



WOMEN FOR
AFGHAN WOMEN

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



AFGHAN WOMEN RISING



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The 16th year of Women for Afghan Women (WAW) proved to be a year of quantum change for WAW and for me, the proud Executive Director of an organization that has grown from a few volunteers in 2001 to over 750 staff, serving thousands of clients in 2017. This year set the stage to securing WAW's future and to ensuring that our spirit remains indestructible.

New senior management, hired in 2016, took over the reigns of different parts of WAW, and have surged full-speed ahead to execute new strategic plans to diversify WAW's donor and supporter base, improve organizational and financial structures, upgrade information technology infrastructure, and launch communications and advocacy initiatives that better convey WAW's tremendous life-saving and life-changing impact. With extraordinary

senior management by my side, and with WAW's incredibly active Board of Directors at the helm, WAW's dream of Afghan Women Rising has truly become a reality.

We are all keenly aware of the ongoing threats facing women and girls, women's rights, and indeed, human rights in Afghanistan, and elsewhere. We all know the challenges posed by deteriorating security conditions not only in Afghanistan, but throughout the world. Non-profit and non-governmental organizations, and the individuals and causes they serve world-wide, are particularly feeling the heat of increasingly polarized geopolitics and political climates fueled by fear and insecurity.

However, despite these tremendous challenges, this was one of the best years in WAW's history. In 2017, WAW increased its funding portfolio by a total of \$1.2 million—the greatest increase WAW has raised in one year. This was the year in Afghanistan where, among many other achievements, 28,870 individuals were trained under our Women's Rights are Human Rights program, our Protection Monitoring Project assisted 377,405 refugee returnees and conflict-induced internally displaced persons in nine provinces, and WAW's 32 guidance centers and protection facilities served 5,467 women, children, and their families in 13 provinces.

This was the year that WAW's New York Community Center (NYCC) dealt with 2,100 case management services for 618 clients and their families; 604 clients received legal support; 126 applied for U.S. citizenship (with a 100% success rate for those interviewed for their naturalization); 163 women and 23 men enrolled in our adult education classes; 81 children received ongoing Homework Help; and 48 girls participated in our Girls Leadership Program.

These successes came to fruition as we simultaneously worked to find a larger, better space for our NYCC and successfully funded and launched new programs such as our Boys Leadership Program, Afghan Youth Rising, Know Your Rights Program, and Coalition X.

This was also the year that we hired an experienced human rights lawyer as WAW’s new Advocacy Manager in order to plant new seeds for a more engaged and impactful Advocacy Program in Washington, DC.

Proudly, the list goes on! It is our hope that this report will provide a more detailed enumeration of every victory achieved in 2017 as well as what remains to be done, how we are going to do it, and what the impact will be. We share our achievements and this blueprint for the future with the knowledge that we cannot do all this without you—our supporters, our donors, and our partners.

I would like to conclude this letter with some bittersweet, personal news. 2017 was the year that I would decide that WAW is finally strong enough, and dynamic, empowered, and stable enough for me to take a break. I joined WAW in 2002, and watched it grow like one would a child. With the support of a powerful Board and staff, I am proud to have had a significant hand in nurturing and building this organization from the ground up.

I have watched as abused women brought to our Women’s Protection Centers in Afghanistan remarry, find new jobs, and lead better, empowered lives. I have witnessed as traumatized children brought to our Children’s Support Centers grow up with love and graduate from schools and universities as young women and men at the top of their class. I have seen illiterate women read for their first time in their lives, and women who sought asylum in the United States, succeed and flourish in New York City, so far from home but determined to create a new, even better one for themselves and for their children.

Finally, I have no doubt that I am leaving the organization in the most capable of hands. I know WAW’s success will continue to grow with supporters like you and the most committed staff and Board of Directors I have ever known. I may be transitioning out of my position, but my commitment to WAW’s success remains a life-long promise that I hope you will always share with WAW, with our beloved clients, and with me.

I leave you with this report on the impressive gains made by WAW in 2017, with the hope that you will wish me luck and that you will continue to STAND BY OUR SIDE.

Sincerely,



Manizha Naderi, Executive Director



“With extraordinary senior management by my side, and with WAW’s incredibly active, working Board of Directors at the helm, WAW’s dream of Afghan Women rising has truly become a reality.”



ABOUT WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN

WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN (WAW) is a grassroots civil society organization dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights of disenfranchised Afghan women and girls in Afghanistan and the United States (U.S.). In particular, WAW works to help Afghan women and girls exercise their rights to pursue their individual potential to self-determination, and to representation in all areas of life—political, social, cultural, and economic. WAW relentlessly advocates for women’s rights and challenges the norms that underpin gender-based violence to influence attitudes and bring about change.

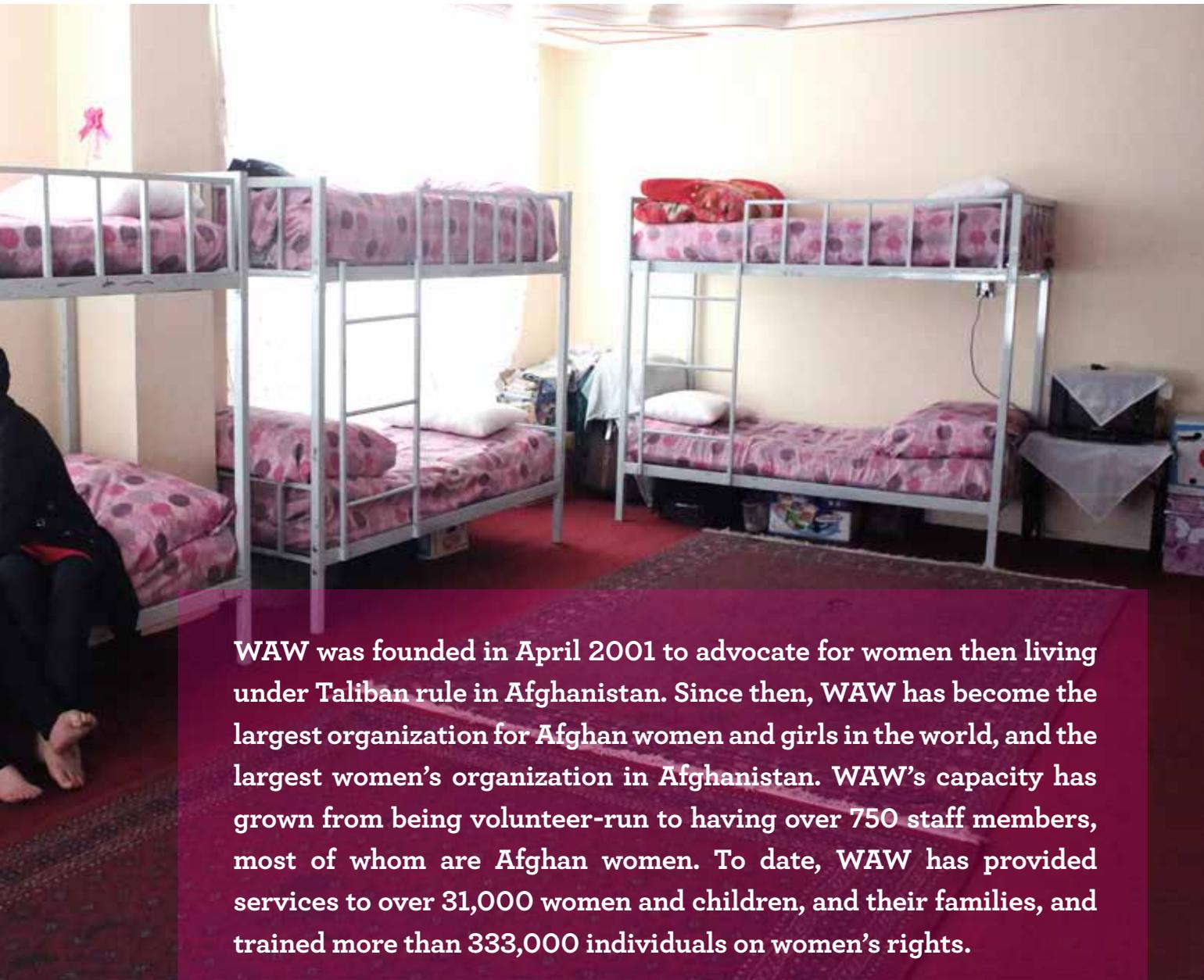
WAW provides life-saving advocacy, education, and direct services for women and children across Afghanistan who have endured human rights violations, including forced and underage marriage, rape, forced prostitution, unlawful imprisonment, and barred access to education and employment. WAW also works with refugee returnees and conflict-induced internally displaced persons in nine provinces. Across its work in the country, WAW provides women’s rights education and training to Afghans from all walks of life—from government officials, to religious and community leaders, prison officials, police, and community members—in order to shift cultural attitudes wherein women and girls are treated with equality, dignity, and justice in Afghan society.

