

## Women for Afghan Women #ByHerSide Project

### Interim Progress Report 1

Reporting Period: 01 November 2018 – 30 April 2019

Women for Afghan Women (WAW) thanks Dining for Women for its generous and timely support for the women and girls of Afghanistan. WAW is grateful for this opportunity to provide an interim progress report on the #ByHerSide project, which has allowed WAW to provide critical medical care to low-income women and girls and survivors of domestic violence in 14 provinces across Afghanistan. As detailed below, WAW is on track towards achieving and exceeding its goals for its #ByHerSide project.

#### Project Details

<b>Organization Name</b>	Women for Afghan Women (WAW)	
<b>Project Title</b>	#ByHerSide	
<b>Grant Amount</b>	\$50,000	
<b>Contact Person</b>	Name	Najia Nasim
	Title	Executive Director
	Phone Number	0093728859560
	Email	najia@womenforafghanwomen.org
<b>Address</b>	158-24 73rd Ave, Fresh Meadows, NY 11366	

#### Project Outcomes and Project Launch

Outcomes and Targets		Achieved
Outcome 1:	250 women and girls will gain access to critical health services	149
Outcome 2:	At least 10 (up to 20) women/girls will be provided funding for emergency medical procedures/care	5
Outcome 3:	250 women and girls will receive shelter and/or intensive support services while recovering from gender-based violence	413
Outcome 4:	250 of these women and girls will receive educational programming to strengthen life/literacy/vocational skills to improve self-sufficiency	232
Total family/community members indirectly impacted through ByHerSide:		1,988

At the beginning of the grant period, WAW's province managers in Afghanistan and key staff from its Kabul headquarters were briefed on the #ByHerSide project, which has allowed WAW to provide dedicated and more holistic emergency and medical services to women and girls on an increasing scale, instead of on an ad hoc basis, as previous resources allowed. Since then, WAW's province managers conducted initial meetings with their respective staff members, in

which they informed staff on the project including the project's objectives and goals. In addition, WAW's province managers met with several public stakeholders in Afghanistan and to officially inform their respective province's Directorate of Women's Affairs (DoWA) and Department of Public Health (DoPH) about the #ByHerSide project's objectives and activities.

All provincial DoWAs and DoPHs were pleased with the project and welcomed launching such an important initiative in their areas in order to lessen morbidity and mortality rates of low-income women and improve services for survivors of domestic violence. They extended their full support and agreed to officially refer and introduce eligible beneficiaries to WAW's provincial offices. As detailed in succeeding sections, these partnerships have allowed WAW to reach an additional 92 women and girls who were referred by these partner agencies.

### **Project Funding**

Thanks in large part to leveraging this grant from Dining for Women, in April 2019, WAW received additional funding support in the amount of \$15,000 for one year for the #ByHerSide project from the Tomberg Family Philanthropies. This grant is renewal for up to three years and will be instrumental in the project's sustainability. WAW also continues to fundraise for this project, especially given the success of this first six months of the grant with Dining for Women.

This new funding support supplements the overall #ByHerSide program budget, which remains at \$150,000. Other sources of revenue for the program are the United States (U.S.) Department of State and WAW's general support funds, which includes the NoVo Foundation and individual charitable donors in the U.S. and other countries.

### **Project Situation**

Beginning in January 2019, Ms. Najia Nasim assumed her new role as WAW's Executive Director. Najia was formerly WAW's Country Director in Afghanistan for five years from January 2014 to December 2018. She brings over 17 years of experience in the nonprofit field, with a focus on civil rights, women's empowerment, and international development.

As WAW's Country Director, Najia built strong relations with government officials, international donors, civil society, and influential local elders and religious leaders. She successfully led a major countrywide program and staff expansion, as well as honed the vision, strategic direction, programmatic development, financial management, and infrastructure growth of WAW in Afghanistan. During her tenure, WAW increased its presence from 10 to 14 provinces, while simultaneously implementing organization-wide evaluation, reporting, operational policies, and workflow systems that have greatly improved WAW's functional efficiencies and

program execution. Najia established WAW's Security Department, which has become instrumental in successfully protecting WAW's facilities, clients, and staff. Moreover, she has adeptly navigated the significant social, political, and security challenges that WAW grapples daily in Afghanistan.

