



Afghan Women's Organization

Annual Report

2009-2010

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2009-2010 has been a year full of tremendous resiliency. We were faced with financial strain and increasing demand for services. Despite these times, we are pleased to report that we met our goals. This is primarily due to our hard working board members, managers, staff and volunteers who touch and transform the lives of refugees and newcomers who have made Canada their home.

We are known for delivering culturally and linguistically appropriate services which are focused, but not limited, to refugee women and their families who constitute a very unique segment of our society. Their need is unique and requires very special care, attention and experience. Since the majority of our staff and board members have personal experience of being refugees, they have first hand understanding of the needs of our clients. This is what makes our organization unique and special.

We had a number of successes to celebrate! We had an increase in the number of our clients and volunteers. Further, we have reached out to other organizations and have created new partnerships.

We also had a number of challenges. We were faced with financial strain due to the difficult and unpredictable economic times. We tried to overcome these challenges by making new alliances with other organizations and diversifying our resources. Many of our clients from the Afghan community are still impacted by the continuous instability and loss of innocent lives in Afghanistan since they had left loved ones back home or in refugee camps. This had a significant impact on their speedy settlement in Canada. We have weathered these challenging times and hope to continue to deliver the best service we can.

In the year ahead, we will continue to make new partnerships and expand our resources and focus on working as efficiently as possible to maximize the resources we have. We are privileged to be working with an organization so dedicated to improving the future of refugees and newcomers in our society and ultimately building a stronger community for all of us.

Asma Faizi, President

Adeena Niazi, Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

To improve the quality of life and facilitate social and economic integration, the Afghan Women's Organization (AWO) has been serving newcomers to Canada by offering culturally competent, socially responsible and innovative programs and services. Over the past two decades, our services have continually expanded and improved in response to rising demand from the growing Afghan community and other newcomer communities in the Greater Toronto Area. The number of AWO clients significantly increases year after year, and this year we have served over 15,000 clients. We provide comprehensive support and services to address the needs of new immigrants, in particular those with refugee experiences, from our four centers: Head Office, Flemingdon Park, Scarborough and Mississauga. Throughout these locations, the AWO currently employs over 80 full-time and part-time employees. The AWO is committed to continuously improve its services to effectively address the needs of new immigrants and provide the necessary support and services to assist them in their social and economic integration process in Canada.

Mission

AWO works with refugees and immigrants, and those who have experienced wars and persecutions, with a special focus on women and their families. Its mission is to improve their quality of life and to promote their social and economic integration inclusion in order to enable them to become contributing members of society and to live in dignity.

Vision

Refugees and immigrants, especially those who have experienced persecution, leading self-sufficient and dignified lives in a socially-inclusive society.

Values

Access and equity; dignity and respect; social inclusion; and collaboration



LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)

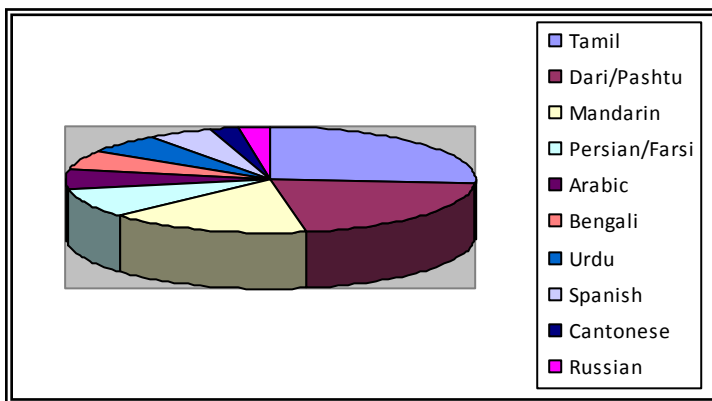
Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) provides English language training for newcomers at varying levels of proficiency. LINC assists newcomers get equipped with the English language skills necessary for effective integration. The objective of the LINC program is to provide basic communication and life skills that are crucial for individuals to develop into capable, independent and active members in their new communities.

This past year was a very productive, dynamic and engaging one. More and more women continue to seek out the AWO LINC program for its services and complementary programs.

