



the linda norgrove foundation

Fifth Annual Newsletter



Helping women and children in Afghanistan
www.lindanorgrovefoundation.org

Welcome to our fifth annual newsletter

It's five years now since our daughter was kidnapped in Afghanistan and her death during an attempted night rescue by US special forces. Very soon after, we started the Linda Norgrove Foundation and this year we passed the milestone of having sent over £1,000,000 to Afghanistan.

Healing isn't a process where, all of a sudden, you're cured. I suppose what Lorna and I experienced is what everyone anticipates: the pain reduces but won't ever disappear.

Obvious as that sounds, this most definitely does not reflect how we felt five years ago. The death of a child is traumatic because, in a way, you lose your future. When your parents die you lose the past, but it's gone already.

We kid ourselves that we're planning the road ahead but most of the time we sleepwalk through life, at half power, convinced we're tired. However, big changes mostly come totally out of the blue and we now have the perspective necessary to see that the effects of the trauma haven't all been bad.

We're both stronger people. We have a closer relationship because we've needed to rely on one another. We're more sensitive than we were, having experienced how grateful one is for the support of others when needed. We're less materialistic and have gained great satisfaction from being able to help change some desperate situations in Afghanistan.

And we worry less because the worst has happened and we can see that what you do afterwards is more important than the setback. Think like a victim and you'll become one, take a positive attitude and be rewarded. In short, we've concluded that, to a large extent, we create the world we live in.

If you're cynical, you might rationalise our charity lifestyle choice as one that makes us feel smug; what we achieve will only be a tiny part of any solution to Afghanistan's problems which, if ever there is one, will be political rather than short term relief for the poor.

But, if you do this, you may also turn away from the situation of the Afghan widow whose husband died in a bombing and who pretends to be crippled to beg on the streets of Kabul so that she can feed her children.

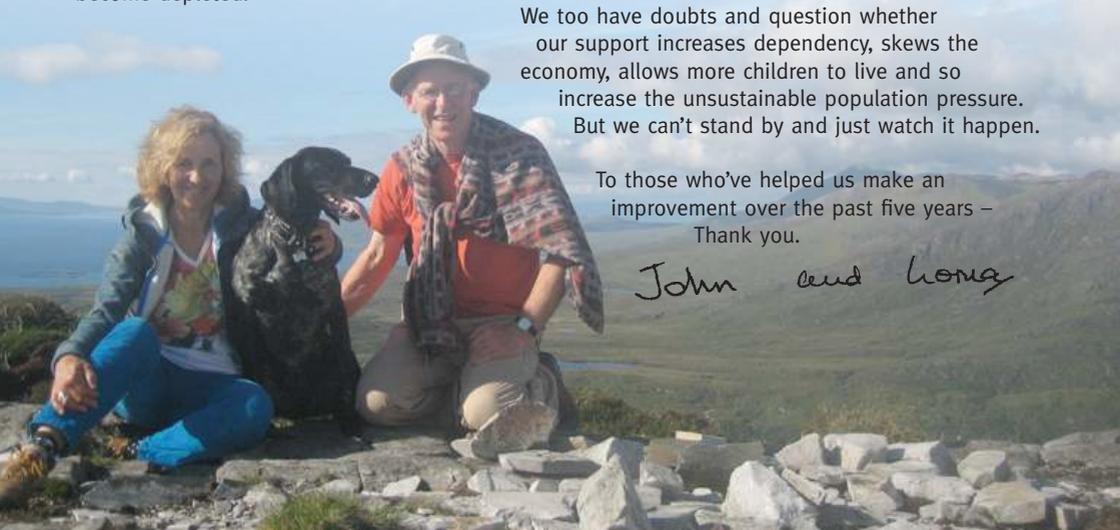
After all, what difference would any modest contribution make to such an ocean of suffering? It's like the population question; so vast, so insoluble, it lets one off the hook.

In Afghanistan, stability stubbornly remains an aspiration rather than a prospect. More civilians died last year due to conflict than in any year since the UN started keeping records in 2009. 74% of working people exist on less than £1.30 a day. The population increases exponentially (42% under 15) and as foreign aid to the country reduces, the need for what we do becomes evermore urgent. But every year we spend more than we take in and the Foundation's modest reserves become depleted.

We too have doubts and question whether our support increases dependency, skews the economy, allows more children to live and so increase the unsustainable population pressure. But we can't stand by and just watch it happen.

To those who've helped us make an improvement over the past five years – Thank you.

John and Lorna





University Scholarship Programme

Over the past few years we have steadily expanded our scholarship programme which pays the tuition fees of girls from poorer families, allowing them to study for degrees at private universities in Kabul.

