

THE WORLD ZOROASTRIAN ORGANISATION LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year Ended 31st December 2006

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The International Board of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) has great pleasure in placing before you the Annual Report of the 26th successful year of its operation.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The year 2006 Annual General Meeting of WZO was held at the International Students House, 229 Great Portland Street, London W1N 5HD on Sunday 17 September 2006.

The Chairman, Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla, welcomed all the members and guests from the UK and abroad.

The report and audited accounts for the year ended 31st December 2005 were presented to the meeting and these were approved unanimously.

Four UK and six overseas Committee members were due to retire. The following outgoing Committee Members offered themselves for re-election.

The following were elected

UK Committee Members

Mr Darayus S Motivala
Mrs Khurshid B Kapadia
Mr Framroze R Joshi
Dr (Ms) Godafreed Irani

Overseas Committee Members

Mr Keki R Bhote (USA)
Mr Sohrab R Felfeli (USA)
Mr Rohinton Minwalla (Canada)
Mr Rostam Yeganagi (Iran)
Mrs Mani J Clubwala (India)
Mr Dadi Mistry (India)

An additional nomination was received from Mr Nozer Meherji (India).

Proposed by: Mr Dinshaw Tamboly

Seconded by: Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla

On a show of hands, all the above were duly elected to WZO International Board.

The meeting proceeded harmoniously, with a vote of confidence being granted to the ongoing Committee.

Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla was nominated from amongst the members of the committee and unanimously elected as the Chairman for the year 2006/07.

Nash Harvey LLP, Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditor, were unanimously re-appointed auditors for the ensuing year.

OFFICE BEARERS

At the committee meeting following the annual general meeting, the following were elected office bearers.

President	Mr Darayus S Motivala
Vice-President	Mr Keki Bhote (USA)
Hon Treasurer	Mr Framroze R Joshi
Hon Secretary	Mr Dinyar J Modi
Membership Secretary	Mrs Khurshid B Kapadia
Social Secretaries	Mrs Tehmi N Patel and Mr Noshir Umrigar
Religious Co-ordinator	Ms Shahin Bekhradnia
Grants Co-ordinator	Dr (Ms) Godafreed Irani

PERSONALITIES AND EVENTS

In Memoriam

Mary Boyce

The WZO recorded with regret the passing away of Professor Mary Boyce on 4th April 2006, following a major deterioration in her health. Professor Boyce was a prolific writer, and a highly original, erudite and eminent scholar of Zoroastrianism and the history and culture of Zoroastrians. She was a much respected professor at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and will be sadly missed by our community, her colleagues and her devoted students.

A letter of condolence was sent to Mr Peter Boyce, brother of the late Professor Ms Mary Boyce.

Lt General (Retd) Adi Sethna

After an illness that gradually but steadily escalated, Lt Gen (Retd) Adi Sethna sadly passed away on 17 October 2006. A tireless worker in the service of the Zoroastrian community, Adi Sethna was the President of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman for two decades. He also served other minority communities through his three term nomination on the (Indian) National Minorities Commission. Adi Sethna was a caring family man who commanded the respect of both his peers and his subordinates. A magnanimous and humble man, Adi Sethna was both a thinker and a doer.

A letter of condolence was sent to his wife Khorshed and family.

A eulogy, to be read at the Memorial Meeting, was also sent by our Chairman Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla to the Delhi Parsi Anjuman.

With respect
HRH The Queen

On 20th April 2006, our Chairman wrote a letter of congratulations to Her Majesty the Queen for her 80th birthday on behalf of the WZO and the global Zoroastrian community. The letter is reproduced hereunder.

“Your Majesty,

It gives me great pleasure to convey, on behalf of the World Zoroastrian Organisation, our sincere and heartfelt congratulations to you on your 80th birthday. We wish you and your family continued good health, joy and happiness for many years to come.

During the course of your reign spanning over 50 years, Zoroastrians have always remained loyal citizens of the nation, have held you in high esteem and have shown a great love and affection for the Royal family. The Zoroastrian community have settled in the United Kingdom for nearly two centuries and are one of the oldest established minorities outside of the Indian Sub-Continent and Iran. Indeed the first three Indian Members of Parliament were Parsee Zoroastrians.

I have the honour to remain Madam, Your Majesty's most humble and obedient servant.

Yours sincerely,

Sammy Bhiwandiwalla
Chairman
World Zoroastrian Organisation”

In appreciation
Rustam Dubash

We are sorry that Rustam Dubash did not seek re-election to the International Board. With his legal background Rustam has played a pivotal part in the protracted discussions for the formation of WZOI/WZOF. He has served for nearly 15 years on the Board and was president for the past six years. A robust debater at meetings, his keen analytical and legal mind gives him the ability to read between the lines and forestall dubious arguments. We wish him all the success in his ongoing career as the Head of India unit in a major firm of solicitors in the City of London.

