

FROK

The UK Friends of Khwendo Kor

Registered charity no: 1095857

Annual Report for 2022-2023

Welcome to the Annual Report of the UK Friends of Khwendo Kor ([FROK](http://www.frok.org.uk)), covering activities undertaken by FROK's Trustees and members during the year from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. FROK was founded in 2002 to support the work of Khwendo Kor through fundraising and other activities. We are a volunteer-run registered charity so incur minimal expenses. We retain only £1,000 each year for unexpected emergencies and transfer the rest of monies raised directly to Khwendo Kor (KK).

Founded in 1993, KK is one of the oldest women-led NGOs in the region and works with women and their families in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) (formerly the North West Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas). FROK promotes KK's four core values - commitment, accountability, mutual respect and integrity - and its vision of 'A compassionate society where women and girls live with dignity and self-reliance'. KK's participatory development approach and in particular its 'Viable Village' model focuses on the active involvement of communities, especially women and children, in its key areas of Education, Civil and Political Rights, Health, Combating Gender Based Violence, Social Cohesion and Livelihoods Improvement. Key to this is the careful building of trust, and attention to building the capacities of communities to advocate for themselves. Communities, with KK's support, are at the core of defining what changes are needed and identifying the means for bringing them about, thereby taking a lead in their own development. You can read more about KK's work on the FROK website (www.frok.org.uk) and that of Khwendo Kor (www.khwendokor.org).

Once again this year, we thank all those members, donors and other supporters who have made contributions during the year, financial or in other ways. We always welcome suggestions of possible fundraising activities or sources, including personal introductions to the latter. We were delighted to report last year on having secured a donation of £15,000 from the Grail Community following an introduction through one of our members. The work this has funded is now almost complete and has included installation of solar panels to schools, purchase of more sophisticated equipment for a handicraft centre, upskilling of handicraft trainers, supporting teachers' salaries and helping 'viable village' interventions in several villages. In other words it has gone a long way! We would warmly welcome any similar introductions.

In Pakistan as in the UK, the impact of the Covid pandemic has been exacerbated by the cost of living crisis – and, of course, by the floods in those of KK’s working areas that were affected. These pressures further deepen existing challenges for communities. As one might expect of KK, they immediately sprang into action in the wake of the floods and were able to reach women and their families who might otherwise have been missed. They also followed up with providing ‘winterisation kits’ as the colder weather descended. Worryingly little has yet been done in terms of rehabilitation of damaged properties and livelihoods, matters outside of KK’s hands.

One impact of the cost-of living crisis that could not have been foreseen by organisations such as KK is that donors have not by and large been able to increase their funds for already allocated projects to cover inflation costs leaving quite a management headache.

KK continues to seek in-country philanthropic contributions with some success and now is also able to receive zakat contributions. They continue to provide monthly dastarkhwans (providing cooked food) both to people on the streets and to families of the children that attend their schools, all supported by individual philanthropists. KK is also again exploring possibilities of corporate support through schemes similar to those operate in the UK as ‘corporate social responsibility’. All such staff efforts take time and are, of course, unfunded.

We reported last year that KK had been awarded a UNHCR-funded project to manage educational provision across a number of longstanding camps for longstanding refugees from Afghanistan, some camps being up to forty years old. Although this builds on their extensive experience providing education to both children and adults, including in camps for Internally Displaced Persons, this is a major new venture for KK. They have had to recruit a lot of new staff, induct them into KK values and ways of working, and manage the complex and time-consuming procedural security-related requirements for their staff to be allowed to enter the camps. The latter processes are not yet fully completed and the UNHCR has extended their temporary contract to, hopefully, ensure they are in place.

A remarkable feature of KK is its steadfast support from employees (who often continue to volunteer for them even after they leave) and in-country supporters as well as FROK. KK’s reputation for transparency and integrity undoubtedly contributes to this. Indeed myself and Naeema Hann, FROK Vice Chair, had the pleasure and privilege of attending KK’s mid-term strategic review workshop in April (so outside the timescale of this report). We were both deeply impressed by the commitment and values shown by the staff, a number of whom were inducted into KK over the last year, their ability to analyse and reflect on the issues we were discussing with their feet firmly on the ground, and the respect for KK shown by the range of stakeholders attending part of the final day of the workshop. We will be showing some images from our trip at the AGM itself and on our website. We look forward to sharing the outcomes of the review in due course.