Most of our sponsorships pay for girls to study at the Gawharshad Institute, a private institute started by Dr Sima Samar, current chairman of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. Three years ago we sponsored eight girls to study for degrees here. This year we sponsor thirty nine.

Scholarships have now become a major focus for several reasons:

- We give flat rate grants for tuition. There's no middleman so it's all relatively easy to administer.
- Simple to monitor through academic performance reports received from their university.
- Good value. £250 a year at Gawharshad, £1,000 a year for a medical student.
- The huge demand from girls for continuing education - it's an opportunity to significantly change both their lives and those of their future children.
- It's a programme relatively resilient to political change.

Khatera



Khatera's father is a drug addict. Her mother is illiterate and works as a cleaner earning £60 a month. Khatera is the eldest of five children: all eight of them live in one rented room. Although she'd done well at school, without an LNF scholarship the future looked bleak for Khatera.

Basera



Basera's father is a teacher, away from home all week working in a village school earning £80 a month. His family of nine lives in a single rented room in Kabul. Basera felt so sad for her father's daily struggle to feed them, she herself wanted to be married to an older man who might have helped support the family. Her mother wouldn't agree and an LNF scholarship to study law has transformed her prospects.



This year we started an additional scholarships programme enabling seven girls to study to become medical doctors. In Afghanistan illness is more prevalent but doctors are scarce - we have ten times as many doctors in the UK relative to population. And there is a particular need for female doctors in Afghanistan because conservative families frequently won't allow their women to be seen by men.

This is a long-term programme and we will keep sufficient reserves to continue funding until the girls graduate, providing their academic progress is satisfactory. The medical students will require additional support after university to help them obtain the required post graduation hospital and GP training.

Fouzia



Fouzia's family still lives in Quetta, Pakistan after fleeing as refugees in the time of the Taliban. Her father, who has very poor health, earns only £2 a day in a shop and, this year, in spite of being one of the top medical students, Fouzia was in the process of changing courses to one which had more affordable fees. Her professor urged her to apply for an LNF scholarship and now she can continue studying medicine with funding guaranteed until graduation.

Masoma



Masoma was brought up in Iran but, as a refugee, she wasn't allowed to go to university there. Returning to Afghanistan, she married a widower with 6 children, had one daughter herself and worked as a teacher. With the total support of her husband, she wants to complete her education and realise her dream to become a doctor. Financing this has been very difficult with such a large family and only one wage but she's a fighter - as she says 'Do not expect your rights to be given to you, but you have to take it'.



Khujista

When Khujista applied to us for a scholarship, her family were in Kunduz at the time when it had been captured by Taliban forces and she was desperately worried for their safety. Thankfully they were unhurt but her father's job is unlikely to continue. She has just two years left to graduation so she is so relieved to receive an LNF scholarship. As I write this, Khujista's sister is in hospital with 80% burns following a gas cylinder explosion in her kitchen two days ago; she lost her baby. This brings home to us how much Khujista and people like her need our support.

Ongoing Projects



- **Provided 39 Afghan women with scholarships** so they can study for degrees in law, economics and business at the Gawharshad Institute of Higher Education. See pages 3-5. **Cost: £10,380**

- Running costs for SCAWNO, an Afghan charity which provides **classes for kids in a poor area of Kabul** in literacy, Islamic studies, art & calligraphy, elementary computing and judo, and for women in dressmaking and tailoring skills. All **run on a shoestring** in cramped conditions but providing a place of learning and safety for over 300 children and women. **Cost: £10,800**

- **A year's salary** for two Afghan professionals engaged on developing the Darakht-e Danesh **online library for teachers**, operated by our partners Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan. A response to the lack of good educational material for teachers. Lesson plans, games, experiments and books are now accessed online or, eventually, by mobile phone, free of charge. **Cost: £11,910**

- **Scholarships for seven Afghan women to study medicine.** See pages 3-5. **Cost: £6,290**



- **Emergency funding** to allow the Afghan **Children's Circus to keep operating** until they received promised donations from larger funders. The Circus provides a safe haven for poor children to play, to learn skills such as juggling and acrobatics and how to spread awareness of the dangers of landmines and drug misuse through performance and radio.