Karan Bilimoria

The Chairman and members of WZO congratulate Lord Karan Bilimoria of Chelsea on his appointment as a Peer of the Realm. The announcement was made in May 2006, and was received with great pride by the community at large. We wish Lord Bilimoria every success in his new appointment and your committee looks forward to introducing him to the activities of WZO in early 2007. We acknowledge, with gratitude, the support that Cobra Foundation has given WZO in its past social events.

MEMBERSHIP

We are delighted to report that the newly formed New Zealand Chapter of WZO is now an incorporated Charitable Trust under the New Zealand Companies Act. Mr Darius Mistry has also registered WZO-NZ as a non profit organisation with the Inland Revenue Department, so a nil tax status may be obtained. The Trustees for WZO-NZ are Ms Farah Unwalla, Mr Darius Mistry and Mr Sam Bhiwandiwalla (international board). WZO-NZ has had its first committee meeting and the minutes recording its planned activities were sent to Mr Bhiwandiwalla. We wish to record our thanks to both Mr Rustam S Dubash and Mr Darius Mistry for their advice and professional expertise in the setting up of the New Zealand chapter of WZO.

We would encourage other countries and geographical areas to form their own national chapters in order that the work and message of WZO International be spread further afield and into our much dispersed communities.

We thank our individual and Anjuman members for joining with us and supporting us in our activities. In terms of numbers our membership continues steadily to increase. However the numerical strength of the WZO membership in no way reflects the international influence and respect that WZO commands.

May we take this opportunity of repeating our appeal to members to register themselves as life members, in order to reduce our administrative costs and the need to send annual reminders. This function does place a strain on our limited financial and human resources, which we need to conserve for our charitable purposes and ongoing projects.

LECTURES AND SEMINARS

WZO's **annual summer seminar** was held on 25th June 2006 at the International Students House, with the recurrent theme of "Zoroastrian History, Religion and Culture". As in previous years this seminar is held in association with the World Zarathushtrian Trust Fund; and we at WZO thank WZTF for being the funding sponsor of this annual event.

The first guest speaker was Professor Ivan Steblin-Kamensky, a specialist on the history of Iranian languages, who teaches classical Persian and Avestan at the Oriental Faculty of St Petersburg University, and is also the author of numerous scientific treaties and books. The Professor's topic was "Mysteries of Ancient Aryans", wherein he explained (with illustrations of newly found archaeological sights) the apparent confusion about the term Aryan existing since the 19th century.

The second speaker was Mr Burzine K Waghmar who examined the collapse of the Sasanid Empire following the Arab conquest of Iran and Western Central Asia, in his topic entitled "Mazdeans and Muslims during and after the conquest of Iran". In his delivery Burzine discussed the factors that led to the

whittling down of Zoroastrianism from the official creed of the empire to the remnant in South-Central Iran in the three centuries after the conquest. Burzine is, at present, temporary lecturer in Urdu and Gujarati at the School of Oriental and African Studies and is also a doctoral candidate in Iranian and Central Asian philology at the same institute.

The third and final speaker was Ms Mitra Mehr who presented a paper called "Against all odds: Achievements of Zoroastrian Women in Iran"; wherein she elaborated on the singular accomplishments of Zoroastrian women in her native land. Mitra is a graduate of Brown University and the University of Pennsylvania and has participated as a speaker in several conferences, as well as representing Fezana at the United Nations NGO conference in 2002.

In July 2006, WZO was invited by **Winchmore School**, a sixth form school to send a speaker to their conference entitled "What is a Human Being?". Our Mr Farrokh Vajifdar kindly agreed to attend the conference and spoke to the students and faculty members about Zoroastrianism and the message of our Prophet.

The **Independent Television** Company (London) contacted WZO with regard to producing a documentary about the late Freddy Mercury (Bulsara) to be broadcast on 5th September 2006 to coincide with the performer's 60th birthday. The producer of the proposed broadcast was put in touch with Mr Farrokh Vajifdar in order that he may be interviewed for purpose of providing an accurate profile of the community in the UK in the 1960s. As ITV also wanted to shoot footage in India, they were directed to Dinshaw Tamboly who assisted them in their requirements. Thank you to Farrokh and Dinshaw for assisting in these assignments.

Our **Interfaith representative**, Ms Shahin Bekhradnia, has continued her participation in the annual Commonwealth Day Commemoration at Oxford Town Hall. Shahin has also attended meetings on our behalf at the Oxford Round Table of Religions and maintains her strong links and connections to SACRE, the organisation that formulates the teaching of religious education in every county. Shahin had also been invited to participate at the Mental Health Forum in the Mental Health and Faith's workshop held at Staffordshire University. The papers from this gathering are to be published shortly. Shahin has also been invited to contribute a section on Zoroastrianism for the book which has been published: A Global Guide to Interfaith.

If anyone would also like to make presentations about our faith to interested groups, please let a member of the committee know of your interest and possibilities.

