



the linda norgrove foundation

Summer 2017

Welcome to our newsletter which we send each summer to more committed supporters and regular donors.

We don't go along with the idea of pushing people hard to donate and we were a little uneasy about making an appeal for additional funds in our last newsletter. It was our first appeal and we have no plans for another anytime soon.

You might recall that we put in some money ourselves and hoped that we could attract donations to match this and so realise an additional £50,000 to replenish our diminished capital reserves.

We were overwhelmed by the response. Every day the postman was bringing new cheques and in December and January our funds were increasing at the rate of more than £1,000 a day. Regular donations doubled. Since our newsletter went out we have taken in more than £115,000 when you include all donations, our contribution and gift aid. This is more than double what we would normally have expected to raise over this period.

The money is important but we were particularly touched by the many letters and messages of support: such vital encouragement for us tapping away at keyboards in an attic on the Isle of Lewis.

This has enabled us to support many new schemes as you will be able to see from the articles overleaf. But we still need to husband our resources so we can fulfil longstanding commitments – SCAWNO, children's surgeries, and scholarships which allow women to study, gain practical experience and eventually qualify as doctors.

That's the good news.

At the same time, things in Afghanistan appear to be steadily and slowly deteriorating. Sometimes we wonder whether it's all a waste of time, but then we remind ourselves that we were never going to radically change the war or the politics, but we certainly can significantly change and improve the lives of individual women and children there.

I hope that after reading through this newsletter, you will agree with us that we have done just that. Together we all have. Thank **you** for your support.



Linda and John



Last week we were simultaneously delighted and saddened to hear that Doulat Bibi Aliyar, our Project Manager in Kabul will be leaving us. Doulat was brought up in the small town of Ishkashim near to the Wakhan Corridor in the remote northeast, and was one of the fortunate few to win a scholarship to the American University in Kabul. She joined us whilst in her final year and since then she has worked for a mobile phone company and more recently for DFID in Afghanistan, whilst still working part-time for us. Now she has been awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study for a Masters degree at the prestigious Duke University in North Carolina.

Her place will be taken by Pariwash Gouhari, Doulat's assistant over the past year, who was also brought up in Ishkashim and is at the American University. Pariwash tells us a little more about herself below.

The search is now on for an assistant to Pariwash. This is our way of preparing for change: little is stable in Afghanistan and our organisation needs to be adaptable as people inevitably move on.

Kabul staffing, essential to support our projects on the ground, costs LNF less than £4,000 a year. We have no other staff costs.

Pariwash

My family were refugees in Pakistan when I was small. But when the Taliban regime collapsed we moved back to the remote small town of Ishkashim in Badakhshan province. I completed my secondary education there but, because of the financial problems of my family, I couldn't go to University and worked for four years at the Central Asia Institute as a finance officer, then as a programme manager.

Living in Afghanistan is hard but it gets harder when you are born a girl. Although I couldn't join University, at least my parents let me work. Many of my school classmates were forced to marriage and some cases ended in divorce, and this changed my perspective on women's lives.

I became passionately interested in journalism, seeing this as a way to spread the stories of women in my country and to change their situation. But my family were so concerned about women's life and their security in Afghanistan that they wouldn't allow me to study journalism.

Eventually I won a scholarship to the American University of Afghanistan to study Political Science where I can pursue my dream of working for women's rights and equality. I love photography and am president of the university photography club.

I have been working for the Linda Norgrove Foundation for over a year now and taking over from Doulat is a great opportunity for me. I really do hope that I can do as well as her.

Eventually I want to be Governor of Badakhshan province.

Where are they now? News of our previous interns and staff...

Rachel Wade, our intern for two years, managed to land that elusive first International Development job working for DAI, Linda's employer, in Liberia. She returned last year to study for a Masters degree at Durham University and is now hoping to build a career in international development, an interest kindled whilst working for LNF.

Laura Donaldson, our second intern, completed a Masters in Public Relations at Stirling University and is now managing media and communications for Bear Scotland who maintain trunk roads and bridges throughout the Highlands.

Zulfa Abawe, our third intern is currently studying for a PhD in Bloomington in Indiana.

Zainab Hussaini, our first project manager in Kabul is pursuing a PhD at University of Chester.

