

Autumn-Winter
2019-2020



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**FROK: UK Friends of
Khwendo Kor**

A better year ahead for KK?

As readers know, Khwendo Kor has received a lot of recognition from various stakeholders over the years, both nationally and internationally and, most importantly, from local communities. Despite this and despite all its good work, KK's history is also littered with challenges. So we are using this issue to tell you in some depth about the nature of the challenges that it is facing currently, KK's response and the contribution that FROK can make.

There have been times, for example, when radical and terrorist groups regularly targeted KK staff and offices, not least because of KK raising awareness in local populations about how to protect themselves against being used by such groups. Such awareness included enabling communities to educate their children and youth, to give a higher profile to women in their social and economic development, to better understand their civil rights and to tackle poverty. KK paid a heavy price for this in the pressure placed on it and its staff.

It is worthy of note that against this backdrop, KK's work has resulted in more than 400 women and men's groups actively forwarding the causes that KK has pursued over the years in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Newly Merged Districts (NMDS) (previously known as the Tribal Areas).

Currently KK finds itself with a new set of challenges. Pakistan is going through a critical stage of countering the findings of the Financial



Women and children in Village Chasmai, KP, welcoming the establishment of a school. See final page.

Action Task Force (FATF) - an international anti-money laundering watchdog - which has placed Pakistan under its 'grey list'. As part of this, the government has introduced a regulatory framework for the NGOs and INGOs in Pakistan. The process is understandably complex and many NGOs are struggling to complete the lengthy and complicated processes that are in place to meet all the requirements. At times this has led to unexpected delays and even the withdrawal of some funds and projects where the processes are not cleared within the necessary timescales.

KK has been caught up in this, along with many other NGOs and INGOs. It started well with KK being among the few NGOs with whom the government's Economic Affairs Division (EAD) signed the necessary Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in October 2017 after much hard, detailed work on KK's part. *Contd on next page*

Congratulations to Maryam Bibi and the KK staff on two recent awards:

“Women Excellence Award 2019” from Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Peshawar for work in empowering women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

“Certificate of Honour” from Centre for Big Synergy (<https://thebig synergy.org/>) for their contributions towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030

A better year ahead for KK? contd from first page

Such MoUs are now a basic requirement for the implementation of foreign-funded projects. Even though in a better situation than many, KK was still faced with having to close down some of its projects even after getting its MoU because of delays or difficulties in getting No Objection Certificates (NOCs) to work in certain parts of the region.

Then, unexpectedly, KK's MoU was withdrawn in January 2019 because two of its major projects were funded by international organisations - Development In Literacy (DIL) and Heinrich Boll Stiftung (HBF) - that had not got the required MoUs in place with either the Ministry of the Interior or the Economic Affairs Division. KK took immediate action to comply with government regulations. It terminated its partnership with both organisations, informed the authorities of the ways in which it sought to comply with government instructions and applied for restoration of its MoU. The restoration process has now been in process for almost a year but KK's staff tell us that there are positive vibrations and gestures that lead it to be hopeful that restoration is imminent.

In the meanwhile, KK's services and staff have suffered in many



Women and children attend a free KK medical camp

ways. Around 100 staff have had to be laid off and projects closed or not yet started, 40 community-based schools have had to be closed as have 2 KK district offices. The education of more than 3,000 girls has been affected. As you might imagine, the time and energy of KK's senior management time has been largely taken up with handling this situation. They have had to provide detailed information and documents to the government on a very regular basis and deal with high and low profile government officials, often having to travel to Islamabad at short notice to do

[Send KK staff a message for 2020; make a donation—see back page for details](#)

so. These are sensitive and demanding tasks and ones which required skilled handling in order to strike an appropriate balance to secure KK's future.

There is good news too. For example, KK has recently been awarded an NOC for a project whose design phase had been completed some time ago but whose implementation was suspended. This is hugely encouraging. We describe it in more detail on the next page.

So at the moment KK is at a cusp in its affairs. Its interventions are needed as much as ever and its potential to keep making a positive difference in the lives of many communities remains significant. At the same time the difficulties it has faced are very great. FROK's help has been particularly important during this time, through its transfer of unrestricted funds in July and through the boost to staff morale of knowing that we care. We are hopeful that 2020 will be a better year, that KK will again be able to work on foreign-as well as domestic-funded projects so that communities, especially women and children, can continue to benefit.