Each year 10th December is celebrated globally as **Human Rights Day**. It marks the day in 1948 on which the member states of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was on that day that Board Members Sammy Bhiwandiwalla and Shahpur Captain were invited by Rights and Humanity to attend a multi-faith Thanksgiving Service at St Peter's Church, Eaton Square, London. Rights & Humanity is an organisation that

champions putting people at the heart of development efforts to ensure that they can lift themselves out of poverty and injustice. This organisation works both at grassroots level and at the highest levels of the UN. The Thanksgiving service was conducted to celebrate their 20 years of achievement. In a moving ceremony of church music and prayer, representatives of many multi faith communities presented their readings to the audience. Shahpur Captain, on behalf of the Zoroastrian community, narrated a verse from the Avesta.

RESTRUCTURED WORLD BODY

It is with regret that we have to report that the discussions concerning the formation of an inclusive world body have seemingly stalled. Those of us aspiring to create a new organisation had to contend with the unrealistic demands from certain significant sections of our global community - demands that, true to our principles, we could not fulfil. In spite of this setback, we must thank Rustam Dubash, Rumi Sethna, Adi Davar and Farhang Mehr for their commitment and unstinting effort in striving to achieve an understanding amongst the various factions in an effort to create a truly global organisation encompassing associations and individuals. We must sombrelly reflect as to what legacy we are leaving for our future generations if true unity cannot be found.

HAMAZOR

Under the continued dynamic editorship of Mrs Toxy Cowasjee our magazine is the much awaited and must read journal in many homes across the world. Toxy has more than matched her personal challenge of finding “diverse and interesting articles to share”. The articles in the magazine are universal and diverse; the presentation is professional and flawless; the readership is both Zoroastrian and non Zoroastrian. Hamazor is truly an international journal that transcends physical boundaries and reaches into our community wherever it may be.

We should however remember that printing and publishing a magazine of this excellent quality is an expensive cost item. We must therefore express our thanks for the financial assistance given to us, in this respect, by the Trustees of the World Zarathushtrian Trust Fund.

Thanks also to our contributors, who so generously give their time and knowledge – so that we may be better informed.

ASSISTANCE

At the tail end of 2005 South-East Asia was hit by a massive **earthquake** with its epicentre in the Northern region of Pakistan. WZO put out an immediate world wide appeal to its membership. With the co-operation of many global Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian organisations and individuals, WZO raised in excess of £100,000 towards this humanitarian tragedy. Praise must be directed to one outstanding individual, Toxy Cowasjee, our Board member and editor of Hamazor, who moved heaven and earth to implement a

spontaneous relief programme, which helped to secure the many lives of destitute women and children. Our sincere thanks to Toxy for all her efforts; and to all the donors who contributed so magnanimously and so spontaneously in answer to the call for help. In India, WZO Trust Funds so ably managed by Dinshaw Tamboly also raised substantial funds for the benefit of earthquake hit regions in that country.

In early August 2006, unprecedented **floods** ravaged southern Gujarat and caused immense hardship and misery to the residents of Surat and its suburbs. The raging floods swept away houses and destroyed storage warehouses. When the flood waters began to recede on 10th August, they left behind a residue of acute despair and distress. However, our WZO volunteers, based at Navsari were immediately on hand to provide relief and succour. Having established contact with the local community leaders at Surat, the first WZO consignment of essential items (water, milk, grains etc) was urgently distributed. As some areas were under two to three feet of water, access was not immediately available to all distressed members of our community and further distributions followed. The imperative demand was to provide elementary and basic relief to our community members so savagely affected by nature's fury. Very substantial funding will be required to return the area to some form of normality and rehabilitate the Zoroastrians who have been the victims in this environmental disaster.

In early 2006 our chairman reported that he (together with Mr Darayus S Motivala) had met Mr Jehangir Sarosh, a Trustee of the **Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation**, to discuss the possibility of WZO receiving financial assistance from this Foundation. WZO was invited to submit a proposal by mid 2006; which we did, thanks to the efforts of Mr Sammy Bhiwandiwalla. We are pleased to report that the proposal and application submitted by WZO was successful. The application was made for funding towards the reconstruction of replacement brick built homes in the villages of Gujarat. The amount allocated by the Foundation is £22,000 towards the construction of nine replacement homes – to be undertaken under the scrutiny and supervision of WZO. We thank the Trustees of the Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation for their generosity and the trust they have placed in WZO; and in particular, Mr Jehangir Sarosh for initially approaching us.

We are pleased to continue our partnership with the **Fali Chothia Charitable Trust, through** the good offices of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (ZAMWI). The Trust was established in 1988 to help provide scholarships and interest-free loans to needy Zoroastrian students. Awards are based on financial need, educational achievement, and community service and in the past 18 years it has awarded scholarships and loans to students from all parts of the US and Canada.

