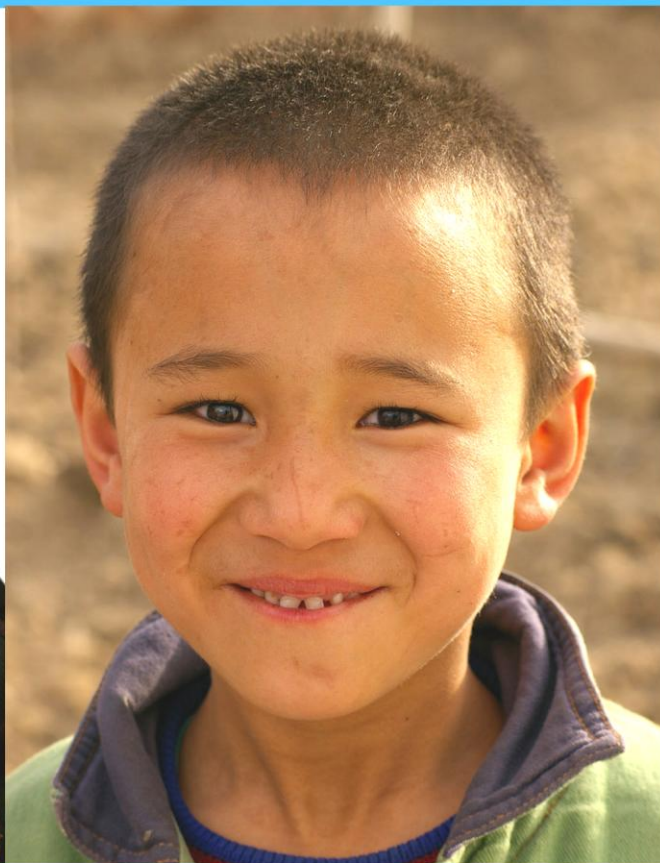
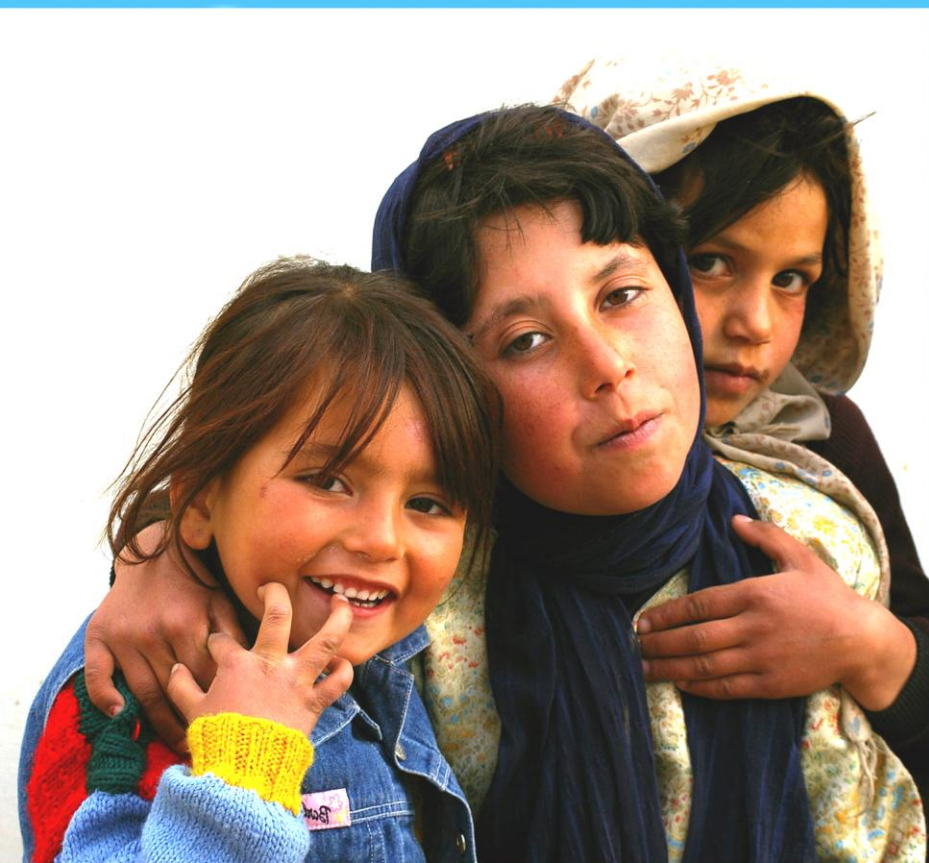




**MAHBOBA'S
PROMISE**

An Australian Aid Organisation



Annual Report 2007-2008





A Happy Tale

Nargas is 18 and has 8 younger brothers. The family were refugees in Iran when her father disappeared and eventually her mother, believing herself to be a widow, returned to Afghanistan. In 2004, her mother arrived destitute at Mahboba's Promise in Kabul. The family was taken in and on her annual visits to Afghanistan, Mahboba would comfort Nargas, who had a very difficult time looking after all her younger brothers.

