

FROK

The UK Friends of Khwendo Kor
Registered charity no: 1095857

Annual Report for 2018-2019

Welcome to Annual Report of the UK Friends of Khwendo Kor (FROK), covering activities undertaken by FROK's Trustees and members during the year from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. We are a volunteer-run charity which enables us to incur minimal expenses, retain only £1000 each year for unexpected emergencies and transfer the rest of monies raised to Khwendo Kor (KK). KK is one of the oldest and biggest women-led and women-managed NGOs in this region that works with women and their families in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP, formerly the North West Frontier Province) including the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) now merged with KP, and Karachi. FROK promotes KK's four core values - commitment, accountability, mutual respect and integrity – and its vision of 'A compassionate society where women live with dignity and self reliance'. All contributions, financial or in other ways, received during the year from members, donors or other supporters are greatly valued.

KK was founded in 1993 by Maryam Bibi and a small group of female friends. Maryam remains its Chief Executive today, aided by a talented and dedicated senior management team. KK is a participatory development initiative which 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. The work is delivered using principles underpinning its well respected 'Viable Village' approach, that communities are its partners. Villages thus help define both the "change" that is needed and the means for bringing it about by owning and taking a lead in their own development. KK focuses in particular on areas where services are either non-existent or dysfunctional and women and the poor are marginalized. KK also provides humanitarian responses where needed. You can read more about KK's work on the FROK website (www.frok.org.uk) and that of Khwendo Kor (www.khwendokor.org.pk).

It is the case in many parts of the world that the space for civil society is shrinking. KK faces an increasingly difficult environment, not least because of its focus on women's rights and social cohesion. Nevertheless KK maintains its highly credible reputation both nationally and internationally. Of

particular note in this reporting year is its work to encourage more women to take part in the General Election of 2018, especially in those conservative parts of its working areas where women have traditionally been deterred from exercising their right to vote. KK was an active member of the Gender & Disability Electoral Working Group and took up a range of advocacy issues. It ran awareness sessions with men's and women's groups; held press conferences (including in the tribal districts) to demand that the Government, political parties and the community facilitate the participation of women in the electoral process; organised sessions for women about the process and how to participate in upcoming elections; developed and disseminated Information, Education & Communication (IEC) materials; trained Polling agents regarding rights and responsibilities under the new Election Act 2017; used radio messages to increase awareness; and provided election observers on Election Day who were able to report issues immediately and get them addressed. **Just as KK has dedicated its 2018 Annual Report to all those women who cast their vote, especially in the face of face of threats and intimidation, so we dedicate the FROK Annual Report to KK staff who worked tirelessly to enable them to do so.**

During 2018, KK worked with more than 98 villages through its 5 regional/project offices (Peshawar, Dir Lower & Upper, Mansehra and Karachi). They reached around 11,000 individuals directly and a further 78,000 indirectly and organised over 200 women's and men's groups with a total membership of almost 4000. Here are just a few more of their achievements:

- KK supported the education of around 2,500 children (80% girls) who would not otherwise have such opportunities and its local campaigns led to around 4,000 'out of school' children enrolling in Government schools.
- KK formed a 32-member Advocacy Forum for promoting education in Dir Upper. Fifteen Government schools were repaired and renovated, libraries set up, sports items provided and teachers trained, improving the quality of education for around 2,000 girls and 1,800 boys.
- KK ran radio campaigns about domestic violence in the Mansehra district through live talk shows (involving religious leaders, lawyers and journalists) and nearly 500 twice-daily public service messages. It also helped over 1,000 women with free legal advice, mediation, counselling and/or court proceedings.
- KK established a Council of Communal Harmony network including religious leaders of all faiths, government officials, media and women's networks. It advocates for the rights of non-Muslim communities, increased budgetary allocation by the government for building social cohesion including through the engagement of youth and women. In collaboration with the Auqaf and

Religious Affairs Department, KK organized different religious events and invited communities from all faith groups.

- KK's partners in women and men organizations were provided with around PKR 15 millions (over £80,000) of government funding for schemes at community level.
- Two community health centres run by KK in remote areas helped 1,600 individuals (360 men, 496 children and 744 women).
- With the help of KK, community groups in Karachi successfully lobbied relevant departments to improve refuse collection and supplies of clean drinking water; to announce electricity load shedding schedules in advance; and to upgrade a dysfunctional dispensary.