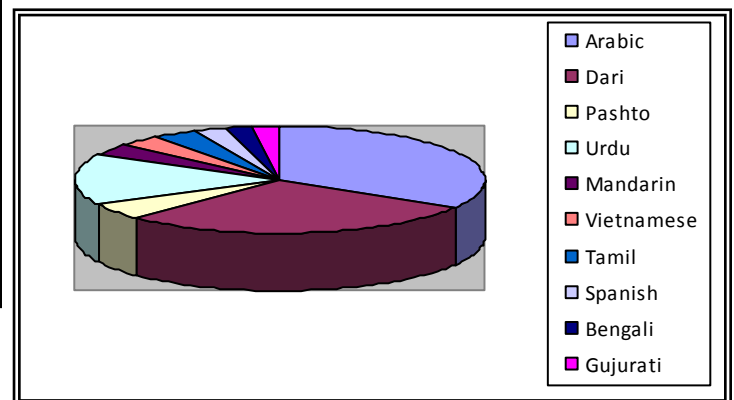
This year, we served a total of **557 students** from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. A total of **149 students** have completed a level during the reporting period. A total of **256 children** have attended our child-minding facilities.

Our LINC program has become extremely diverse over the past year.

Students by Language Background in Toronto LINC programs:



Students by Language Background in Mississauga LINC program:



In total, AWO now offers a total of 19 LINC classes throughout the Greater Toronto Area, with 11 classes being offered in Toronto and 8 in Mississauga. 5 of our classes are full-time and 14 are part time.

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)



As a large focus of our English classes is to immerse our students into Canadian culture, LINC students take trips around the community and guest speakers are invited to give relevant and timely information. Below is a list of guest speakers and trips enjoyed by the students this past year.

Guest Speakers

- Toronto Public Services
- Toronto Public Health
- Industry Canada
- Canada Revenue Agency
- Flemington Health Centre
- Centennial College
- Regional Fire Departments
- Local Police Departments
- Trillium Health Centre
- YMCA
- MCS
- Peel Career Assessment Centre
- Interim Place
- Family Education Centre
- Peel Region Conservation
- ELT programs
- Central Library of Mississauga

Trips

- Centre Island
- Black Creek Pioneer Village
- Andrew's Scenic Acres
- Chinguacousy Park
- Dixie Orchards
- CN Tower
- Public Libraries
- Kortright Centre
- Maple Sugar Bush
- Ontario Science Centre
- Casa Loma
- Eaton Centre
- Canadian National Exhibition
- Edwards Gardens
- Local Supermarkets
- Annual PLP picnic

LINC teachers have participated in several training opportunities including using SAMS as a classroom evaluation tool, teaching writing skills, effective communication strategies and elicitation techniques, instructions and classroom management, active reading and listening techniques, language awareness and accuracy vs. fluency in speaking practice. In addition, LINC teachers received orientation sessions from community organizations such as Peel Family Mediation Services and East Mississauga Community Health Centre, and they attended the 3-day TESL Conference held downtown Toronto.

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS TO CANADA (LINC)

The LINC program often collaborates with other AWO programs to meet students' varying needs.

- LINC students often have an individual ISAP worker who helps them with all their settlement needs.
- LINC students are often matched with a volunteer in the HOST program and participate together in HOST activities.
- Students benefit from JSW workshops and other AWO programs such as mental health.

Special Events

Due to the natural disaster in Haiti, our students joined together and raised money for this very worthy cause. In total, \$1500 was raised and presented to Shirley Mak, President of the Peel Council from Red Cross.

For International Women's Day, AWO held a large celebration to honour women, past and present. Students presented their research assignments on the topic of inspirational women around the world and discussed the importance of women and their accomplishments. Dancing and eating ensued and everyone had a marvelous time!

This year AWO Mississauga hosted the LINC Teacher Council Meetings and organized several childminding training sessions for teachers and childminders from other settlement organizations. We were pleased to introduce our location to other professionals in the settlement field.

These are just a few of the many special events LINC has had this year!

Childminding

Childminding is an integral component of our LINC program as it allows our students to attend school while their young children are taken care of by qualified childminders.

Daily activities in the childminding rooms include calendar information, letters, numbers, songs, crafts and culture tied into a weekly thematic unit based on seasons, holidays or other areas of interest. The fully-equipped gross motor room allows the children to play with bikes, balls, balancing beams and parachutes.

We support and encourage the professional growth of all our childminders. Childminders attend frequent training sessions to enhance their knowledge and potential in the childcare.