Cost: £10,110



- Small **libraries provided for 3 girls schools** in Kabul and rural areas. Part of a four year programme managed by Womanity. **Cost: £1,790**

- **Paid school fees** to the Heela Model School in Jalalabad for **seven girls** from poor families to attend. This includes uniform, stationery, snacks and transportation to and from school, particularly important for security. **Cost: £1,530**

- Working with the charity arms of two UK High Street chains to part **fund** early childcare and development centres in Herat province where **over 1,000 children benefit**. Also 18 community greenhouses, both for nutrition and to generate additional income to help women make the programme self-sustaining. In partnership with War Child. **Cost: £6,430**

- **Support for** the Khadeeja Kobra women's centre run by Maryam Durani, a winner of many international awards for her **courageous work** with the women of Kandahar, a conservative city where women are particularly disadvantaged. **Cost: £4,390**



● **Half of the costs of surgeries** which **totally transform the lives of 10 children** at the La Chaîne de l'Espoire's French Hospital for Children in Kabul. 3 complex orthopaedic surgeries, 3 plastic surgeries for cleft lip, and 4 cardiac surgeries. See pages 12-13. **Cost: £6,620**



● Our one third **share of the running costs** of the Window of Hope **orphanage for children with disabilities**. The home provides good nutrition, medical care, schooling and safety to this particularly disadvantaged group, many of whom have been abandoned by families unable to look after them. **Cost: £10,000**

● Our funds provided the **opportunity to villagers** in very rural Balkh province to break out, by hand, from solid rock **two drinking water storage tanks** so they have clean safe drinking water which drastically reduces birth and maternal mortality. Working with UK charity Healthprom. **Cost: £9,360**

● Part funding to allow the **Bamyan Bees Women's Co-operative**, who sold 1.2 tons of honey last year, to **buy their own delivery van**. Includes women's driving instruction! See page 10 **Cost: £3,460**

● Funds for a much needed **food security project** in the rural North East of the country, **helping farmers to withstand shocks**, both environmental and political. Managed by UK charity Concern, our donation will be matched with £10,000 grant from the British Government towards a similar food security project in Sierra Leone. **Cost: £10,000**





A Student's life in **Kabul**

Can you imagine living in a place where you always have a fear of society, a fear of invasion of your house, fear of attack, fear of being raped or even stoned by your own local people? These kinds of violence happen to women in Afghanistan each and every day, not only in rural Afghanistan but also in cities.

Earlier this year a young woman called Farkhunda was beaten to death by a mob in the middle of the day in the centre of Kabul. Her crime – she was a student of Islamic law at a mosque and had questioned publicly the practice of selling of charms at a shrine outside. The caretaker selling the charms incited a mob and she was beaten to death whilst police looked on. Subsequently those responsible were given long prison sentences but the fear that this incident instilled in women remains, particularly for girls living alone in a strange city where some police are more likely to be a threat than a lifeline.

However, with all these fears and nightmares there are still brave women, many from very rural areas, who stand up for their rights and risk moving to Kabul to continue their education.

Some of our students are lucky enough to have relatives in Kabul to stay with, but most rent rooms in family houses where the presence of men gives some kind of protection against a gang breaking in during the middle of the night.

As a young woman it can be difficult to rent a room because society has a bad perspective about the character of women who live alone and may think of them as an immoral or disgraced women.

Because of very low incomes, typically 5 or 6 women share one room and they eat, cook, study and sleep in that one room. Five of our sponsored students rent the room in these pictures in a small house occupied by two families with a total of 12 children. These pictures were taken during a visit without prior warning and the tidiness and cleanliness of this room is a credit to them. I doubt that many rooms with five British students sharing are as well kept?

No en-suites here; there is one bathroom and one toilet in the house for twenty one people. It's not culturally acceptable for them to use the communal yard, and so the bathroom or toilet, whilst there are men around, so they have to wait until the men leave the house.

Studying is difficult because of the noise of 12 children playing within this small house and, since they are only girls who are renting the room, they feel unable to ask the kids to be quieter because of the risk of being asked to leave.

These young women live on a tight budget. They might receive an allowance from their parents; some supplement this with part



time work; some fully fund themselves by working.

We undertook a survey of some of the Gawharshad students. On average they manage on a total weekly budget of £10.27 of which £3.47 goes on rent, £1.43 on transport, 94p for cell phone and stationary and 46p on clothes, leaving 57p a day for food. Many of them suffer from mild malnutrition.





Katakhana Beekeeping Cooperative

When we visited Afghanistan in March, we travelled to the Bamyan valley in the mountains to the west of Kabul to visit the COAM ecology project that we funded last year.

It's a very special place: home to the Hazara people who have been discriminated against and targeted by other ethnic groups. They have implemented an efficient security system and it's one of the few places in Afghanistan where it was safe enough for us to walk around.

This year we have started to support the Katakhana Beekeeping Cooperative in Bamyan province that's run by over 250 women who produce and then market honey. Initially funded by aid from the New Zealand and UK governments, this year they produced 1.18 tonnes of honey, sold this locally and made their first modest profit.

