



WOMEN FOR
AFGHAN WOMEN

Invest in HER: Hope, Empowerment, and Resilience

Annual Report 2024



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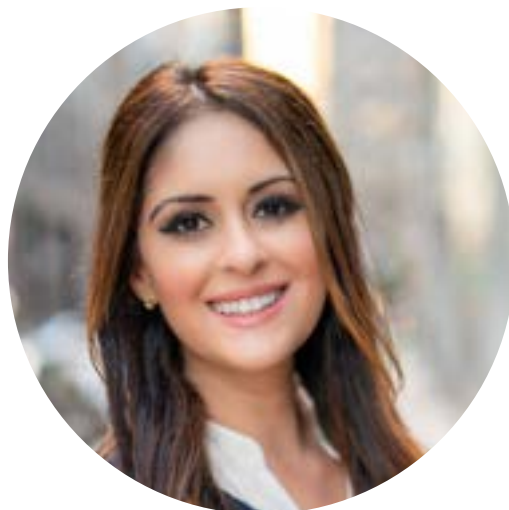
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A Letter From WAW's Executive Director

Dear Friends of WAW:

Introducing Women for Afghan Women's 2024 Annual Report as WAW's new Executive Director is a great honor. I came on board at WAW in 2024, humbled by the responsibility and confidence granted me in leading this incredibly impactful organization. As an Afghan American woman deeply committed to the cause of women and girls, I have been profoundly impressed by WAW's achievements and its potential to empower and uplift women, girls, and members of other vulnerable communities we serve.



This report is further evidence of how this organization, supported by an extraordinary Board of Directors, leadership team, and most importantly, our tireless and dedicated staff, has continued to provide critical support for the women, girls, and families we serve as they rise above challenges, fulfill their dreams of independence, and improve their lives and the lives of their families.

When I joined the organization in 2024, I was tremendously excited and passionate about the possibilities ahead and about strengthening and expanding our programs so our beneficiaries can reach their fullest potential, amplify their voices, and achieve their goals. We embarked on a new, ambitious, and challenging direction, focused on building stronger partnerships and collaborations while devoting precious resources to addressing the unique needs of Afghan women in the U.S. and Afghanistan.

In 2024, we aimed high in both fields of operation. In Afghanistan, critical, life-saving work continued with our international and local partners providing humanitarian aid, protection monitoring, children's support, sheltering, education, and natural disaster relief programs and support to Afghanistan's most vulnerable populations: women, girls, children, internally displaced persons, and refugee returnees. We provided support to the construction and rehabilitation of schools, clinics, shelters, and water and sanitation systems, supported livelihood projects for women, and took special care of Afghanistan's most defenseless children. We uplifted the lives of close to one million Afghans, with a focus on women, girls, and children.

We are particularly proud of our brave and unrelenting staff in Afghanistan, who continue to go out on the field every day, despite the tremendous and arduous challenges of working in a country plagued by severe economic distress, lack of international support and funding, deteriorating healthcare, limited education, and weakened social services and governance structures. It is because of these conditions that WAW is making such a tremendous difference in the lives of so many in Afghanistan.

In the United States, we remain committed to providing a robust and comprehensive network of programs and services to support women and families in the New York and Virginia communities. In 2024, we set and met ambitious targets to support newly arrived Afghans while expanding the reach of our services to Afghan and other Muslim immigrant women and their families. With funding challenges and rising anti-immigrant sentiment, our work in 2024 and the future becomes even more critical.

Despite the challenges facing our clients both in the United States and Afghanistan, in 2024, the leadership team worked hard with our board and staff to present a revitalized vision and approach to advocating for Afghan and other vulnerable women's rights and to elevate and empower their efforts to secure safer, healthier, and more prosperous lives for themselves, their children, and their families. We set clear priorities to diversify our support base, amplify our voices for change, strengthen our networks, and expand collaborations with Afghan diaspora organizations and both national and international women's rights groups.

We believe in strength in numbers, allowing us all to bring visibility and to push for critical changes to advocate for Afghan and other vulnerable women's rights.

In 2025, we plan to better include you, our supporters, in our work. We hope to host more events so you may learn more about what we do, engage with our team, and hear directly from the women whose lives we are transforming.

Together, we will strengthen WAW's programs while expanding our clients' access to education, employment, and capacity-building opportunities, everywhere we work.

Together, we will address the root causes of gender inequality and gender-based violence so that Afghan and other vulnerable women and girls can live without fear and envision a limitless future filled with dignity and respect.

Together, we will help women and girls develop the skills they need to thrive and confidently navigate daily life.

Together, we will support Afghan evacuees and refugees as they transition from displacement to citizenship in a new home.

Together, we will continue to fight for the rights of women and girls, wherever they may be, and ensure their voices are heard, respected, and empowered.

Lastly, we are deeply grateful for your ongoing support. Without it, we would not be able to achieve the accomplishments we proudly present in this report.

I hope you enjoy these highlights from WAW's work in 2024. As we navigate the complexities of 2025, we continue to hold hope for brighter days ahead for Afghan women and families, and for all of you who stand with us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Susan Aryan Antolin', with a stylized, flowing script.