Training Sessions Attended by the Childminding Staff:		
CPR training	Children's Behavior	Children and the Law
Ready to Read	Child Development	Language Development
Nutrition for Children	Self Care with Joy	Communication with Parents
Role of Play in the Development Children	Nurturing Language Development	Teaching Yoga and Meditation to Children

Settlement Services (ISAP and NSP)

Settlement services for newcomers are an integral part of our service provision. Our Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) and Newcomer Support Program (NSP) are designed to assist newcomers to Canada not only to settle but also to adapt and integrate into the Canadian society. Our programs and services are aimed to ensure an effective and efficient integration process for our clients.



The vast majority of our clients have had refugee experiences prior to coming to Canada and some are currently refugees. All of AWO’s settlement services are delivered in a culturally-competent and linguistically-appropriate manner to address the complex, specific needs of those who have experienced wars and persecution. Majority of our clients are Afghan, Iranian, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Pakistani and Middle Eastern women, youth and seniors.

Services are provided on a one-on-one basis to address the specific needs of clients and include orientation, support counselling, interpretation, translation, referrals, advocacy, housing, health, escorting, filling forms, employment counselling, and employment support.

These programs are offered by specialized youth, family and senior settlement staff, as well as general settlement staff. Our settlement services are delivered throughout the Greater Toronto Area in our four locations. We also provide itinerant services through partnership with other organizations.

We have successfully served over 15,000 clients this past year, well-exceeding our target numbers.

Total Number of Clients Served between April 2009 to March 2010	
<u>New New Clients</u>	496
<i>(newcomers in Canada less than one year and new to our organization)</i>	
<u>New Clients</u>	702
<i>(clients who are new to our organization)</i>	
<u>Return and Previous Clients</u>	14,135
<i>(clients assisted by AWO at least once before)</i>	
<u>Total Number of Services</u>	42,807

Settlement Services (ISAP and NSP)

Many information sessions are offered to clients on a monthly basis targeting different groups (seniors, youth, women) and their specific needs. The purpose of these sessions is to provide information to large groups at one time and also to generate ideas and discussion in a safe and welcoming environment.

Some workshops for SENIORS include:

- community resources
- stress management
- healthy eating
- elder abuse
- homeopathic medicine
- disability equipment
- weight control
- arthritis
- breast cancer
- dental hygiene
- Diabetes
- medicine safety
- mobile clinic
- family issues
- library tours
- educational trips

Some workshops for YOUTH include:

- time management
- parental conflict
- civic engagement
- culture and lifestyle
- public speaking
- conflict mediation
- Canadian law
- sibling rivalry
- post secondary opportunities
- Multiculturalism
- Anger Replacement Training (ART)
- Social and cultural events such as:
 - talent shows
 - sports games
 - celebrating Afghan culture
 - holiday gatherings

Workshops for FAMILIES and all newcomers include:

- Daily living
- Canadian school system
- Family mediation
- RESP options
- Parenting in Canada
- Family Literacy
- Healthy eating
- Making healthy baby food
- Income tax
- Hygiene
- Diet and nutrition
- H1N1 and flu shot
- Subsidized services in the Peel Region
- Shelters
- Canadian banking system
- Hospital tours for expectant mothers
- Financial literacy
- Canadian law and regulations
- Aggression replacement training
- Conflict resolution
- Mental Health
- Children Aid services, community awareness
- Team building/leadership
- Civic participation
- Citizenship preparation
- Dealing with peer pressure
- ODSP and old age security



Youth Program

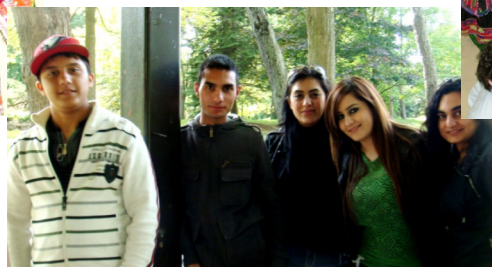
AWO's Youth Program continues to effectively provide numerous services to meet the specific needs of youth. We have empowered and supported them in different areas of their lives. Our Youth Program includes settlement services as well as mentorship and civic engagement programs. We have provided supportive and solution-focused counseling to newcomer youth to reduce their level of social isolation and to assist them in integrating into Canadian society by encouraging participation in the wider community. We have provided a number of skill development workshops during our drop-in sessions on a weekly basis which assisted youth in developing leadership and public speaking skills. We have also provided programs to bring awareness about Canadian culture and society.

