



the linda norgrove foundation

Third Annual Newsletter



Helping women and children affected by the war in Afghanistan

www.lindanorgrovefoundation.org

Calendars and Christmas Cards

2014 Calendars

Look out for the 2014 Linda Norgrove Foundation calendar, released earlier this month. Following last year's overwhelming demand for calendars, which resulted in three print runs, we've combined striking colourful images from both Afghanistan and the Hebrides this year. Calendars make great mailable gifts and the feedback we received was that last year's A3 size made them harder for people to mail. So this year we've gone for a brochure style A4 calendar, which opens out to the same size for hanging on the wall but is much cheaper to post. Pictures have come from all over, some from our projects, some from friends, but most are Linda's own photos from



the years she spent living and working in Afghanistan.

Visit the website today to order yours before they run out.

£10 each + £3 p&p per order



Christmas Cards

We have used two wonderful images from the calendar for this year's Christmas cards.

One of a Bactrian camel with a flamboyant bouffant hair-do and the other a group of kids rapturous at a performance of the Afghan Children's Circus in Kabul. Both show a much lighter side of Afghanistan than we usually receive from the media.

Large A5 glossy cards with envelopes, they are available in packets of 12 of one design, complete with matching envelopes.

Available from our website for £10 for a packet of 12 cards, plus £3 p&p per order.

Ladies! – Wondering what to buy your partner for Christmas? Visit John's blog on our website for a man's suggestions.

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Education

- £2,533 Scholarships for seven poorer rural girls to study law for their first year at the Gawharshad Institute of Higher Learning in Kabul.
- £14,990 Providing pre-school education and care to 390 vulnerable children within 13 rural communities in Herat province in partnership with UK charity Warchild.
- £615 Contribution towards a campaign to build a new school for 900 girls in Badakshan.
- £8,522 Part funding for the 2013 costs of running an orphanage in Jalalabad, where Linda was based, run by Afghan charity AFCECO.
- £9,474 Continuation of our programme of funding daily lunches for 120 children at the Afghan Children's Circus School throughout 2013.
- £11,000 Classes for poor kids in a rough area of Kabul learning judo, Islamic studies, elementary computing, dressmaking, calligraphy and art. All run on a very tight budget by the tiny Afghan charity SCAWNO. Most of the 304 students are children who have missed school because of disruption during the civil war period.

Support for Women

- £6,450 Hagar women's safe house in Kabul for women who have been outcast from their families or who are on the run from them. A year's wages for a psychosocial advisor who will provide professional training and support to increase the skills and the capacity of local Afghan staff.
- £15,923 A free legal aid service for women and girls in Herat, western Afghanistan administered by WASSA. A female defence lawyer who specialises in family law and a project assistant provide legal representation to women, some of whom have suffered abuse and others who need to resolve family issues.
- £9,418 An emergency fund run by Women for Afghan Women to provide support and often life-saving medical treatment for women and girls who live in rural areas following very serious but isolated cases of assault, rape and domestic abuse.

Environmental and Community Development

- £9,680 Three part environmental project run by Afghan Charity COAM in Bamiyan. See page 10.
- £10,000 A donation to Afghan Action's Training and Business Incubation Centre in Kabul. This centre provides vocational skills, training in carpet weaving and tailoring, education, on-site healthcare and a meal each day for the women.
- £8,840 The construction of two drinking water storage tanks for 3000 villagers in Balkh province through UK charity Healthprom. See page 11.
- £6,450 Training women in horticultural and textile skills to enable them to both earn a living and train others. All as an element of a 'Trade Afghan' project run by the charity PARSA. See page 14.

Health

- £6,320 A one third share in the annual running costs of the 'Window of Hope' disabled children's home in Kabul. See page 6.
- £15,000 The provision of medical clinics, training of community health workers, a vaccination programme and birth life saving skills training, all in the Wakhan corridor in the extreme northeast. All in partnership with Operation Mercy of Sweden.
- £6,450 Funding for operations for nine girls from rural areas of Afghanistan. See page 12.