Transportation costs make up 70% of the operational budget and calculations indicate that, by owning and driving their own vehicle rather than using hired transport, their costs and thus their viability would be greatly increased.

We've agreed to pay for 30% of the cost of a rugged van, training drivers and two years running costs; the balance being provided by the remnants of previous aid funding and from the cooperative's own resources.

Although women drivers are not uncommon in Kabul, they will be a novelty in Bamyan. In Taliban times it was forbidden for women to drive on penalty of death.

This is a great way for us to help women from poor rural families to earn additional income thereby improving the social status of women, for them to obtain additional nutritious food, and to help an underprivileged ethnic group in one of the few remaining secure areas of Afghanistan. And it's good for the environment.



My Family Life

Doulat works part-time as our Programme Manager in Kabul

There are people in the world who actually never ever have a relaxed and secure life from the day that they have been born until they die. Unfortunately, us Afghans are from those types of people. In my 23 years of life I can't recall a time when we didn't have worries about our education, financial instability, starvation, explosions, attacks either from insiders or outsiders. It's not just me who suffered all this but also our elder generation; my parents spent their lives struggling to make a better life for themselves and for their children. Something impossible in a country like Afghanistan - uhh!

I still remember November 1998 when we had to leave our house and all of our belongings, except for one blanket that my mother took in case my 2 brothers and me would feel cold on the bus. It was when we migrated to Pakistan for the first time after the collapse of Afghanistan to Taliban. My parents are both university graduates but they had to do hard labor work in Pakistan just so they could send us to school and feed us. We spent 4 years of our lives surviving in a country where the local people would do anything to irritate us because it wasn't our country.

In 2003 we were able to move back to our own country - to Baharak in Badakhshan province in the northeast where my parents got work with Aga Khan Foundation. I was in my 4th grade and, after finishing high school, I moved to Kabul with a scholarship to the American University of Afghanistan. I graduated last summer but couldn't return home because everybody in our district knows my father and the fact that I have graduated from an American university and I would be a risk to myself and my parents.



I cannot explain my feelings when I saw on the TV news last month that Baharak had fallen under Taliban's control. I was so very worried and scared about my parents' safety because the Taliban target NGOs' employees. I tried to call my parents and eventually was relieved to find that they had already moved to the provincial capital. But I was still scared of their situation - they were stuck in Badhakshan and could not come to Kabul because the road was blocked due to the collapse of Kunduz and flights were fully booked all week. I was in contact with my parent almost every hour but that wasn't enough to stop me worrying. I was thinking; What if the Taliban come to the center of the city, recognize my parents and kill them just because they work for a foreign NGO?

After two nights the Army was able to defeat Taliban and one week after that my parents moved back to our house in Baharak, but the fear of them coming back and ruining and destroying everything remains. And I don't believe this peace will last long there because Taliban hold the neighboring districts and will return the minute they see an opportunity.

Sometimes I feel this situation with us, with every Afghan, will never end. Sometimes I feel that we are born to struggle and the struggle will only end when we die. But we carry on because that is what we all must do.

La Chaîne de l'Espoir



The situation in Afghanistan makes it very difficult to decide what is the best use of funds, for LNF or any other charity. Should we focus on doing the most good for the greatest number of people? Should we work on long-term interventions, and forget about compelling immediate demands? When LNF funds SCAWNO, for example, it's clear that hundreds of children are benefiting, and a few thousand pounds seem like a very small price to pay for improved life chances, educational opportunity, and a safe place for so many children to learn, play, and socialise. The funding of specific medical interventions for individual children is much more expensive, naturally, and comes with a set of difficult choices. When resources are in short supply, who decides who should benefit, and how do they measure the potential benefit to the individual child's health, life chances and even employability in the future?

For the past three years, LNF has given money to pay for the cost of surgeries at La Chaîne de l'Espoir, a French charity working with disadvantaged children, which runs a children's hospital in Kabul. They have also set up a unique Children's Medical House to provide accommodation for the children and their parents both before and after their surgeries. La Chaîne de l'Espoir's web site is impressive, its operations across Afghanistan comprehensive, but most importantly it does wonderful work for children from remote parts of rural Afghanistan.

During the LNF visit to Afghanistan in February/March this year, The Children's Medical House was one of the projects we visited, to see the young patients and their carers/family members. It's easy to get sentimental in such a place, with tiny kids waiting for hole-in-the-heart operations or serious orthopaedics. There was a great atmosphere of caring, combined with medical efficiency. The ceilings are festooned with soft toys, which are also all over the floors and window sills. Trustees Lorna and Carola spent some time making friends with the kids, who warmed to soap bubbles and chocolate coins.