To demonstrate solidarity and trust between organizations while serving community causes, US Chapter of WZO has once again joined the Fali Chothia Trust's Scholarship Programme by sharing equally the scholarships awarded to the students. This partnership enables the Trust to significantly increase the amount of its scholarships.

The Noshirwan F. Cowasjee Medical Benevolent Fund

The Medical Benevolent Fund, renamed in honour and memory of the late Noshirwan F Cowasjee, owes its very existence to Noshirwan. Over nearly twelve years he worked alone and ceaselessly to raise funds for the Medical Benevolent Fund. His contribution to WZO is immeasurable in terms of his financial support and selfless dedication; he refused to accept any public or private recognition. His staunch support for WZO influenced others to do likewise and he is greatly missed.

Noshirwan's own corpus target of £250,000 has now been achieved, but we would yet request donors to come forward for this very worthy and humanitarian cause for the benefit of our community.

Dinshaw and Avabai Byramjee Madressa Fund

Mr. Marzi J. Byramjee (our International Board Member from Canada) was an initial contributor to the Dinshaw and Avabai Byramjee Madressa Fund. This fund utilises its resources to fund the medical clinic at the Dadar Madressa. Our sincere thanks and appreciation to Mr. Marzi Byramjee for implementing this fund.

Roshan A. Dehnugara Benevolent Fund

This fund was set up in loving memory of Roshan, a well loved and respected member of the UK community, and will utilize the income from the corpus for the relief of poverty among our brethren.

Our thanks are expressed to the Dehnugara family, the late Dr (Mrs) Shirinbanoo S Kutar, Mr Rumi & Mrs Hilda Sethna and others who have contributed to the fund.

Daulat Kershasp Dastur Education Fund

This fund has been set up by son Sam Dastur, in loving and revered memory of his mother and will provide financial assistance specific to educational needs. Our sincere thanks to Sam Dastur for this act of generosity.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

The **Silver Jubilee** of WZO was celebrated by WZO India in late Dec. 2005 at the Albless Baug in the company of about thousand or so fellow Zoroastrians. President of WZO India, Mr Dadi Engineer, extended a warm welcome to all the guests and read out a tribute that WZO had received from H.E Mr A P J Abdul Kalam, President of India. In his tribute President Kalam wrote "it is heartening that the World Zoroastrian Organisation is working for the welfare and rehabilitation of humanity by providing them self-employment, education, medical and financial support. I hope the Organisation will continue its mission of improving the lives of those who are in need and will also provide them a better livelihood. This tool will not only make them self reliant but also make them prosper and become enlightened citizens." Mr Engineer then went on to enumerate WZO's significant achievements down the years and to thank the persons and institutions that had made these possible. WZO took this opportunity to honour four outstanding young achievers –

Jimmy Mistry (architecture and design)

Boman K Irani (construction)
Tanaz Godiwalla (hospitality)
Boman R Irani (performing arts)

WZO then went on to express its gratitude to the evening's donors, advertisers and well wishers.

A glorious summer's day filled with music and dance and good food and drink – that is our **annual summer barbecue**. It is therefore with immense happiness and joy that we record our gratitude to Pervize and Rohinton Irani for organising this annual event on our behalf. Rohinton's fund raising skills were magical and apparent as the enthusiastic crowd bid for a wide array of offers, including hotel accommodations, holidays and restaurant bookings. There was eager anticipation at the end of the day as the final tally of collected funds neared £9,000. However, it was on the following day that the final tally was confirmed at a grand total of £10,000. This is the largest collection ever made at a WZO barbecue. All monies raised will go to the Gujarat Farmers and Medical Benevolent Funds. Once again, our sincere thanks to Pervize, Rohinton and their family for the hard work they put in planning this from start to finish; and for opening up their home and garden to a crowd of 225 boisterous and vocal Zoroastrians and their friends. Our sincere thanks are due also to all the immensely generous donors who so willingly supported us, the army of helpers who worked throughout the day and all the attendees for contributing and for making this day such an enjoyable success.

Our **Annual Gala Charity Ball** – the 17th – reverted back this year to the Effingham Copthorne Hotel, in the leafy environs of its spacious grounds and golf course. The Ball is in aid of the Gujarat Farmers Appeal and is most popular with our London based members and our non Zoroastrian supporters, who turned out in full numbers to enjoy the evening and donate generously to a worthy charity. We thank Hilda and Rumi Sethna for their dedication in once again organising this glittering occasion which contributes so regularly to the Appeal. Elegantly dressed in their finest, the guests wined, dined and danced the night away – and did not hesitate to participate in the raffles, auctions and games that generate the revenue that goes directly and without deductions into the Appeal Fund. We are grateful to our members for their continued support; and to our non Zoroastrian friends for their unstinting generosity. The cause to which they contribute is far removed from their daily lives, but the plight of our impoverished co-religionists is constant in their minds even as they enjoy the entertainments at hand.

