



# WE INVEST IN YOUNG WOMEN

THROUGH MENTAL HEALTH, LIFE SKILLS  
TRAINING & COMMUNITY SERVICE

## ABOUT US

Ascend goes beyond borders and redefines opportunity for young women to thrive and contribute to society.

We envision a world where cultural barriers and gender disparity no longer restrict girls' opportunities.

Through health training and leadership, we create new pathways for girls to succeed, reshaping perspectives and championing gender equality every step of the way.



*"For nearly a decade, we've been providing girls with hope and opportunity by redefining traditional pathways to progress in regions constrained by cultural barriers."*

Marina Legree: Ascend Founder

*"We are a door for other girls."*

Ascend Pakistan Instructor: Fareena



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## AFGHANISTAN

Ascend launched its first program in Kabul, Afghanistan in 2015 and in the years leading up to 2021, over 200 girls participated in mountaineering-based leadership training. Following the Taliban take-over in 2021, our primary focus was to reestablish a program in Kabul that could provide much needed mental health support, give women a sense of purpose, and provide a safe place for women to connect and support each other.

Ascend has reestablished as a strong and positive presence in Afghanistan, cultivated a skilled all-female instructor team delivering Ascend's 5-pillar program, and initiated community service projects that have already positively impacted over 800 individuals. Each year over 120 women, ages 15-24 participate in and benefit from Ascend's on-going four-month program.

Ascend has committed \$200,000 towards reestablishing the program in Afghanistan. However, to further expand and enhance our program, we now seek support to propel our initiatives to the next level.

## OBJECTIVES

- Impact 1,000 individuals in Afghanistan through training, employment, community outreach, and service projects.
- Employ exclusively female program staff.
- Create a safe space for women to gather and grow.
- Ensure sufficient funding and growth for Afghanistan that establishes a model replicable in other areas of the country.
- Focus on mental health, life skills, self-esteem, and critical thinking, to equip participants for success in life and positions of leadership.

## 3-YEAR OUTLOOK

- Provide training and professional development opportunities to Ascend's female instructors and support opportunities for new instructors.
- Provide world-class training to over 120 young women annually through highly trained female instructors.
- Secure \$200,000 annually, totaling \$600,000 over three years, to develop and sustain the program.



# PROGRAM OUTCOMES

## Self-Esteem

At program end 100% of participants report high self-esteem; this compared to 30% of participants who begin the program reporting “very low” self-esteem (using the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale).

## Life Skills

Participants report an overall improvement in their communication skills, conflict resolution and giving and receiving constructive feedback as a result of program participation.

## Overcoming Challenges

Prior to Ascend, participants ranked their abilities to perform difficult tasks and handle a crisis as very low. By the end of the program, participants belief in AND demonstrated ability to manage difficulties and crisis situations greatly improved.

## Teamwork

Participants report Ascend as one of the more diverse groups participants belong to. Reported feelings of teamwork and trust improve during participation in the program. Many participants report their Ascend team as a group in which they feel accepted and valued.

## Health & Wellness

Participants report an improved understanding of their mental and physical health and now have the necessary tools to care for their bodies and minds at program conclusion.

## Family & Community

Family and friend acceptance of a girl's participation in Ascend increased as their daughters and friends progressed through the program.

Improved self-esteem



100% increase in self-esteem reported by participants

Role-Model

# 27%

increase in the number of participants who see themselves as role models for other women

Community Service

## USEFUL SATISFIED PROUD

how participants reported feeling following completion of their community service project

### INSTRUCTORS

- 12 educated and certified instructors with professional experience
- 4 months skills-based training with professional development opportunities

### PARTICIPANTS

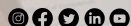
- 120 participants ages 15-24
- 4 month program offered daily
- 342 program hours

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- 150 family members impacted
- 800 young people reached through community events
- 2,000 community members impacted by participant service projects



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# AFGHANISTAN BUDGET:

## WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH & LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM



Employee Compensation	<b>\$94,793 USD</b>
Contracted Services	<b>\$12,736 USD</b>
Supplies & Equipment	<b>\$18,651 USD</b>
Facilities	<b>\$18,705 USD</b>
Travel & Transportation	<b>\$46,683 USD</b>
Other Expenses	<b>\$10,438 USD</b>
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Total	<b>\$202,006 USD</b>

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# WE INVEST IN YOUNG WOMEN

THROUGH MOUNTAINEERING-BASED LEADERSHIP  
TRAINING & COMMUNITY SERVICE



## ABOUT US

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## PAKISTAN

In May 2023, Ascend launched its Pakistan initiative, headquartered at the Ascend House in Skardu, Gilgit-Baltistan. Our primary focus in 2023 was to establish a strong presence in Pakistan, cultivate a skilled instructor team proficient in rock climbing, mountaineering, and physical fitness, and initiate community service projects that have already positively impacted over 800 individuals and created 10 local jobs contributing to the Pakistani economy. Moving forward into 2024, we are excited to welcome our inaugural cohort of 30 scholarship participants for a 7-month program year.

Ascend has committed \$150,000 towards establishing operational infrastructure, obtaining nonprofit registration under Section 42, and recruiting and training local female staff in Skardu. Additionally, our efforts have resulted in providing outdoor experiences to over 800 people in Gilgit-Baltistan during our start-up year. However, to further expand and enhance our program, we now seek support to propel our initiatives to the next level.

## OBJECTIVES

- Impact 5,000 individuals in Gilgit-Baltistan through training, employment, community outreach, and service projects.
- Employ exclusively female program staff.
- Ensure all funds raised in Pakistan remain in Pakistan, with Ascend HQ providing support for curriculum and training standards, program monitoring, and financial oversight.
- Introduce sustainable international certification in outdoor education and mountaineering for the first time in Pakistan's history.
- Focus on critical thinking, management skills, and self-esteem to equip participants for success in education and professional life.

## 3-YEAR OUTLOOK

- Train 5-10 female instructors annually, contributing to Pakistan's outdoor education infrastructure.
- Provide world-class outdoor education to children in Gilgit-Baltistan with highly trained female instructors.
- Secure \$150,000 annually, totaling \$450,000 over three years, to develop and sustain the program.



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Community Service

## USEFUL SATISFIED PROUD

how participants reported feeling following completion of their community service project

### INSTRUCTORS

- 5 certified instructors
- 2 instructors in-training
- 9 months of skills-based training
- SPI certification
- Wilderness First Aid trained

### PARTICIPANTS

- 30 participants ages 15-24
- 7 month afterschool program
- 14 outdoor program days
- 342 program hours

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- 150 family members impacted
- 1,500 young people reached through community events
- 2,000 community members impacted by participant service projects



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# PAKISTAN BUDGET:

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SPORT



Employee Compensation	<b>\$43,134 USD</b>
Contracted Services	<b>\$31,522 USD</b>
Supplies & Equipment	<b>\$11,882 USD</b>
Facilities	<b>\$11,234 USD</b>
Travel & Transportation	<b>\$26,513 USD</b>
Other Expenses	<b>\$8,639 USD</b>
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Total	<b>\$133,000 USD</b>

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