Dr. Susan Aryan Antolin
Executive Director
Women for Afghan Women

Renewed Leadership, Renewed Vision

Women for Afghan Women has provided life-changing services to Afghan women and their families since 2001. Since then, we've grown into a strong organization advocating for Afghan women in Afghanistan and the United States.

2024 was a year of expanding critical programs and services, staying the course despite difficulties, and hiring new staff and leadership. WAW is always working on reinventing itself and ensuring our work remains relevant and impactful. We are ready to serve in every way we can to meet the unique and changing needs of the communities we serve. This year, we even refreshed our brand to reflect how the organization has matured and how we aim to be bigger, bolder, and even more impactful in our future.



Of all these achievements, we feel one of WAW's brighter moments in 2024 was the invitation by WAW's Board of Directors to Dr. Susan A. Antolin to lead the organization as our new Executive Director. Dr. Antolin brings to WAW a wealth of experience as the daughter of Afghan refugees whose life and background deeply informed her doctoral studies at NYU, previous leadership positions, and dedication to social causes that focused on empowering women and girls. She is a dynamic person with integrity and vision, and we are lucky she accepted this new role.

Today, Dr. Antolin is leading WAW in finding creative solutions to the challenging environments in which we operate. She is taking a lead in ensuring that WAW co-creates and collaborates with all those who are passionate about WAW's work and who recognize the women and girls we serve are the greatest assets in their extraordinary journeys.

With Dr. Antolin, WAW's leadership and staff set new strategies in 2024 for a stronger and more sustainable fundraising and development plan for WAW's operations in Afghanistan and the U.S. Additionally, Dr. Antolin is leading WAW's efforts in building stronger networks to advocate for women's rights and empowerment in Afghanistan and the United States.

These efforts will remain our focus in 2025, as WAW aims to renew and recommit to its vision of amplifying our voices and pushing for critical changes on the national and international stage to ensure Afghan women enjoy safety and the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that all women deserve.

On behalf of WAW's Board of Directors, I thank all our donors, supporters, staff, and loyal friends. Your support is the critical pillar for the success of our mission of protecting and empowering women, girls, and families for over 23 years. We welcome your support as we continue to serve until our collective vision for the women of this world becomes a reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annie Pforzheimer".

Annie Pforzheimer
Board Chair
Women for Afghan Women



A Letter of Gratitude

Dear Women for Afghan Women,

I've been thinking about how to put into words what your support meant to me during one of the darkest chapters of my life. Sometimes the most extraordinary friendships can lie dormant for years only to prove their strength when we need them most.

Since my earliest memories of interacting with WAW, you've been a constant beacon of reliability and trust. What strikes me most is how, throughout all these years, you've maintained the same level of integrity that first earned my trust as a young person attending youth events hosted by WAW.

There's something deeply reassuring about knowing that you remain a steadfast presence even as the world changes rapidly around us. In moments of uncertainty, I've found myself saying, "At least WAW is still there, still doing great work, still caring."

When I was trapped in that toxic abusive relationship, feeling isolated and lost, you appeared like a lighthouse in a storm. Despite the years apart, you stepped in without hesitation or judgment. You saw my struggle and extended your hand.

I'll never forget how you gave me the courage to make the hardest decision of my life. You referred [me and my children] not to just a shelter; you gave us peace of mind, a chance to heal, and hope for tomorrow.

Life has moved forward since then, and I'm in a much better place now, thanks in no small part to you. I want you to know that your kindness and support during that time didn't just help me escape a bad situation — it helped me rediscover my worth and rebuild my life.

- Client, Domestic Violence Survivor, NYCC 2025



Our Mission

Women for Afghan Women is a grassroots organization empowering Afghan women and girls in both Afghanistan and the U.S. to realize their full potential and advocate for their rights, while challenging societal norms to create lasting change and advance gender equality.

Our Vision

Women for Afghan Women envisions a world in which all Afghan women and their families thrive and prosper.





U.S. Testimonials

"English class helped me in many ways. Class has become my home away from home. Here I feel safe and I learn not only English but also about American culture and my rights as a woman. Since I joined WAW's classes, I am more confident and motivated to share and accept life challenges. I can solve my problems mostly by myself. Thank you to my teacher and thank you, WAW!"

- Sona Ahmadi, WAW U.S. Client

"When I am in class, I feel that it is my time to do something for myself. I feel relaxed and free. Since I joined this class, I have improved a lot and overcame many fears I had about life outside home. It has helped me build my self-confidence and improve my mental health, thanks to my teacher and WAW."

- M.Y., WAW U.S. Client

"The love and support I get from WAW has changed my life for the better. I think I make smarter decisions and learn a great deal about life and life skills. WAW is helping me achieve my goals in life."

- R.T., WAW U.S. Client

"Class is important to me because it helps me learn new things and improve my life skills through the lessons our teacher prepares for us. My teacher and classmates helped me build confidence, socially and academically. I appreciate it a lot."

- N. M., WAW U.S. Client



U.S. Overview

WAW's Board of Directors, headquarters, and community centers in the U.S. are women-led. WAW's U.S. operations are powered by a dedicated team that brings together individuals from immigrant and refugee communities similar to those we serve, alongside strong allies who are deeply committed to advancing our mission.