We also thank our masterful compere Mr Barry Williams, who has been with us since the first Ball. Barry was at his usual witty and professional best, as he expertly guided the evening through the serious periods and the light hearted.

Our thanks once again to Hilda and Rumi Sethna for devoting their time and energy to organising the Ball; and to all our very generous guests and donors.

GENERAL COMMENTS

WZO, as the world body for Zoroastrians, continues to serve and protect the community's interests globally. It has a commitment to remove many of the social and communal injustices that exist today. In the course of so doing we have to contend with orchestrated misinformation that is directed towards both the community and ourselves, creating misguided perceptions which need to be eradicated. But we can and will achieve our objectives through our record of achievement and a willingness to speak up where necessary.

Throughout the years WZO has endeavoured to create a spirit of togetherness and comradeship throughout the world and in the UK with our bi-annual Navroze functions, seminars and Gala dinner dances. We rely extensively on the generosity of the community to implement successfully all our projects and we are indebted to them for their continued support.

If our charitable functions of assisting the poor, sick and infirm, are to be sustained, housing and employment improved, refugees assisted, then we must endeavour to create awareness and seek wider public support.

BOOKS, PERIODICALS AND PRESS

***Triumph Over Discrimination: The Life Story of Farhang Mehr* by Lylah M. Alphonse**

"Triumph Over Discrimination" is the life story of Dr. Farhang Mehr, an exceptional Zarathushti. It deals with Dr. Mehr's early life and education; his experiences in OPEC and in Iran's oil and insurance agencies; and his achievements in politics, including his experience as the first Zarathushti to serve as Deputy Prime Minister of Iran.

It details his escape from Iran during the Islamic Revolution of the late 1970s, his self-imposed exile in the United States, and his hopes and dreams for the future of Zoroastrianism and the Zoroastrian community worldwide.

Lylah M. Alphonse is a cum laude graduate of the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University, and was recently inducted into their alumni Hall of Fame. She is an assistant editor of National News at the Boston Globe newspaper in Boston, Massachusetts, where she occasionally writes for the Life at Home and Calendar sections and the Boston Globe Magazine.

She has contributed articles to "Our Times, 5th edition" (Bedford Books, 1998) and "Interactions: A Thematic Reader," (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1999)

WZO wishes to record its sincere thanks to Rumi and Hilda Sethna for financing the publication of this remarkable life story.

Book Price £10.00 plus £3.00(UK) or £7.00(overseas) postage and packing.

A unique record of the Proceedings of the WZO 1993 Gatha Colloquium is available in one paperback volume titled

“New Approaches to the Interpretation of The Gathas”

Edited by Farrokh Vajifdar, this 264-page record of the proceedings contains the fully revised and expanded versions of the ten lectures given at the first ever Gatha Colloquium, held in Croydon, England.

Published for the first time, its contents represent the mature viewpoint of scholars and the challenging perspectives of learned interpreters of the seventeen Hymns of ZARATHUSHTRA SPITAMA, the founder of the faith today followed by devout communities of Zoroastrians worldwide.

The book contains contributions by Ilya Gershevitch, Helmut Humbach, Pallan Ichaporia, Kaikhosrov Irani, Ali Jafarey, Dina McIntyre, Hormazdyar Mirza, Martin Schwartz, Paul Thieme and Farrokh Vajifdar.

This publication could not have been contemplated without the finance provided through the generosity of Mrs. Goli Farhangi in loving memory of her husband, the Late Mehraban Farhangi and his mother Khorshedbanu.

Book Price £15 plus £3(UK) or £7(overseas) postage and packing.

Religion and History of the Parsees

by Mrs Meherbano Kekobad Marker

Mrs M K Marker, when a grandmother of venerable age, wrote this book for her grandchildren so that they may "live to the tenets of our great religion".

She had kindly agreed to donate all the proceeds of the sale of the book to WZO for the relief of poor Zoroastrians of Mumbai, India.

This book is a must for every Zoroastrians household and we urge you to buy a copy as you and your children will find it informative and useful.

Book Price £10.00 plus £2.00 postage and packing.

THE WORLD ZOROASTRIAN ORGANISATION

PROJECTS AND FUNDS

Members of the community are aware that WZO has no funds of its own, and is completely dependent on donors for support in its multifarious activities - all of which are aimed at making beneficiaries independent, enabling them to live with self-respect and dignity, and gradually introducing a positive transformation in the quality of their lives.

Bearing in mind the dictum of R G Ingersoll: "The hands that help are holier than the lips that pray", WZO has applied that philosophy to the support and assistance that it gives in its welfare activities. Our focus of attention has shifted from merely handing financial assistance to providing the support and assistance that encourages a person to stand proudly on his/her two feet.

WZO is proud to present before its respected donors and community members all over the world, an overview of its numerous welfare activities.

THE WZO TRUST FUNDS INDIA

The WZO Trust Funds has over the years been raising funds for many worthwhile causes. From the support received from donors, the welfare programmes of WZO have grown to embrace the whole of India, extending substantial support in diverse areas of human needs.