In addition, KK has established a separate business development company called "Business for Equality and Empowerment" or BEE Services. As KK will be the main beneficiary of the company profits, its sustainability will be enhanced significantly.

KK's achievements are all the more remarkable given the difficult financial and security situation in which it works. Its income dropped significantly during 2018; it had part of its registration suspended (hopefully shortly to be restored); it had to make some staff redundant; and it had to close some schools and seek their transfer to government. While financial and operational challenges are familiar to many NGOs here in the UK, the security situation is, thankfully, not. We commend the KK staff and management for their morale and commitment.

FROK's activities during 2018-2019

Since the last AGM, FROK's **Executive Committee** has had three meetings supplemented by email and phone contact in between. We reported last year that we had experimented with meeting via skype in order to keep down costs and time spent travelling and that it had proved successful. We have therefore continued in this vein, with Trustees meeting in geographic clusters in order to do so.

We also maintain regular **contact with KK staff** by email, phone and skype to keep up to date with developments within the organisation itself as well as in the wider region.

FROK's **membership** remains remarkably steady. At 31st March 2019, we had 110 members (numbers fluctuate over the year and are slightly lower than at the same time last year): their subscriptions, donations and fundraising efforts form a substantial part of our annual donation to KK.

Our twice yearly **Newsletter** provides our key contact with members, supporters, donors and other interested parties in the UK and overseas. Our **facebook** page remains popular with around 1400 'likes' of whom 2/3rds are from Pakistan, more than half are aged under 35 and 83% are male - a somewhat different demographic to that of our membership so we try to choose our 'posts' accordingly.

Last year, we reported on how we had gone about seeking compliance with the new **GDPR regulations**. If you have not yet done so, please check out our Privacy Policy on our website or ask us to post you a hard copy. We were delighted that almost all our members and supporters gave permission for us to maintain regular direct correspondence. We keep this side of our work under regular review.

In addition to matters reported above, the following summarises FROK's activities:

(i) Financial Support of KK

FROK aims to raise a minimum of £12,000 each year as an 'unrestricted' donation to KK, i.e. not tied to specific projects unless as part of a specific fundraising appeal. Unrestricted donations enable KK to take up new opportunities and/or have some protection against emergencies or unexpected shortfalls.

In July 2018 we sent £28,520 which was made up as follows: £12,000 to KK's core costs; an additional grant of £5,000; £350 for UWIC schools; £340 for school scholarships; £780 from Sharnti Trust for a dedicated training course for TQK; £50 grant for the reusable sanitary wear project (private donation); and £10,000 for the KK Education Fund (from an individual member).

Funds continue to be raised in various ways, many of which we report in our Newsletters. These include larger donations from individual members and collective fundraising efforts. We have been fortunate this year to have, among others, donations from Oxford Quakers, both Teme Valley and Pinner Parish Church Councils, and St Columba's United Reform Church Oxford. Funds are also raised through stalls selling second hand jewellery (we can provide starter packs), home produce and micro credit goods and giving talks to interested parties. **If you are interested in fundraising**, we can supply collection boxes, posters, laminated photos and DVDs of KK's work. We also have a Just Giving page for one-off or regular donations or anyone undertaking sponsored activities. Simple instructions sheets on 'Tips for Fundraising' and 'How to run a Clothes Swap event' are available on our website or in hard copy.

(ii) Technical Support

FROK members offer regular technical support to KK staff. This includes help with written English on KK's documents (such as their Annual Report) and assistance with funding proposals or report writing. **If any**

members have technical skills they would like to share, such as in finance or management information systems, human resources, or fundraising, please get in touch.

(iii) *Micro credit activities*

Maureen Hussain is our lead person for liaising with KK over their micro-credit goods. She and her husband Del were again able to meet KK staff this year while on a family visit to the region. FROK is pleased to continue to support such economic activity albeit in a small way.

(iv) *FROK Website*

Although our website is deliberately low maintenance (to match our available resources) and we do not run an accompanying twitter feed, it does have regular visitors. Thanks to FROK member, Kath Cox, for her continuing help with looking after it. Do let us have any suggestions for further improvement.

(v) *Links with the Pakistani community living in the UK*

We continue to build and maintain contacts with UK-based Pakistani individuals and organisations and look forward to extending these where possible.

(vi) *Links with Friends of Khwendo Kor US (FOKUS)*

We remain in regular contact with our US sister organisation, FOKUS, and welcome a growing international community of support for KK.

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 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.

Marilyn Crawshaw, Chair

June 2019