Youth and social cohesion

In November, KK supported a fellowship programme for 30 young people to be trained on Social Cohesion and Cultural Diversity. See also item on bottom of next page

Right: Women learning handicraft skills at the Elma Bibi Handicraft Centre busy in woollen work. A grant through FROK from The Breslaff Centre allowed materials to be provided to women too poor to buy their own. With the sale of the products proceeds are supporting families and enhancing women's confidence through their earnings.



The road ahead in Dir Upper—a novel approach to community planning

As we reported earlier, KK has recently been awarded a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for a project whose design phase had been completed but whose implementation was suspended. This is hugely encouraging and an indicator that the future is looking brighter in 2020.

The project was originally intended as a long term 'viable village (VV)' project. Following its VV model, plans were developed with community members, especially women, to meet needs for education, maternal health, micro-credit, civil rights and so on. Because of the suspension, the time remaining for implementation has had to be reduced to one year. The conditions of the NOC have also required a rethink as they set the core focus as the development of community physical infrastructure, in particular road building.

While not traditionally a core focus for KK's work, KK is relishing the chance to mobilise the community organisations they had established to ensure the

infrastructure meets their needs. After all, roads enable small businesses to sell more widely than their local village and women with complex pregnancies and labour need access to transport which works.

Of course, 'viable villages' need more than transport. KK is working hard to build on this funding to develop a more holistic approach to development in the area. Watch this space!

'The organisation works with a high level of transparency that supports a sense of trust..... Beliefs and values are supported strongly'

Report to KK on Phase 1 of Organisational Exploratory Programme, Tavistock Institute.



2019 has been a tough year for KK. Send your message to them now for 2020, a year of better promise! (via our website or email—details on back page)

Strengthening local women's, youth's and men's groups

Two days of training for the police on "Human Rights and Gender Sensitive Case Management" were recently facilitated and supported by KK.

Sixty one participants came from different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Newly Merged Districts and the Pakistan Air Force Police. They were drawn from various ranks ranging from police constables to senior staff.

Sessions included awareness-raising on gender-based

violence issues, pro women laws, gender responsive case management and the use of forensic DNA in sexual assault cases.

As with the **Youth and Social Cohesion** programme reported on **page 2**, these events are part of a wider portfolio of trainings and interventions that are designed to enable local groups, especially women and youth groups, to take charge of the development process.



KK recently began working in **Chashmai village in Bannu**, a very poor community with no school for girls. The community—women and men - worked closely with KK to establish a Girls' Primary School in the village, the first school for girls ever. It was inaugurated on 29th August, a ceremony attended by 50 men and 35 women including local dignitaries and officers, teachers, community activists and local people. Within only two months of opening, 140 students had enrolled!

Right: Maryam Bibi on a recent visit to the school



Want to Donate to FROK or get a friend to join and not sure how?

Advice from our Treasurer

There are many ways through which you can support KK financially:

- ◆ Set up a membership, standing order, or make a donation by cheque (made payable to FROK please) or bank to bank through our **website** (www.frok.org.uk) or by **writing to us**.
- ◆ **Use an on-line** banking transfers using the bank account details on the website and let me know you're doing this by putting your surname in 'payee reference' or emailing me on the first occasion you go down this route so I can confirm receipt.
- ◆ Fill in a **Gift Aid form** if you're a UK tax payer (If you have already completed one for us in the past, you don't need to do one on every occasion. I'll come back to you if there's a problem).
- ◆ For those with **Charity Aid Foundation (CAF)** accounts you can send me a voucher or set up regular payments.
- ◆ You can donate either a one-off or regular amount through **Just Giving** (www.justgiving.com/frok/Donate). If you declare you're a UK tax payer, Justgiving will add gift aid to any donation.
- ◆ Support **FROK** when you make on-line purchases by using the THEGIVINGMACHINE.

You can also now donate to FROK each time you buy through Amazon if you select Amazon Smile as we are now one of their registered charities.

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