FROK's activities during 2022-2023

We were delighted to have been able to return to an 'in-person' AGM in June 2022 but, sadly, not in a venue that enabled us to allow online access. The speaker, Emily Beasley, gave a talk on 'Climate Change: Its impact on women and the development of solutions by and for women and their communities' (a link to the you-tube recording is available on request). Little did we know how prescient that would be as it was followed in July by some of the worst flooding in Pakistan in recent years. We thank all our supporters who contributed so generously and rapidly to our Flood Appeal which raised more than £10,000.

FROK also received a donation of £20,000 for KK's Education Fund to support learning pathways for adolescent girls who do not have access to middle level education. The donor has asked for anonymity.

We are pleased to venture into a 'new to us' part of the country for our AGM this year. It was been arranged in Coventry by some of our members in the Midlands and we are very much looking forward to meeting members who have as yet been unable to attend an AGM as well as some familiar faces. We are also experimenting with using zoom to allow online access.

FROK's **Trustees** have held three meetings this year – all by zoom - supplemented by email and phone contact in between. We also maintain regular **contact with KK staff** by email, zoom, and WhatsApp in order to keep up to date with developments within the organisation itself as well as in the wider region.

FROK's **membership** remains very steady and as of 31st March 2023, we had 102 members. Members' subscriptions, donations and fundraising efforts form a substantial part of our annual donation to KK so do spread the word!

We continue to produce a twice yearly **Newsletter** for members, supporters, donors and other interested parties in the UK and overseas.

In addition, the following summarises more of FROK's activities:

Financial Support of KK

FROK aims to raise a minimum of £12,000 each year as a contribution to Khwendo Kor's core costs that is not tied to any specific project or appeal. This enables them to fund activities not normally covered by other donors, take up new opportunities and/or have some protection against emergencies. Normally we seek to achieve that £12,000 by around the end of June each year and then an annual grant is sent to KK in July or August. This will also include other monies that have been raised as well.

This target of £12,000 was achieved in 2022 and the funds were sent to KK along with £500 raised for the UWIC schools. Monies raised specifically for the flood appeal were sent in two tranches: £8,500 in September and £1,750 (the gift aid element) in December. The £20,000 grant for the Education Fund was also sent in December.

So in this reporting year of 2022/23, a total of £42,750 was sent to KK.

It is expected that FROK will achieve its target of £12,000 for KK's core costs by the time of the AGM. In June 2023.

Technical Support

From time to time, FROK members provide technical support to KK staff. This includes help with written English where needed and assistance with funding proposals or report writing. If any members have technical skills they would like to share, please get in touch.

FROK Website and Facebook page

We continue to run our website in a low maintenance manner to match our available resources. Limited resources also influence our decision to not (yet) use social media other than Facebook. We are pleased to report our website has a regular flow of website views during this reporting year, with the highest number being 106 in March 2023. The country with the highest number of visitors continues to be the UK.

UK FROK's facebook page reaches all over the world to promote our work. We have 1,700 followers, which is an increase of a hundred since last year. The percentage of women followers is still around 17%. Over the year we have developed better co-ordination with the Khwendo Kor staff who operate *their* facebook, and this helps us share the news and photos on our respective pages. There are 72 followers in the UK and we're looking to increase this number in 2023-2024 - <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=UK%20Friends%20of%20Khwendo%20Kor>).

Links with the Pakistani community living in the UK

We continue to have contacts with UK-based Pakistani individuals and organisations and are especially pleased that this is reflected in our Board of Trustees.

In summary, we hope that you enjoy reading this Annual Report and that it encourages you to continue your much needed support for KK, both financially and in solidarity with its aims. FROK Trustees, as always, welcome your ideas, suggestions and offers of help as we strive to enhance our work of supporting Khwendo Kor. If you wish to get more involved in any way at all then please get in touch – you can be assured of a welcome!

Marilyn Crawshaw, Chair May 2023