In this context we must acknowledge with immense gratitude the continuous support extended for all its activities by the Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund, Trustees of Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong Canton & Macao and Sir Ratan Tata Trust who have been the three main pillars of encouragement, motivation and support for all the projects undertaken.

1 Rehabilitation of Zoroastrian farmers

The massive ongoing project to rehabilitate poor Zoroastrian farmers has been operational since August 1990. Since that time, the WZO has reached out to provide practical training, and thereafter the necessary agricultural inputs to more than 381 families spread over 165 villages.

Assistance has been provided by way of establishing farms, brick kilns, etc, providing plant and equipment and all manner of other essential supplies.

Total donations received till December 2006
Ind Rs 450,89,000 (£549,800)

Total amount spent till December 2006
Ind Rs 447,26,500 (£545,500)

2 Rural Housing - the changing horizons

Many of the Zoroastrian rural dwellers live in huts made from mud & cow dung. These huts require a fresh coating every few months; failing which the walls dry up and shrivel.

From funds that have been raised, financial support has been extended to over 55 Zoroastrian families to replace their huts with cottages, the walls of which are made from bricks and plastered with cement, the floors made from stones and the roof from tiles.

The replacement of huts by cottages costs approximately Ind Rs.250,000 (£3,000) each.

3 Self - employment

There are many in our community who are very keen to be self employed in disciplines of their choice, but are unable to pursue the same due to lack of requisite funds.

A 'self employment' scheme was launched in 1996, which still continues. 'Interest free' financial support is extended to Zoroastrians who are keen to start their own modest ventures.

Initially the funding was made available from a very generous donor trust. Since the last six years the scheme is now being sustained from the repayments that are received.

535 Zoroastrians, from 61 different urban, semi-urban, rural locations have been provided funds to pursue self employment of their choice in diverse disciplines such as transport, trading, manufacturing / workshops, electronic data processing etc.

4 Education - an essential investment for the future

a) Academic

Education, in India as well as overseas, has always been regarded as an essential investment and not an expense. A good education ensures the sound future for our youth and thereby the community. Keeping this philosophy in mind, WZO has always been in the forefront to encourage the pursuit of education by using its good offices to assist in raising and making available financial support to those of our youth who are willing to put in efforts to excel.

b) Institutional

Zoroastrian youth from indigent families are supported in their pursuit of education through a student sponsorship scheme, under which WZO encourages sponsors from all over the world to contribute towards the educational pursuits of such children and thereby provide the opportunity to the young person to benefit from a good education.

c) Vocational

Support for encouraging education is not restricted to academic education alone. Equal weighting is given to encouraging vocational training, as well as developing and honing inherent skills in our youth who wish to pursue technical disciplines.

5 Medical support

Ours is an ageing as well as an ailing community. With the economic graph of the community showing a consistent downtrend, the increasing abuse of the environment producing new ailments and medical treatment becoming increasingly expensive, the need for funds towards medical support has shown a many-fold increase.

WZO uses its good offices to raise and disburse funds, wherever and whenever possible, to help members of the community in meeting hospitalisation and medical expenses.

In addition to providing support for medical expenses in India, WZO has established in London, the 'Noshirwan F.Cowasjee Medical Benevolent Fund', which provides financial support to Zoroastrians who have to travel to the west

for medical treatment not available in their own countries. During the period under review many Zoroastrians from India were extended support in meeting their medical expenses for treatment overseas, mainly in Australia, USA and UK.

6 Relief from Poverty

Financial support is extended to aged individuals who due to their ailments live in penury and are unable to work.

7 Mobeds

With a view to encouraging young mobeds to take to mobedi as a full time profession, WZO in association with Athornan Mandal launched a scheme that would provide fair returns to young full time mobeds.

WZO raised an amount of Ind Rs 103,00,000 that has been capitalised and the income used for providing returns based on the type of ceremonies that the young mobeds perform. Each of the 46 odd beneficiaries under this scheme receives an amount ranging between Ind Rs 1000 to Ind Rs 4000 per month. The amount received is in addition to the regular income that these young mobeds earn.

Support is also extended to initiate, as Navar & Martabs, young athravans from indigent families.

Elderly mobeds who have practised mobedi as a full time profession and are now retired or close to retirement and yet living in indigent conditions are assisted by way of financial support.

8 Centres for Senior Citizens

WZO Trust Funds opened their first senior citizens centre Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Senior Citizens Centre at Navsari on 6th January 1998. The underlying philosophy on which the initiative was conceived and developed was to ensure that residents passed the evening of their lives - their golden years – in a happy environment free from stress and strain.

To have a philosophy is one thing; to remain faithful to it is quite another. WZO has taken adequate care to adhere faithfully to their philosophy, for within a short time of the opening of their centre, occupancy began to rise steadily, and the centre began to run to full capacity.