Nargas told Mahboba that she dreamed day and night of the day her father would reappear. In 2005 word came that Nargas' father had come home, his brother-in-law found him wandering near his old home. He had been incarcerated in a jail in Iran for years and then released.

There was so much joy. The brother-in-law, a taxi driver, arrived at Hope House and all the children climbed in to drive to be reunited with their father. There was no room for the oldest brother but he climbed on the roof and would not budge, so the overloaded taxi got going as the children were screaming with excitement. However, the joy of the reunion was short-lived. Nargas' father had been so badly beaten and abused in Iran that he was brain damaged and a broken man. Mahboba's Promise rented a house for the family and tried to keep them together but the father was unable to support his family physically or emotionally. It was a devastating time for young Nargas who was old enough to remember her father as he had once been. Nargas asked if they could move back to Hope House and it was decided that it was best if they had at least that security and continuity. Nargas finished school and started helping at Hope House as a teacher.

This year Nargas got engaged to one of the young teachers at Hope House and there was much celebration. Mahboba's Promise organised a beautiful wedding for Nargas and Obeid and she has started a new life with her new husband. Both Nargas and Obeid are teaching at Hope House.



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Vision

Our Vision is to provide a sustainable future within a secure environment for disadvantaged Afghan women and children.

Mission

Mahboba's Promise aims to provide effective overseas development aid to disadvantaged Afghan women, widows, children and orphans. We will achieve this through sustainable development programs such as the establishment of schools, health clinics and community facilities destined to be operated by local authorities and communities.

Values and Principles

- To achieve our Mission, we will honour the values of compassion for people in need and effectively impact on their circumstances while embracing standards of practice that ensure integrity, honesty, transparency and due diligence.
- In developing our aid programs, we will strive to:
 - (a) build the morale of people affected by conflict so that they have motivation to reconstruct their country;
 - (b) restore faith in the future for the people of Afghanistan through the example of quality workers delivering aid services;
 - (c) consider and consult experts in relation to cultural practices and beliefs to identify and meet the best interests of Afghan women, widows, children and orphans;
 - (d) establish self-sufficiency in individuals and sustainable outcomes in community projects in the programs that we provide;
 - (e) enhance the quality of life of our beneficiaries through education and employment training;
 - (f) have effective consultation with all stakeholders including beneficiaries and value their participation in our programs;
 - (g) secure basic human rights including the principles of gender equality and child protection in our program design;
 - (h) be equitable and non-discriminatory in the distribution of our aid;
 - (i) follow best practices and give due consideration to issues of sustainable ecological and resource management in our aid programs.
- In our Governance, we will endeavour to be professional and accountable and compliant by:
 - (a) offering the public and organisations in Australia and elsewhere, a trusted and acceptable mechanism by which they may contribute funds to worthy projects to assist Afghan women, widows, children and orphans;
 - (b) ensuring that the Association is at all times financially responsible;
 - (c) developing, implementing and reviewing the Policies and Procedures of the Association.

Message from our Patron, Mahboba Rawi

Last year with all your help, my dream was realised with the completion of Hope House in Kabul. I thought when that was finished I could really feel I had accomplished something and would relax a little; but it didn't happen. The building was complete and it just seemed as if the whole weight of it was on my shoulders. After ten years, I was so tired.

My mother asked me to go with her to Hajj. She had asked before, but each year I was too busy. This time, I knew that I had to go. It was a very demanding time but it was a time of extraordinary spiritual renewal, I could feel my energy coming back and the weight lifting. It will always be a highpoint in my life. It was very important not just for me personally but for Mahboba's Promise. I needed to let go of much of the past which had built up each year as I listened to the horrors endured by my people and to restore myself.

My trip to Hajj and the time I took out afterwards, helped me to put a perspective on my work. I cannot help everyone in Afghanistan any more than I can help everybody in the whole world, even if that is what I feel I want to do. BUT, with your help we can make a difference to the lives of some very beautiful children in Afghanistan and we can change the lives of some brave women overwhelmed by the horror of their experiences.



There are many books now being written about Afghanistan. When I hear the stories, I think of my widows and I am glad these tales are being published which draw attention to the plight of Afghanistan. But often the fiction is not as extraordinary, shocking or redeeming as the life stories of my widows and orphans.

Thank you all so much for making it possible for me to continue my work for another year. When I was at Hajj, I prayed for you all, for whatever you believe, together we have made a difference.

From the Chair

Mahboba's Promise Inc is a non-profit, voluntary association in Sydney, which raises funds to help improve the lives of poverty-stricken women and children in Afghanistan.

Mahboba started her work ten years ago when she first sent \$120 in 1998 to a young Afghan doctor in Peshawar, Pakistan who asked for help for the refugee children literally starving to death at her door. From these small beginnings grew an organisation which has sent hundreds of thousands of dollars to projects to alleviate poverty and helped to educate thousands of children who might otherwise not have had a chance to improve their lives. Funds have also been used to build schools and infrastructure which will benefit generations of children to come.