Najia was nominated for the "10 Bravest Women of the World" award in 2014 by Amnesty International and the 2015 Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize, and in 2018, she won the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice on WAW's behalf. In addition, she has received official appreciation letters from both Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Women's Affairs for WAW's outstanding performance under her leadership.

Najia holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (*summa cum laude*) with double majors in Economics and Accounting from Bucknell University in Pennsylvania. Her academic training in the U.S. and years of work experience in Afghanistan has equipped Najia with robust financial management skills, technical knowledge, and the practical program expertise required for strategizing, developing, supervising, and expanding programs and services to support WAW's mission to save, protect, and empower Afghan women, children, and their families. Najia is fluent in English, Dari (Farsi), and Pashto.

### **Change in Number of Beneficiaries**

WAW expects the number of #ByHerSide beneficiaries to increase during the upcoming months due to ongoing violence and economic challenges, leading to extreme financial difficulties among Afghan women, and high demand for critical health services among those residing in remote and faraway districts of Afghanistan. This does not affect the project budget under Dining for Women, especially given the new funding award from the Tomberg Family Philanthropies.

### **Project Objectives**

WAW continues to provide life-saving and life-changing services to women and girls in Afghanistan through its 32 centers and programs in 14 of the country's 34 provinces. WAW provides protection and shelter against life-threatening violence, as well as critical medical services and procedures, intensive emergency and safety counseling, eventual successful (safe) reintegration into the community, and importantly, educational programming to protect, promote, and reinforce safety and self-sufficiency of women and girls.

Since the beginning of the project, there has been no change in the project's objectives. Thanks to support from Dining for Women, WAW has successfully transitioned the #ByHerSide program from providing services on an ad hoc basis to an ongoing and expanding program with

support from local leaders, including Afghan government officials, law enforcement, and the local communities.

WAW will continue to implement the program as described in its application to Dining for Women. WAW will also continue to meet with stakeholders in Afghanistan to promote the project and ensure that it reaches increasing numbers of women and girls in need, especially in remote areas.

**Progress Towards Achieving Project Objectives**

During the reporting period, the #ByHerSide project successfully provided Afghan women and girls with critical access to healthcare as well as life-saving services to support survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). Specifically, during the reporting period of 01 November 2018 to 30 April 2019, WAW achieved the following:

**Protection and shelter against life-threatening violence:** WAW provided protection and shelter to **413** women and girls, exceeding our objective of 250 women and girls, who were survivors or at risk of GBV through its 12 Women’s Protection Centers (WPCs) in Afghanistan. In the WPCs, they received safe shelter for themselves and their children, legal support, and family counseling and/or mediation, when feasible and safe. They also participate in educational programming in the WPCs to strengthen life skills, literacy, and vocational skills with the goal of promoting their self-sufficiency and ensure their safe and productive return to their communities (more details below).

In addition, WAW’s WPC doctors conducted public awareness sessions in their respective provinces to inform the general public of the #ByHerSide project and the services offered. They reached **600** individuals through public awareness sessions conducted during the period.

**Critical medical services and procedures:** WAW provided **149** women and girls with medical services, as well as other needed procedures to recover from GBV or other reproductive health issues. This exceeded the project’s objective of serving 125 women and girls during the first six months of the grant period, and included **5** women who were provided with critical *emergency* medical care, and a total of **74** beneficiaries, including women and their children, who received health kits that included personal hygiene items and items needed before and after medical procedures and/or delivery.

Of the 149 women and girls served, **92** were referred by Afghanistan’s DoPHs, provincial hospitals, DoWAs, and police. The breakdown of referrals and services provided are as follows:

Province	Service Provided	Referral Agency
----------	------------------	-----------------

	# of OBGYN services, resources, and check-ups (birth/after-birth services)	# of treated survivors of rape or incest	# survivors of physical abuse or violence by family or community	DoWA	DoPH	Public Hospital	Other
Faryab	26	5	2	16	10	0	7
Saripul	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
Jawzjan	1	1	2	2	0	1	1
Samangan	7	0	0	0	0	4	3
Kunduz	6	0	2	0	0	8	0
Takhar	10	0	1	4	0	7	0
Badakhshan	2	1	3	4	0	2	0
Kapisa	11	0	0	6	0	4	1
Kunar	10	0	0	10	0	0	0

Moreover, WAW staff also conducted **16** community outreach sessions during the period to encourage community members to donate blood or other resources to those in need.

