Abbreviations

LAC: Legal Aid Center
UCL: University College London
NIHR: National Institute for Health Research
KNH: KinderNotHilfe
LOPWAJ: Legal Obstacles Preventing Women from Achieving Justice
MoE: Ministry of Economics
MoWA: Ministry of Women Affairs
DoWA: Directorate of Women Affairs
EVAW: Elimination of Violence Against women
GBV: Gender Base Violence
CEDAW: Convention on Ending All forms of Discrimination Against Women
UN: United Nations
OSA: Open Society Afghanistan
AWN: Afghan Women Network
CSHRN: Civil Society Human Rights Network
SAAGN: South Asia Alliance for Grassroots NGOs
ASN: Afghan Shelter Network
ALAAN: Afghanistan Legal Aid and Advocacy Network
WPC: Women protection Center
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Executive Directors Message

Today the world is suffering from gender base violence and gender base discrimination. On average more than 70% of women around the globe are experiencing one or more type of violence. 650 million of women are married under the age of 18. Only victims of sexual and physical violence consist 35% of women around the world; but violence against women is not limited to sexual and physical violence. Today women are denied from the right to education, right to marriage, right to work, abused, harassed, mentally tortured etc. Gender base violence is a plague that is found in all the countries and like a cancer it is growing. However this problem can be found more in third world countries and the countries that are in war. Afghanistan being both an underdeveloped country and a country in war experience this issue at a higher level. The Afghan Independent Human Right commission reports of an increase of 8 percent in number of violence cases in the first 7 month of the year. The EVAW law and other passed laws are unable to prevent this inhuman act and needs to be amended and updated as violence shows itself in a different shape every day.

Yet, we should not lose hope and like a fish that swims upstream, we should also struggle hard and fight this plague and bring an end to it. This can be achieved only through unity and joint work. We must support and assist each other in our work and be one.

I am pleased to announce the publication of our 2019 annual report and on behalf of HAWCA, I want to thank our donors, supports and all men and women who have taken a stand to fight against gender base violence and I request them to continue support each other for a better and equal world.

Shafiqa Noori
HAWCA executive director
About HAWCA

Humanitarian Assistance for the Women and Children of Afghanistan (HAWCA) was established in January 1999 by a group of youth Afghan women and men. HAWCA’s establishment was motivated by the despair and devastation suffered by Afghan women and children as victims of war and injustice in Afghanistan and as refugees in Pakistan. Living under the same conditions and experiencing the same misery as millions of Afghans in Afghanistan and in Pakistan during the civil war, the leading members of HAWCA committed to achieving their aims and objectives as volunteers, and devoted their efforts to improving the lives of Afghans under difficult circumstances, from the era of Taliban domination to today’s insecure Afghanistan.

Mission

HAWCA is an Afghan NGO dedicated to Working for the social well-being of all people with a particular focus on women and children who live in Afghanistan.

Vision

HAWCA envisions a safe and just society where all Afghan regardless of their race, ethnicity, tribe, language and religion receive equal benefit from the development process and work together for a safe and better world

Goal

HAWCA aims to encourage the active participation of women in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan.
Mandates

HAWCA is and intends to be mainly but not exclusively engaged in promoting the participation of Afghan women in the development process and improve the well-being of women and children in Afghanistan. Consequently HAWCAs’ mandate includes:

- protection and counseling
- education and peace building
- promoting income generating and micro credit activities
- health and child care
- advocacy for women and children rights at national and international level
- emergency response operations
- research and analysis of women rights
- sponsorship programs
- mobilization of human right defenders

Network

- AWN
- CSHRN
- SAAGN
- ASN
- ALAAN
In 2019 HAWCA implemented the following projects:

- **WPC**: Women Protection Center
- **PBNG**: Peace Building for the New Generation
- **IDPS**: Legal and Health Support to IDPs and Refugees in Kabul
- **LAWVV**: Legal Aid for Women Victims of Violence
- **APCMHSV**: A package of Care for the Mental Health of Survivors of Violence in South Asia
- **SPONSORSHIP**: Support HAWCA
Afghanistan is still a dangerous place for women to live. Based on the recent research; from every 3 women, 2 women face one form of violence every day. The social, political and economic instability of the country and the influence of the war lords in the government have made the life worst for the women. Most of the time the victims are being threatened by the culprits and since the government has been unable to provide proper protection to the victims; they have no choice but to refrain from their case.

To support such women, HAWCA has established a women protection center where women victims of violence are kept in a secure place and are provided with legal, psychological, educational and necessities of life. In 2019 HAWCA registered a number of 135 women and 50 accompanied children, out of which 95 cases solved and reintegrated with their families and society. 47 legal awareness and 45 health awareness programs were also conducted for the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries were also provided with Vocational training, literacy courses and mushroom farming in order to build their capacity and make them self-sufficient.
Despite on-going peace talk with the Taliban, the prospect for peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan appear dim as security situation has worsened with rates of civilian causalities reached record highs in 2019. A flawed presidential election in September 2019 and uncertainty around the result have furthered political instability. The humanitarian situation also remains dire, as the prolonged drought and other resource scarcity issues threaten greater levels of displacement and human suffering.