After 10 years hard labour, it was time for a break and Mahboba took two months off at the end of 2007 and undertook a lifelong ambition to go to Mecca on Hajj. She returned to the office in February after her much needed break with her passion and vigour restored. It was a fitting year for Mahboba to make a contribution to Mosaic, a book of favourite prayers and reflections from inspiring Australians edited by Rosalind Bradley and published in March 2008. You can read Mahboba's contribution as the end piece to this report.

Our Vice-President and Chairman, Raymond Nelson, left us in August 2007 to return to his native Scotland. Raymond transformed the Board during his two year tenure, bringing a new professionalism and more structure to the Committee with a quiet dry humour that crossed many cultural boundaries.

The Management Committee invited me to take on the Chair when Raymond left. I have been involved with Mahboba's Promise since 2005, was already a Management Committee member and was happy to continue in the new role.

The Committee has worked hard this year and grappled with the compliance issues that we need to understand to increase our accountability as we impose on the Association high organisational, governance and financial standards.

We pay tribute to Sidiq Rawi, Mahboba's brother, who manages our projects in Afghanistan and his staff who all work under increasingly difficult conditions. Sidiq is uncomplaining and works incredibly hard in the field. He has to overcome a range of practical obstacles which present themselves in the path of any project implemented in Afghanistan. He does so with ingenuity and humour.

All the members of the Management Committee signed a Code of Ethics this year formally committing themselves to high professional and ethical standards.

Changes to the Constitution were formalised at a Special General Meeting held on 11 July 2007 and our application as a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) was confirmed after that. (Both our Treasurer and Office manager have attended ACFID training sessions which have been very helpful in content and facilitated networking with other agencies.)

During the year we applied for authority to fundraise in other states in Australia, thus regularising much of the work we were already doing.

To enable the Management Committee to effectively plan for the future, a sub-committee met in February and prepared a Strategic Plan for the next two years. The Plan places a greater emphasis on reporting and governance with a view to achieving tax deductibility under the Overseas Aid Gift Deduction Scheme (OAGDS) together with a strong focus on achieving access to AusAid funding in future years.

At a Special General Meeting held on 4 June 2008, the Management Committee recommended a change of Auditor as the Committee felt that we

needed more support to move forward to meet the requirements of ACFID and AusAid. The new auditor is Robert Mayberry of Nexia Court & Co.

Zuli Haji who has worked in the office for over two years resigned in February 2008 but will continue to help in the office until she goes to America later in the year. Zuli became engaged to be married in May and we wish her all the very best for the future

Don Gough

Chairman

Mahboba's Promise Inc.



Kids at Hope House learn Taekwondo



Goals

Many of the goals we set last year have been met, although we have still not completed our application to the Australian Tax Office for deductible gift recipient status through the Overseas Aid Gift Deduction Scheme (OAGDS). We will work to achieve this goal in the coming year.

The main reason is just the practical work load in Afghanistan is so pressing and the changes on the ground are so fluid, that there has not been the time to draw the information together.

Following our strategic planning in February 2008, the Management Committee has recommended that we consolidate our projects in Afghanistan and do the projects we are involved in well rather than taking on new initiatives. In addition improvements to governance in the office in Kabul need time and resources as these improvements will give us better access to funds locally available from other local and foreign NGO's.

The shift from welfare to development which the organisation has made over the last two years has been a remarkable achievement. Our vocational training courses are working well, however, we cannot just teach skills and wave our widows goodbye! There is a long term commitment to see them utilise those skills and set up in business to replace or supplement handouts. It is not easy and every widow has her own individual hurdles to overcome and strengths to build on.

We also decided to expand our work through community projects helping established schools to improve their facilities rather than invest in more infrastructure. This is often as basic as providing clean drinking water for the pupils or desks and benches so that they do not have to sit on the frozen ground during the winter months.

We are trying to spend 75% of allocated funds on development projects which will have lasting benefits for the participants. However, Afghanistan is still in a desperate situation and recent security scares and the economic downturn have caused a renewed flood of disenfranchised widows. So 35% of our funding in this year was used on basic welfare, providing food, shelter and comfort.

Relationships with Implementing Partners

Our work in Australia is to raise funds to facilitate projects in Afghanistan to carry out our mission and vision. Our primary implementing agency in Afghanistan is Mahboba's Promise – an NGO registered in Afghanistan with the Ministry of Economy, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. However, we also implement a project in Jaghori through the Ufug Welfare Society (UWS), another registered NGO and we worked during the year with an agency in Herat to help women who have self-immolated. In each case, we have a letter of understanding with the implementing NGO, which agrees to uphold the values of our Association and implement the projects in accordance set guidelines.

News from Afghanistan

It has been a difficult year in Afghanistan. The security situation has deteriorated a lot and that makes it difficult to get and keep staff. Travel is difficult for everyone and there is a lot of uncertainty and fear. Twenty percent of the new orphans coming to us have lost their fathers recently in bombings and related violence. Much of the violence goes unreported.

Food shortages and rising prices have also increased the costs of running programs and, of course, put more pressure on the poorest of society.