**Intensive emergency and safety counseling:** During the reporting period, WAW provided **14** women, whose lives were at risk, with intensive emergency and safety counseling. This included an individualized safety plan for each woman to find the safest and most viable solution to her situation. When safe and ready, WAW then worked with each beneficiary to develop a plan for her future, including building her skills for self-sufficiency.

**Rescue and transportation:** WAW provided **413** women and girls with medical care, transportation and accompaniment to medical appointments or surgeries, and connected them with local medical providers, health care institutions, and/or WAW's medical staff in order to receive the care they needed. This number exceeded the project's goal of 250 for the year, and WAW's brave and dedicated staff arranged rescue and transportation for these women and girls at any time or day, 24/7.

**Successful (safe) reintegration into the community:** During the reporting period, WAW's comprehensive services resulted in **232** women being successfully reintegrated with their families or community, exceeding the goal of 125 for the first six months of the grant period. WAW staff worked with each woman and her families and communities to seek the safest and most productive reintegration option for each client. This included family mediation and counseling, meetings with community leaders to ensure client safety, and creating a reintegration plan for each client, including self-sufficiency options such as vocational training

or connecting her to local businesses that can sell, for example, hand-made products by WAW's clients.

**Educational programming to bolster self-sufficiency:** During the first six-month period, **232** women participated in WAW's educational programming at its WPCs, which includes literacy, life skills, and vocational trainings. This exceeded the first six-month goal of 125 women, and WAW also connects these women with local businesses who can employ or buy their handmade products as a vital step towards their self-sufficiency.

**Indirect impact:** To date, WAW estimates that 1,988 family and community members have been indirectly impacted by the #ByHerSide project in Afghanistan. As WAW expects to serve even more women and girls in the next six months, WAW is confident it will meet the target of 3,500 by the end of the grant period.

### **Challenges and Proposed Solutions**

Overall, WAW does not anticipate any major difficulties in completing the project in the timeframe outlined in the proposal. However, the ongoing economic and security issues in Afghanistan pose some challenges to the #ByHerSide project, as detailed below with WAW's proposed solutions.

The number of eligible beneficiaries is very high due to the country's poor security and economic situation leading to increased poverty and declining access to healthcare. Due to the vastness of Afghan women's needs, WAW does not have enough resources to accommodate all eligible beneficiaries. Needed resources include additional transportation/vehicles for hard-to-reach areas and more timely responses to emergencies, increased number of #ByHerSide healthcare kits for distribution, and increased resources to meet medical and safety needs of Afghan women who are from low-income households and/or survivors of GBV.

To address these needs, WAW continues to fundraise for the #ByHerSide program, as mentioned previously. Recently, WAW successfully received another grant for this project, but will continue to work hard to fully address this need. In addition, WAW will refine its criteria for selection of the neediest beneficiaries, which may include income level, treatment period, and treatment mechanisms.

The deterioration of security in most of Afghanistan's provinces also poses a challenge for the project. Unsafe conditions prevent WAW's access to some remote districts that are run by the Taliban and other armed insurgent groups. WAW's Security Department and province

managers continue to work with local officials and community leaders to assess the situation and find safe ways to reach women and girls who are in these areas.

Finally, though WAW has successfully built partnerships with most provincial DoWA and DoPH officials, which resulted in 92 referred cases to WAW during this period, there remain some provinces that need to continue to meet and gather support from the local DoWA and DoPH offices, which can provide access to hard-to-reach areas and increased referrals of women and girls who pass through their systems.

WAW continues to conduct outreach with these agencies and works with other partners, such as community leaders, schools, police, and other local officials, to reach women and girls in need of medical care and safety as a result of GBV. WAW also conducts outreach to the general public to make them aware of the project and services available.