In the U.S., WAW’s New York Community Center (NYCC) is a lifeline for the local Afghan immigrant, refugee, and Afghan-American population, providing families with comprehensive case management services, legal support, and educational empowerment programs for women, children, and men. In Washington, DC, WAW advocates for the rights and safety of Afghan women and children by ensuring that their voices and stories are heard by U.S. and international policymakers.



Clients resting at WAW’s Halfway House (HH) in Afghanistan. Photo credit: Emilie Richardson, 2017

WAW relentlessly advocates for women's rights and challenges the norms that underpin gender-based violence to influence attitudes and bring about change.



WAW was founded in April 2001 to advocate for women then living under Taliban rule in Afghanistan. Since then, WAW has become the largest organization for Afghan women and girls in the world, and the largest women's organization in Afghanistan. WAW's capacity has grown from being volunteer-run to having over 750 staff members, most of whom are Afghan women. To date, WAW has provided services to over 31,000 women and children, and their families, and trained more than 333,000 individuals on women's rights.



Every year, WAW co-sponsors and participates in the Silent March against Domestic Violence organized by a sister organization, the Korean American Family Support Center. 2017 was the 20th anniversary of the march.

SNAPSHOT OF 2017 ACHIEVEMENTS & PLANS FOR 2018

WAW had a landmark year in 2017, greatly increasing its NYCC programming for Afghan, South Asian, and Muslim immigrant women and families and expanding WAW’s programming in Afghanistan. Challenges were particularly acute in Afghanistan due to worsening security and heightened threats to gains in human rights due to accelerated attacks by the Taliban, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria-Khorasan province (ISIS-K), and other extremist elements.

In light of these developments and the implementation of strengthened organizational systems, WAW raised significantly more private funding (from foundations, corporations, and individuals) in 2017 than in past years—a total of over

\$1.2 million. In addition, the improvements to WAW’s financial systems in 2017 led to better transparency and accountability, and have resulted in streamlined internal systems including reporting to donors and more efficient and clean audits and tax filings.

WAW continues to build on this momentum thanks to its thousands of committed supporters. In 2018, WAW will continue its full spectrum of programming in the U.S. and Afghanistan, while the following expanded initiatives are developed:

- Increased advocacy and outreach in the U.S. through meetings and coalition-building with policymakers in Washington, DC and the launch of the new Coalition X, led by WAW and consisting of women-led, immigrant-led, and Muslim-led community-based organizations in New York City (NYC);
- New Afghan Youth Rising program for Afghan and Muslim young women aged 16-20 in NYC to develop their leadership and career opportunities;
- Improved services and enrichment activities for children staying at WAW’s Children’s Support Centers in Afghanistan;
- Enhanced vocational and income-generating programs for clients residing at WAW’s centers in Afghanistan;
- Voter education and voter registration drives in the U.S. and Afghanistan;

WAW remains committed to serving the women and children of Afghanistan and continues its life-saving and human rights programs in 14 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces.



- Launch of WAW’s new, rebranded website with a much improved and customized content-management system designed to ensure supporters and the general public have fluid, relevant, and engaging online access to information about WAW and its programs and services; and
- Integration and expansion of WAW’s online presence, through rebranded and streamlined communications material, accessible online, as well as in print, a new Google Ads campaign, advocacy initiatives, fundraising appeals, and other forms of awareness-raising activities of WAW’s life-saving and life-changing programs, which aim to increase fundraising for WAW’s work and support for Afghan women and children.

WAW IN AFGHANISTAN

All of WAW’s programs in Afghanistan continued in 2017 despite a substantial deterioration of the security situation in the country—with increased attacks from the Taliban and ISIS-K, particularly in Kabul, which had more stability than other, more remote regions in the past.

Yet, despite these serious challenges, WAW remains committed to serving the women and children of Afghanistan and continues its vital work in 14 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces.

Also in 2017, WAW integrated the Men’s Movement Program into its Women’s Rights are Human Rights Training Program in order to better streamline and combine the two training curricula into one expanded training program that is currently implemented in 10 provinces.

In 2017, WAW provided:

3,136 individuals with **Family Guidance Center** services—namely, family counseling, mediation, and legal representation to any person who has suffered a human rights violation.

1,627 women and girls, and their children, with **Women’s Protection Center** (also known as women’s shelters) services—namely, safe and confidential shelter homes until their legal cases are resolved.

458 girls and boys with **Children’s Support Center** services—namely, safe homes, stability, loving care, and education while their mothers are in prison.

220 formerly incarcerated women and girls, and their accompanying children, with **Transitional House** services—specifically, safe homes, education, and vocational training for women previously imprisoned.

26 women with **Halfway House** services—namely, long-term shelter, education, and vocational training to women transitioning out of WAW’s women’s shelters and cannot safely return home.

Clients attending literacy classes at one of WAW’s Women’s Protection Centers in Afghanistan. Photo credit: Emilie Richardson, 2017



From left to right:

1. First lessons in spelling at one of WAW's Children's Support Centers in Afghanistan. Photo credit: Emilie Richardson, 2017

2. WAW Clients: Gul Meena (left) and Mumtaz (right). Photo credit: Leslie Knott, 2015

28,870 Afghan stakeholders—including religious leaders, and government officials — with education about women's rights under Islamic and Afghan laws through **977 Women's Rights are Human Rights Trainings**. Of these, **12,024** men were trained through **588** trainings conducted in 13 provinces in Afghanistan as part of the integration of the Men's Movement program into WAW's Women's Rights are Human Rights Training Program; and

377,405 refugee returnees and IDPs were assisted through our Protection Monitoring Project in nine provinces.

WAW hired **four new employment and marketing officers** in Afghanistan to reinforce WAW's vocational training program, which aims to better match local market demand with clients' future employment opportunities and financial independence. These officers work with local businesses to determine where client-made products can be sold, and work with WAW vocational trainers to design training curricula accordingly.