Nevertheless, the year has been very successful in terms of our achievements and, in particular, getting several vocational training courses off the ground. The widows have to be encouraged to step forward and enrol in the courses. Many of them have young children, have never studied, live far away and have no confidence at all. So at first it was very hard work to get the widows to start training. We employ good teachers and provide the widows with a lot of encouragement. Sidiq says it has been quite remarkable to see how the widows change once they start training. They do not just learn skills; they make friends, start to laugh again and a future opens up for them. Their confidence increases with each month and then they encourage other widows to step forward for training.



Sidiq Rawi at work in Afghanistan. Sidiq leaves his young family in Sydney to spend months of the year in Afghanistan overseeing our operations there.

Visitors To and From Afghanistan



Aisha Meguid visiting orphans at Hope House, Kabul.

Several Committee members and supporters visited Afghanistan during the year and were able to review the progress of the work at first hand. Raymond Nelson again visited projects in Kabul and also went to Panjshir Valley.

Mahboba visited Afghanistan in September 2007 and was accompanied by Emtissal Little, a member of Mahboba's Promise, who has been involved with humanitarian projects for several years.

Also during the year, Aisha Meguid, one of our Management Committee members visited Hope House and met with the coordinators and children.

Pip Newling, a Mahboba's Promise volunteer, was with another NGO in Kabul and visited Hope House and has helped the office there with paperwork and reporting.

During the year with the help of ROMAC, the medical arm of Rotary, an orphan boy from Afghanistan was brought to Sydney for a major and life-saving operation on his spine. Doctors at the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, contributed their skills and the operation was successful. Bill Crews of the Exodus Foundation helped instigate this project. Seiar is staying with Mahboba to receive some long term treatment for underlying conditions.

Summary of Program Activities

Hope House Community & Training Centre, Kabul

The establishment of Hope House has been extremely successful. The local community has become closely involved with the activities; participating in education, recreation and vocational training.

A new well was drilled at Hope House this year and provision was made for pipes to go outside the surrounding wall to provide clean water for the local community.

Often the staff at Hope House are called upon to take a sick child in the community to the doctor in an emergency. People come for advice, to help in the garden or just to feel secure for a little while.

The road was improved during the year which has made a big difference to access in winter.

We are also planning a fabricated shelter for the roof. The roof was built flat as an area where the girls could have recreation space in complete privacy. However, it is hot in summer and the snow collects in winter and is causing minor structural damage, so with a shelter, we anticipate that they will be able to make better use of Hope House.

Greenhouses have been added to the Hope House garden this year. Additional land has been purchased adjacent to Hope House with the help of a generous gift by a donor in memory of his mother. This garden has been named the Kulsum Garden and will be used to establish a vegetable garden to secure food production as prices of fresh vegetables are beginning to rise dramatically in Kabul.



Children enjoying the garden at Hope House

Positive Education Outcomes

This program helps improve educational outcomes both for individual orphans and community. Education in Afghanistan is still only reaching about 50% of the children despite the tremendous strides the Government has taken over the last few years. Economic hurdles prevent many children access to education. Their families are just too poor to buy uniforms, provide bus fares or pay informal school fees. (Education in Afghanistan is free, but schools are so short of funds, many instigate informal charges). Once the economic hurdle is overcome, there are others. Many children go to school so hungry they cannot concentrate. Most of the teachers have never received formal training and struggle to impart knowledge let alone inspire their pupils.

They too are facing great difficulties without even basic resources such as blackboards and stationery, and in makeshift classrooms.

This project seeks to address some of these issues through removing the hurdles for children to go to school, providing supplementary education to improve outcomes, recreation for physical and emotional development and making sure children have food for the day so they can concentrate at school. We also support local schools by providing resources and improvements. The program is run in Kabul, Panjshir Valley and Takhar.

Muslim Aid Australia continues to collaborate with us on this project. This program is funded from sponsorship contributions and general donations.



Kabul

Altogether we employ seven teachers at our community centres in Kabul. The major centre is Hope House which as we have mentioned above is a growing focus in the community. In addition to supporting children with the local curriculum, the children learn art, are taught gardening and cooking. Each new child that comes to the centre for residential care is given a tree to plant in the garden. This symbolic act connects the children with the land, gives them something of their own to nurture and helps them to feel part of the wider community.

Recreation receives a lot of attention. The children we are helping have come from very different ethnic backgrounds and all have been through emotional or physical trauma or both. A great leveller is recreation. It builds friendships across barriers of age and other divides, improves coordination and physical

development. The taekwondo classes introduced last year have continued to be a great success and funds raised in Warick, Queensland have been used to put a proper floor covering down in the room used by the taekwondo students. Again Hope House students have been doing well in competitions including winning a championship. Soccer and Volleyball teams also participate in local competitions.

Local schools were supported with construction of new wells for fresh drinking water, generators and diesel, blackboards, school furniture and stationery to help them upgrade their facilities.

The children at Hazrat-Ali House in Kabul which is managed by Mahboba's Uncle, Haji Faizal Ahmad, continue to do well at their studies.

Panjshir Valley

Abdara Primary School, Panjshir Valley, Afghanistan



During the year, final registration was received from the local Government and approval for the school to start a Year 7 Class next year to take the girls through to High School.