Carers and occupational therapists regularly visit the centre to look after the elderly and infirm and residents are taken for holidays to Udvarda, Sanjan and picnics to Dandi, Ubhrat etc. .

Thanks to the recommendation of Past Chairman Rumi Sethna and his wife Hilda, their life long friends Rena & Behram Baxter, residents of USA, visited Navsari in early 2003. Rena and Behram were so impressed with the management and facilities at the Senior Citizens Centre that they volunteered to fund the creation of a second senior citizens home on similar lines. Thus

came into being WZO Trust Funds' second establishment, "Dolat & Hormusji Vandrewala Senior Citizens Centre".

Both our centres for senior citizens are very popular and much sought after institutions. The running of the centres is supported by Sir Ratan Tata Trust who donate generously towards the day to day expenditure, which enables us to continue to provide quality care to our residents.

Thus WZO Trust Funds have created one more institution in the interests of the community and continue to render excellent service in many different areas.

9 Housing for the poor and needy

From funds received from the generous Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Funds, WZO Trust Funds have constructed three residential buildings at Navsari, where the occupants live in fair sized apartments at very reasonable license fees.

A fourth building, very near to the Atashbehram, – Behramji Nowroji Gamadia Building No. 1 - has been constructed from the funds received from the generous Trustees of Behramji Nowroji Gamadia Parsi Hunnar Shalla Trust and is now operational.

Our fifth building – Hong Kong House - adjoining Behramji Nowroji Gamadia Building No. 1 - funded by the generous Trustees of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton & Macao has been constructed and is also operational.

WZO Trust Funds now own 5 residential buildings at Navsari, in which deserving Zoroastrians have been provided accommodation at nominal licence fees.

10 Sanatorium at Sanjan

A well-laid out sanatorium, with comfortable rooms and serving sumptuous meals has become operational at Sanjan. Within a short time of it becoming functional, the "Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy – WZO Sanatorium" has become a popular community resort. It is a haven for those wishing to enjoy a holiday in idyllic surroundings and in an exhilarating environment; at extremely moderate rates of Rs.200 per person per day for full board and lodge.

11 The Holiday Project

This project assists widows and their children from India who are unable to afford a break from the day-to-day drudgeries of life. It provides these families with a treat of a lifetime, with an all expenses paid, door-to-door holiday, in the refreshing climate of the hills of Khandala.

Likewise groups of senior citizens who live below the poverty line, or have been ill and are in need of recuperation, are taken for holidays in the hills around Bombay. All expenses, from the time they leave home and to the time they return back, are paid for by WZO.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation to the late Dr. (Mrs.) Shirinbanoo S. Kutar for providing the finances for this ongoing project.

THE WZO in IRAN

Pourchista Foundation

WZO continues to support the work of the Pourchista Foundation in Iran which has expanded its training programme to help the Zoroastrian community in Yazd, home to the second largest concentration of Zoroastrians in Iran. Many young people benefit from its comprehensive range of training which covers computer skills, cookery, hair and beauty, tailoring, artificial flower making, kusti weaving and sadre sewing, art and sculpture etc. In addition to fulfilling this basic aim, it is hoped that in the near future a senior citizen centre will be opened under the aegis of the Pourchista Foundation. Because of the constant drain of young people from Yazd, the necessity for a kindergarten does not appear as urgent as originally envisaged; but there is a pressing need for the care of the older generation. Whilst the Foundation is fortunate in having secured a property for this project, its start up and running costs need to be assured.

THANKS BY WZO

The WZO extends its sincere gratitude to all donors, big and small, for their munificent support and co-operation.

As the community's premier global organisation, the WZO remains conscious of its responsibilities, reaffirms its commitment and dedication towards the Zoroastrian cause, and looks forward to the continued support from individuals and institutions from all over the world.

The WZO has always employed the policy of being open in all that it does, with full accountability to all donors at all times. This policy has earned the respect of our donors, who have contributed so generously and so willingly.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to:

The late Mehraban Farhangi and his dear wife Goli, donors of the World Zarathushtrian Trust Fund and benefactors to WZO, for their continued support and financial help.

The Trustees of Bai Maneckbai P.B. Jeejeebhoy Deed of Settlement Fund-Mumbai, India for their exceptional support for the causes espoused by WZO.

The Trustees of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao, at Hong Kong, who have been very generous in their support to the various appeals passed on to them.

The Sir Ratan Tata Trust for their constant support and assistance to the WZO Trusts in India.

The Trustees of the Behramji Navroji Gamadia Parsi Hunnar Shalla Trust, who have extended their support and encouragement to us in our welfare activities.

Toxy Cowasjee for being in the forefront of and an inspiration in our humanitarian appeals; and her dedication to Hamazor.

The President and members of The Karachi Zoroastrian Banu Mandal, for their services to the entire Zoroastrian community in Pakistan and for their staunch support, financial help and fund raising efforts for the many worthy causes funded through the WZO.

