



the linda norgrove foundation

Summer 2016

Welcome to our interim newsletter which we send out each summer to keep committed supporters and regular donors up-to-date with progress.

We all tend to live within our own little bubbles and this results in our taking our own security and well-being for granted, but one's heart goes out to parents in places like Afghanistan.

We recently received an email from one of Linda's Afghan friends whose children had been disturbed when a 14-year-old boy they knew was kidnapped and kept for five months. His captors cut off one of his forefingers to persuade the parents to cough up the \$100,000 ransom but they couldn't possibly afford this and their son was killed. Can you imagine coping with their guilt?

And inside you'll read of one of our Gawharshad scholarship students, active in protesting against the lawlessness which allowed the random abduction and subsequent beheading of seven people including a nine year old girl, all civilians from the Hazara minority.

We can blame the Afghans for their continual infighting, their corruption and their apparent inability to govern themselves successfully. But this fails to take into account wider factors. Their geographical, cultural and material situations are all so much less favourable than ours.

During the Cold War conflicts were relegated to far off countries, of which Afghanistan was one. More recently, globalisation and modern communications have massively increased the pace of change, and the resultant cracks are nowhere more obvious than in conservative countries with established cultures and religions. It's almost as if a battle is now being fought in Afghanistan between time zones: an established past versus a tidal wave of future globality.

Add to this mix an opium poppy growing industry that dwarfs the 'normal' economy, widely available weaponry, unstable neighbours and you have a country that's going to be difficult to govern.

In spite of this, Afghanistan now has an honest man as President who is making a genuine attempt to turn things around and is supported by the majority of Afghans who would relish some of the chances that stability and prosperity have brought to us over here.

Contrasting the efforts of the current Afghan leadership and people with our own situation in the West, I feel ashamed at how we often fail to recognise how lucky we are to be relatively healthy, wealthy and secure.

For all of you out there who've helped us make some small improvements to the lives of some really deserving women and children in Afghanistan, thank you.



www.lindanorgrovefoundation.org

News Roundup

LNF Wheelhouse

A boat wheelhouse, relocated on John and Lorna's croft 20 years ago with a fantastic view, has been recently tidied up to rent to tourists. All proceeds will go to LNF.



BOAT WHEELHOUSE FOR RENT

SLEEPS TWO-
£30/night

3 MANGERSTA -
Turn right ahead

PHONE - 01851 672 324

All proceeds to charity

The advertisement features a photograph of a white boat wheelhouse with a blue stripe, set against a background of a blue sky and green hills.

Our New Trustee – Jane Maciver



After hearing John deliver a lecture about Afghanistan and the Foundation's work and realising it is something I would really like to be involved with, I spent the first few weeks of this year volunteering at the Foundation.

I've been interested in development since my teens and so studied politics and international development at the University of Glasgow. And I have some practical third world experience, having volunteered in Bangladesh, Thailand (working with Burmese migrants) and Kenya.

Through volunteering with the Foundation I have learnt a lot about effectively supporting local projects in a fragile country like Afghanistan and am astonished at the number of factors you have to consider with each decision made.

As by far the youngest trustee, I'm nervous about not being able to contribute much in the way of expertise, but I intend to do my best with the skills that I can bring, especially those available to a 'young un' from the social media savvy generation.

Manchester University Award

In May John was awarded 1st place in the Alumni category of the University of Manchester Volunteer of the Year Awards by Vice Chancellor Dame Nancy Rothwell. The award was given to recognise outstanding service as a volunteer in the community from amongst the 420,000 Manchester alumni.



New Projects in 2016

£4,500 to Silk Weaving project in rural NW.

£10,035 to support the **SCAWNO** project, providing education within a poor area of Kabul.

£1,875 annual contribution to allow Womanity to provide libraries in girls' schools.

£7,170 for solar panels, batteries and wiring for the Khajeeda Kubra girls' college in the conservative city of Kandahar in the SE.

£4,690 of scholarships for our seven female medical students.

£6,430 as a second year payment to War Child towards a kindergarten and an associated women's livelihoods project in the NW.

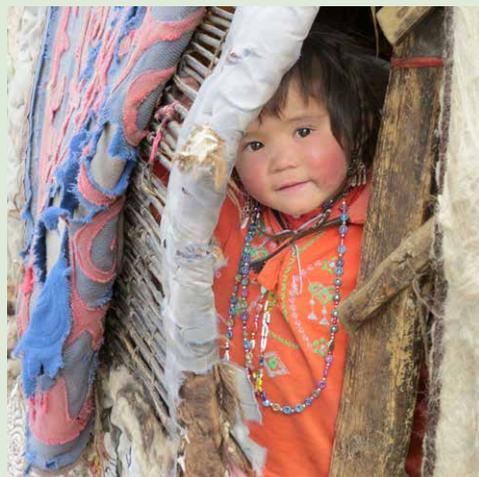
£6,600 towards the Ascend mountaineering project.

£10,000 to allow the Swedish Charity, Operation Mercy, to provide birthing skills training in the remote Wakhan Corridor in the NE to the marginalised and incredibly poor Wakhi and nomadic Kyrgyz people who live both in this area and in the nearby Pamir ranges.



2017 Calendars

This year our calendar is to feature the magnificent Wakhan Corridor in the extreme NW of Afghanistan. A remote region bounded by the Karakorum, the Hindu Kush and the Pamir ranges, it's fantastically photogenic, with spectacular landscapes, distinctive peoples and animals: pastoralists, nomads, yaks and camels. It, and our Christmas cards, will be available from this summer, so keep an eye on our website if you'd like to order by post.



2016 Fundraising

So far this year

- Farid Alimi has raised £180 by running the London Marathon in April.
- Beeslack High School, Penicuik, have raised £300 from various events.
- A Ladies' pamper night in Uig, Isle of Lewis, raised £110.