In 2017, WAW participated in several exhibitions in Kabul to showcase client-made products. WAW is currently finalizing its new marketing brochures and will create a marketing manual to unify and standardize its vocational program in all the Afghan provinces where it operates facilities.

Outreach and advocacy activities continued with WAW's Kabul team maintaining frequent contact with with major **international stakeholders**, including the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, the Swedish Embassy in Kabul, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and UN Women, to coordinate international efforts to support and promote women's rights in Afghanistan.

WAW staff also regularly attended **monthly coordination meetings** and discussed issues related to the advancement of women's rights with top-level national and local government officials, including the Office of Afghanistan's First Lady, Ministry of Women Affairs, Violence Against Women Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Haj and Religious Affairs, and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, which greatly facilitated the advancement of women's and children's rights in Afghanistan.

Thanks to these coordination meetings, WAW successfully advocated for **the recognition of Women's Protection Centers as religiously-sanctioned institutions by the Ministry of Hajj; secured national identification cards for many clients who otherwise would not have been able to obtain national identification cards; legally filed for divorce or marriage on behalf of clients; and expedited the legal process for clients whose cases were mired in the court system.**



NEW LIVES FOR WAW CLIENTS: GUL MEENA AND MUMTAZ

GUL MEENA

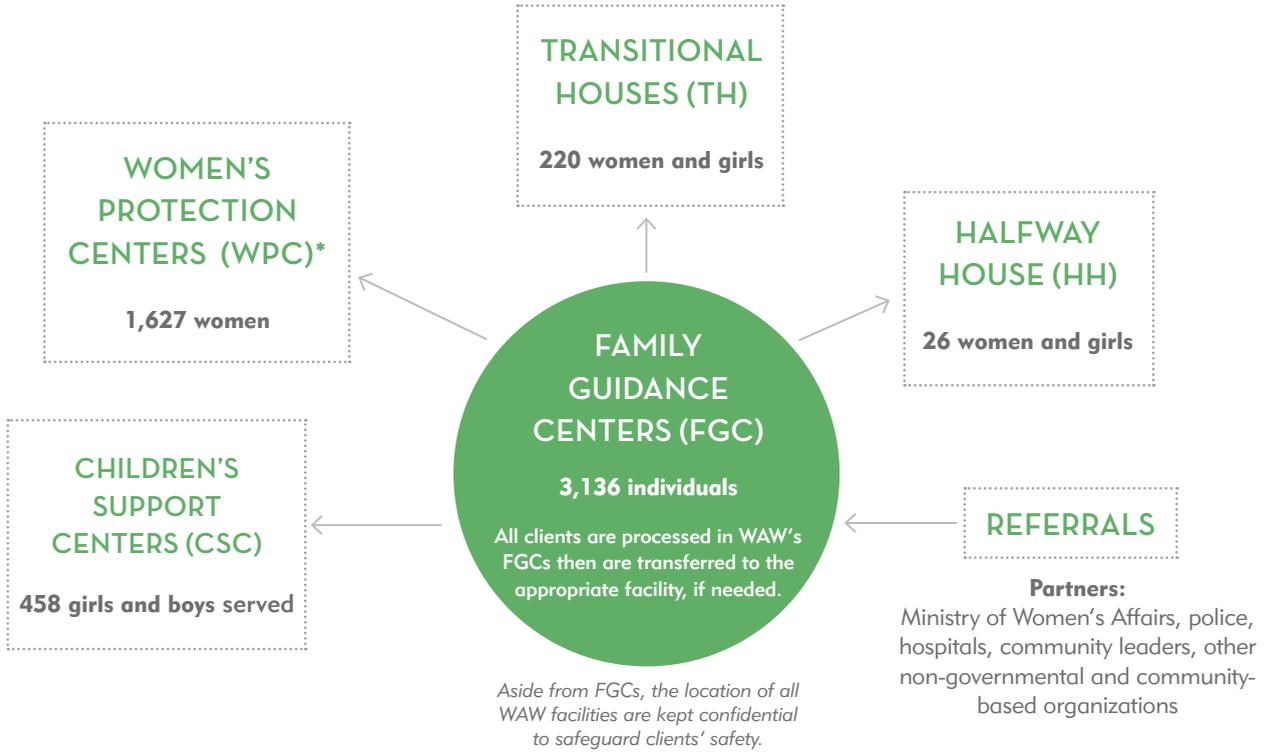
In 2017, one of WAW's long-term clients, Gul Meena, left the WAW shelter she called home in Afghanistan to start a new life in Sweden, where she received asylum with the aid of WAW's General Counsel, Kimberley Motley. Before coming to WAW, Gul Meena was a child bride, forced to become the third wife of a man who was old enough to be her grandfather. Upon realizing her fate, Gul Meena ran away only to be chased down by her uncle and her brother, who attacked her with an axe. Miraculously, Gul Meena survived this horrific assault and was taken in by WAW. Finally safe in a WAW Women's Protection Center, Gul Meena found relief in the safety of her new home, far from her abusive relatives. As she starts a new life in Sweden, Gul Meena hopes to pursue her education and live in peace. WAW continues to check in with her and will make sure she settles in her new home throughout the next few years. While at WAW, she became very close to Mumtaz, whose story follows below.

MUMTAZ

Mumtaz was a survivor of a terrible acid attack, from which it took months to recover. Mumtaz's father turned down a proposal from a local militiaman connected with the Taliban who wanted to have her hand in marriage. That same night, four men locked her father up and attacked Mumtaz with acid. Only 18 years old then, Mumtaz was hospitalized and underwent multiple surgeries and skin grafts in India through WAW's intervention. Mumtaz remained with WAW until she recovered and eventually married a man of her own choosing. With legal aid from WAW, her attackers were convicted and imprisoned, but as the Taliban regained strength in that district, they were released. In 2017, her husband was murdered by the same militiamen. WAW mobilized all its resources to get Mumtaz out of harm's way. Today, a widow with two children, Mumtaz is back safe and sound in one of WAW's women's protection centers. When Mumtaz was attacked as a child, WAW remained #ByHerSide. We will remain by her side until her long-term safety is secured.