Moreover, we have served a number of at risk youth; we have provided counseling, referrals to lawyers, assistance with court and school issues and Aggression Replacement Training. Many youth that we have served through Aggression Replacement Training gain invaluable skills in conflict mediation.

We also took clients on field trips to Ontario Science Centre and City Hall to promote civic participation. We introduced two new programs which include a 'Mock Trial' in partnership with Ontario Justice Education Network which assists clients to learn about Canadian Law. As well, in partnership with New Horizon -Healing and Hope Coalition, we provide series of twelve-week workshops for youth which enabled them to cope with and overcome obstacles they face during migration to Canada.

With the help of our youth advisory group, we were able to plan number of cultural, social, religious and recreational events for youth, so they could learn about their heritage and increase their awareness about Afghan culture among the broader community. The following events took place last year:

Khatem-UI- Qurhan during Ramadan, Afghan Cultural Show at "Taste of Asia", Afghan Cultural Show at Mayor of Richmond Hill's "Eid celebration", Youth Dialogue " Building Bridges Among Afghans & Afghan Canadians", International Women's Day celebration and youth picnic, we also took youth to a documentary on Afghanistan.



Seniors Program

The Seniors' Program focuses on the physical, emotional, and social needs of newcomer seniors. Often, seniors face multiple challenges, remain isolated, and their needs go unmet; for this reason, our program aims to reach out to these seniors and help to engage them into life in Canada by providing them with the appropriate services and support.

The following are key components of our seniors' program.

FRIENDLY VISITING monthly visits to seniors' homes for support. Support includes assessment of the senior's immediate needs, conversation, accompaniment, translation, and more. These visits reduce isolation, create a familiar cultural connection for the seniors, and provide the necessary information and support to improve the senior's current circumstances.



HOME CARE volunteers are assigned to visit seniors who require help in maintaining their homes and other responsibilities. These visits reduce isolation, address immediate needs, create a familiar cultural connection and improve individual well-being and overall quality of life by providing them with essential services and support.

GROUP TIME encourages the development of linkages between seniors through small group sessions which includes guest speakers, workshops, translated information, and field trips. Group Time helps seniors to reduce time spent at home in isolation and is a time to receive useful information regarding available services and programs. It also reduces social isolation feelings of fear and insecurity in their new environment by creating networks and friendships.



TELEPHONE SUPPORT LINE Isolated seniors or seniors living without proper support and information are contacted by telephone on a bi-monthly basis. This way we are able to ensure that the seniors' immediate needs and safety are being met and that they have a connection outside of the home.

Homework Club

The Afghan Women's Organization has started a new program called the "Homework Club", designed specifically to meet the needs of newcomer children of parents who are unable to receive help at home with their school homework and assignments. The Homework Club is an opportunity for students to receive the extra support that they need to succeed academically in school. This Club is a voluntary after-school program which, in addition to the academic benefits, strives to assist students in terms of taking initiatives and using their time wisely.

The program coordinator and dedicated volunteers ensure that the children understand and complete their weekly school assignments. Students work together by grade levels which also provides the opportunity for the students to help and encourage each other. Extra worksheets are prepared in advance for those students who have finished their homework.

The Homework Club runs twice a week in two of AWO's locations - Don Mills and Mississauga. This program is a necessary and successful program which we intend to continue in the following years.