Our leadership and teams offer strategic solutions through pro bono support that meet our clients' unique needs, including a network of legal, immigration, gender-based violence, social services, job placement, citizenship and English language instruction, and senior, youth, and community outreach programs and services.

In 2024, WAW's [Virginia Community Center \(VACC\)](#) marks two full years of operation, building on the longstanding success of our [New York Community Center \(NYCC\)](#), which has served as a vital lifeline for Afghan women and families for over 19 years.

Built on the NYCC's model and in response to the 2021 crisis in Afghanistan, WAW founded our VACC to support thousands of newly arrived Afghans who have settled in the Virginia area, where one of the largest Afghan-American communities traditionally resides.

Because of WAW's grassroots, needs-based, and culturally-sensitive approach, our clients regard our U.S. community centers as safe spaces to seek assistance and the opportunities they need to ensure their well-being, education, and economic empowerment lead to safer, better assimilated, and more prosperous lives for themselves and their families. Our community centers offer a space to thrive, offering hope and opportunity for Afghan and other immigrant women to integrate more seamlessly and to forge empowered paths forward in their lives and the lives of their families in the U.S.

Women for Afghan Women partnered with over two dozen organizations in New York and Virginia in 2024.



U.S. Program Staff

21 STAFF MEMBERS



2023

29 STAFF MEMBERS



2024

38% GROWTH

In 2024, WAW's Community Centers in New York and Virginia Provided:



- A Seniors Program for 30 senior Afghan women (aged 55+).



- 111 youth with leadership programs.



- Various levels of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for 44 women.
- 180 clients with college enrollment assistance, educational advising, and financial aid.
- 232 clients with job matching and career development support services leading to gainful employment.



- 31 Women's Circles attended by 58 women who discussed relevant issues such as mental health, domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and bystander intervention.
- 13 trainings for 385 community members on culturally responsive approaches to domestic violence, sexual assault, gender justice, and mental health education and prevention.
- 257 clients with mental health counseling, including individual, couples, and family counseling and other forms of advocacy for mental health support.
- 200 domestic violence survivors with casework support.



- 1,821 clients with material assistance, including cash assistance, clothing, and essential home goods.
- 18 distribution drives and other forms of emergency relief to support 1,674 newly-arrived refugee families, including food packages, clothing, cash assistance, and back-to-school supplies.



- 223 clients assistance with submitting U.S. citizenship applications.
- Three online U.S. citizenship exam preparation classes for 47 women.
- 1,255 women, men, and their families with 5,972 case management services.
- 676 clients with 1,939 cases of legal support, including naturalization, permanent residence, change of status, asylum, U visas, family petitions, and others, including 244 asylum seekers who received critical legal support.

From Afghanistan to the U.S.

Amira's Journey: From Struggle to Stability

Amira's journey from Afghanistan to the U.S. is one of hope, empowerment, and resilience. It is a reminder of the impact a supportive community can have in transforming lives, particularly for those who have endured unimaginable hardships.

Amira's journey began in the midst of hardship and uncertainty. Amira fled Afghanistan due to the turmoil and violence that threatened her and her family's future. The journey to escape was long and dangerous, but after months of perilous travel, she finally made it to the Mexican border. There, Amira and her children faced yet another struggle—navigating a complex system that seemed overwhelming and uncertain.

Like so many others who have made this treacherous journey, Amira and her children were exhausted, emotionally drained, and unsure what to do next. She and her family had lost everything including their home, community, and a life they once knew.

But what Amira didn't lose was her determination to create a better future for herself and her children. Her journey eventually brought her to one of WAW's U.S. Community Centers where she found her first glimmer of hope. At WAW, Amira was immediately met with compassion and understanding. The staff knew Amira's road ahead would be challenging, but they were committed to helping her rebuild her life.

Our first priority was to provide temporary housing and basic support like food, clothing, and access to healthcare for Amira and her children. Next, the center provided the legal support Amira needed to navigate her family's complex immigration process.

Our legal team worked closely with her to ensure she understood her rights, guided her through asylum applications, and helped her apply for work permits.

While waiting for her immigration applications and permits to process, Amira was enrolled in English language classes and job training programs offered at our center.

Eventually, Amira began to feel a sense of belonging. She found solace in the community of other refugees and immigrants, who offered her support and encouragement. With help from the WAW's case management team, Amira secured a part-time job, which allowed her to support her children and cover their living expenses. Over time, her employment status improved and she transitioned to full-time work at a local business.

WAW's support for Amira did not end there. We helped her find childcare services, so she could balance her job and children's care. We connected her with cultural orientation programs that helped her better navigate her new life in the U.S.



With each passing day, Amira has grown more confident, empowered, and hopeful for the future.

Today, she is a proud, independent woman successfully integrated into her new life. She has stable employment, a home for her family, and is fully engaged in her children's schooling and their extracurricular activities. She no longer feels like a stranger in a foreign land, but like a valued member of a supportive community.



Amira's story is one of hope, empowerment, and resilience. It is a reminder of the incredible impact that a supportive community can have in transforming lives, particularly for those who have endured unimaginable hardships.

Thanks to WAW's comprehensive network of support and true commitment, Amira and her children now have a safe, stable, and promising future ahead and limitless hope for a better life in the United States.