For High School, we had to fulfil the long term ambition to have female teachers. We have at last recruited three female teachers, however, they have to be transported into and out of the area each day and the transport cost is very high. So although we are receiving more help from Government, we are also contributing more in order to upgrade the school.

Green houses were added and a netball court will soon be completed inside the surrounding wall. Solar panels have still not been added as the area is remote and the technology new to the valley.

An upgrade to the toilet block is planned, so that the girls can wash their hands and making the toilets more hygienic.

The local Department of Education are establishing a new teachers training institute which will be built further up the Valley. We are paying transport costs so that teachers from the school can attend this facility and it will be a tremendous boon for the teachers most of whom have had no formal training.

A new boys school was recently built in the Valley close to the Girls' School with funds from another overseas NGO. They supplied the building only and we continue to support the boys with stationery and sporting equipment.

Takhar

Takhar suffered a severe earthquake ten years ago which devastated families and left many children orphaned. Children were scattered to refugee camps and we helped with repatriation last year and set up the Roostog District Community Education Training Centre which has two teachers and ancillary staff. There are 35 orphans resident at the centre who attend the Roostog High School each morning. In the afternoon they attend classes and recreational activities at the Centre together with approximately 20 disadvantaged children from the local community. The centre is proving very popular as it gives the opportunity to children who have been severely disadvantaged to gain

self-confidence, achieve at school and make friendships. The centre also interacts with the wider community – it has a soccer team and a volleyball team which play in local competitions.

The coordinator has asked us to move the Centre into the city so that the facilities can be made available to a much wider range of students, but for the time being we have advised that we would prefer to invest further in facilities at the local High School which would benefit a greater number of children and perhaps review the suggestion to move the centre at a later date.

Badakshan

The School in Badakshan was finally completed and handed over to local authorities. We would have liked to have supported this school for longer but difficulties with the distance and monitoring the project made us decide to hand the school over. The village elders are extremely grateful for this wonderful

achievement and it will be an opportunity for thousands of children over the years.

This School was built in memory of Ronald Stone by his sister, one of our long term supporters.



Vocational Training



Boys at Hope House wearing uniforms designed and made by the Tailoring Project students.

Sewing and Tailoring Course

This course started in October 2007. The initial capital came from an AusAid Direct Aid Program (DAP) grant through the Australian Embassy in Kabul. The widows made school shirts for all the boys at Hope House and we are currently trying to get contracts to make uniforms for other schools.

Beautician Course

The beautician course has become very popular, we had 14 graduates this year out of a class of 20. The course incorporates classes on adult literacy and managing money.

The widows graduating from the tailoring and beautician courses will all be helped towards employment or setting up their own businesses.

Quilting Course

This is a new initiative for widows to help them to purchase the materials, make professional quilts and sell them in the market place and create a market through other NGO's. It has been set up with funds raised at the IWD breakfast in Canberra.

Computer Training for Youth

A computer room was set up at Hope House when Mahboba visited in 2007. We will focus on basic skills and provide training for children and young adults.

Jaghori Vocational Training

We support Jaghori through the Ufuq Welfare Society (UWS). This NGO runs vocational English and computer training classes in Jaghori.





Houses for Progress

This is a fund which is able to help widows with repairs or extensions to their houses under specific circumstances. With the second year students graduating from the beautician and tailoring course, some widows need repairs or extensions which will enable them to run small business from home.

Herat – Women

Following the 4 Corners program in October 2007 on women in Herat, Afghanistan who set themselves alight because of the bestiality of their lives, Mahboba contacted the journalist involved and asked what assistance was being given to the women involved. Out of that we have now taken one of these young women into Hope House and we will assist others on an individual basis seeking the best solution for each one.

Panjshir Valley Medical Centre

The medical centre continued to operate during the year. More and more women are coming to the centre to have their babies and the local health department has said that in 2008-2009 they will build a new clinic but would still like the support of Mahboba's Promise. We provide incentives for the medical staff so that they work in the Centre and support with products that are not funded by Government. These include paediatric syrups, women's health products, and home birth maternity kits.

The current Medical Centre is adjacent to the Abdara Girls School, so when the clinic moves the building will be useful for us as the school expands and will be used as a school office and teacher's staff room.

The new Medical Centre will be built between the Abdara Girls' School and the newly built Boys' School.

Health Fund

This year, we established a crisis health fund, making funds available at the discretion of the Director in Kabul to be able to respond quickly to medical emergencies among the widows and orphans we support. This fund was also used during the year for a long standing member of staff in Afghanistan who had to be taken to Pakistan for surgery.

We sent one of our widows to Pakistan for an investigation into her heart problems as many of the testing and diagnostic procedures are not available in Afghanistan. The establishment of the French Medical Centre for Children in Kabul is a great asset but it is still expensive to send patient there. With this fund, the staff on the ground in Afghanistan can react quickly to emergencies and feel secure knowing that they do not have to wait for a response from Sydney before being able to act in a medical emergency.

Hope House Proposed Medical Centre

We have put a proposal to The Children's Variety Club of Australia for support for a medical and dental and health education centre to be established in a room at Hope House.

Livestock Management Program.

