

When I left the U.K. for Pakistan I didn't know what to expect. I knew that I wanted to do voluntary work but, not having anything organized, I wasn't sure how this would work out. Getting in contact with Dr. Ayaz Khan at KLWT was a huge stroke of luck. It was clear right from the start how enthusiastic all the guys at KLWT were about their project at Bhunja and just how keen they were for us to get involved and lend a hand. From our very first meeting I was thrilled that we had got in contact with them and we were going to be able to go up to the mountains to help.



The trip up to Sehri Bagh village was one I certainly won't ever forget. As we traveled through Manshera and Balakot the massive scale of the terrible tragedy started to become clear, as did the huge international relief effort that had taken place. The final jeep trip to the village was a white knuckle ride through stunning scenery; all the while being shaken about and blasted by hot, dusty air- it was amazing!



To be able to spend time in the village and meet the children and teachers was very rewarding. Everybody there was very warm, friendly and welcoming and the place really is beautiful. The whole valley has no electricity or telephones and the descriptions of it being covered in eight feet of snow in the winter were scary. While sat in the warm summer sun, it was difficult to imagine just how hard it would be to live there during these cold winter months



Our main task while we were there was to demarcate and map out the boundary of the school. This was challenging but we eventually managed to get it done and it felt good to be able to do something to help. There are many problems faced by the project, not least the remoteness of the village. All these make KLWT's achievements even more noteworthy.



The initial relief effort has now been carried out and the project is moving into a reconstructive phase. It was clear that KLWT had developed an excellent relationship with the village leaders and were very well respected. This places them in an ideal position to help the community rebuild after the earthquake.



I think peoples generosity and there ability to pull together in times of trouble are one of our greatest attributes. My first hand experience of this is something that will always stay with me. I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to everybody at KLWT for giving me the opportunity to work with them. I hope to come back to Pakistan in the future to meet with everybody again and to see the complete school.