AFGHANISTAN PROGRAMS

WAW FACILITIES & PERSONS SERVED IN 2017



TRAINING/MONITORING & PROTECTION



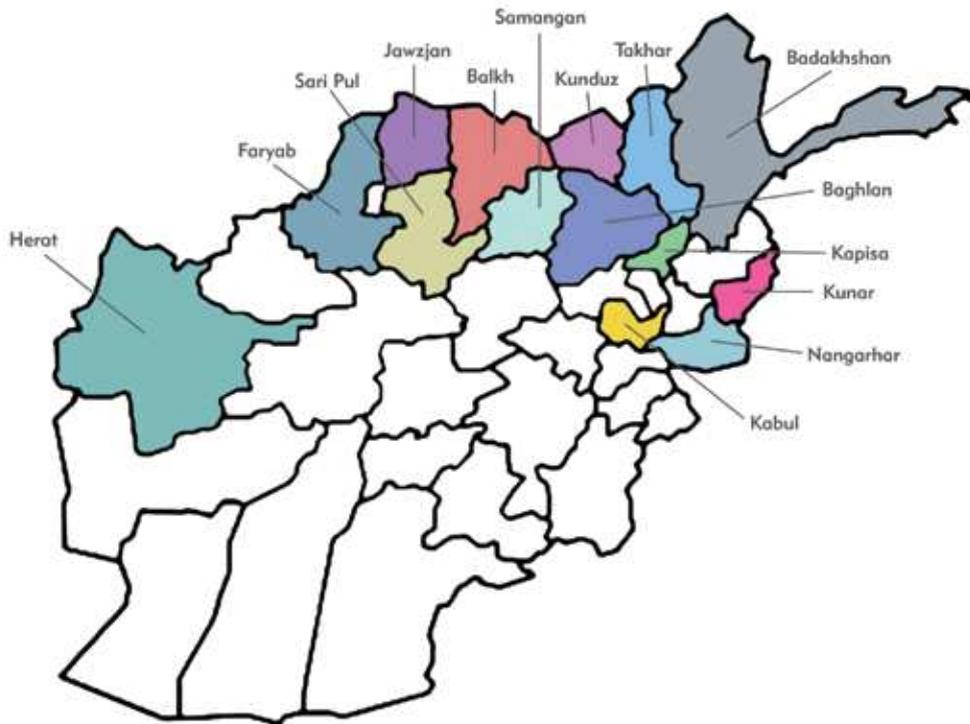
377,405 refugee returnees and conflict-induced internally displaced persons (IDPs)



28,870 women and men trained

*Also known as women's shelters.

AFGHANISTAN OPERATIONS MAP



AFGHANISTAN FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Province	FGC	WPC	CSC	TH	HH	WRT	PMP
Badakhshan	1	1	1			1	1
Baghlan							1
Balkh	1	1	1	1		1	1
Faryab	1	2				1	1
Herat			1	1			
Jawzjan	1	1					1
Kabul	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Kapisa	1	1				1	
Kunar	1					1	
Kunduz	1	1				1	1
Nangarhar	1	1				1	
Samangan	1	1					1
Sari Pul	1	1				1	1
Takhar	1	1				1	1
Totals	12	12	4	3	1	10	9



WAW'S NEW YORK COMMUNITY CENTER

WAW's New York Community Center (NYCC) greatly exceeded the majority of its expectations in 2017. The NYCC was able to: (1) secure funding to **hire a first-ever part-time legal advisor** (attorney) to provide on-site pro bono legal services at the NYCC once a week; (2) receive funding support to begin **three new programs**: Coalition X, Know Your Rights trainings, and Afghan Youth Rising; and (3) obtain funding for **increased domestic violence support services** to include a vocational training class for survivors and a partnership with CONNECT, a local organization—to implement more domestic violence awareness trainings for community members and religious leaders.

WAW successfully secured a significantly **larger, new space for the NYCC** to accommodate the increasing demand for WAW's services from local immigrant and refugee communities, while remaining accessible and within walking distance for most of WAW's clients. The space is currently undergoing renovations with the aim of WAW moving to the new space in May of 2018.

The new NYCC will be located at 71-19 162nd Street, Unit D, Fresh Meadows, NY and includes:

- Four classroom spaces, which are two more than what is currently available at the NYCC;
- A dedicated private counseling room for casework, counseling, and legal services;

- An on-site childcare center;
- A larger reception area that can better accommodate volunteers and teachers; and
- One large basement room for community gatherings and celebrations, which will provide a safe space for new clients and bolster community spirit and togetherness.

WAW recruited volunteers to care for children whose mothers are enrolled in NYCC programs, which enabled more clients to attend classes and increased the numbers of clients WAW serves. WAW also secured funding to hire a **childcare provider**.

618 clients and their families were provided with **2,100 case management services**.

WAW provided **604** individuals with **legal support** thanks to the NYCC's new part-time legal advisor and the NYCC's ongoing partnership with Lutheran Social Services of New York for client citizenship applications.

128 clients applied for U.S. citizenship, with a **100% success rate** with **30** clients receiving their citizenship in 2017 and **98** scheduled for interviews and testing dates in 2018.

163 women participated in **adult education classes** on English as a Second Language (ESL), citizenship, and driving education, and **23** men attended ESL and citizenship classes specifically scheduled for male members



of the community. Classes were conducted with Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement, the Indo-Caribbean Alliance, and Queens Community House—all partnerships that WAW initiated in 2017 to expand its classes to the wider community in NYC.

12 Women's Circle sessions were conducted during the reporting period, with **40 to 45 women** in attendance for each Women's Circle session.

81 children participated in WAW's tutoring program, **Homework Help**, with 100% of participants passing their state exams and advancing to the next grade.

48 girls participated in leadership skills training and development through the **Girls Leadership Program (GLP)**. The GLP meets on Fridays from 4:00pm to 6:00pm during the school year, and Mondays to Thursdays for a one-month intensive camp during the summer school break.

During the 2017 GLP summer camp, participants visited museums, toured a firehouse, attended a self-defense workshop, and engaged in lively discussions on culture and gender. An important GLP session also took place with a group of dynamic, young female professionals from Goldman Sachs. The latter came to speak with the GLP participants about their role as engineers in the company. They inspired the girls to continue working hard and to pursue their education and dreams.

WAW successfully recruited a dedicated GLP Team Leader as a part-time staff member, who is a young Afghan woman and first-generation immigrant. She now leads the GLP's discussions on the current political climate, women's rights, activism, Afghan culture, religious norms, leadership, and other topical subjects like bullying and girls' rights to education.

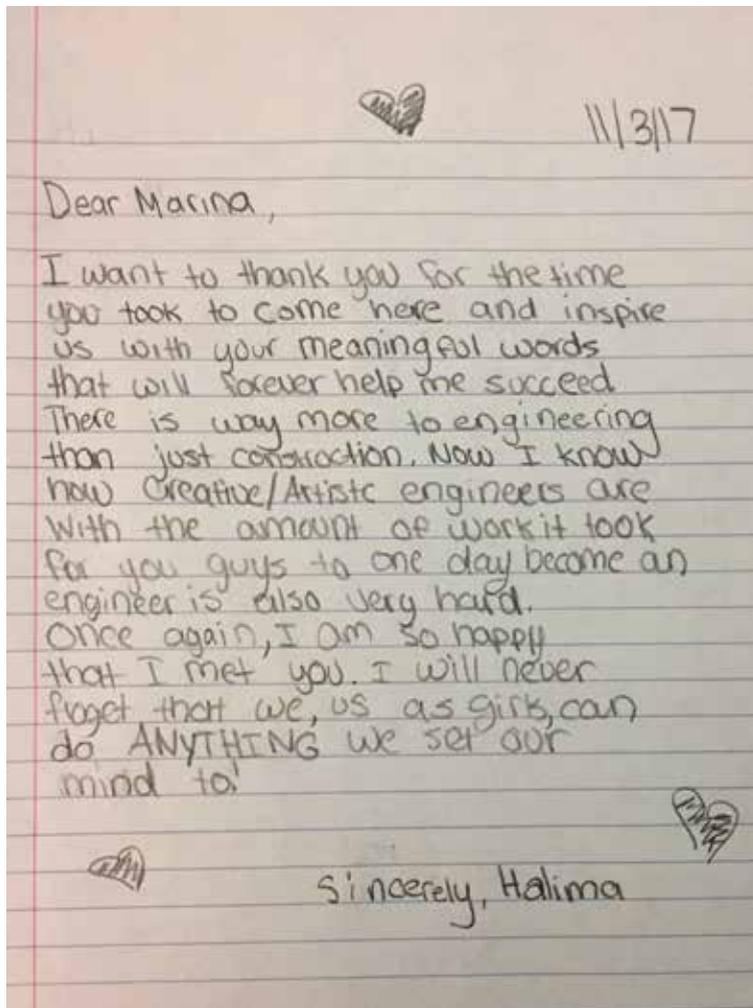
WAW successfully **launched its new Boys Leadership Program (BLP)** on October 12, 2017 with **12 boys** participating for the program's first cohort. The BLP meets on Thursdays from 4:00pm to 6:00pm in a safe and nurturing space where the boys can share their experiences with politics, racism, and bullying and then brainstorm possible resolutions. The BLP program also provides boys with sessions focused on harmful gender norms and how to overcome them.