This project is supported by the Loom Growers, a Bega Valley Community Group. Selected widows in rural areas are given a cow in calf. When the calf is 18 months old, the widow returns the calf to Mahboba's Promise and the cow is then hers. We support the widow to help her prepare for the cow, with animal husbandry advice and also teach her, if necessary, how to make milk products, cheese, yoghurt and traditional dried milk nuggets

We would like to expand this project next year with donations of livestock and poultry

Welfare – outreach

Rising prices, increased violence and the return of a prevailing atmosphere of fear have impacted adversely on the poorest of society once more. Our widows are fearful as rising prices eat away at their meagre purses and the harsh winter comes around again.

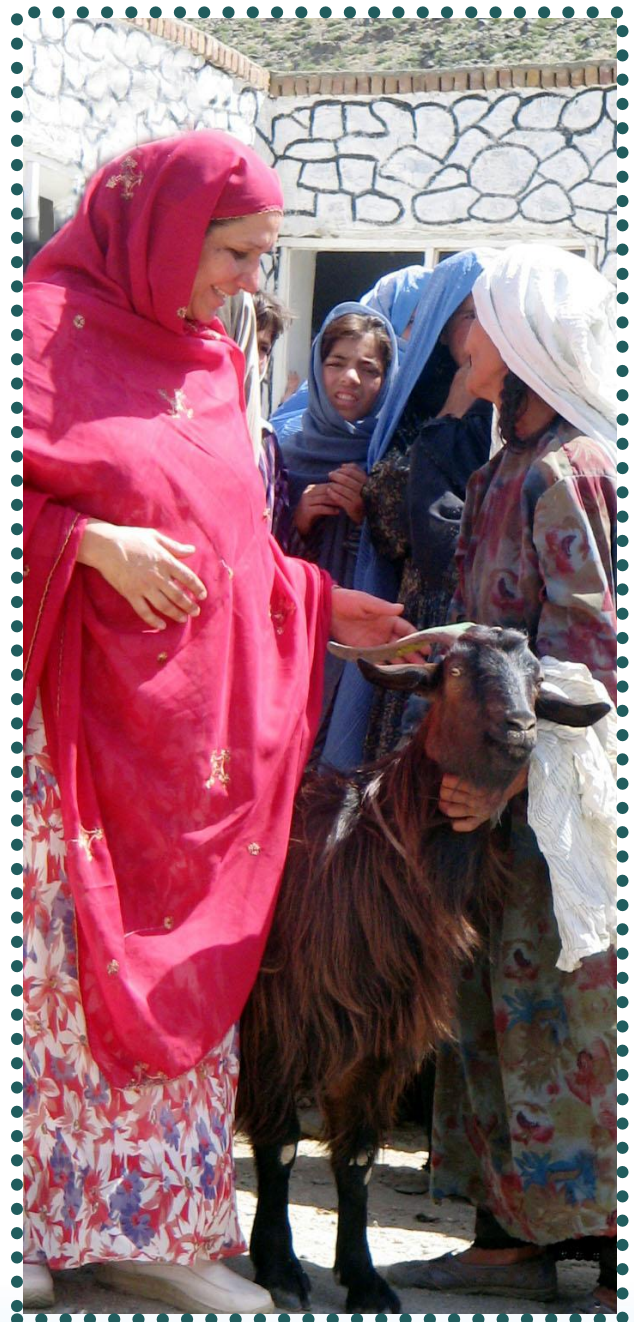
We prepare the widows early for winter by providing them with fuel, warm clothes and staple foods.

Pakistan Projects

Remittances to widows finished in December 2008 as planned although occasional help has been extended to families who have found themselves with adverse circumstances they cannot overcome.

Annual appeals

Muslim Aid contributed to the Feed the Fasting program. The annual Qurban appeal provided fresh and dried meat which gives the widows some food security for a short period.



Summary of Ancillary Projects and Appeals

Donations in kind

We received several pallets of consumable products mainly related to anaesthesia. These were sent to Afghanistan in a community funded container which left Sydney in June 2008. Knitting from Victoria and Queensland, wonderful rugs, beanies, baby clothes and scarves also went in the container.

\$200 US in cash was also received which was sent to Afghanistan when Sidiq went over in March. Four watches were also received which were given to the older girls at Hope House.

Global Youth Service Day

Permaculture across Borders in conjunction with the IMF again awarded us a grant to celebrate Global Youth Service Day. This year's project was tree planting and the children at Hope House responded enthusiastically with tree planting.

This is the second year we have received a grant from Permaculture across Borders.



Publicity and Fundraising

It has been another busy year with tremendous support from friends of Mahboba's Promise. The Committee was concerned that Mahboba's health would impact on the ability to raise funds to sustain the projects this year. Supporters stepped in with a wider variety of fundraising activities than ever before, including trivia nights, market days, film nights, garage sales, stage shows and concerts, multicultural entertainment and choirs.

During the year Ros Worthington, came to visit Mahboba. Ros is renowned for her work with the Make-A-Wish Foundation and has been awarded the Order of Australian Medal for her contribution to charities. Mahboba and Ros found they had a lot in common. Ros has subsequently started the 'Love Angels' project in WA where packs of small angel cut-outs are sent to schools and funds raised for charity. The first charity she has chosen is Mahboba's Promise.