HOST PROGRAM

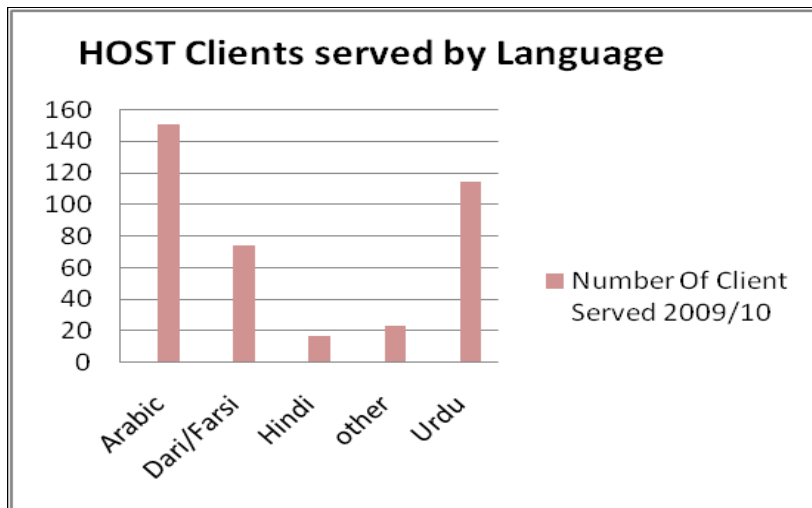


The Afghan Women's Organization is running the HOST Program in the Mississauga (Peel) Region. The program is intended to match newcomers with volunteers who have lived here for a longer period of time and therefore are familiar with the Canadian society and culture. The program has been very successful in matching newcomers to Canada with volunteers and has been well-received by our clients and the community. Between April 2009 and March 2010, the HOST Program has been running to full capacity, and the number of clients continues to grow significantly. This unique program is mutually beneficial and enriches the knowledge of everyone involved in the program.

The program offers very useful and practical support to newcomers. In addition to running a Homework Club, HOST also runs an English Conversation Circle twice a week so mothers can participate in English Conversation while children are busy doing their homework.

Once a week HOST offers sewing club runs by trained volunteers in a fully-equipped sewing room. We also have regular Recipe Sharing and Coffee with Friends which are well received by the group. These activities allow both newcomers and volunteers to share their skills and knowledge. There are also summer activities for the children, which include crafts, movie events and talent sharing.

HOST also organizes volunteer appreciation events which encourage volunteers to consistently contribute to the program whilst getting the chance to socialize and have a great time with the newcomer they were matched to.



JSW PROGRAM

The Job Search Workshops (JSW) program helps newcomers to find jobs in Ontario. Our workshops give clients the necessary job search tools that help them succeed in the Canadian job market.

Our programs are open to all newcomers who are looking for work and may need extra support and resources. We offer 3- 4 day workshops at 2 locations, including day time, weekends and evenings. These workshops cover resume and cover letter writing, labour market trends, strategies to tap the hidden job market, interview skills, cold calling and networking, overcoming the barrier of 'no Canadian work experience', worker's rights and employment standards. We also offer shorter 1-day workshops which focus on computer skills and specific job search techniques and topics.

Clients also have access to one-on-one counseling, assistance to develop an employment action plan, work experience placements, and referrals to job development. They also have access to the Internet, computers, telephones, and fax machine for job search purposes.

Between April 2009—March 2010, we offered 48 workshops that included day time, evening and weekend workshops. The total number of clients who attended these workshops exceeded 300 newcomers. Some of these clients found jobs while others preferred to upgrade their language skills. Most of the clients got admitted to educational institutions to obtain Canadian credentials.



Mental Health Program

This program serves Afghan newcomers who are dealing with mental health issues. Many of our clients served through this program are dealing with settlement and acculturation stress, post-traumatic stress disorders and other mental health issues. These newcomers are often unable to access services elsewhere and this program is able to meet their mental health needs. The activities in this program include providing culturally and linguistically appropriate referrals, support, counseling, workshops and relevant informational materials.

Multicultural Women's Wellness Program

Funded by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), AWO provides a multicultural women's wellness program which raises the awareness of mental health among our clients and educates them on mental health issues and resources in the community. Workshops are provided twice a month on topics such as the anatomy of the nerve system, stress and anxiety, depression, schizophrenia and so on. Guest speakers who are expert in the field are often invited to present. Many newcomers have been benefitting from this program since 2002.

Women's Circle



This program was initiated in the beginning of 2008, with dedication towards supporting isolated and vulnerable women who would otherwise stay home in isolation.

These socially deprived individuals were brought out to the Afghan Women's Organization, not solely to get linked to diverse social networks in their community but also to meet with new people while learning new skills, sharing their experiences and participating in hands-on activities.

The Women's Circle is comprised of 12 gatherings; each session embraces 10-12 participants and runs for 6 months with sessions being offered twice a month. Divided into two parts, the first component of the session offers topics for discussion, while the second is facilitated by a community nutrition educator from Public Health. 2009 was a very successful year for the Women's Circle as the themes for discussions were determined to be most looked-for by women participants who were mostly housewives or mothers occupied with young children.

Volunteers

Volunteers make an incredible difference in our ability to provide effective programs to the community. We are most grateful to each individual and group who gives their time and talents to make this difference to the Afghan Women's Organization.