WAW successfully recruited a dedicated BLP Team Leader staff member, who has been a WAW volunteer since 2016. Having worked with the boys previously, the BLP Team Leader's existing bond with the participants allowed for the swift establishment of trust and the early success of the program.

In just a few months, the BLP program has made great strides in building the boys' confidence and leadership skills and in challenging negative attitudes towards women and girls. A participant who previously said that girls should not sing (echoing a belief by conservatives in the Afghan community)

From left to right:

- 1. On December 14, 2017, 160 Afghan community members attended the first ever Afghan Town Hall and Resource Fair in NYC co-hosted by WAW and the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs as well as other city agencies.*
- 2. WAW clients and staff took part in the Second Annual 9/11 Day of Service at Pier 86, NYC.*
- 3. WAW Case Manager Shgoofa Rahmani spoke on WAW's behalf at the Queens Solidarity Coalition Rally held on September 9, 2017, advocating for immigrant rights and unity in diversity.*



A thank you letter written by GLP participant, Halima, to one of the female engineers from Goldman Sachs who came to speak to the girls about what it means to be a female engineer and professional today.

enthusiastically sang the Afghan national anthem with GLP participants during the first-ever Town Hall for Afghan New Yorkers.

New foundation grants were awarded for the NYCC's **new movement-building initiatives** through the development of the following new programs, which will ensure that WAW is serving Afghans from childhood to adulthood, including:

- **Coalition X** – a new coalition led by WAW that aims to advocate for immigrant and women's rights with other Muslim, South Asian, and immigrant-led organizations;
- **Know Your Rights Trainings** – a training program for Afghan, South Asian, and Muslim communities to ensure members know their rights and that they are protected despite policy changes;
- **Afghan Youth Rising** – a new program for young Afghan and Muslim women aged 16-20, launched in March 2018 with the

intention of expanding the program to reach out to young Afghan and Muslim men aged 16-20 in 2019; and

- **Expanded programs for survivors of domestic violence** – including improved capacity, increased service provision (in-person and phone/remote support), vocational classes for survivors of domestic violence, community trainings (including a four-week training for local imams and potentially with the New York Police Department), and a formal partnership with CONNECT for two years to conduct these trainings.

2017 culminated in NYC's first-ever **Town Hall and Resource Fair for Afghan New Yorkers** held at Queens College in December of 2017. This historic town hall was co-hosted and organized by WAW and the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) and other city agencies, which included approximately 160 Afghans living in the NYC area. In light of the event's success, WAW and MOIA plan to organize these Town Halls on an annual basis.

Town Hall participants were actively engaged and directly addressed NYC government agency officials that were in attendance on issues related to immigration, housing, employment, and public services and benefits. Even those participants who were not fluent in English were able to get their concerns addressed because of simultaneous interpretation services provided during the Town Hall. In addition, participants wrote in their questions, which were forwarded to the appropriate NYC agencies and officials after the event.

GLP and BLP participants also actively participated in this Town Hall. The girls and boys sang the national anthem together, overcoming cultural taboos that inhibit women and girls from singing in public. They also asked questions directly to NYC agency officials, like providing halal food options in NYC's public schools. GLP and BLP participants also volunteered to help WAW staff with final logistics and clean up.

As WAW continues to improve and build its NYCC's services, WAW is confident its New York programming will see tremendous gains for the New York and U.S. Afghan and Muslim immigrant communities.

NEW YORK COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAMS CHART

CASE MANAGEMENT AND LEGAL SUPPORT

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION

HOUSING

PUBLIC BENEFITS

EMPLOYMENT

PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH

EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

CITIZENSHIP TEST PREPARATION

DRIVER'S PERMIT TEST PREPARATION

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS TRAINING

WOMEN'S CIRCLE

MONTHLY DISCUSSION GROUPS

YOGA & OTHER ACTIVITIES*

AFGHAN YOUTH RISING

DISCUSSION GROUPS

MENTORSHIP & COUNSELING

GIRLS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

BOYS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

LEADERSHIP COURSES

SUMMER CAMPS

WORKSHOPS (Art, Creative Writing, etc.)

MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

CHILDREN'S TUTORING

HOMEWORK HELP

ENGLISH CLASSES

COALITION X

COALITION-BUILDING

NETWORKING & EVENTS

LOCAL RALLIES & TOWN HALLS

COMMUNITY EVENTS & OUTREACH

MOSQUE OUTREACH

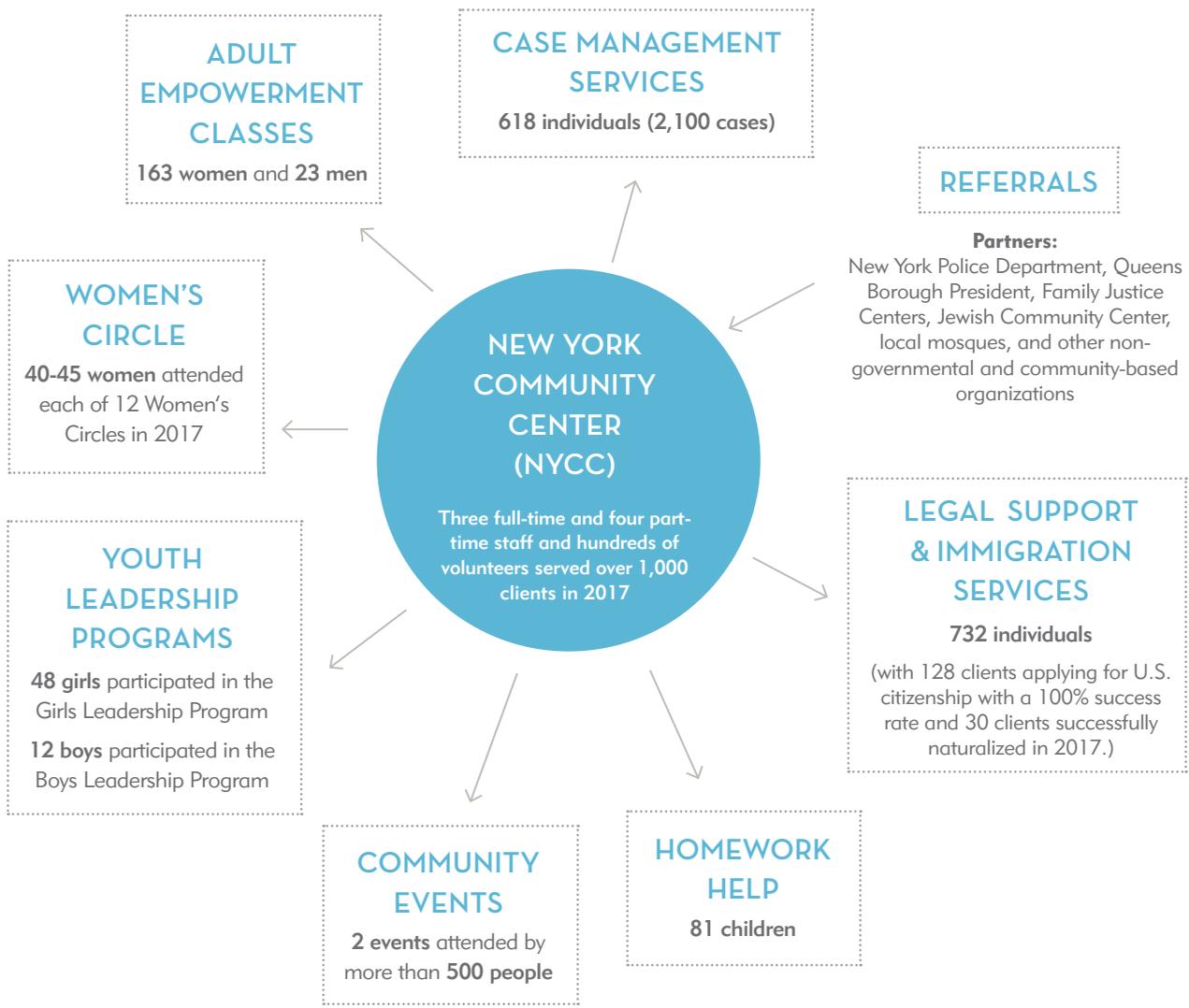
LOCAL BUSINESS OUTREACH

CULTURAL EVENTS

**Offerings are dependent upon availability of resources.*

NEW YORK COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAMS

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED BY THE NYCC IN 2017





WAW'S WATERSHED YEAR FOR ADVOCACY

On January 21, 2017, WAW kicked off a watershed year of activism and advocacy by participating in the **Women's March in Washington, DC**. Forty Afghan women accompanied by WAW staff traveled by bus to the nation's capital to stand together with sisters and brothers from diverse backgrounds to reject a new climate of fear, hate, and bigotry and to promote women's rights and empowerment.

In May, WAW hired a new high-level **Advocacy Manager, Megan Corrado**, an experienced international human rights lawyer and advocate, to help steer WAW's advocacy efforts in its Washington, DC office. Megan is focusing on furthering WAW's goal of advancing women's rights and giving voice to Afghan women and girls on a global level.

Since then, WAW has been at the forefront of a number of **policy discussions, coalition-building initiatives, and grassroots campaign efforts** to facilitate sustained support for women peacebuilding activities and the rights of Afghan women and girls.

WAW successfully advocated for **increasing funding for women, peace, and security** in the U.S. National Defense Authorization Act through meetings with key members of the U.S. Congress. Through WAW's advocacy, the national budget for this crucial item was **raised by \$16 million**—from \$25 million in FY2017 to \$41 million in FY2018.

In July 2017, WAW also spearheaded a coalition of human rights organizations to urge the U.S. Administration to intervene and grant the **all-girl Afghan Robotics Team** entry into the U.S. to participate in the FIRST Global Challenge after their entry visas were twice denied. The team was finally granted entry and went on to win the Second Prize for Courageous Achievement. In November 2017, the team won the top award at Robotex, Europe's largest robotics competition.

In advance of and following the announcement of the **revised U.S. strategy in Afghanistan**, WAW advocated for the use of all the tools in the foreign policy toolbox to preserve the phenomenal gains Afghan

From left to right:

1. WAW clients at self-defense training at the NYCC.

2. WAW clients and staff proudly posed with their signs at the Women's March in Washington, DC. Photo credit: Elise Blanchard, 2017

“American and international economic and capacity-building assistance has undeniably led to phenomenal strides in all facets of life, particularly for Afghan women and girls in their ability to overcome the gender inequality, discrimination and collective trauma systemic in Afghanistan after decades of conflict and Taliban rule.” — quote from *In Afghanistan, Security Interests Outweigh Ideology*, an opinion editorial by Manizha Naderi, WAW Executive Director published in *The Hill*, July 16, 2017.



women and girls have made since the ousting of the Taliban in 2001. WAW also weighed in on policy proposals to cut the budget of the State Department and to revise its mission to eliminate the promotion of democracy and justice around the world.

Year-round, WAW worked hard to advocate against **child marriage** and for expanding **the role of women in peacemaking, peacebuilding, and peace-sustaining efforts** by publishing opinion editorials in influential publications such as *The Hill* and *Washington Examiner* by participating in policy meetings, events, and conferences. WAW continues to expand its engagement in the policy community, including with its partners on the U.S.-Afghan Women’s Council, as well as the U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security.

WAW’s advocacy efforts in 2018 will continue to focus on the critical role of women in peacebuilding in light of the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan that has endangered hard-won gains made by Afghan women and girls.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2017, WAW developed and **rebranded its organizational identity** to better reflect WAW’s impact and indestructible spirit. WAW’s new identity and style guidelines have translated into cohesive, streamlined external and internal communications that positively reflect WAW’s position as “the largest organization for Afghan women and girls globally” and its empowerment work to promote “**Afghan Women Rising**,”—WAW’s new tagline adopted from banners designed by WAW clients and supporters for the 2017 Women’s March in Washington, DC.

The organization’s rebranding and successful implementation of WAW’s 2017 communications strategy have resulted in increased engagement from supporters, including during WAW’s 2017 annual appeal, which resulted in its best year-end fundraising yet by **raising over \$124,000**.

Also in line with WAW’s 2017 communications strategy, WAW launched a new **quarterly newsletter** and **monthly news round-ups**, which are circulated to all of WAW’s subscribers. The newsletter provides WAW supporters with updates on its work, while the monthly news round-ups offer the latest news from WAW, as well as special news coverage focused on Afghan women and girls, public policy, and general news from Afghanistan relevant to WAW’s advocacy focus.

WAW’s growing staff team and **improvements to internal and organizational systems** in 2017 resulted in the best year yet for the organization. Due to these critical developments, WAW **raised significantly more private funding in 2017 than ever before**—with **\$849,500** raised from foundations, corporations, and other private funders, and **\$432,838** raised from individuals—for a total of \$1,282,338, including over **\$700,000** in new funding for the NYCC alone. In addition, the improvements to WAW’s financial systems in 2017 increased



transparency and accountability and have resulted in improved internal systems including better reporting to donors and more efficient audits.

WAW also organized, attended, and facilitated several events in 2017 that served to further its fundraising and advocacy goals. A few of these events were:

- A donor recognition event on February 2017 held at the Astraea Foundation;
- Meetings at the U.S. Afghan Women's Council, the Afghan Embassy, and on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, as well as at the United Nations in NY;
- Facilitated a workshop at Alliance for Peacebuilding's Annual Conference;
- Meetings with the U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security housed at the U.S. Institute of Peace; and
- The Embassy of Afghanistan hosted a reception for WAW in November 2017, which allowed WAW to cultivate its network in Washington, DC and to connect with potential supporters.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

WAW accomplished so much despite the political and security situations in the U.S. and in Afghanistan that bring with them unique challenges to WAW's work and programs. The unwavering commitment of each and every WAW staff member in the face of these obstacles contributes to the success of WAW's work and ensures WAW can be there for each client who comes to its centers in Afghanistan and NY.