The deteriorated situation in 2019 has rendered the children highly vulnerable to social harms. Their rights to life, liberty and education are trampled upon with impunity. Children suffer mentally, emotionally and physically amid the horrors of war and bloodshed. And they are at risk of exploitation, poor health, severe injury, and needless death.

The Peace Building project tried to bring peace education to the children and their families keeping in mind the aim to create a generation that believes in peace and peaceful life. The centre registered a number of 481 Children out of which 231 were girls and 250 were boys. Beside the educational activities for the children, the centre also conducted awareness’ programs to the parents, capacity building programs for the teachers and child right awareness’ programs to the community.
While the number of returnees and the internally displaced people are increasing every day in Afghanistan, the facilities and supports provided to them is decreasing. The people are living in a very inhuman and harsh environment. Women and children are the most effected people and are vulnerable to different forms of violence. While they are all in need of clean water, proper shelter, school, hospitals etc. HAWCA believes that the most important issue is the health and child care since every year a lot of children dies of sickness and a lot of mothers die during birth.

The Legal and Health support project is funded by Fons Mallorquí falls under the Humanitarian and emergency aid program. In 2019 the project provided health services to 2498 people of whom 80% were women and children, 80 women were given especial training on pregnancy and child care, 536 individuals were given awareness on health issues and personal hygiene, 1854 individual was given awareness on legal issues with a focus on women rights and IDP rights.
Access to free legal support is still considered a big challenge for the Afghan People. The Afghan constitution clearly states that the government should provide a lawyer to any person who is in need of legal support if he/she is not able to hire one, but in reality most of the people are denied from this right. The women are the section of the society that suffers the most when it comes to legal procedures and litigations. From one side they are threatened by the culprits which are mostly the male members of the family such as husband, father, brother etc. who are also people in charge and will never give them money to hire a private lawyer and from the other side the government is not able to provide them with good and professional lawyers to defend their right. At the end it falls on the non-profitable organizations to support these women and help them to start a life free of violence and live freely.

During the reporting period a number of 123 cases were registered with HAWCA out of which 104 cases were won and the women started a new life. The remaining cases were either transferred to other free legal aid providers or taken by the HAWCA defense lawyers to be followed without any cost and voluntarily. In addition to this and as part of HAWCA advocacy for women rights a number 8 workshops were conducted to the law and sharia students and 4 Public awareness programs were conducted for the public. The workshop covered a number of 120 students and the public awareness covered a number of 236 individuals.
Violence against women has many negative effects but the most important is the psychological effects. The effects of the violence on mental health of the women can result in many complications including low birth weight, pregnancy complications, motivation to commit suicide, mental disorder etc.

The project seeks to prepare a package of care for the women victims and survivors of violence and to help them regain their normal mental health. To get accurate information on how the women feels and how they can be helped a number of 99 interviews was conducted in three provinces of Afghanistan. In addition 9 focus groups were also organized where in each group 10 people participated. The research findings were shared with the head researcher to analyze and share it with the professional psychologist in order to prepare a package of care suitable for Afghan women.

HAWCA is looking forward to provide training to organizations and individual psychologist and doctors who are involved with women victims and survivors of violence in order to get the best of the care package.
In 2018 HAWCA took a project to find out why the case of violence that has been published through social media and news has still not got justice. The prior assumption was that the problem lies within the Afghan law and legal procedures. As example HAWCA took 4 different cases of violence from 4 different provinces which were Farkhonda case from Kabul, Maryam case from Balkh, Shakila case from Bamyan and Sahargul Case from Baghlan. Since the cases were complicated and getting information was very difficult the project was extended in 2019.

The project found out that there are a lot of gaps in the Afghan laws especially in Elimination of Violence against women law, but mostly the gap was in the procedure and follow-ups of the cases where the in charge entities and individuals were not able to follow the procedure properly. Some entities were not even able to keep proper records of the cases and in some places it was totally missing.

At the end of the project period a national conference was organized and the findings of the project were presented to the representatives of the government. HAWCA also presented its suggestion and recommendation to the government in order to eliminate all forms of violence against women. The Findings were also published in Dari and English language. Latter due to the request of the entities in south and south east of Afghanistan, it was also published in Pashto. The research finding can be downloaded from HWACA website.
The 4 decades of war has damaged the economy of the country and today more than 95 percent of the people are living in poverty which has resulted in many people losing their lands, homes, jobs etc. As usual women and children suffer the most from the negative impacts of the war. Today there are thousands of women and children who are left to their faiths and are being sexually and physically abused by rich and powerful people. There are many women who are forced to prostitution and many children are denied from their basic rights. Nadia, one of the women decided to sell one of her child in order to be able to take care of the other two. It was HAWCA and its supporters that rescued her from taking this horrible and difficult decision.

To support such people, HAWCA from the beginning had its sponsorship program where it tried to find individuals from around the world to support one or more family or child in need. In 2019 through our supporters abroad; we were able to get support to 26 people.
As HAWCA is a non-profitable organization, it solely runs on project funds and contribution from its supporters. You can support our work to bring a just society where men and women live equally in peace and where all get equal benefit from the available resources, by funding a project, co-funding a project, donations and buying our publications.