The Trustees of the WZO Trust Funds, The WZO Trust for Women and Children and The World Zoroastrian Organisation Trust for maintaining the momentum of communal services in India through their hands-on approach.

The Erach and Roshan Sadri Foundation for their generous support and the confidence placed in WZO.

Mr Behram and Mrs Rena Baxter for their generous and spontaneous donations to the causes of WZO.

Mr Rumi and Mrs Hilda Sethna, not only for their generous financial contributions throughout the years, but also for their dedication and personal involvement.

Mr Zhooben Bhiwandiwalla, for the gift of a Mahindra Bolero jeep, so essential in the rural countryside, in memory of his late father, Dossabhoy.

Dr Mahinder and Mrs Khorshed Sodhi for their kind willingness to contribute generously to WZO's funds.

The Firuz Madon Foundation, UK, for its much appreciated support in all WZO's activities.

Mr Sam Kershasp Dastur, for the corpus monies enabling an education fund to be set up.

Mr. Firoj Panthaky and Mr Farrokh Kasad who volunteer freely their services in harsh working conditions, offering guidance and expertise to the deprived sections of the rural community.

The late Mrs Mani Bhumgara, Board Member and staunch supporter of WZO, who passed away in early 2003 and bequeathed £35,000 to the WZO

The Proprietors and Editors of the Bombay Samachar, Parsiana and Jam-e-Jamshed in India and the Parsi Sansar in Karachi.

Dr Meherwan P and Mrs Zarine Boyce for financing SMAK, our web host masters.

The legacies endowed from the estates of deceased members of our community and for putting their trust in the Board Members of WZO to act as executors of their estate.

The Auditors, Nash Harvey LLP, for providing their services to WZO.

Our Well-Wishers and Supporters World Wide for their confidence and financial support without which WZO could not enduringly sustain all that has been achieved so far in social, economic and religious matters.

We conclude our report with the two following extracts

Yasna 43, 16

O Ahura Mazda, Zarathusthra has selected for himself pure wisdom as his guide. May truth and righteousness strengthen our material lives. May spiritual power along with faith and love lighten our hearts as shining rays of sun. Do grant reward O my Lord, to the persons who perform their actions through pure mind and wisdom.

Yasna 47, 4

The truthful person, though of small possessions and poor, should be loved and respected, but followers of untruth though of great possessions and power should be despised and regarded as wicked.

ATHA ZAMYAT - YATHA AFRINAMI

DONATIONS

Donations for any of our projects are most welcome, as the level of funds required to continue and increase our involvement in these projects is substantial. You may wish to consider making a small legacy to WZO in your Will.

How to donate

WZO has charity status in India, USA and in the UK. Residents of these countries can receive Tax exemption on their donations in these countries. Residents of other countries should send their donations to the WZO headquarters in the UK.

We can now accept your credit card donations through our website.



In India, those who wish to contribute may send their cheques / drafts made payable to "The World Zoroastrian Organisation Trust" and forwarded to:

The World Zoroastrian Organisation Trust,
SHANTI, 5th Floor,
Banaji Street, Fort,
Mumbai 400 001.
India.

E-mail : beedee@vsnl.com

[Indian Residents please note - Donations to the WZO Trust Funds are exempt under section 80G(5) of Income Tax Act 1961 permission valid till 31 March 2008.]

Overseas donors please note - The World Zoroastrian Organisation Trust is authorised by The Government of India, Ministry of Finance, to receive funds from overseas under The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act.



In U.S.A., those who wish to contribute may send their cheques / drafts made payable to "WZO US Region Trust" and forwarded to: -

Mr Keki Bhote

The World Zoroastrian Organisation Trust,
493 Woodlawn Avenue
Glencoe
Illinois. IL 60022
U.S.A.

E-mail : krbhote@sbcglobal.net

Residents will receive Tax exemption on their donations. The Tax Exemption ID No. of WZO US Region Trust is: 36-4236575



In Pakistan, those who wish to contribute may send their cheques / drafts made payable to "The World Zoroastrian Organisation " and forwarded to: -

Mrs Toxy Cowasjee
2A Mary Road
Bath Island
Karachi 75530
Pakistan
E-mail: toxy39@attglobal.net



In UK, those who wish to contribute may send their cheques / drafts made payable to "The World Zoroastrian Organisation" and forwarded to: -

Mr Framroze R Joshi
Hon. Treasurer, WZO
83 Claydon Drive,
Beddington,
Surrey. CR0 4QX
UK

Email: framrozejoshi@tiscali.co.uk

UK residents should send in their donations with the Gift Aid Form as it will allow WZO to claim an additional sum from the Inland Revenue.



in N Zealand, those who wish to contribute may send their cheques/drafts made payable to "The world Zoroastrian Organisation" and forwarded to:-

Mr Darius Mistry
134A Paritai Drive
Orakei
Auckland
New Zealand