View from Kabul

Zainab Hussaini is our project manager working in Kabul and here she explains how happiness can be an issue for Afghan children.

Everywhere in Kabul streets you can see the kids are begging or asking you miserably to buy something from them, or trying to clean your car. They shouldn't think about money early in their childhood. But they grow up early, and just thinking how to survive. They don't know what is being a child, what is childhood, or what is happiness.

They wish to go to school like many children in the world. They wish to have entertainment like other children. But their life is full of these wishes. Some of them are lucky. A rich person may want to help, or a foreigner may visit them on the street, and then decide to help educate them. But how many of them are lucky? What about the others?

When I started to work for LNF, my first visit from the LNF's projects was SCAWNO project. Students who don't have enough money to have education and entertainment were registered in SCAWNO to study, exercise, play football, paint, or learn computer and calligraphy for free. Many children who didn't have any entertainment before, came to learn and enjoy. I was really happy about girls who finally found a place to exercise properly.

When LNF funded the Afghan Circus, I visited there. It is a colorful and safe place for children. It was the first time that I saw a place in which the directors cared about children's happiness and enjoyment. There are many incredible organizations who are trying to educate children, but Afghan Circus is considered



to emphasize one of the essential necessities of Afghan children: happiness. I met many children who were learning and playing. They were showing up in front of my camera to take photos of them. They all seemed really happy.

The Afghan Circus has one central office in Kabul, and many branches in other provinces. I visited their Bamiyan branch about three months ago. They have a small yard with three rooms. One is for radio class where children were seated around to record a radio program. One is for boy's juggling class, and one is for girls juggling class. The director told me when they have to close the circus for the day, the children are unhappy. They want to play more. The Bamiyan branch has little equipment for children, nevertheless, the children are happy about it because they have a place to play and to learn. Although the other branches of Afghan Circus are not as equipped as Kabul, they can give the gift of happiness to Afghan's children.

I wish for a day when Afghanistan children will laugh from the bottom of their heart. A laugh full of satisfaction, full of happiness.

Read more from Zainab in the Blog section of our website



Window of Hope Disabled Children's Home

In Afghanistan, it is often difficult for aid programmes to function efficiently and sustainably. One of the main challenges of running a grant-giving trust is ensuring projects continue to run after the initial funds are exhausted.

At the Linda Norgrove Foundation, we pride ourselves in helping small-scale projects which can often be overlooked by larger organisations. This allows us to keep in contact with projects that really touch our hearts and, through your donations, help those most in need.

Supporters of the Foundation may remember one of our earliest initiatives - providing help to a disabled children's home in Kabul, the Window of Hope Orphanage.

The home provided care for the 14 children living with different disabilities such as cerebral palsy but it was underfunded and in a poor state. The Foundation stepped in, providing the children

with decent, locally-sourced beds so they no longer had to sleep on the concrete floors, with warm bedding, winter clothing and curtains, plus toys to promote sensory learning.

John and Lorna Norgrove visited the children's home in 2012, were impressed with the commitment of the staff working there, but were concerned about the lack of management support. We were delighted to be approached earlier this year by the Afghan Professionals Network, an organisation based in London with a charitable arm, the Enabled Children Initiative. They were proposing to support the children's home, both financially and just as importantly by mobilising the necessary voluntary support in Kabul to manage the home.

The budget exceeded our usual limit so we proposed a joint venture with the Karen Woo Foundation, a similar Foundation to ours, set up by the parents of a young doctor murdered in Afghanistan around the same time that Linda died. We all met up in London in May and agreed to each fund one third of the running costs of the home.

Over the past year, the home was grossly underfunded, receiving intermittent support from an individual donor. The funding shortfalls were stark, unpaid rent resulted in their having to move to a smaller house, and there were shortages of basic foodstuffs, medical supplies and even nappies. The caregivers, the housekeepers and cooks had gone for months without pay.