Given these challenges and WAW's planned solutions, WAW does not foresee any challenges that will affect the #ByHerSide project's original objectives and goals.

### **#ByHerSide Impact Story**

Asmaan (name changed to protect her privacy and safety) is a 19-year-old #ByHerSide beneficiary in Samangan province. Around four years ago, she was engaged to her cousin (uncle's son) against her consent. From the very outset, she was against the engagement since her fiancé was also her foster brother and living with him made her feel very uncomfortable.

After a few years, when both families fixed their marriage date and her parents forced her to agree with it, Asmaan ran away from home. On the way to the Baghlan province, she was arrested by the Baghlan Police Criminal Department for "moral" crimes, and was transferred to Samangan. On 16 April 2019, the client was referred to WAW's Samangan WPC for shelter, protection, and resolution of her problem.

After a few days of her stay at the Samangan WPC and conducting a number of counseling and mediation sessions with Asmaan and her parents, which included women's rights awareness, she agreed to be reintegrated with her parents at her own consent through the Samangan Justice Department. Following WAW's procedures for safe reintegration, her parents signed a legally binding agreement ensuring her safety and full consent in decisions.

After a few weeks, Asmaan's father contacted WAW's Samangan WPC because Asmaan tried to commit suicide by consuming acid. She was being threatened by her uncle and his family for

refusing the marriage and running away from home, “tarnishing” their families’ reputation.

Asmaan’s father was distressed because although her health condition was very critical, he could not afford to pay for her medical expenses and ensure her survival. The Samangan Public Health Department requested WAW’s Samangan office to enroll her in the #ByHerSide project.

As a result, WAW’s Samangan office admitted Asmaan to the Samangan Provincial Hospital, but due to unavailability of needed health services and Asmaan’s critical and worsening health condition, she was transferred to Kabul province and admitted to Ibn-e-Sina Emergency Hospital.

The doctors at the Ibn-e-Sina Hospital advised WAW that Asmaan needed to stay at least 40 days in the hospital under professional medical care to get ready for surgery. At the moment, Asmaan is in the Intensive Care Unit and her health condition is improving. With financial support from Dining for Women, she will undergo an endoscopy check-up and stomach surgery in the near future to facilitate her full recovery.

Through the #ByHerSide project, Asmaan is surviving and getting the best care available to promote her full recovery. WAW will stay with Asmaan until she is ready to live the life she chooses for herself.

### **#ByHerSide Photos**



*Beneficiaries receiving critical health services, ByHerSide project, April 2019*





## Financial Report

Below is the interim financial report with a detailed list of the project's expenses during the reporting period.

Allocation	DFW Grant Allocation	DFW Grant Description	EXPENSES					
			QTY	Unit\$	%	Expense USD	BALANCE USD	Description
Direct service staff in Afghanistan	25,000	Direct staff supporting case management, counseling, legal, medical support services					<b>25,000.00</b>	
Afghanistan Emergency Medical Expenses	10,000	Emergency medical support for women and children (DFW allocation would cover costs for up to 10 women and children)	180.00	44.14	100%	<b>7,945.99</b>	<b>2,054.01</b>	180 kits for beneficiaries in 9 centers
Supplies for children/women staying in Afghanistan centers	2,200	Food, basic necessities and educational/recreational materials and supplies (DFW would cover educational/recreational materials only)	1.00	136.60	100%	<b>136.60</b>	<b>2,063.40</b>	Medical checkup of one emergency clinics
Afghanistan facilities rent/occupancy costs	7,500	Emergency shelter expenses related to clients served by #ByHerSide					<b>7,500.00</b>	
Travel expenses	2,300	Emergency, medical, rescue client and staff transport					<b>2,300.00</b>	
Indirect program costs	3,000	At about 6.5% of proposed program budget	1	8,082.59	6.50%	<b>525.37</b>	<b>2,474.63</b>	Cost of overhead at Kabul Headquarters
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$50,000.00</b>		<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>			<b>\$8,607.96</b>	<b>\$41,392.04</b>	