This year, your donations helped to pay for operations on thirteen children at La Chaîne de l'Espoir, looked after and housed by the Children's Medical House at a cost of £11,260 in total, of which LNF contributed £6,620. A good use of the money raised by well-wishers, sponsored runners, and the growing numbers of LNF supporters? We're certain that it is.



Nasrin



Meet nine year old Nazrin who came from a distant province, with congenital heart disease, and absolutely no previous surgery. Her family income is £2.00 a day, for a family of six. The cost of surgery was £2,310, and a further £179 for the cost of keeping her and a family member in Kabul, so that she could have the treatment. Sounds like a lot? But what a difference your donations have made to this girl's future.

Razia



Razia was four years old when she came to the Children's Medical House last February with a congenital right side club foot deformity. Her teacher father earns £2.60 a day, to keep a family of seven, and they live in Wordak province, two days travel from Kabul. Surgery costs were £380, additional living costs £53. Razia had a lovely smile even before her treatment – now, thanks to your donations, she has even more reason to smile.

Christmas Cards

Large A5 glossy cards with matching envelopes in packets of 12.

We have one new card this year, also cards from previous years and an option to order 12 card 'variety packs.'

Available from our website for £10 per pack.

£3 p&p per order (UK).
International postage at cost.



the linda norgrove foundation 2016 CALENDAR

sponsored by Lewis Builders Ltd



Helping women and children in Afghanistan

2016 Calendar

For our fifth calendar, we have picked photographs of Afghanistan's children, along with smaller images of the projects that we've supported.

The calendars are A4 size for ease of mailing, open up to A3 for hanging and are available from our website for £10 each.

Postage is £3 per order in the UK.
International postage at cost.

Inheritance Tax Breaks

If you're wealthy enough to pay inheritance tax, please do remember to include charities, any charity - not necessarily us, in your wills because, subject to some rules, the amount you leave can effectively be quadrupled by the government.

Speak to your accountant or ask us for clarification.

Contact Us

The Linda Norgrove Foundation is an award winning UK registered charity. Charity Number: SC041843

For more information please contact us:

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Twitter: @lindaFOUNDATION



Our Supporters

Another year of great fundraising events by our supporters:

- Hebridean Housing Partnership - Quiz Night in Stornoway
- Pupils at Beeslack High School, Penicuik, and Plockton High School
- North Uist ladies - fundraising tea in Sollas
- William Thomson who ran the Boston Marathon
- DAI – Happy Hour led by senior management, a raffle and 'Workout Wear Friday'
- An Lanntair, Stornoway, exhibition of artwork by SCAWNO students

The Foundation's main fundraising event, the annual 10K held in October on the Isle of Lewis was also open to supporters around the world. This year people ran, walked or cycled in the UK, Sweden, Germany, France and Portugal; Liberia and Rwanda; Bangladesh, China, Sri Lanka and Australia; Canada and the USA. Almost 300 participants across the globe!

- DAI held a 5K walk in Bethesda, Washington DC, postponed for a couple of weeks due to the approach of hurricane Joaquin.
- Sofie, Linda's sister, and husband, Matt Corns held a 10K run/cycle round the Balindore Loop, Argyll, and a crèche for children.
- Linda Thomson and Jacquie Mahoney were joined by 24 walkers and 10 dogs for a walk along the coast from Burghead to Findhorn.
- Yumiko Yasuda, despite being new to Stockholm, soon had 18 fellow walkers joining her to walk in the Botanic Gardens.
- Over 100 runners and walkers crossed the finish line on the Valtos Peninsula on the Isle of Lewis.

Thanks to all of you who organized, helped and took part in the various events.





Thanks for all your support

If you would like to make a donation to help transform the lives of women and children in Afghanistan, please complete the form below together with your donation and send it to:

The Linda Norgrove Foundation, 3 Mangersta, Uig, Isle of Lewis, UK, HS2 9EY.

Your help is greatly appreciated, however you choose to help the Foundation.

Full Name:

Address:

..... Postcode:

E-mail:

I enclose a donation of: £ to the Linda Norgrove Foundation.

If you wish your donation to be treated as Gift Aid and boost your donation by 25p on every £1 you give, please tick the box and sign the declaration below:

I want to Gift Aid this donation, future donations and any other donation over the past 4 years to The Linda Norgrove Foundation.

giftaid it

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please notify us if you change your name or home address, want to cancel this declaration, no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

Signed:..... Date:

If you would like to know more about setting up a monthly donation please tick this box:

Please leave us a message, we'd love to hear from you!

