pakistan want to express things the way they do or for those in Pakistan to understand why changes are being suggested. Nevertheless this is, as far as we can tell, a useful and appreciated service and one which might be developed.

*Development of FROK* - FROK's Executive Committee has met twice this year, with a third meeting planned in conjunction with the AGM.

Members have also made important contributions to fundraising – notable examples being the collection boxes which Shehzad Ali and Noman Paracha have placed in local shops, the fundraising walk to Everest base camp made by Alison Lever, and the stalls run by Jacqui Chainey, Adi French, Lesley Dellagana, Marilyn Crawshaw and Elma Sinclair. In addition a non-member, Kevin Rushby, raised money for KK by cycling in the Tour de France. A key but less obvious contribution is made by those members who donate to KK on a regular basis. Around one in seven do so and thus make a major contribution to FROK's fundraising. Finally, FROK remains profoundly grateful to the J.A. Clark Trust, which it introduced to KK and which has made a really significant financial contribution to it over the years.

This history shows the way in which members and those associated with FROK have contributed. Building on this we need:

- Active members who can recruit others, or if they have time, run stalls, find outlets for boxes, or raise money through sponsorship or in any way ingenuity suggests. All members are welcome, irrespective of contribution. But experience suggests that the more there are, the more will be able to contribute in these ways.
- Supporters who may or may not be members but are able to contribute around £5 a month on a regular basis, along with benefactors who can contribute considerably more (around £50 in some cases)
- Partners - organisations or philanthropists who are in a position to contribute sums but naturally require a say in the uses to which this money is put and the information to assure themselves that it is spent wisely.

For our part, we at FROK have to learn more about how to attract these sources of support and provide them with appropriate backup.

Last year I suggested that we needed to consolidate our links with the Pakistani community and outside our initial base in York. Some progress has been made over both these aims but it is slow. In this context, I am proposing to step down as Chair, not because I am in any way less committed to FROK, but because I want to be able to concentrate with others on building support for FROK in the South of England, particularly Oxford, but also ideally London. The election of my successor will be a matter for the AGM, but I am fully confident that whoever it is will be more than competent to take over the reins. They will certainly have my full support.

Last year I ended the annual report by quoting my predecessor, Jonathan French. I can do no better than to quote him again. "KK has had to face a number of challenges this year

which would have sunk many an organisation, but their spirit and principles and strong sense of mission have taken them through. FROK, too, has faced difficulties, but remains strong in our faith in KK". This was true both last year and the year before. It remains true now.

**Ian Sinclair, Chair, FROK: 13.06.2011**