Forthcoming:

Gillian Davies and Elly Green are signed up for the Barrathon on 25th June:

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/GillianandEllyBarrathon>

Roderick Read will be Goose Busking around Europe: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Fin-the-Goose-Read>

World Wide 10k

The sixth Linda Norgrove Foundation 10k will be held on Saturday 1st October. Join us and run or walk around the Valtos peninsular or plan to take part wherever you live in the world to raise funds for our projects. We'll keep you updated on our facebook page and website on how you can get involved.



Helping Widows on the Silk Road

Afghanistan has the highest percentage of widows in the population in the world and they are one of the most marginalised groups in Afghan society.

In most rural areas it is not acceptable for women to work and, even if they could, on average they often have four dependent children to care for. Countrywide, only 15% of females of working age are engaged in the labour market compared to nearly 80% of men, and so widows tend to rely on support from their extended families. Often they become a burden and their options are severely limited.

This year we gave UK charity Christian Aid £4,500 towards a silk production project. By rearing silk worms and using the cocoons to produce silk, this project helps more than 60 widows and female household heads, ultimately benefiting over 400 family members.

The project is located in Zinda Jan in the North West of Afghanistan, an area positioned on the ancient Silk Road where the history of silk production stretches back 2,000 years, and it aims to revive skills lost during the wars of the late 20th century.

The project is run through a local partner, The

Rehabilitation Association and Agricultural Development for Afghanistan, who supply the women with a box of silk worm eggs and guidance on modern methods of silk processing and weaving, enabling them to produce high quality silk cloth. After just 45 days the silk worms produce enough silk to generate £107 of income: a significant sum given that the average per capita income in Afghanistan is around £285 a year.

The project goes further than meeting basic economic needs; it aims to support the women to establish a Silk Association with a 70p membership fee, which the women can use to promote their silk. This model of development puts the power in the women's hands and will encourage female ownership, improve networks and develop business skills.

Fatema, 36, a mother of six children with an unemployed husband formerly addicted to opium, tells of the difference participation made to her life:

“Life was so bad and I didn’t have a sufficient income since I was a woman and my husband was unable to make a living. The income allowed me to not only provide the basic needs of my family but also to take my husband to the hospital to treat him and now he has stopped using drugs and recovered. This is all caused by the NGO which gave me a chance to change my life. I appreciate from the depth of heart the help of RAADA and the Foundation that paved the ground for me.”

Despite their clear vulnerability, projects supporting widows and women household-heads are hard to come by in Afghanistan and so when the Linda Norgrove Foundation heard about this project we were delighted to be able to support these marginalised women. Even more because it’s using a sustainable solution, is managed by a local Afghan organisation and ultimately gives these women some control over their lives.



Bamyan Beekeeping Cooperative - An update

In our last newsletter we reported about a grant we had made to the women’s Bamyan Beekeeping Cooperative towards the cost of buying a van and paying for driving lessons for the women. Transport made up 70% of their operational budget and so by having their own vehicle they are able to make substantial savings. A 1994 Toyota Townace van has been purchased and can’t you just see the delight on the faces of the three women who now have driving

certificates: a very rare and unusual thing for women to possess in rural Afghanistan.

It’s now a going concern: 281 women produce over a ton of honey a year which they are able to sell for good prices in local markets. We like this beekeeping project. It is good for women, good for the minority Hazara community in the Bamyan valley and good for the environment.



Scholarship Programme Update

We now support 39 students studying economics, law or business studies at Gawharshad Institute. It was a good year for them; very few girls dropped out.

Our seven medical students also did well, averaging third place amongst a mean class size of 42.

Right: Top three students receive Linda prize from Doulat, LNF project manager in Kabul

Below: The Students we sponsor at Gawharshad



We received these pieces from two of our Gawharshad students:

Khatera's Story



I want to start by thanking LNF for supporting me because, if you hadn't, I wouldn't have been able to continue my education successfully. After I graduated from Gawharshad, I started working as a teacher in one of the private universities. After five months teaching, I was selected the best teacher of university following an assessment from Ministry of Higher Education.

In fall 2015 I applied for master degree program in Kabul University. From 600 students they selected 75 students for examination and I got the 8th highest score. Now, this year I started my master degree in finance and banking in Kabul University. To conclude my speech, once again I want to thank the Linda Norgrove Foundation.

Shafiq'a's Story

My name is Shafiq'a Sayees and I was born in 1994 in Ghazni province, south of Kabul. I was lucky to get into school but when my father died I was not able to continue. After long time of hard work I managed to finish school but was then unable to continue in higher education and I gave up hope. But one day a friend of mine informed me about Gawharshad Scholarship program so I went to Kabul, applied, fortunately passed the exam and managed to get a Linda Norgrove Foundation scholarship. I am really proud and thankful to the Linda group who help not only me, but all girls whom are dreaming to get higher education.

It is hard to study far away from home. I got accommodation in Sar-e-karez for six girls, but the rent was expensive for us and the owner of room was often threatening that if we don't pay him more money he will force us out of the room even at 9pm. I started to fight for rights of the woman in entire country. I knocked every door to know about the women whom were in need. I worked for 5 months as volunteer officer in women rights support section at human rights commission. After that I got volunteered as communication officer for women and children organization.

Last November, Taliban or ISIS beheaded seven civilians abducted from the persecuted Hazara community, four men, two women and a 9 year old girl. I was involved with programme coordination for one of the largest protest rallies in Kabul. They threaten me that if I do not stop they will kill me but I will continue fighting for women rights until the end.





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 this form 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

I would like to know more about setting up a monthly donation:

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 donation over the past 4 years to The Linda Norgrove Foundation.

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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: