



**Afghanistan Women Council
Micro-Finance Program Bio Booklet**



Run for Good

Run for Good is a team of dedicated runners in Switzerland who are using their feet to raise money and awareness for communities in need. We have teamed up with [AMT FÜR AUFBAU](#), a Swiss non-profit organization with experience in organizing charitable events. Together we are raising funds for projects in need and having fun in the process! We are united by the shared belief that the most natural way to change the world is through commitment and physical effort – One step at a time! Our team will be running in the [Greifenseelauf](#), the Zürich Half Marathon, to raise funds for the [Afghanistan Women's Council](#) micro-finance project. There are three ways that you can support our efforts to raise money for this project:

- **Support the Runners:** Each runner must be sponsored for the 21 kilometers that he/she will run during the [Greifenseelauf](#) Zürich half Marathon on 19 September 2009. Each kilometer is valued at 20 CHF and thus runners will need to raise at minimum 420 CHF. Sponsors can be family, friends, colleagues, etc. and may purchase as many kilometers as they wish to support their runner. Click [here](#) to make a tax-deductible donation and help sponsor a runner today!!! A small 20 CHF donation will go a long way! Please read our [sponsorship letter](#) written in both English and German.
- **Attend the Post-Run Celebration:** On the evening of 19 September 2009, [AMT FÜR AUFBAU](#) will host a post-[Greifenseelauf](#) fundraising party in Zürich for supporters to come out and celebrate with the [Run for Good runners](#).
- **Join Run for Good Community:** Join our community where you can see and interact with runners and supporters. We will post playlists, pictures, and track fundraising progress.

All charitable contributions are tax-deductible and can be made through [AMT FÜR AUFBAU](#)

Afghanistan Women Council (AWC)

AWC is a non-governmental, non-political, non-profit, non-sectarian community based women's organization founded in 1986 by a group of Afghan refugee women. Lead by Ms. Fatana Ishaq Gailani, AWC was established in Peshawar, Pakistan to provide emergency and humanitarian assistance to the Afghan refugees, especially women and children. AWC initially provided widows and the most vulnerable women in the refugee camps with educational programs, skills development courses, and programs that taught peace-building, democracy, and human rights awareness in the area of rights for women, children, and refugees. AWC also provided health facilities, including a mobile clinic and psychosocial counseling center, and education to the Afghan Refugee children via its MCH clinics and schools. A monthly publication was produced for the international community to read about the issues and problems affecting Afghani women.

In 1992, AWC opened its office in Kabul and established its MCH clinic of 10 beds for Afghan mothers in Qala e Fatullah, Kabul, which was functioning as the only women running clinic at the time of Taliban rule. AWC opened its offices in Kandahar and Jalalabad in 2006 and in Parwan in 2008. AWC has completed various projects in Kabul, Kandahar, Parwan and Jalalabad and trained more than 2000 women in literacy, health education, skills training. In addition, women have been given classes on human rights, women and children rights, peace-building, psychosocial counseling, environment protection (for abuse), community mobilization, leadership, business, and trade. Since 2004, over 5000 women have been give small loans through the micro-finance program to start a business and provide a path of support for their families.

AWC is the winner of 6 international Awards.

~ Stories of Supported Women ~

Halema Razz Mod Shah Mahmood



Halema is a 39 year old widow with 7 children (2 sons and 5 daughters). During the Taliban regime they lived as refugees for 5 years in Iran and returned to Kabul, Afghanistan after the Taliban was removed in the early 2000's. Her husband was soon killed from a bomb explosion while at work, leaving Halema and her children without income. They moved in with her brother's family but the living conditions were difficult and she had little assistance to help pay for her children's school fees. To provide some daily support, she made homemade quilts and sold them at the bazaar. The Afghanistan Women Council (AWC) learned of Halema's situation and carried out an assessment in which she was subsequently invited in the AWC micro-finance training program.

After the graduation from training courses, Halema possessed new vocational skills and was given a small business loan by AWC of 4000 Afs (US \$80.00) to help Halema purchase material for quilt making. She was able to receive 150-200 Afs (US \$3-5) per quilt. This income allowed her to pay for her children's educational expenses, provide food and supplies for the family, and slowly pay back the loan. Halema was granted a second loan to improve her quilt production and invest in some land. She hopes that AWC grants her future loans so that she can continue to expand

her business by buying a tailoring machine and employ more people in her family. From this opportunity with AWC micro-finance program Halema brings as much as 4000 Afs home per month and is able to contribute to the positive development of her community.