U.S. Highlights

In 2024, WAW's New York Community Center (NYCC) and Virginia Community Center (VACC) advanced our mission to support Afghan and other immigrant women, girls, and families by growing our team to 29 staff members, providing culturally appropriate and tailored services five days a week to all those who come to WAW.

Our teams in the U.S. address a diverse range of issues and meet the needs of our community members, as they are presented to us. These include supporting survivors of domestic violence (DV) and advocating for them, providing legal assistance to those facing immigration challenges, empowering women through education, providing mental health support, and uplifting our community and its voice through community events, skills-building and immigration workshops, and proactive engagement with our partners.

Major highlights from our U.S. Community Centers' achievements in 2024 include:

- Providing sensitive, confidential, and vital case management support to newly arrived refugees, supporting and advocating for DV survivors, and meeting critical needs of underserved groups, while strengthening local networks and partnerships for housing, healthcare, and financial support in culturally sensitive settings.
- Addressing a critical gap in mental health support for immigrant and newly-arrived Afghan women through one-on-one counseling, group therapy sessions, and special sensitization interventions during Women's Circles held regularly at each center.
- Expanding WAW's legal team from one full-time attorney, one part-time attorney, and two full-time paralegals to a robust team of three full-time attorneys, one part-time attorney, and five full-time paralegals that provide a comprehensive range of legal immigration support, including for N-400 citizenship and asylum applications (with a 100% success rate!).
- Providing culturally relevant, empowering programs for immigrant senior women and youth in our communities to ensure they overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation while enjoying each other's company and learning from an engaging environment.
- Piloting new mental health services for Afghan youth in partnership with local high and middle schools in Virginia.
- Organizing the Holding Youth Uprising and Hello Future youth programs that helped youth in our community build career skills, financial independence, and confidence.
- Expanding empowerment classes to meet the demand of women enrolled in WAW's in-person ESOL classes at both centers.



Zohra's Story

Supporting a New Beginning for Zohra, Every Step of the Way

Zohra's story is one of courage and transformation. From a life of domestic violence and abuse to healing, empowerment, and independence, Zohra and her children are living the safe, secure, and hopeful lives they deserve.

For years, Zohra endured an abusive marriage, trapped in a cycle of fear and isolation. Her husband's control was all-encompassing—financially, emotionally, and physically. He did not allow Zohra to work, limited her access to money, and often told her she was worthless. The emotional abuse cut as deep as the physical abuse, leaving her with a shattered sense of self-worth.

Every day, Zohra felt like she was living in a constant state of survival, always fearful of what might happen next.

When Zohra finally found the strength to leave her abusive spouse, she did so with nothing but her children and the clothes on their backs. She was terrified, unsure of where to go, and what to do next. But she knew she had to escape to give herself and her children a chance.

When Zohra came to one of our community centers for help, she finally found support, empathy, and hope. WAW's center staff immediately provided Zohra with a safe place to stay—temporary housing that allowed her to start rebuilding her life without fear of her abuser's retaliation.



WAW's legal team made sure Zohra understood her rights. We helped Zohra file for a protective court order against her spouse, and then for divorce. Our legal team stood by Zohra every step of the way, helping her regain the control she had lost over her life and well-being over the years.

Beyond legal and housing assistance, WAW helped Zohra receive the counseling services she needed to heal from the trauma she had endured. It was not easy. There were days when the weight of what Zohra had gone through felt too heavy to bear.

But with WAW's support, Zohra found a safe space to process her emotions, rebuild her confidence, and reconnect with her sense of self. Through therapy, she learned how to set boundaries, advocate for herself, and develop the coping skills she needed to thrive.

As we watched Zohra's confidence grow, so did her independence. WAW connected Zohra with job training and educational programs that helped her gain new skills and prepare for the workforce. With WAW's guidance, Zohra found stable employment that is allowing her to support her children and gain financial independence for the first time in years.



Over time, Zohra's life has shifted from one of survival to one of hope. With her newfound independence, Zohra is taking control of her future and, most importantly, ensuring a safe and stable environment for her children.

Today, Zohra is thriving. She has a steady job, a home, and is fully engaged in her children's lives, providing them with the love, stability, and safety they deserve. Zohra's journey hasn't been easy, but through her resilience and the support she received from WAW, she has built a new life, full of confidence and independence and free of violence.

Zohra's story is a powerful reminder that with the right support, no woman has to face the trauma and pain of domestic violence alone. Zohra has transformed her life. Today, she inspires not only us at WAW but other domestic violence survivors in our community who are on their own paths to healing and empowerment.

Laila's Story

Laila is a newly-arrived Afghan woman and asylum seeker in the United States. She is also a domestic violence survivor. When Laila reached out to WAW, we immediately relocated her and her two children to a safe shelter, which is aware of her cultural sensitivities and provides her with wonderful ongoing support.

WAW's legal team has taken on Laila's asylum case while our caseworkers are following up with her to ensure all of her and her children's needs are being met.

We sent her a new phone, phone line, and a \$500 gift card, so she would be able to contact people safely and buy some basic necessities for herself and her children.