The sponsorship program remains vital to us. With this in place, we are assured of a monthly income to support our major projects and we are tremendously grateful to all those donors who pledge \$35 or \$50 per month to keep the wheels turning.

Mahboba's book continued to generate interest and involvement with our projects and a lot of momentum was gained from that publication which is still helping the Association three years on. Mahboba took part in a 'Living Library' event in the city where 'borrowers' were able to have a fifteen-minute conversation with her on her work and life.

What has struck us this year is the diversity of events and functions. Some highlights were:

- ◆ The display of pictures from some of our orphan children at the Big Ones, Little Ones Exhibition held at NSW Parliament House and opened by Governor Marie Bashir.
- ◆ Mahboba's presentation at the Brisbane Writers Festival in September 2007. In Brisbane, a group of supporters organised events, fundraising through QBE Car insurance and donated large quantities of knitting and helped with editing.
- ◆ A very successful Ramadan Dinner which generated funds and many new sponsors organised by the Muslim Ladies Group, Friends of Mahboba's Promise, Sydney.
- ◆ Acapella on a Summer's Day – A fundraising Concert organised in December 2007 featuring several choirs including 'Unaccompanied Baggage', 'Timbre Flaws' and 'Icing on the Cake'!
- ◆ In February 2008, the launch of Architects Without Frontiers featuring Hope House, and with Mahboba as one of the speakers, was held at the Customs House Library on Circular Quay in Sydney and then moved onto Melbourne.
- ◆ Mahboba visited Canberra in March for the International Woman's Day breakfast and a talk at the Canberra Islamic Centre.
- ◆ The Powerful Women exhibition which features Mahboba was opened early in 2007 in Sydney and then toured Australia.
- ◆ Mahboba attended the 2020 summit as a contributor to the stream 'Strengthening Communities and Supporting Working Families.' She gave Kevin Rudd a copy of her book and made several contacts with individuals and organisations which will be beneficial in the months to come.
- ◆ In Bega a fundraising group works tirelessly for various projects they have 'adopted' in Afghanistan.
- ◆ Mahboba undertakes many speaking engagements, media interviews and meets visitors at the office in Sydney. School visits were particularly successful this year.
- ◆ With the generous donation of time from Rick Searle in Queensland, we produced a new video which is for use in situations where Mahboba cannot personally attend public speaking engagements.



Schools Promise Report

Achievements for the schools program this year included:

- Publication of a revised Schools Promise brochure
- Update of the Schools Promise page on the website
- Publication of the first online newsletter for member schools to promote the efforts of students, staff and school communities to each other and to an external audience via the web
- Continuing representation on the Steering Committee of the Schools Peace Initiative, hosted by the Sydney Peace Foundation
- Many schools continuing to give donations and new school joining the program



Muslim Ladies Volunteers Group

- **Ramadan Fundraising Dinner:** A successful fundraising event, attended by 200 guests. Close to \$40,000 was raised, including project donations and ongoing sponsorship commitments.
- **New Mahboba's Promise Brochure:** An updated organisation brochure was developed and one of the volunteers did a great work on the artwork.
- **Corporate Brochure:** With the desire to raise corporate sponsorship, an initiative of publishing a lengthy booklet on Mahboba's Promise was begun and almost finished.
- **Mothers and Daughters Fundraising Dinner, Sydney**

Volunteers

Once again, we owe an enormous debt to our hardworking volunteers. The contribution by our country and interstate groups is especially commendable as they are working at a distance raising funds through all kinds of activities. Groups in Bega, Brisbane, Braidwood and Melbourne have all contributed during the year. The Muslim Ladies Group significantly increased contributions from the Muslim community in Sydney and worked very hard during Ramadan to raise funds and awareness. Volunteers in the office have been very committed to their work and helped enormously with administration and the running of daily operations.

Muslim Aid Australia

We are indebted to Muslim Aid for their assistance with the issue of tax deductible receipts and we value the relationship.



Governance and Current Members of the Management Committee as at 30 June 2008

We held nine meetings during the year. There were several changes to the composition of the committee.

Raymond Nelson left for Scotland and was replaced by Don Gough who also took the Chair.

Ronia Elmaarraoui joined the Management Committee. Ronia's background is in clinical research and she has taken on the role of Volunteer Officer as well as actively helping with fundraising.

Mike Hartnell also joined the Committee. Mike works in IT, but his passion has always been humanitarian work. He has visited Palestine, Iraq and Timor to help promote human rights. Mike has been a volunteer for many years and was previously our liaison officer with Muslim Aid Australia.

Mahboba felt that with a stable Management Committee, it gave her an opportunity to concentrate on fundraising and her pastoral care of orphans and widows in Afghanistan. Consequently, Mahboba resigned from the Management Committee and has taken the role of Patron. She will still be very much involved with the day to day matters of the Association.

With Mahboba's resignation, Don Gough took over as President with Kris Needham moving into the role of Vice President.