2017 Fundraising



So far this year

- £165 from sale of donated goods at Stornoway craft fair.
- £1,061 raised by sisters Rhoda Bamsey and Rachel Warfield who ran the Bath half marathon.
- £853 from Rhoda Macdonald who served brunch at Ravenspoint in Lochs on the Isle of Lewis, as part of her 40th birthday celebrations.
- £622 donated by Rosie Wiscombe, the profits from the sale of a unique collection of bags made specially for Mother's Day at *byRosie* in Stornoway.
- £600 from William Halliday who ran his first marathon in London, and is continuing to run and fundraise for us throughout 2017.
- £2,352 from our long-time supporters Michelle and Philip Butcher who asked for donations to be made in lieu of wedding gifts.

Thank you all for your support

2018 Calendars

Look out for our 2018 calendars and Christmas cards which will be for sale through our website later in the year.

Worldwide 10K

Our annual 10K will be held on Saturday, 30th September. Please think about joining us to run or walk around the Valtos Peninsula if you are on the island, or wherever you are in the world on the day. Encourage your friends to join you, wear one of our t-shirts and help us raise much needed funds. Look out for more information and updates on our facebook page and website.



Helping Women Help Themselves – Serve Afghanistan

Over the past 10 years Serve Afghanistan, a UK-based charity that is staffed mainly by volunteers, has developed Self Help Groups (SHG) to enable women in rural areas to improve their own lives. Women, often widowed or disabled, meet to discuss their needs, following which many have started their own small businesses.

These businesses have mostly been successful, although they often face similar challenges, frequently associated with the status of women. For example, they can be forced to sell their products through male relatives who pocket any profits, or they can quickly saturate the limited markets around their small villages.

We have given £7,070 to a project which brings together three groups of women from SHGs within specific rural areas to meet and examine ways to tackle their problems.

Additionally, a total of 36 women will be selected for specialist support. Their businesses will be analysed, training given and, as their businesses improve, they can become role models for the others.

Mymona's Story

Mymona is 35 years old, her husband is mentally ill and unable to work, and they have two sons aged 15 and 12. She is the sole bread winner and necessity forces them to live in a single room in her brother-in-law's house. She joined a Self Help Group six years ago and then started a small food-stuff retailing business.

In season, she buys, grinds and packages peppers, and dries grapes into raisins. All year round she buys and resells milk and yoghurt, selling 80 pints of milk and 40 mid-sized containers of yoghurt a day. She makes an average daily profit of £4.10 from which she has managed to save enough to buy a milking cow.



Like most of the group members, Mymona is illiterate and has limited numeracy. She finds it difficult to develop her business without help and the following actions are proposed:

1. Research markets in the city for packaged raisins and pepper and for milk, where prices are 60% higher than around her village.
2. Investigate low-cost, simple systems to test milk to improve product quality.
3. Calculate the return from buying a cooler to store products.
4. Investigate a long-term contract with a local shop to give a more stable income.
5. Research the cost and return of improved packaging.
6. Look into a cooperative transport system to reduce distribution costs.

Helping Mymona to improve her business will be good, but using her success as an example to the other 300 SHG women will be even better.

£71,025 given to projects in the first five months of 2017

£4,059 to provide business training and a contribution towards the cost of additional hives for women within the Bamyan Beekeeping Co-operative. See article alongside.

£7,070 to Serve Afghanistan, allowing them to help rural women improve their small businesses. See article alongside.

£5,600 to Christian Aid to continue with the project enabling another 80 Afghan women to generate a good income from silk worm rearing, spinning and silk weaving.

£11,303 to Healthprom for the excavation from solid rock of the final two drinking water tanks in the Qaraghage area of Balkh province. These ten tanks are now providing safe drinking water to remote villages and reducing infant mortality.

£8,437 to pay for travel and accommodation costs, as well as funding life-changing surgeries for ten poor children to attend the French hospital, La Chaîne de l'Espoir, in Kabul.

£8,186 for 6 months' funding for SCAWNO, an Afghan-run children's centre in Kabul serving a rundown area.

£2,213 to allow 'Womanity' to provide much needed small libraries in rural girls' schools.

£9,864 to support a livelihoods project for women in the Wakhan Corridor. See article alongside.

£6,107 to pay fee scholarships for nine girls training to become doctors.