We helped her fill her application for SNAP benefits and prepared her for an interview with the New York Human Resources Administration office for food assistance and emergency rental assistance. Thankfully her application was accepted. She was delighted to hear the news and thankful for our ongoing help.

Today, Laila has a job as a preschool teacher at a nearby preschool and is on her way to rebuilding her life.





Looking Ahead: U.S. Operational Strategy for 2025

In 2025, WAW's U.S. Community Centers aim to:



Expand our case management capacity, including implementing a digital case management system, to support more refugees, survivors of domestic violence, and underserved groups.



Strengthen local partnerships to expand housing, healthcare, and financial resources for our communities.



Hire more full-time attorneys and paralegals to handle the extensive demand for immigration legal support and to host quarterly workshops on key immigration and legal issues impacting our community members.



Expand ESOL classes for more women and seniors in our communities and provide a refresher training course for our ESOL instructors.



Expand WAW's new partnership with the Refugee Career Pathways RCP program to create more employment opportunities for our community members, particularly the women we work with.

- Partner with local mental health professionals to expand counseling, group therapy, and public awareness on trauma and stress recovery.
- Launch mentorship, vocational training, and leadership programs for youth in collaboration with schools and community centers.
- Launch a Youth Leadership Program at VACC to help newly arrived Afghan youth in Virginia build essential life skills.
- Expand services and hours for the NYCC Seniors Program, adding wellness workshops and cultural events.
- Partner with healthcare providers to offer screenings and health education for women in our communities.
- Grow our partnership with the Archewell Foundation to create safe spaces for newly arrived refugee women, offering wellness and educational sessions in New York.

Donor Spotlight

Mother Cabrini Health Foundation

Since 2022, the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation (MCHF) has been a valued partner in WAW's mission, helping us serve over 1,000 individuals annually. This partnership has been vital to strengthening our case management and legal services, job training, and community engagement, ensuring more immigrant families can thrive in New York City.

Since 2022, MCHF has provided WAW \$575,000 in funding, including extended support in 2025.

The support we receive through MCHF is helping WAW provide culturally tailored services to even more Afghan, South Asian, and other immigrant and refugee communities in New York City.

MCHF's continued support is a reflection of what is possible when partnerships are rooted in hope and committed action!

With partners like MCHF, our community centers now offer each client six to seven services on average.



Since 2022, **MCHF** has provided WAW **\$575,000** in funding, including extended support in 2025.

2022

Two \$75,000 grants for COVID support and the Seniors Program at the NYCC.

2023

Renewed support of \$75,000 for the NYCC's Seniors Program.

2024

\$150,000 for culturally and linguistically appropriate case management support to Afghan, South Asian, and Muslim immigrants and refugees that ensures access to basic needs support and social services.

2025

\$200,000 for culturally and linguistically appropriate case management support to Afghan, South Asian, and Muslim immigrants and refugees that ensures access to basic needs support and social services.



Afghanistan Overview

Afghanistan is suffering one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. In 2024, an estimated 23.7 million people, more than half of Afghanistan's population required humanitarian assistance.

Since August 2021, the Afghan people have suffered deeply from increased poverty and human rights violations, a deteriorating economy and broken financial sector, ineffectual governance, and ongoing instability. Vulnerable populations, particularly women, girls, and young children, face the most significant hardships in this devolving social, political, and economic environment.

Since 2021, there have been at least 70 different bans on access to education for women and girls and on women working in the country's non-profit, health, education, legal, political, and social services sectors. The latter has had a resounding negative impact on every part of the Afghan economy and on every segment of Afghan society. Organizations advocating for women's and girls' rights, protections, and empowerment receive little to no funding support, locally and internationally, and protections for women's rights organizations are non-existent.

Despite significant challenges, Women for Afghan Women increased the number of Afghans served by 50% from 2023 to 2024.

Our Afghanistan team of 479 staff members, including 84 women, continue to work tirelessly to meet the critical needs of the Afghan people from 21 offices across Afghanistan.

WAW continues to network and build strategic partnerships to ensure the cause of Afghan women and girls remains at the fore of global and human rights advocacy platforms. In Afghanistan, we are:

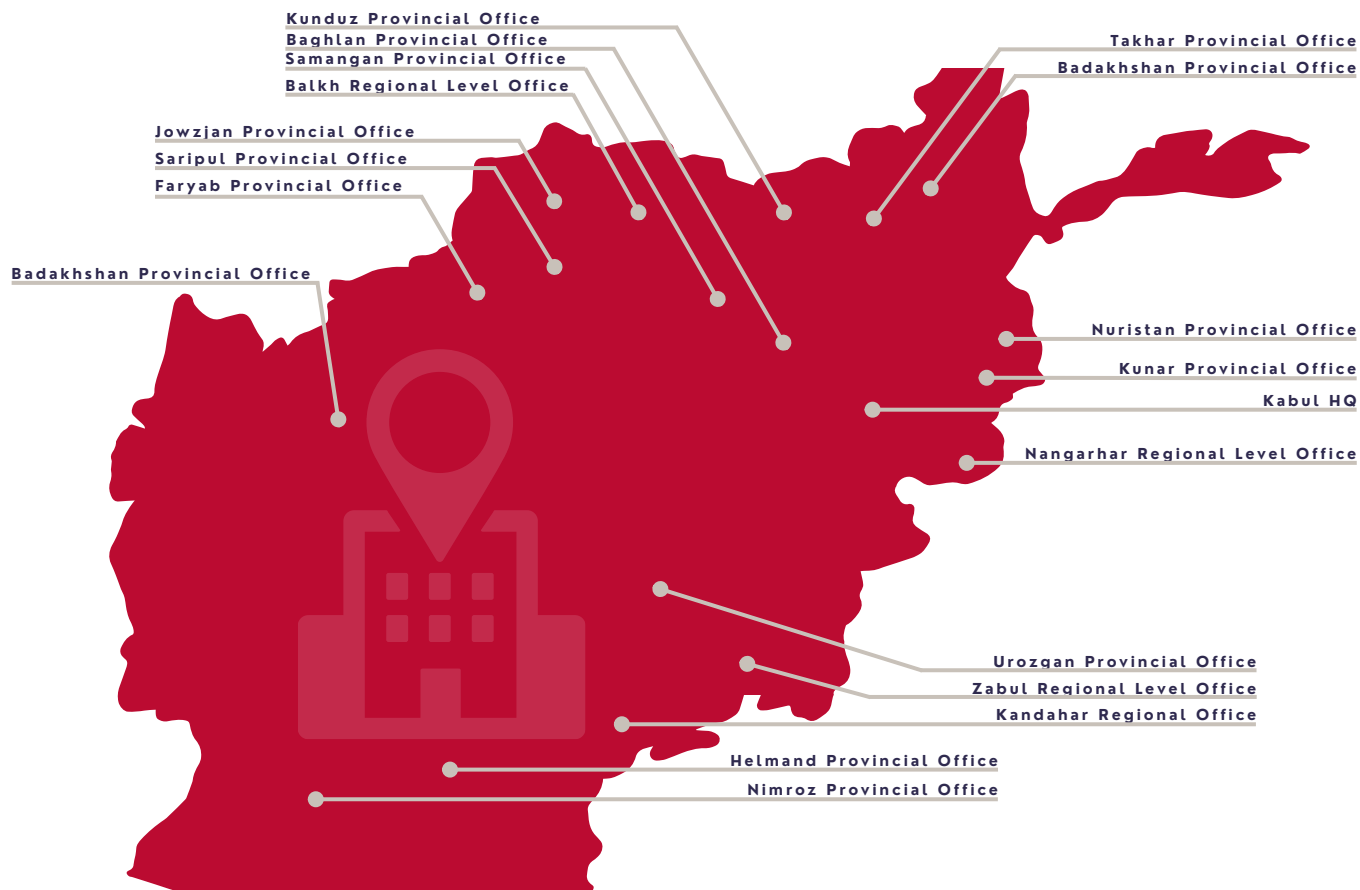
- Expanding protection monitoring for vulnerable populations and their hosts communities;
- Expanding and executing vital programs aimed at protecting women and other members of vulnerable populations against gender-based violence;
- Offering critical mental health and psychosocial support to Afghan women and their families;
- Providing life-saving humanitarian aid services ranging from distribution to providing logistical support to partners distributing life-saving aid.
- Creating jobs for thousands of Afghan breadwinners in the rebuilding of schools, clinics, and shelters.
- Providing the best educational experience for Afghan girls for as long as they are in school.
- Providing access to healthcare through new Basic Health Centers to the most vulnerable communities, where healthcare is no longer accessible.
- Providing safe shelters for women-led and other families displaced or left homeless by natural disasters, conflict, and a defunct economy.
- Supporting the most vulnerable children and children of incarcerated parents through our Children's Support Centers and cash assistance program.

WAW is committed to maintaining its presence in Afghanistan, ensuring that Afghan women and girls have a committed ally in their fight to reclaim their rights. By remaining rooted at the grassroots level, our work lays the foundation for rights-based advocacy to re-emerge and grow from within the communities we serve.

We will never give up on
Afghan women and girls.



WAW in Afghanistan



*Some office locations are not disclosed for security measures.



Total Beneficiaries

School Renovation Projects

5 schools serving
16,214 students



Legal Assistance and Protection (Access to Territory, Registration and Documentation)

Total Beneficiaries: 12,054



Logistics and Technical Support (LTS) for Humanitarian Aid Distribution Networks

Total Beneficiaries: 104,642



HAP Dignity Packages and Food Support for Incarcerated Women and Men

Total Beneficiaries: 393



Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP) and Winterization Support to Earthquake Survivors

Total Beneficiaries: 250



Community-Based Protection Monitoring (CBPM) Program

Total Beneficiaries: 1,370,672



+50% From 2023

Children's Support Programs

Children's Support (Cash Assistance) Program
total beneficiaries: 70 children



Children's Support Centers
Total beneficiaries: 200 children



Total Beneficiaries: 270 children

A Place that Feels like a Family

Despite the circumstances Jalila endured as a child, she is now hopeful and determined to grow into an empowered young woman. Jalila is resilient, embracing the opportunity to build a brighter future for herself, her people, and her country.