Each year we rely on more than 150 volunteers to be a part of our team to assist with ISAP, youth, senior, the child minding program and a wide variety of seasonal and special events and activities. In the ISAP program, our volunteers escort our clients to the doctors, Ontario Works, lawyers, immigration, schools, housing and other service providers.

Most of our volunteers are young adults with Canadian experience and they contribute their experience with newcomers to Canada. It is an excellent opportunity for our newcomers and clients to meet friends, learn new skills, and learn about Canadian society.

Volunteering is much more than just a job. For each individual volunteer we set an interview day and we have a discussion about their skills, area of interest and their ability. We also provide orientation about our services and mandate. We make sure that our volunteers gain valuable working experiences and we are a good reference for them when they apply for a job. Seven of our volunteers received The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards from the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.



Financial Literacy Education Project

Through a pilot project, JVS Toronto is working in partnership with the Afghan Women's Organization to develop and implement a financial literacy education program for newcomers residing in and around the Scarborough area. Topics of discussion include paying bills, balancing a household budget, understanding the benefits and risks associated with credit card use, banking, saving, investing and basic financial management. These issues are often unfamiliar tasks for new Canadians as many of the newcomers we serve come from countries where financial matters are handled differently or where they have had limited exposure to banks and/or other financial institutions. This project has benefitted many women by assisting them in increasing their financial knowledge, awareness and well-being.

Fundraising and Cultural Events

The Afghan Women's Organization has been a host to many community events in the past.

The most significant ones for 2009-2010 are:

- **Mela-E-Samanak:** This event is celebrated each year in the month of April to celebrate spring and the Afghan New Year. Last year, approximately 2000 community members attended.
- **Father's Day:** This significant event was held in the presence of 250 guests.

Foreign Trained Medical Practitioners' Focus Group

The Afghan Women's Organization is running a focus group for foreign trained Medical Practitioners. The group is led by Sara, an experienced volunteer lecturer, who has an immense knowledge with the requirements of this exam; more importantly, who knows how to break down complex material into manageable and simple pieces of information. Included in the course, are sample exams modeled on the actual EE and QE1.

By participating in this unique focus group, group members will be capable of contributing to fellow IMGs who face the EE exam in myriad ways, like sharing information and ideas in the networking session; participating in an existing group or creating a group of their own; or even by donating materials like notes, books, CDs, and other things they have used while preparing for examination. The Afghan Women's Organization has provided these foreign medical practitioners the opportunity to share the same vision of integrating all capable IMGs into the Canadian Medical System. This focus group provides every IMG with the opportunity to make a real difference in the community, while becoming a proactive individual who contributes ones time and talent and benefits from being part of a group of similar individuals who share the same vision.

STAFF TRAINING

AWO encourages staff to increase their knowledge and professional growth through a wide variety of training opportunities offered both internally and externally.

Following are just some of the sessions that staff have attended:

Skill Enhancement Training on Health and Seniors Services (CET)
Volunteer Management (Charity Village)
Information and Referral Training (CIC Peel)
CPR and First Aid Training (Red Cross)
Microsoft Excel and Access Training (AWO)
OCC Training (CMAS)
Parenting (AWO)
Housing Connections Information (Toronto Housing Connections)
Tax Filing (CRA)
Passions Test (Ahmad Durani)
Helping Children (CAS)
Helping Victims of Domestic Violence (CLEO)
Old age security, CPP and RRSPs (Citizen Services Specialist)
Immigration Law (Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Legal Clinic)
Caring for Canada's Children (Mothercraft)
Kids in Chaos (Peel Board of Education)
Financial Literacy (SEDI)
Family Law (lawyer David Frenkel)
Assisting Individuals in Crisis (CPI Crisis Prevention Institute, Inc)
Train the Trainer Facilitation (Canadian Centre for Diversity)
Rethinking Relationships Conference (Research and Education on Violence)
HOST Conference (CIC)
ISAP Conference (CIC)
OCASI Conference (OCASI)
TESL Conference (TESL Ontario)
JSW Conference (CIC)

SPONSORSHIP

As a sponsorship Agreement Holder organization with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), AWO sponsors refugees from Pakistan and other refugee camps to come to Canada. In 2009, 101 refugees arrived in Canada and received settlement services and other supports to help them upon their arrival.

