



## Afghan Women's And Kids' Education & Necessities, Inc.

*Improving the lives of women and children in Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province by helping them become healthy, literate, and self-sufficient*

*98% of all gifts go directly to our work in Afghanistan*

November 2020

*This year, your donation will be doubled! See page 3!*

### A special message from Bibi Bahrami: AWAKEN's response to COVID

I hope and pray that you and all of your loved ones are well in this challenging time. I've been deeply struck by the fact that we are all connected by the COVID-19 pandemic, by the increased hardship and suffering it has caused for so many people.

In fact, some of my own family members in Afghanistan became sick with the virus and died, and for the people of the Nangarhar Province's Behsood District, where AWAKEN carries out most of its work, the illness has had a devastating impact. At one point, health officials estimated that up to 80% of the Behsood residents had COVID.



Things became so bad that AWAKEN's Behsood Health Clinic and the Maternal & Child Health unit had to close for a few weeks. COVID hit our own mobile clinic doctor, and he had to stop treating patients temporarily. For several months, the Afghan government closed down all schools, including our vocational training program and the Qala-e-Malakh School that AWAKEN founded in 2004 and still helps support.

About 90% of the businesses in the Behsood District were affected by the pandemic, too, which made it even more difficult for hospitals and medical clinics, like ours, to get supplies from larger cities. Families either couldn't get food and other basic supplies or they couldn't afford them.

**That's why AWAKEN's response to COVID-19 has been critical**, as we've found ways to support a region that is sorely lacking in healthcare resources, basic supplies, and knowledge about the virus. **To date, our mobile health clinic has seen approximately 1,200 COVID patients**, providing them with masks, hygiene supplies, and other supportive care.

In May, **we launched a special fundraiser**, to donate flour, rice, oil, sugar, beans, tea, and hygiene products to families in need. For just \$65, a single emergency relief package provided a family of five with one month's worth of supplies.

The fundraiser was a great success, **bringing in more than \$10,000** to provide this emergency relief.

This was enough to provide essential supplies to more than 150 families. In the coming year, we will continue giving food and hygiene packages to families who've experienced the impacts of COVID and other emergencies.

I am grateful beyond words for both your compassion and generosity in a year that has been filled with great pain for Americans, Afghans, and all of the world's citizens. I hope you will join us in continuing to ease the suffering of Behsood District citizens in 2021.

With my deepest thanks and gratitude,

Bibi Bahrami  
Founder and President of AWAKEN



COVID-19 relief packages of food and hygiene products are distributed to families

## Creating a healthier future for Afghans

Healthcare remains at the heart of AWAKEN's work, and thanks to your financial support, our medical facilities set a record of **more than 50,000 patient visits** in the past year!

The real workhorse of our healthcare programs is the **mobile health clinic**, which brings critical care, medical supplies, and medications to remote villages of the Nangarhar Province five days a week. Residents of these rural villages—in places like Tangi Tukhchi, Abdul Khil, Shamal, Aml, Arbapan, Mirzakhil, and Ghowchak—have no access to transportation, and without AWAKEN they'd likely have no access to healthcare, either.

Each month, the mobile clinic staff members see an average of 1,500 patients and administer around 300 vaccines, to prevent polio, tuberculosis, measles, tetanus, diphtheria, hepatitis B, and other infections and illnesses.

Likewise, our **Behsood Health Clinic (BHC)** provides full medical care to patients who live in or near the village of Qala-e-Malakh. Nearly a year ago, in order to focus more of our time, attention, and money on the mobile clinic, we began working to transfer the BHC to the Afghan government or another NGO. Those efforts are still underway, but in the meantime, we continue to manage and fund both clinics, which means we need your generous support more than ever!

Our third medical service is the **Maternal & Child Health Unit**, which was established in partnership with Rotary International in 2017. We believe that taking care of mothers and their babies is one of our most critical responsibilities. Every month, we provide **at least 200 women** with prenatal and post-natal care, medical advice, and vitamins, and over the past year our midwives delivered **more than 120 healthy babies!**

Healthcare services for pregnant women and newborns are still a rarity in rural Afghanistan, so AWAKEN's work is vitally important to protecting the lives of Afghan women and children—and to ensuring a strong, healthy future for the country.