Jalila is only eight years old and has already faced more hardships than most experience in a lifetime. Born into a struggling family, she and her siblings were separated due to the most unfortunate circumstances. Jalila's father, who is blind, could not care for his children and her mother was incarcerated for the alleged "crime" of adultery .

Jalila's older sister is married and her brothers were moved to live with their aunt and grandmother. But the young Jalila was forced to live with her mother in prison, that is, until she was enrolled at one of Women for Afghan Women's Children's Support Center (CSC).

When Jalila arrived at our CSC, she had never been to school and was unable to read or write. Her emotional and mental state was deeply traumatized by her childhood and experience in prison. However, with the guidance and support of WAW's therapists and counselors, Jalila began to heal.

Through WAW's accelerated learning programs at the CSC, Jalila discovered a love for learning. She quickly picked up reading and writing, and developed a keen interest in learning English.

She now thrives in a safe and nurturing environment where she gets an education, safe shelter, healthcare, and critical emotional and mental health care and support. Everyone at the CSC loves her for her intelligence, peaceful demeanor, and how respectful she is towards the other children and staff.

Jalila prays five times a day and takes pride in keeping her room clean, often wanting to assist the staff that clean the center at the end of each week.

She is constantly expressing how grateful and happy she is to be living at the CSC and calls it "a place that feels like family." She loves the food, attending classes, and the clean and new clothing she now gets to wear. She loves the recreational activities offered to her and the other children. Her favorite subjects in school are English and Dari. She tells us she wants to be a teacher one day. Her hope is to alleviate the suffering of her people and her country.

Though she has faced many challenges, Jalila is now a hopeful little girl determined to become an empowered young woman. She embraces the opportunity to build a brighter future for herself, her people, and her country in a way that also gives us hope for a better Afghanistan for women and girls.





Children's Support Programs

Children's Support Centers (CSCs)

In 2024, WAW's CSCs provided safe shelter, nutritional food, education, extracurricular activities, comprehensive medical and psychosocial support, and tender, love, and care to close to 200 children whose mothers are incarcerated and other family members are unable to care for them.

At any one time, 140-250 children of incarcerated parents live under the care of WAW's CSCs in Balkh and Badakhshan. The number of children in these CSCs fluctuates from year to year as new children are enrolled. Some exit the program when they are reintegrated with mothers released from prison or with other family members.

Psychosocial counselling services and awareness raising sessions are also provided by WAW staff to the incarcerated parents of the children at our CSCs to ensure their well-being is maintained and they are ready for reintegration with their children once they are released from prison.

CSC staff provide around the clock services such as shelter, food, clothes, education, healthcare, psychotherapy, psychosocial and other necessary support to these children, who feel protected and whose health, wellness, and education are nurtured. Children at the CSCs also enjoy sports and recreational activities outside the centers, and visit their parents on a regularly maintained schedule.

Children's Support Program (CSP)

The children under the care of WAW's CSP almost doubled from 46 children (26 girls and 18 boys) in 2023 to 70 children (24 girls and 46 boys) in 2024.

Due to the ban on women working and loss of funding to our CSCs, WAW's Children's Support (Cash Assistance) Program was piloted in 2023 in response to the forced closure of several of our CSCs.

CSP works with host families to ensure children of incarcerated or formerly housed women at our CSCs are protected, their well-being secured, and their access to education continues. CSP monthly stipends assist host

families to meet children's basic needs and provide the financial stability required for maintaining the wellbeing of the children under their care without burdening the host. All the parties to the CSP sign contracts to ensure children moved to host family care are provided with comprehensive healthcare, psychosocial support, and continue their education. WAW continues to monitor the welfare, safety, and well-being of children under the care of host families until children reach the age of 18 or are reunited with their birth mothers.

Community-Based Protection Monitoring (CBPM) Program

In the CBPM program, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Afghanistan (UNHCR) engaged with WAW to implement the

gathering and analysis of data that help identify protection risks among vulnerable populations. This includes internally displaced persons and refugee returnees now living in UNHCR-supported protection environments, such as refugee camps or UNHCR shelters in host communities. The data collected provides risk and needs assessments to UNHCR, national protection clusters, and other humanitarian/development aid agencies so they can respond with appropriate interventions and awareness-raising activities.

Another vital dimension of CBMP includes design, technical monitoring, and quality control over the construction, reconstruction, renovation, or rehabilitation of health clinics, schools, shelters (houses) for refugees/returnees, internally displaced people, and host communities, and small business

markets and centers. In 2024, WAW also provided support to UNHCR in the final verification process of 849 shelters constructed in 2023.

CBPM also provides a network of programs, services, and support to the most vulnerable Afghan populations through the following:

- Mental Health Psycho-Social Support Project (MHPSS)
- Technical Support for the Construction and Rehabilitation of Schools and BHCs
- Rapid Household Assessment
- Community engagement programs
- Complaint/feedback hotline for UNHCR-partner programs and projects
- Border Monitoring





Humanitarian Assistance Project (HAP)

In 2024 and in partnership with UNHCR, HAP served nearly 17,000 beneficiaries through the project's various levels of interventions.

Through HAP, WAW offers humanitarian assistance and support to tens of thousands of vulnerable Afghan individuals and families, with a particular focus on women-led households and girls.

