

AFGHANISTAN

Afghan Women Skills Development Centre

POSITIVE CHANGE FOR WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN

Fifteen years ago Mary Akrami and a group of pioneering women's rights activists set up the Afghan Women Skills Development Centre (AWSDC) to tackle violence and inequality and bring about positive change for women in Afghanistan.

AWSDC provides training for police officers to sensitise them to working with female survivors of violence, works with traditional and religious groups to raise awareness about women's rights issues in communities, and runs several shelters.

In a country where violence against women is endemic and those responsible rarely face justice, shelters like those run by AWSDC play a critical role in providing survivors with protection and support to help them rebuild their lives.

AWSDC staff carry out this important work at great personal risk and face threats, intimidation and attacks.

■ www.amnesty.org.uk/awsdc

ONLINE ACTION

ADD YOUR SOLIDARITY MESSAGE TO:

■ www.amnesty.org.uk/awsdc

■ Preferred language English

■ Salutation Dear Friends at AWSDC

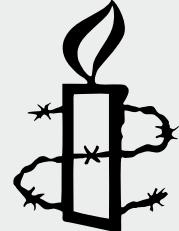
■ Suggested message I stand with you in solidarity and wish you strength and courage.

'It unsettles people to see a woman being strong and vocal – and they get more upset when they see I encourage other women to be strong and vocal too... there is no protection for human rights defenders like us. No one is thinking of us and what will happen to us.'

Mary Akrami



© CARE/Puthuppattamill



SEND AN APPEAL LETTER TO:

Urge President Hamid Karzai to improve support and protection for women human rights defenders

Write to: President Hamid Karzai
Gul Khana Palace
Presidential Palace
Kabul
Afghanistan

Email: president@afghanistangov.org

Salutation: Your Excellency

In your letter:

- State that women human rights defenders are among the most active agents for positive change in Afghanistan, but face frequent intimidation and attacks, including from members of the government and people allied to the Taliban and other armed opposition groups.
- Call for attacks and threats on women human rights defenders to be swiftly and fully investigated.
- Call for full implementation of the Elimination of Violence against Women Law and other legislation that protects and promotes women's human rights.