

Women for Afghan Women condemns Taliban's decision to ban higher education for women

New York, NY (12/20/2022): [Women for Afghan Women \(WAW\)](#) Women for Afghan Women (WAW) is outraged to learn that the Taliban's Ministry of Higher Education issued a decree ordering all public and private universities and colleges immediately deny education to all female students, ultimately banning women's higher education indefinitely in Afghanistan.

This decision to ban women's higher education is blatantly discriminatory against all women and girls in Afghanistan, and an infringement of their most basic human rights, as laid out in Articles 1, 2, 3, 7, and 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Article 26 of UDHR clearly declares, "Everyone has the right to education [...] higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit."

We condemn this ultimate disregard for every Afghan woman's and girl's right to education and to live with dignity, freedom, and agency.

It is a fact that societies and economies flourish when women are educated at higher levels and can acquire the knowledge and tools to contribute to their families, communities, and all sectors of society.

It is a moral imperative that the international community, including all governments, institutions, and people around the world, continue to speak out against these flagrant human rights violations that have turned Afghan women and girls into second-class citizens and have stripped them of their humanity and dignity. We cannot stand by as the gains women have made in Afghanistan over the past twenty years continue to be erased.

Every young girl and woman who is denied access to education is one whose hopes and dreams of a brighter future have been shattered.

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Women for Afghan Women (WAW) is a grassroots, civil society organization dedicated to advocating for women's rights, challenging the norms that underpin gender-based violence, and influencing harmful attitudes to bring about positive change.

WAW grew from a small network of volunteers established in early 2001 in New York to become the largest women's organization in Afghanistan before the Taliban took over the governance of Afghanistan in 2021. Today, WAW continues to expand its services to provide life-changing programs, women's empowerment education, and vocational training for its clients in the United States (U.S.) and continues to implement its humanitarian programs and work with non-governmental and other partners across Afghanistan.