*Top right:* The mobile clinic's nurse checks a woman's blood pressure

*Right:* Long lines of mobile clinic patients wait to see the doctor and receive medication



### Pekai's story:

I was living in the Khogyani District when my husband was killed in an explosion. After his death, my family's troubles got worse. We didn't have enough money to live on, and we didn't feel safe, so we fled Khogyani, came here to the village of Ghowchak, and started a new life, living in tents.

My oldest daughter is also a widow, and she has a heart problem. My second daughter has an eye problem and cannot see well. My two youngest sons sell plastic goods, and my oldest son drives a taxi (auto rickshaw), but their jobs were all stopped during the COVID lockdown.

I wasn't feeling well, so when I heard that a mobile clinic was coming to our village, I ran to see the doctor. He found that my blood pressure was high, so he kindly gave me medicine, and I began feeling better.

I am very happy that AWAKEN has come to our homeland to treat our illnesses. Thank you all very much for your help.



## HELP US MEET OUR GOALS FOR 2021!

We've set an ambitious **budget of \$109,813** for 2021, which will allow us to continue the work we've been doing over the past year, with **increased funding for our three healthcare services**—the mobile health clinic, the Behsood Health Clinic, and the Maternal & Child Health Unit—with greater outreach to pregnant women and new mothers who could benefit from maternal health services. We'll continue to meet the dire needs of families whose lives have been turned upside down by the COVID pandemic, too.

We also intend to **increase the number of university scholarships** that we award to talented, ambitious students who will become the nation's next generation of leaders. In 2020 we gave scholarships to 24 students, including three women, to help them get degrees in fields ranging from medicine to law to economics. In 2021 we plan to raise the number of scholarships to 32, with the goal of supporting even more women.

We'll continue to find other ways to improve the lives of women and children, too. We recently hired a female assistant for the director of AWAKEN Afghanistan (who runs AWAKEN's day-to-day, in-country operations). We've also empowered our midwife and female doctor at the Behsood Health Clinic to take full responsibility for all activities and services of the Maternal & Child Health Unit. We're excited to provide 24-hour service to Afghan women in need through their leadership.

**We can do all this, and much more, with your generous support.** And remember that for every dollar you donate to AWAKEN, 98 cents goes *directly* to the women, children, and families we serve in Afghanistan.

**Please join us in our ongoing mission to *change the lives of Afghanistan's most vulnerable populations.***

### Your donation will be doubled!

**Thanks to the incredible generosity of an AWAKEN supporter, all donations made to our end-of-the-year campaign will be doubled, dollar for dollar! If you give \$100, it will become \$200! If you give \$2,000, it will become \$4,000!**

***Our anonymous donor has set no limit to his matching dollars, so please give as generously as you're able to.***

**This opportunity will end on January 31, 2021. Don't miss this chance double your dollars for healthcare, education, and vocational training in Afghanistan!**

## Creating self-sufficiency

**More than 60 women** graduated from our six-month vocational training programs in two different rural villages over the past year! Besides learning tailoring skills, they also received literacy and family hygiene instruction. They now have the skills and tailoring equipment to help support themselves and their families.



### Arzo's story:

I was very happy when I joined AWAKEN's tailoring program, because it was the first time such a program had been offered in our village. The people of the village do not pay any attention to women, and women's rights are trampled on.

After six months in the tailoring program, I learned how to sew different types of clothes with different designs. Now I am a good tailor, and I can have my own tailoring business at home to help support my family.

Last Eid\* I sewed special clothes for my four children. When my husband saw the clothes, he was very happy thankful and encouraged me to do more tailoring.

I am very grateful to AWAKEN and all the staff who made it possible for me to get involved in this program—and for everything AWAKEN does to serve Afghan girls and women.

*\*Eid is an Islamic holiday.*

**Left: Women in the village of Jamali learn how to create and cut patterns out of news-papers, which eventually become beautiful items of clothing—perhaps to clothe their own families or to sell as a means of supporting their families**



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**Because of the uncertainty created by COVID-19, we don't yet have a date for our 2021 fundraising dinner. Please check for updates on our website and Facebook page in the coming months.**

## **Join AWAKEN in changing lives**

Use the enclosed envelope to send your check to AWAKEN, at P.O. Box 515, Yorktown, IN 47396. Or donate by PayPal at [www.awakeninc.org](http://www.awakeninc.org).

AWAKEN is a 501(c)3 organization. Your entire gift is tax-deductible.

### **AWAKEN's board of directors:**

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