HERITAGE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

AWO provides Heritage Language classes in Pashto and Dari for Afghan children as it is important for families to maintain elements of their culture and identity while living in Canada. In addition to our classes for children, our dedicated volunteers continue to provide a Dari and Pashto literacy program for Afghan women and seniors in Toronto.

AWO volunteers to provide these programs to many children and women as a way to give back to the community.

OMID-E-MIRMUN ORPHANAGE

The Omid-E-Mirmun orphanage was established by the Afghan Women's Organization in 2004 in Kabul, Afghanistan with the support of Canadian Women for Women of Afghanistan. This orphanage provides shelter and basic needs for approximately 30 girls between the ages of three to twelve years. The girls have a safe and comfortable home, access to schooling and extra-curricular activities, as well as emotional support and care from the dedicated staff. We are thankful for the generous funding from Canadian Women for Women of Afghanistan, and other friends and supporters for making it possible for this project to persist and grow in its success.



**To our funders and partners who have supported our
programs and services:
Thank You!**

PARTNERS

Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services
 Canadian Council for Muslim Women
 Canadian Mental Health Association
 Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan
 City of Toronto – Community Development
 Community Resource Connection of Toronto
 Family Education Centre
 Flemingdon Health Centre
 Ismailic Women’s Economic Development
 Mississauga Community Legal Services
 Mississauga Library System
 Mother Craft Institution for Early Development
 Nabawi Mosque
 Neighbourhood Link Support Service
 Overland Learning Centre
 On-Track
 Rehma Foundation
 Skills for Change
 LIP Kennedy Park/ Eglinton East
 LIP partners, Don Valley

CURRENT AND PREVIOUS FUNDERS

Citizenship and Immigration Canada



Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration



City of Toronto



New Horizon



Ontario Women’s Directorate

Status of Women



United Way



AWO STAFF



Board of Directors

Asma Faizi:

Asma Faizi is the President of the Afghan Women's Organization. She has a Master of Science in Pharmacology from the University of Toronto and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Toronto. She is a lawyer and currently working as an associate at Torys LLP where she primarily focuses on intellectual property litigation matters involving patents, trademarks and copyright. She has been advocating on behalf of Afghan women for over a decade, in Canada, and internationally, on human rights issues.

Mary Gharwal:

Mary Garwal is the Vice President of Afghan Women's Organization. She has Master's degree in English/ Common Wealth Literature from India. Currently she is working as Program Liaison and counselor at COSTI Reception centre, she is actively involved in the community, she is member of the Sierra Leone Canada Watch and has volunteered with Amnesty International and Free the Children.

Latifa Sarwari:

Latifa Sarwari is a member of Board of Directors of Afghan Women Organization. She obtained a B.Com degree from University of Toronto in 2002, later she completed her Certified General Accountant ("CGA") designation in 2007, and she has also completed the CICA In-Depth Tax Course in 2009. She worked at Ernst&Young as Senior Tax Accountant and at State Farm Insurance as Analysis, Reporting and Tax Accountant. Currently she is working as Assistant Manager of Taxation at Lombard Canada.

Nazi Amin:

Nazi Amin is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She is an insurance broker very actively involved with Afghan Community and she is also working with Nabawi mosque of Afghan Community in Toronto.

Shakila Hassanyar:

Shakila Hassanyar is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She has Agriculture degree from university of Kabul, and owns and operates a hair salon since 1998 in Toronto. She has been actively involved in community for years, from 1999-2005 she has served as a council member, women's development chair, on The Agha Khan Ismaili Council for Ontario, she has also served as a board member on Focus North America. Since August 2009 she is a Board member on The Agha Khan Economic Planning Board for Canada.

Hasiba Anna Esmatyar:

Hassiba Anna Esmatyar is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She has a diploma in Civil Engineering Technology from Seneca college, (FEAS) civil Engineering Ryerson University, PMAC Diploma in Principals of buying from Centennial college, She has also successfully completed the TTC Personal and Professional Skills Diploma and a certificate in MS Office XP from CDI College. She is currently working as a Training Coordinator truck and structure department, Wilson yard-plant building, Toronto Transit com

Sharifa Ahmadzai:

Sharifa Ahmadzai is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organizations. She has bachelors of Journalism from university of Kabul, In Afghanistan she worked as a producer, writer and host of two famous shows Zamzama Hai Shab Hangam and Walali. Currently she is working and assisting Afghan Media.