One in 5 Afghan families has a member with a severe disability but the children at the Window of Hope have no families to look after them and, without your funding, their future would be bleak. Disabled children are often stigmatised in Afghanistan and government spending is stretched so the appropriate health care, education, and social services for special-needs children are simply not readily available or accessible anywhere in Afghanistan.

The money that you have contributed together with joint funding from other committed organisations will ensure that these children can at last have some security, will be well looked after and cared for by adequately trained members of their local community and so enjoy a better quality of life.





Afghanistan Reads!

Education of women has always been at the forefront of the Linda Norgrove Foundation's projects. We believe a country that has seen so much turmoil and tragedy over the years can only turn around if its citizens are educated and empowered to change things for the better.



The best sign of a state's peacefulness is not its level of wealth, its level of democracy, or its ethno-religious identities; the best sign of a state's peacefulness is how well its women are treated. We believe that educating women is the best hope for creating the kind of society we would all want to live in.

Over the past two years we have twice funded Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan (CW4WAfghan) to run literacy classes for rural women and girls who have missed out on schooling, and we were impressed with their openness, commitment, energy and effectiveness.

We wanted to build on these classes and to seek funding to work in this field on a larger scale, but we are a very small charity run by volunteers and do not have the capacity to run a project of this size. The opportunity to work

with a charity established in Afghanistan like CW4WAfghan meant we could jointly apply for support from the United States International Development Agency (USAID).

Last year we submitted a joint bid with CW4WA for special funding totalling \$625,000 (£403,226) and in May we learned we had been successful. The project has now started.

Around 840 women and girls will benefit from literary classes to improve reading, writing and numeracy. Life skills training will focus on very basic hygiene, first aid and nutrition. To avoid any conflict, the classes only take place in villages that have asked for them.

Forty boxed libraries will be installed in rooms provided by the communities and will be open to all 22,000 residents, providing the means for Afghans to take charge of their own empowerment and educate themselves. Librarians will be trained to manage the libraries.

Research has shown that more than two thirds of women who have been educated at school have lost their literacy skills after two years. This is largely because they do not have access to reading materials of any sort to maintain their reading skills. It's hard to imagine, isn't it, a life without books? We feel confident that by having access to these 'Able Box Libraries' - each of which contains 500 books, both novels and non fiction to increase knowledge and skills - villagers will benefit enormously.



With this fantastic support from USAID and through our partners at CW4WA, the Foundation can really make a difference to so many lives in Afghanistan. Teaching entire communities to read and enabling them to continue reading afterwards will have a profound impact for many, both now and in the years to come.

This large grant is 'ring fenced' for this particular purpose and, as such, we are still very much reliant on donations to allow us to continue to fund all of the other projects that we are involved with. We remain particularly grateful for your continuing support.



Safe Stoves and Clean Water

The Foundation has been working with two different community developments designed to bring about changes to health, agriculture and sustainability to villages in the North of Afghanistan.



COAM

It's often the case that simple improvements can make a huge impact. That's been the case with COAM's safe cook stove project in Bamiyan which we supported last year. Its startling success has encouraged us to support this fantastic charity in its latest community project with its three pronged approach to improve safety and sustainability.

The cook stove project focused on changing the traditional cooking methods which used lots of firewood, were unsafe and unhealthy. The lack of chimneys meant houses were often filled with smoke. New stoves were locally designed, built and delivered. They use much less firewood, and have an oven and a water boiler, all resulting in a safer and more environmentally friendly method of cooking.

These were a hit with the villagers and demand now outstrips supply to the point that we're financing an internship programme to train eight unskilled young men in the COAM workshops. This should have a cascading effect onto the local communities - the men will not only be trained in valuable life skills but will transfer their knowledge about environmental and clean technologies to other villagers.



The second element involves creating and establishing two rural community plant nurseries, where women will grow native trees and shrubs. The local women will learn agricultural methods providing them with a sustainable income and furnishing them with skills that can be passed onto other members of the community in the future.

