Women for Afghan Women (WAW) is the largest women’s organization in Afghanistan, with over 850 local Afghan staff working to empower women, children, and families, and to build a nation of advocates and allies for women’s rights.

Afghan women have made tremendous strides and measurable progress since the fall of the Taliban in 2001. Yet, much more work still needs to be done to expand WAW’s reach in Afghanistan and to multiply the gains women have made to accelerate the cultural change needed to advance the country, in general, and women’s equality and rights, in particular.

“Women for Afghan Women is the best organization in Afghanistan.” – Fawzia Koofi, Afghan politician and rights activist

**THE STATE OF AFGHAN WOMEN**

According to Human Rights Watch, an estimated **87% of women** in Afghanistan will experience abuse in their lifetime. Research by Global Rights also suggests that **9 out of 10 women** in the country are victims of gender-based violence with **90%** of incidents committed by family members.

Despite these challenging conditions and difficult realities, access to protection services for survivors of human rights violations, abuse, and gender-based violence are limited in Afghanistan. The country’s political and economic insecurity, the ongoing conflict and terrorist attacks, have also created a sense of constant instability that impedes advocating for women and girls’ rights and their right to access services and protection.

**WAW’S WORK IN AFGHANISTAN**

WAW’s comprehensive programs and services in Afghanistan address human rights violations and cases of violence and abuse against women and girls. Every year, **over 10,000 clients** come to obtain

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**The vast majority of WAW’s clients are women and girls, who have suffered abuse and human rights violations, including:**

- Forced and underage (child) marriage;
- Threats of “honor” killings;
- Domestic violence;
- Ba’ad (custom of using young girls as barter to settle disputes);
- Beatings amounting to torture;
- Forced prostitution;
- Imprisonment for alleged “moral crimes;”
- Limited access to healthcare; and
- Denial of education.
support through WAW’s 32 centers and services in the 16 Afghan provinces of Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Herat, Faryab, Jawzjan, Kabul, Kapisa, Kunduz, Laghman, Nangarhar, Nooristan, Samangan, Saripul, and Takhar.

WAW’s success in Afghanistan is rooted in its grassroots approach in the development and implementation of its programs. The organization hires locally and uses local knowledge and a deep understanding of and sensitivity to local culture, traditions, customs, and challenges to inform its comprehensive programs and services in Afghanistan, which includes:

- 32 Family Guidance Centers (FGCs)
- 12 Women’s Protection Centers (WPCs)
- 4 Children’s Support Centers (CSCs)
- 3 Transitional Houses (THs)
- 1 Halfway House (HHs)
- Women’s Rights Trainings Program
- Protection Monitoring Project (PMP)
- Undergraduate Scholarship Program

WAW’S PARTNERS IN AFGHANISTAN

WAW works with the Afghan government and the US State Department, including the US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Afghan Ministry of Women’s Affairs, and the Office of Afghanistan’s First Lady.

Other partners include the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, UN Women, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. WAW is also a proud member of the US Afghan Women’s Council, the Alliance in Support of the Afghan People, the Afghan Shelter Network, and the Afghan Women’s Network, among many others.

“In the education I received from Women for Afghan Women was the only way I could rescue myself and my daughter from violence.” — WAW Women’s Protection Center client

In 2019, WAW in Afghanistan provided services, programs, and/or took care of:

- 3,013 individuals at our FGCs.
- 1,904 women and girls, and 578 accompanying children at our WPCs.
- 387 girls and boys at our CSCs.
- 137 formerly incarcerated women and girls, and their accompanying children, at our THs.
- 23 women and 11 children at our HH.
- 34,463 Afghans through 1,046 women’s rights trainings (with 42% men participating in 969 of these trainings).
- 10,316 refugee returnee families and 66,845 IDP families through our PMP.
- 2,682 women and girls, who required critical health services.
- 13,213 community members and stakeholders, and 297 staff through peacebuilding training focused on women and peacebuilding.

For information on how to support WAW or to learn more about WAW’s other programs, please visit www.womenforafghanwomen.org

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 New York (NY). 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 was founded in April 2001 to advocate for women then living under Taliban rule in Afghanistan. Since its inception, WAW has become the largest organization for Afghan women and girls globally, and the largest women’s organization in Afghanistan. To date, WAW has served over 57,000+ clients and trained more than 396,500+ individuals on women’s rights. WAW provides life-saving and life-changing services, education, and advocacy for women and children across Afghanistan and NY who have endured human rights violations. WAW’s capacity has grown from being volunteer-run when it was founded to now employing over 850 staff members, the vast majority of whom are Afghan and female.