In the U.S., **shifting policies** threaten to undermine the rights of WAW's clients—women, immigrants, refugees, youth, Muslims, Afghans, and South Asians. WAW has learned to integrate flexibility into its programs and requests in order to respond to unanticipated challenges, and is persistently pursuing diverse funding opportunities to meet clients' needs.

The **increasing insecurity** in Afghanistan, with almost daily violent attacks from the Taliban, ISIS-K, and other armed groups, has challenged WAW in its program

"Dream" by Safia, aged 12, was one of eleven paintings made by participants in WAW's 2017 NYCC Girls Leadership Program that visualized the motto "Afghan Girls Rising."



Boys from one of WAW's Children's Support Centers on their way to school. Photo credit: Emilie Richardson, 2017

implementation, especially in remote and contested areas. This is also a challenge for the effective management of WAW's over 750 staff members located in 14 different provinces with varying levels of insecurity.

However, WAW's security team continued to improve security procedures and protocols, updated WAW's security manual, and hired new security officers for provinces with elevated threat levels. Programs were implemented as much as possible and case management and advice were conducted over the phone whenever necessary due to security risks. Despite these threats, WAW staff members in Afghanistan remain as committed as ever to promote the rights of women and girls throughout the country.

In addition, a waning interest in Afghanistan and multiple international humanitarian crises have led to donor fatigue. The **lack of funding available from governments and foundations focused on Afghanistan and the rights and empowerment of women and girls** remains a significant obstacle. Furthermore, increasing uncertainty exists as to whether the current Administration will continue **U.S. development aid in Afghanistan**, which requires WAW to identify new funding sources to support its work in Afghanistan, as WAW is heavily supported by the U.S. State Department. However, WAW is proactively addressing these challenges with

its five-year strategic plan that includes plans to further diversify its funding base and create opportunities to procure more sustainable financial streams.

Another challenge, as well as opportunity, is that **Manizha Naderi**, WAW's beloved Executive Director, has decided to transition from her role after 17 years of exceptional service to the organization. Manizha expressed her regret, but also a personal need to focus on family and other obligations that require her full-time attention. Manizha started out as a volunteer with WAW in 2001 and was made Executive Director in 2006. As Executive Director, she has played a critical role in the development, expansion, and success of the organization, which has grown from a grassroots initiative employing two staff members in 2001 into the largest and premiere organization focused on the promotion of Afghan women's and children's rights and empowerment in the world. Under Manizha's leadership, WAW has achieved significant accomplishments, including:

- The provision of services to over **31,000 clients** in the U.S. and Afghanistan **since 2001**, and now consistently serving at least **5,000 clients per year**;
- The training of over **333,000 individuals** on women's rights as human rights;
- The expansion of operations in Afghanistan wherein nearly **750 staff**



members provide services and training in **32 facilities**, and programming across **14 provinces**;

- The **near elimination of children over the age of five living with their mothers in Afghan prisons** in the provinces where WAW provides Children’s Support Center services;
- The **diversification of organizational funding** to include government, foundations, corporations, individual donors, multilateral and bilateral funders, and other philanthropic sources; and
- Establishing WAW as the **largest human rights organization in Afghanistan and the largest organization in the U.S. dedicated to promoting the rights of Afghan women and children.**

WAW’s Board of Directors accepted Manizha’s resignation in late 2017, and formed a search committee, including Manizha, to seek a dynamic successor that will continue her legacy, effectively serve WAW’s mission, and lead this transition into a new era for WAW.

Additionally, in 2017, the WAW staff team—in Afghanistan and NY—began working on a **comprehensive five-year strategic plan**. In January 2018, the U.S. WAW team met with the Afghanistan-based leadership

team in India to continue its comprehensive planning. The trip also included a visit to Afghanistan, which was unfortunately cancelled due to multiple terrorist attacks in Kabul in the hours before the scheduled visit.

WAW’s strategic planning process relies extensively on analysis of outcomes data of WAW’s direct services and advocacy work, in-person interviews with Board, staff and funders, and focus groups, as well as over 700 completed online surveys of WAW’s staff, board, and key stakeholders. Research, reports, and data analysis from other partner organizations working in the fields of women and immigrants’ rights, such as the Asia Foundation and UNHCR, are also informing WAW’s strategic plan.

WAW’s strategic planning process continues and WAW looks forward to implementing an ambitious plan to meet the needs of women and girls in the U.S., Afghanistan, and the world over the next five years. WAW expects to have a completed strategic plan based on this work by Summer 2018.

Building on these successes, 2017 was truly a landmark year for WAW. WAW successfully increased the NYCC’s budget with new funding support and successfully secured renewals from funders that support its Afghanistan programs, ensuring its programs will continue and grow through 2018 and beyond.

Vocational training at WAW’s Halfway House in Afghanistan. Photo credit: Emilie Richardson, 2017

WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN, INC
COMBINED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2017 (UNAUDITED)

REVENUE

Government Grants (INL, CPS, NYC Council, Queens Borough President)*	4,561,153
International Development Agencies (SIDA, UNHCR, UNW)**	1,204,888
Foundation Grants	849,500
Individual, Corporate & Other Contributions	432,838
Total Revenue	7,048,379

EXPENSES

Program	5,637,549
Management & General	866,469
Fundraising	305,023
Total Expenses	6,809,042

REVENUE LESS EXPENSES

239,338

*INL = Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs |
CPS = Colombo Plan Secretariat

**SIDA = Swedish International Development Agency | UNHCR = The UN Refugee Agency |
UNW = United Nations Women

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalent	1,514,427
Receivables	269,911
Security Deposit - Occupancy	27,719
Equipment & Furniture - Net	13,642
Total Assets	1,825,700

LIABILITIES

Payables to Vendors	55,285
Other Current Liabilities	247,518
Total Liabilities	302,803

Total Net Assets

1,522,897

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

1,825,700

FUNDING PARTNERS

Without the generous support of our funders and donors, the life-saving and life-changing work of Women for Afghan Women (WAW) would not be possible. Our donors recognize that countries that condone the violation of the human rights of women and children are prey to anti-democratic, destabilizing influences. Grassroots NGOs like WAW, which are effectively protecting those rights, have made remarkable progress in peacebuilding in homes, communities, and nations against overwhelming odds. We are most grateful for their ongoing support.