The Koh-I Baba mountains where the projects are located have, in the past, suffered from overgrazing and overharvesting of fuel. The planting of saplings from the nurseries will provide future grazing as well as crucial fuel sources for the cook stoves. It will also reduce erosion and help prevent natural disasters such as landslides and flooding.

Finally, the third part of the project will see the creation of a demonstration project - effectively a 'green school'. Pupils, community members and teachers will come together in this unique school garden to learn and practise sustainable methods of growing and farming.

The long-term benefits of the project bring a more sustainable future to villagers who currently struggle from lack of understanding and knowledge about the interaction between farming and the environment.

Healthprom

As a retired water engineer, John Norgrove has always appreciated the importance of a clean water supply. So when the UK charity Healthprom approached the Foundation with a water related project, John was particularly keen to help.

Healthprom specialise in health and social care and have carried out lots of good work over the past 5 years reducing child and maternal mortality in the Charkent District, Province of Balkh in Northern Afghanistan.

Their Water Project started in 2011 when it became apparent that, while fatalities at birthing had been much reduced, far

too many children under five were dying from illnesses such as gastroenteritis and dehydration as a result of drinking contaminated water. In times of drought, drinking water often becomes putrid.

We are paying to build special water tanks called 'Khandas' for two villages. These will be dug by hand within solid limestone to store and collect safer drinking water for the villages. The topsoil will be removed from the catchment area to reduce pollution from grazing animals.

Local men will be trained to excavate the reservoirs, providing employment for 12 men for 100 days and this knowledge can then be transferred on to the next village, leading to a continuation of the process.

Both men and women will be taught how to keep the water supply safe, about sanitation and hygiene, and simple ways to combat dehydration following bouts of sickness and diarrhoea. The villagers will be encouraged to build latrines, which are rare.

£8,900 of your donations will result in considerable local employment, some important practical education and a more reliable safer water supply for 3000 villagers. Last but not least, fewer kids will die in the years to come.



Life Changing Surgery for Children

Last year the Foundation raised over £4,500 to directly cover the costs of life-changing operations for six children at French hospital La Chaîne de l'Espoir in Kabul, as well as their aftercare, travel and accommodation at the nearby children's medical house.

This year, thanks to your support, the Foundation has managed to cover all the medical expenses for nine girls, all of whom required delicate, complicated surgeries that will alter their lives.

The girls, aged between a few months and 13 years old, required specific procedures costing far more than their families could ever hope to muster.

The operations included surgery to repair cleft lip and palate for three of the girls, orthopaedic operations for hip dysplasia and clubfoot for five girls, and life-saving open heart surgery for one. All nine operations were completed successfully and all girls have been discharged.

None of these surgeries would have been possible without you.





Meet Malali

She is seven years old, and full of life. She lives in Kandahar, and comes from a family of six. Malali has struggled with bilateral club feet since birth. Her father, the sole wage earner, works at the local government electrical station earning a little under £160 per month. He could never have saved enough for Malali's surgery and support his family on his own. After hearing about the children's medical house through the Red Cross, Malali's father travelled across Afghanistan to bring her to the hospital and the Foundation stepped in to cover all costs. Now, Malali will lead a normal life with her family.

Meet Fatima

Born with a cleft lip and palate, six year old Fatima is one of a family of five all supported by her father. He works as an agricultural labourer in a remote area of Bamiyan, earning just £86 a month and a little food from the harvest. He heard about the children's medical house and decided to bring his daughter there, and, using funds you provided, the hospital operated on Fatima the same day. What could have been a lifelong disfigurement with all its implications has been successfully treated – Fatima's father and mother are delighted with the results of the surgery and the impact it has had for their little girl.



Kabul Smallholding Livelihoods Project

One of our projects involves a small livelihood project on the outskirts of Kabul. Marnie Gustavson of PARSA talks to the Foundation about what's been achieved so far and how small changes can make a big difference.