The Composition of the Committee

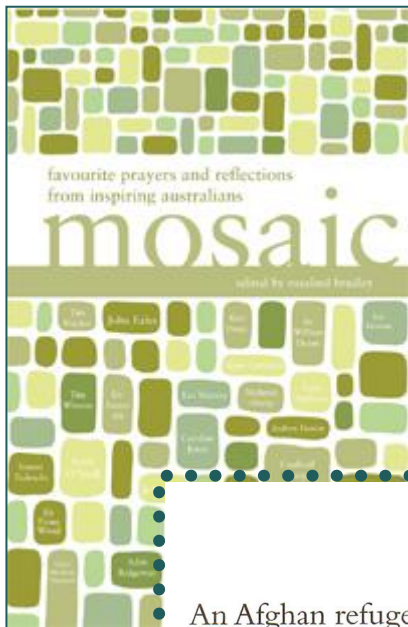
Current Members of the Management Committee:					
	Name	Position	Occupation	Date Appointed	Meetings
1	Don Gough	President	Consultant in spoken communications	AGM 20/12/2007	8/9
2	Kris Needham	Vice-President	Education consultant & executive coach	AGM 20/12/2007	6/9
3	Phil Kerrigan	Treasurer	Retired accountant	AGM 20/12/2007	5/9
4	Tania Melikian	Secretary	Property & facilities manager	AGM 20/12/2007	6/9
5	Elizabeth Giles	Ordinary member	Speech pathologist / TESOL	AGM 20/12/2007	7/9
6	Sidiq Rawi	Ordinary member	Executive Director-Afghan operations	AGM 20/12/2007	4/9
7	Aisha Meguid	Ordinary member	Teacher	AGM 20/12/2007	7/9
8	Ronia Elmaarraoui	Ordinary member	Clinical Researcher	AGM 20/12/2007	4/7
9	Mike Hartnell	Ordinary member	IT Consultant & Humanitarian Aid Worker	Casual Vacancy 6/2/2008	3/4
	Name	Position	Occupation	Date Appointed	Meetings
1	Don Gough	President	Consultant in spoken communications	AGM 20/12/2007	8/9

Other members who have served during the year 2007-2008:				
1	Raymond Nelson	Vice-President	Resigned 25/7/25007	1/1
2	Gill Shaddick	Ordinary member	Resigned 6/2/2008	5/5
3	Mahboba Rawi	President	Resigned 28/5/2008	7/8

At the end of the year the sub-committee were as follows:

Current Sub-Committees & responsibilities		
	Name	Chair
1	Schools Promise	Kris Needham
2	Muslim Fundraising	Aisha Meguid
3	Rapid Response	Phil Kerrigan
4	Grants	Phil Kerrigan
5	Privacy Officer	Elizabeth Giles
6	Child Protection Officer	Kris Needham
7	Collection Coordinator	Mike Hartnell
8	Communications Officer	Aisha Meguid
9	Volunteer Officer	Ronia Elmaarraoui
10	Remuneration Sub-Committee	Phil Kerrigan





Extract from Mosaic Book of Interfaith Prayer

MAHBOBA RAWI

An Afghan refugee, Mahboba lost her son to drowning two years after coming to Australia. She is the driving force behind 'Mahboba's Promise Inc', an aid organisation that delivers food, shelter, medical attention, education and hope to hundreds of children and women whose lives have been destroyed by war in Afghanistan.

O Lord, give me a heart
I can pour out in thanksgiving.
Give me life
So I can spend it
Working for the salvation of the world

Sheikh Ansari

Reflections

I have selected this particular verse as I feel it reflects my attitude to living my life. It also affirms my belief in my work with orphans and widows, which I consider is my destiny and vocation. Such prayers serve as a source of inspiration and strength in my moments of doubt and anxiety. My life is dedicated to serving those in need.

■ Sheikh Ansari, 'Give Me', in Andrew Harvey and Eryk Hanut, *Perfume of the Desert: inspirations from Sufi wisdom*, Quest Books, Illinois, 1999. Reproduced by permission of Quest Books, the imprint of The Theosophical Publishing House (questbooks.net).
Sheikh Ansari (1006–88) was a known scholar of his era.





MAHBOBA'S PROMISE

An Australian Aid Organisation

Mahboba's Promise Inc. Australia

PO Box 6234, North Ryde NSW 2113

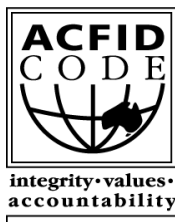
Tel: (02) 9887 1665

Email: mahboba@mahbobaspromise.org

ABN 85 254 682 685

Code of Conduct

Mahboba's Promise Inc is a signatory to Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct which defines minimum standards of governance, management and accountability for non-government development organisations. Adherence to the Code is monitored by an independent Code of Conduct Committee elected from the NGO community. Our voluntary adherence to the Code of Conduct demonstrates our commitment to ethical practice and public accountability.



More information about the ACFID Code of Conduct can be obtained from Mahboba's Promise Inc and from ACFID at:

Website: www.acfid.asn.au

Email: code@acfid.asn.au

Tel: (02) 62851816