Zahira Dauod:

Zahria Daud is a member of board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She is a high school graduate and she worked as bank manager in Afghanistan, currently she owns a small business.

Karima Sharifi:

Karima Sharifi is the secretary of Board of Directors of Afghan Women's Organization. She attended Medical University and obtained Masters in Women's Health. She is currently working as a Mental Health Clinician with Trillium health Centre; she is also working as a behavior management consultant in the area of Dementia. She has been actively involved and volunteered with AWO since 1992

Zobaida Noorzad:

Zobaida Noorzad is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She is a house wife and mother of 5 children. She is an active member of Afghan community.

Mawena Malala Maiwand:

Mawena Maiwand is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She was born in the city of Kandahar Afghanistan. After completing her education, she became principle of Malalai Leisa (school) in Kandahar. While carrying out her duties as a principle, Mawena also had a column in the local news paper Tolo-e-Afghan. Her column was called "Merman" or woman which provided information on general topics about women such as women's rights and their contributions to the Afghan society. Shortly after moving to Kabul, she was appointed as the head of the Pashto department and teacher in Maryam Leisa

Najeeba Shairzay:

Najeeba Shairzay a formal teacher was the founder and the principal of Hazrat-e-Bibi Aisha school for girls. She organized various extra curricular activities in after school hours and during summer holiday; e.g., sewing, English courses, rug weaving, beats sewing, literacy courses, calligraphy and much more. Moreover, she volunteered in various different locations such as Senior Link, Afghan Women's Organization and various other locations. Najeeba is a mother of one son and two daughters.

Adita Shirzad:

Adita Shirzad is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She came to Canada in 1992. After graduating from Vanier College in Montreal, with a Diploma in Health sciences, she attended U of T - Majoring in Biochemistry, 1995-1997. She then graduated from George Brown College in 2000 with a Diploma in Denturism. Currently, she has her own Practice in Oakville.

Wajma Soroor:

Wajma Soroor is the second youngest in a family of 8 Afghan singers, actors, writers and artists. Canada has been her home since she was a little girl. After working for several years in corporate communications, Wajma returned to York University to receive a BA Hons in Communications and Sociology. Wajma's interests and experiences span from academic research in newcomer youth mental health, global leadership and community outreach to music and art as technologies for change. In 2008, Wajma returned to Afghanistan to release her very first radio documentary with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. A member of the Board of Directors for the Afghan Women's Organization, Wajma hopes to continue serving newcomers' community and empowering its young voices.

Parween Danayar:

Parween Danayar is a member of Board of Directors at Afghan Women's Organization. She is a house wife and mother of 4 children. She is actively involved in Afghan community, as well as, she is an active member of Shia mosque organizing their cultural and other events.

Locations

North York (Head Office)

789 Don Mills Rd., # 312
Toronto, ON M3C 1T5
(416) 588-3585 tel
(416) 588-4552 fax

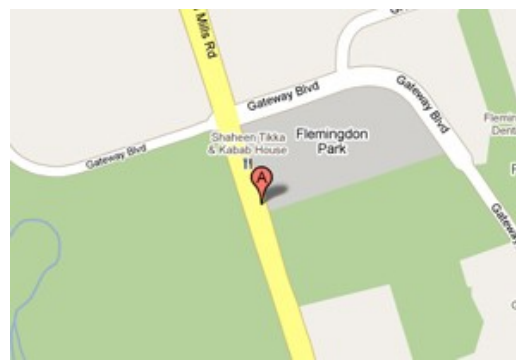
Monday, Tuesday 9am to 5pm
Wednesday 9am to 7pm
Thursday, Friday 9am to 5pm
Saturdays: 9am-5am



North York

747 Don Mills Rd., Unit# 223 (Basement)
Toronto, ON M3C 1T2
(416) 422-2225 tel
(416) 429-9111 fax

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Saturday 9:30am to 5pm
Evenings and weekends by appointment



Mississauga

3050 Confederation Parkway, Unit #302
Mississauga, ON L5B 3Z6
(905) 279-3679 tel
(905) 279-4691 fax

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Evenings and weekends by appointment



Scarborough

2555 Eglinton Ave. East, #211
Toronto, ON M1K 5J1
(416) 266-1777 tel
(416) 266-8145 fax

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Evenings and weekends by appointment