Past and Present Donor Organizations/Foundations

Afghan Women Leaders Connect
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)
American Association of University Women
The Asia Foundation
Ben and Jerry's Foundation
Booth Ferris Foundation
Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan
Catapult
Carnegie Corporation of New York
Charles and Stella Guttman Foundation
Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Christy and John Mack Foundation
The Colombo Plan
Combined Federal Campaign
Cordaid
Counterpart International
Danish Refugee Council
Daphne Foundation
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Edward & Ellen Roche Relief Foundation
European Commission
Flora Family Foundation
The Ford Foundation
The Fund for New Citizens at the New York Community Trust
GlobalGiving
Global Fund for Women
Government of Belgium
Government of Finland
Government of Poland
Harman Family Foundation
Humanities New York
Hunt Alternatives Fund
Independence Community Foundation
Irving Andrew Porter Foundation
Internews
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The Khaled Hosseini Foundation
Laura B. Vogler Foundation
The Malala Fund
Ms. Foundation for Women
The New York Community Trust
New York City Council
New York Women's Foundation
Newman's Own Foundation
North Star Fund
NoVo Foundation
Open Society Institute
Pinkerton Foundation
PRBB Foundation
Queens Borough President's Office
Royhaton Fund
San Francisco Women's Fund
The Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation
The Sister Fund
The Sunshine Lady Foundation
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
The Sister Fund
Third Wave Foundation
U.N. Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
U.N. Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT)
U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

U.N. Women
The U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR)
Union Square Awards
Urgent Action Fund
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
(USCIS)
U.S. Department of State
U.S. Department of Justice Office on
Violence Against Women
Valentine Perry Snyder Fund
van Ameringen Foundation
The Wallace Fox Foundation
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
The William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill
Foundation
Women Living Under Muslim Law
Women's Fund of Long Island

2017 GALA SPONSORS Individuals, Corporations, and Foundations

Abigail Disney and Pierre Hauser
Afghan Hands
Afghanistan International Bank (AIB)
Ahmad Zubair Massoud
Ajit Johar
Alexis Finlay
Alison and Jonathan Segal
Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh,
Permanent Mission of the United Arab
Emirates to the United Nations
Amrita Singh
Andrea and Chris Davis
Angela and Constantine Karides
Ann Kramer
Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG)
Arielle Solomon
Arline Lederman and Edward Friedman
Astrid Montalta, Nudwear Lingerie,
Lougewear & Swimwear
Awadh Restaurant
Barbara Slifka
Barnett Rubin

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Carey Macaleer, Aline Pilates
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Catherine and Rony Shimony
Charlotte Kreutz and Thomas Hilmer
Charlotte Plotnick
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Chetna and Arun Singh, Chetna Singh LLC
Chloe Breyer, Interfaith Center of New York
Christiane Piselli
Christina Piaia
Christine Davies
Christy and John Mack, Christy and John
Mack Foundation
Daniel Greenberg
Davanie Singhroy
David and Karen Everett
Debbie Ahmari
Debra Copeland
Del Maguey
Diana Krell
Diane and Adam Max
Dimitri Jobert
Dominique Bravo
Dominique Day
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Ellen Kelly
Ellen Wingard
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Emilee Pearson
Emma Cunningham
Erik Hyman
Feminist Majority Foundation
Ferha and Barry Sahgal
Francine Monaco
Frank Bostelmann
Gabor George Hazy
Gary Honig, Remember XYZ

“I’m extremely grateful for Women for Afghan Women, and the amount of support I received from them. I wouldn’t have been able to survive in the United States if it wasn’t for WAW. I went through a lot of hardship before finding WAW, but I’m at ease now knowing there is a place like WAW.” – NYCC client



- | | |
|--|--|
| Gaurav Anand and Shagun Mehandru | Karla and Peter Harwich |
| Genuine | Kathleen Kaasch |
| George W. Bush Institute | Kathryn Ellis |
| Gloria Neuwirth, The Wallace Fox Foundation | Kathy Mills |
| Gracey Stoddard | Katie Danziger |
| Heirloom | Kayaan Unwalla |
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| Hilary Dayton Busch | Kenneth and Noreen Lankin |
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Nicola Fritz	The Sunshine Lady Foundation
Nicole Lapsatis	Time Hotel
Pamela Corrie and Lawrence Baer	Todd Soloweigh and Megan Corrado
Polly Smail	Tom Freston
Premier Lighting & Production	Toni and Raymond Maloney
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LIVES SAVED IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE UNITED STATES

MINA, 9

Mina was only 9 years old when she was promised to a man by her father so that he could have another wife. A few months later and before they were supposed to be married, her 29-year-old fiancé kidnapped her and began to brutally rape her. The fiancé's mother tried to protect Mina for as long as she could, but her son continued to rape the poor child for weeks. Mina got to the point where she could no longer sit or walk, was bleeding heavily, and eventually contracted a severe infection. A local community leader was made aware of Mina's condition and took her to the nearest clinic, which immediately referred her case to Women for Afghan Women (WAW).

WAW immediately transferred Mina from the clinic to a local hospital that could better deal with the treatment needed for her condition. The child was in constant, agonizing pain and required surgery. But, she was too weak. After six months of medical care, her doctors were still too worried to operate because they feared she could die under anesthesia due to the frailty of her condition.

At that point, WAW transferred Mina to a medical facility in Kabul to see if they could treat her condition. She was finally able to undergo the surgery and spent her recovery at one of WAW's Women's Protection Centers, where she is doing much better. Now, she is much healthier and happier. But, unfortunately, she will still have to undergo further surgery when she is older. Until then, WAW will take care of her for as long as Mina needs WAW's help.

GHAZAL, 16

When Ghazal ran away with a man who was not her husband, her enraged brother pursued the couple. When the brother finally found them, he savagely attacked both with an axe. He hacked the man to death and tried to do the same to Ghazal.

Somehow, Ghazal survived more than 15 massive blows to her head, face, and neck. A hospital in the area kept Ghazal alive, but her family was afraid to lend her any support. The stigma of standing by an alleged "fallen" girl put them in danger of being targeted.

When WAW got news of Ghazal's case, the organization stepped in immediately and took over her care. WAW flew Ghazal to a hospital in another province and made sure she received the urgent medical care and surgery that she required. After a lengthy medical recovery, WAW placed Ghazal in our Halfway House, where compassionate staff continue to care for her.

Today, Ghazal can walk, eat, and speak again. Although, she has suffered trauma-induced memory loss, she is aware that she was attacked by her own brother. But, she has also learned that many of the women that WAW cares for have been similarly abused and brutalized, and applies herself to her rehabilitation with the utmost dignity and courage.

CHAMAN, 42

Born and raised in Afghanistan, Chaman is a domestic violence survivor. When she became of marriageable age, her family arranged for her to marry an Afghan man living in New York. When Chaman arrived in the United States, her husband hid her identity papers, physically abused her, and refused to let her communicate with her family.

Chaman first came to Women for Afghan Women looking for support with accessing Medicaid. Within weeks, she felt safe enough to call a WAW staff member in the middle of a cold, spring night, where she and her children were stranded on a park bench. Her husband had beaten her and her two children and thrown them out of the house.

Women for Afghan Women took on Chaman's case and solicited legal help to assist Chaman in obtaining a divorce. The divorce was not only obtained successfully but she also won full custody of her children. With WAW's help, Chaman has relocated with her children to Canada, where they are living with extended family in a safe, thriving, and peaceful environment. Chaman remains in regular contact with Women for Afghan Women and remains grateful for the support she and her children received during their time of need.

“When I returned to Afghanistan for the first time since leaving as a child, I truly learned how strong and resilient my Afghan sisters are. After hearing their stories, I vowed to go back and commit my life to advocating for change for all Afghan women.”

— *Manizha Naderi, Executive Director, Women for Afghan Women*

Women for Afghan Women changes all client names and removes any identifying information, features, and characteristics when relaying their stories in order to protect their and their families' identities, privacy, and safety.

NEW YORK

158-24 73rd Avenue
Fresh Meadows, NY 11366
T: 718-591-2434

AFGHANISTAN

Noor Mohammad Taraki Street
Police District #3
Kabul, Afghanistan
T: +(93) 728-859-560

WASHINGTON, DC

5520 4th Street NW
Washington, DC 20011
Tel: 202-667-7236

EMAIL: office@womenforafghanwomen.org

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/womenforafghanwomen

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