Decades of war, chronic poverty, widespread food insecurity, compounded by the 2021 crisis in governance has resulted in millions of Afghans—or more than half the population—in critical need of humanitarian assistance.

School Renovations and Basic Health Centers (BHC) Construction

Through HAP, WAW provides technical support to the construction of schools and Basic Health Centers under UNHCR's

contract. In 2024, WAW provided this support to one school and three Basic Health Centers that deliver education and primary healthcare access for marginalized and vulnerable communities.

The HAP school and BHC projects created over 5,000 jobs in these communities, specifically in Nimroz in 2024 and now serve close to 35,000 beneficiaries, including 7,000+ women and 24,000+ children.

In addition to WAW's HAP program, WAW independently renovated and refurbished five schools in underserved areas in which 11,685 girls are in attendance. These projects included upgrading classrooms with new desks, chairs, computers, and whiteboards, updating bathrooms and other sanitation facilities, installing solar panel energy systems to ensure regular electricity and internet access, replacing

broken windows and doors, rehabilitating old and worn building structures, and providing recreation and sports areas.

HAP Support to Survivors of Natural Disasters, Vulnerable Communities, and Incarcerated Afghan Women

Women for Afghan Women's HAP teams provide winterization packages, food and essential items, flood and natural disaster relief packages, in addition to cash assistance to vulnerable populations impacted by poverty and natural disasters.

In 2024, HAP helped 250 families who survived earthquakes, with a focus on women-led families, to make it through the winter and the natural disaster. The program also provided dignity kits, daily use essential items, and food support to 310 women and 82 children of incarcerated women in Afghan prisons.

Surviving Another Winter

After tragedy struck Ziba's family, she and her grandchildren found hope and comfort in the critical assistance they received from WAW to help them get through another harsh Afghanistan winter.

Ziba is a 69 year-old widow and loving, devoted mother of seven children. Since the loss of her husband over ten years ago, Ziba has been supported by her eldest son, who is also the father of four children. But, her son suffered serious neurological damage after he was poisoned by relatives.

Ziba recounts, "My son was completely healthy and capable. He was working day and night to feed us and provide a good life for his family, including me. But some of our relatives poisoned his food after a terrible fight and he completely lost his memory. He doesn't understand the simplest things and is unable to recognize any of us. It is extremely painful for a mother to witness her son this way."

Today, Ziba's grandson is the only breadwinner for the family. Although he works hard to support the family, he can barely make ends meet. In 2024, facing another harsh winter, Ziba received cash assistance and winterization support from Women for Afghan Women's Humanitarian Aid Program (HAP) in partnership with UNHCR.

The HAP-UNHCR program was designed to assist vulnerable families prepare for winter. Besides Ziba, 613 other families received similar assistance during the 2024 winter season, funded by UNHCR.

"I am so thankful for the generous support extended to me and others in need during last year's harsh winter. The financial assistance allowed us to buy enough fuel and warm clothing to ease our burden significantly. This kind gesture restores hope and strength for my grandchildren and me. It helps us to move forward despite all our difficulties and fills us with the hope that, one day, a better and more peaceful future will be within reach for us.

With this help, we no longer have to worry about surviving the winter, which is a true blessing, one that words cannot fully express."



Looking Ahead: Afghanistan Operational Strategy for 2025

In 2025, WAW will streamline some of its programs and expand others to better serve the evolving needs of the communities we support, including the various activities undertaken by our Community-Based Protection Monitoring Program. We are planning to provide further technical assistance to the critical implementation of the renovation of more schools and will continue our vital children's support programs, including our two Children's Support Centers. Our mental health and psychosocial support to vulnerable populations, particularly women and children will also continue while WAW provides logistical and warehousing support to life-saving humanitarian aid distribution across four regions in Afghanistan.



Particularly exciting for WAW in Afghanistan in 2025 is the launch of a new **Women's Protection Program** in partnership with UNHCR, which aligns directly with our women's rights mission.

Under the three-year Partnership Framework Agreement (2025-2027) with UNHCR, the new Women's Protection Program will be implemented by WAW in five regions in Afghanistan to provide:



Support the identification and mitigation of risks across different interventions through targeted assessments.



Increase the knowledge of WAW and partner staff on core protection principles and referral pathways.

- Protection interventions for women to prevent, mitigate and respond to gender-based violence, especially against women, girls and boys, through a comprehensive set of activities that engage communities and provide targeted support for impacted individuals.
- Establish women's community centers to serve as safe spaces for women and girls to participate in a variety of recreational, information-sharing and small-scale livelihoods and economic empowerment activities.
- Strengthen community awareness about the harmful impact of violence on individuals, families and communities and information-sharing about available support for individuals affected. This will be achieved through outreach activities and engagement of forcibly displaced, returnee, and host communities as well as dialogues with community leaders.
- Provide mental health and psychosocial support to women and girls through group psychosocial and individual sessions in line with a dedicated toolkit developed for the program.
- Facilitate access to multi-sectoral services for women and girls in need of targeted support.
- Provide hygiene kits to meet the special needs of women and girls.
- Enhance the well-being and economic resilience of women and girls through their participation in small-scale livelihood activities organized at women's community centers.
- Conduct training on case management and disability inclusion.



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