For those of you who have not visited PARSA, we are lucky to have our offices located at Marastoon, a 20 acre spread on the outskirts of Kabul with fruit orchards and tree lined lanes and a considerable amount of land available for agricultural programs. Over the years, as we expand our programs to meet the needs of poor communities, we have worked to use the land for the benefit of poor women in the local community.

This year, thanks to a donation from the Linda Norgrove Foundation and support from Dr. Sophia Wilcox, Yasin, our country director has started a small farm animal project with 10 local women. It was a happy day when we bought our first milking cow and our chicks for our poultry program. Ten women from the surrounding area now tend four cows and the chickens, taking home milk and eggs to sell to their neighbors, earning badly needed cash for their destitute families. It has brought changes to our compound and many a Friday (our day off) comes when I hear early in the morning, a lowing cow waiting to be milked. I text message Yasin "The cows are yelling! Who is milking them today?" and he responds "Me! I am on my way!"

What I did not expect from this project was the excitement that our farm animal program would generate in our staff. I have learned that Afghans really like

farms and love enterprises. They are a culture of merchants, which is why so many economic programs now are focusing on supporting the development of micro-enterprises. Now, in the afternoon, it is typical to see many staff go home with their bottle of fresh milk or eggs that they have purchased from the women. Yasin even found five chickens in a poor neighbor's house that were not being fed, because they did not have the money. He bought them and brought them to our chicken coop, and put his son, Osman in charge of caring for them - our first "rescue chickens". They are now benefiting from a soy feed mixture of feed, that we learned about through our soy flour distribution project and they are laying eggs to Osman's delight. Yasin is preparing to teach children in our programs how to care for small poultry coops.

The nights are getting cold and I fully expect to see the cows sporting colorful winter blankets, typical of Afghan farmers who value their animals. Plans for next year include expanding into beekeeping in a four-acre field. Next week, Dr. Sophie is helping us buy two sheep and then we will have a full training program for our local women. You might ask how this program works in an urban city like Kabul of five million residents? You would be amazed at how many back yard farm animals there are in the city as well as herds of goats and sheep roaming the streets eating from garbage heaps. Healthy animals like a cow can augment a family income up to £39 a month, which is a lot of money for many families who try to scrape by on £26 a month through wages. Congratulations to Yasin and our program staff who have developed a very relevant program, using our donation investment well. As the program grows it will sustain itself through the income generated from our small farm products as well as support the community women as they earn money from their work on the farm. **A big thank you to you donors!**



Our Supporters

Fundraising efforts from our supporters continue to blow us away every year. This year has seen supporters take on all sorts of challenges to help raise money for our projects in Afghanistan. We've had a team take on the mighty 'Three Peaks' challenge, a whole office from Alcis compete in the Men's Health 'Survival of the Fittest' race in London, cyclists and tweed enthusiasts raise funds through the splendid Harris Tweed Cycle Rides in Glasgow and Edinburgh, a Lewis spinning and weaving group donate all money raised from taster classes, a supporter take on a 100K run, Wwoof hosts open their garden to the public, and another even grew a moustache in Mo'vember to raise funds for the Foundation. Various friends asked that donations be made to the Foundation in lieu of wedding, birthday and anniversary presents.

Our annual, worldwide 10K had participants join in from Africa, America, Canada, Australia, Japan, Europe and all across the UK, with the official event taking place around the Valtos peninsula here on Lewis. John and Lorna took part in Victoria on Vancouver Island in Canada, ambling to the starting line well before dawn to set off at the exact same time as those running in Lewis. Dedication!

Thank you to everyone who ran, walked, climbed, cycled and did everything else in support – we couldn't do what we do without you.





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: £

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

Please check contact details are correct (full name and address), and sign the Gift Aid Declaration below if you wish for your donation to be treated as Gift Aid:

I want the Linda Norgrove Foundation to treat all donations and all future donations as Gift Aid donations.

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You must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year (currently worth 25p on every £1 you give).

Signed:..... Date:

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