£5,678 to Global Partners for a project to raise awareness of the importance of clean water hygiene and sanitation in ten villages in the Wakhan Corridor.

£2,508 for bedding and basics for three kindergartens in Kunduz city, whose supplies were destroyed or stolen when Taliban over-ran the city last year. We have also enabled the restocking of their libraries by the US charity, Hoopoe Books.



Gawharshad Institute Update

Each year we take on students to replace those who graduate. Ten new students were selected following interviews by Gawharshad and LNF staff in Kabul. These stories are fairly typical of the difficulties these young women experience.

Sakina Gholami has lived for most of her life in Pakistan. Her father was killed in a car crash when she was 13, her mother died when she was 18. Her remaining family had to move back to Afghanistan as part of the recent forced repatriation of refugees. She lives with her brother and his wife but he is now unable to support them after being recently injured by a terrorist bomb. LNF's scholarship at Gawharshad allows her the opportunity to turn around all this bad fortune.

Jamila Nabizada comes from a family of eight, her mother is seriously ill and her father is a high school teacher in an outlying province. Fighting and insecurity forced them to abandon their home for a safer area where he is required to spend £52 of his £117 monthly wage on rent. Without an LNF scholarship she couldn't have continued her education.

Sesiqqa Ramazani's family of ten rely on her mother working from home as a dressmaker, her father being old, sick and incapable. As the eldest daughter, Sediqa worked alongside her mother to support the family but she was determined to complete her education and travelled to Kabul. As she puts it "I have had a lot of domestic problems because my parents weren't pleased about my studies and they don't want me to carry on, moreover they are not able to pay my fees. But I am ready to tolerate any difficulties in order to reach my goals."

These women deserve your support.

Aschiana Street kids School

Last newsletter we reported of the imminent installation of a new football pitch surface for the Ashiana. This is how it looks, the inset shows how it was.



Ascend Women's Mountaineering Project

Some of the of 17 new girls starting the new season!



Medical Scholarship Funding

We now have four donors signed up to sponsor a female medical student for the duration of her studies. If you're able and willing to take on this level of commitment, £1,200 a year for five years, please get in touch.



Bamyan Bees Women's Co-operative update

Our project helping the Hazara women in Bamyan province who have formed a beekeeping cooperative goes from strength to strength. Bee survival over the harsh winter has been good, more apary training has been delivered, especially on the steps needed to counter American Foul Brood disease and another 72 hives have been started with the aid of 50% establishment grants. More work has been completed with marketing, labelling and distribution, aided by the van we helped to pay for, driven by the women we put through driving school. It's wonderful to see these rural women succeeding and expanding their own business co-operative.

Domestic Abuse Emergency Fund update

Maghrifat

In our last newsletter we reported the horrific story of Maghrifat, married aged 8 to a 30 year old man, and physically damaged following repeated rapes. Since then our emergency fund has paid towards her travelling to India to receive additional specialist surgery. She has recovered well considering her trauma and her ambition now is to train to become a doctor.



Farzana

Following sustained physical abuse from family, 16 year old Farzana attempted suicide by drinking sulphuric acid. Her throat and stomach were so severely damaged that she was unable to eat or drink. Local hospitals in Kunduz couldn't treat her, there's no NHS, so Women for Afghan women, an Afghan charity, stepped in and, using our emergency fund, arranged for five months of specialist treatment in Kabul. Now she is recovered and living in a W4AW shelter.

Strengthen Agriculture, Livelihood, Environment and Hygiene (SALEH) project in Wakhan Corridor

Both Dr Mohamad Hakim and Linda worked for the UN ten years ago and it was this connection which led Dr Hakim to approach us with a proposal to empower women from the Wakhan, an isolated valley high up between mountain ranges in the extreme northeast of Afghanistan. 48% are classed as severely food insecure, many are malnourished, so the project focuses on improving their capacity to grow more for themselves.

With support from a small Afghan charity called SALEH, 120 women have established vegetable gardens within polytunnels, which assist growth at such high altitudes. They have created 60 small fruit orchards and planted 52,000 willow saplings to combat overgrazing and erosion.

All women will attend classes in basic nutrition, hygiene, and environmental management.

LNF has donated £9,900. Dr Hakim, who works for the UN in nearby Badakhshan province, personally donated several hundred pounds towards the cost and gives his time free.





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.

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.

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.

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