"I see that many changes that I cannot imagine, I am relieved from the times that me and my children were waiting for my brother's food, clothes and everything. I wish I had found this opportunity a long time ago, but any how this is also not late and was a good time for me. I don't have such words to thank such organization working for such people." Halema

Farzana M.Bakhsh Amerudin



Farzana is 33 years old with 9 children (3 daughters and six sons). Six of her children are over the age of 10 and in school. When Farzana got married, she moved to Pakistan to live with her husband's family and returned to Kabul, Afghanistan after the conflict subsided. She lived with her sister for eight years while her husband was a daily laborer until he became injured while working. After some time they were able to build a mud-house with two very basic rooms. With dreams of having her own bakery business, Farzana applied for the AWC micro-finance loan which allowed her to buy wood and build an oven to make local Afghani bread. This has allowed her to begin a small business which brings in 100 to 250 Afs (US \$3-5) per day. She hopes to secure another loan

in the future to establish her own official bakery and expand the business. Through her business she is able to support her children's education, provide food for the family and save a little for the future. She is interested in many skills, such as, sewing, knitting, beading and khamak, but her passion is baking

“A big change has been made to my life after receiving a loan. At first I was facing lots of poverty and I was suffering from our poor life. At the same time my husband did not allow me to work somewhere else. I work at my home now and make some money to support my family. I can support my children's school costs and other household costs. I am happy now.” Farzana

Ameena Karim Khan Abd. Fatah



Ameena has 11 children (7 daughters and 4 sons). She lives in an old house in Shore Bazaar area of Kabul, Afghanistan old city. She was married at the age of 25 years old to a man who was a driver by trade. After 6 years he married a second wife and began to be violent towards her. After some time she decided to leave with her children to find a separate home.

Due to lack of income and support from her husband, Ameena's elder son worked in a butcher's shop her mother provided some assistance. She went to AWC to learn how to change her circumstance and gain skills so that she could provide for her family. After going through the AWC micro-finance training program, Ameena received her first loan to buy equipment for cleaning trotters (pig feet) for other people. Her

second loan provided the support to buy her own trotters and then sell them in the Bazaar.

The support she has earned from the small trotter business, Ameena has been able to buy materials, clothes and stationery, and pay for her children's school fees. She continues to be self-employed and hopes to secure a 3rd loan to improve her business and the quality of life for her family. She is interested in learning many skills, such as, knitting, sewing of blankets, bead knitting, but hopes to expand her business of cleaning of trotters.

“A lot of changes came to my life after receiving the loan. At first I was very needless and I didn't have house materials. My children didn't go to school because I had no money to buy the school uniforms for them, stationary and other things. Now I am able to buy the house materials such as, carpet, curtains, food items, dishes and etc... and I send my children back to school. I bought for them clothes and stationary for their school. And I saved some money for my future.” Ameena





~ Stories of Women Who Need Support ~

Shaima M.Maqsood Basir Ah

Shaima is a 40 year old widow with 4 children (3 daughters and 1 son). She was married at the age of 17 and her husband eventually married a second wife and became abusive. This marriage ended due to continued violence and a miscarriage that Shaima had. She went to live with her father, who was very poor and struggled to support her and the children. Shaima accepted an offer for marriage to an army officer who unfortunately died while on duty. To survive, Shaima sold materials from her home and received some support from family. She now lives with her sister and hopes to secure some income so to pay for the school expenses of her 14 years old son and provide food for the family. Two of her daughters have married. She is completely reliant on the support from her sister and seeks to enroll in the AWC micro-finance program to gain skills and start a small family business to become more independent.

Marzia Bashi Ali M.Nasim

Marzia is 45 years old with 7 children (4 daughters and 3 sons). She grew up in an extremely poor environment and lost her father at an early age. She was married at the age of 14 years old to a 35 year old man who became increasingly abusive. She has gone through suicidal depression due to her difficult circumstances. Her husband has since become ill and unable to support the family. To provide some income, Marzia washes clothes and packages chocolates to sell to local shops. She hopes to change her situation and become more independent and self-employed. Her main skill is her ability to cook and has approached AWC to pursue a bakery career. A small loan could help her develop a home business and sell baked goods in the neighborhood.

Maliha Gh. Sakhi Zahid Ali

Maliha is a 39 year old widow with one daughter. She was forced into a marriage at 18 years old. Her husband eventually married another woman and after two years with two wives divorced Maliha. She married another man who died from the explosion of a roadside bomb while she was pregnant. Due to lack of sufficient work and income, Maliha married a man who already had another wife as she felt that she had no other choice and needed the extra support for her and her daughter. She currently works at a school as a cleaner for about 2700 Afs (US \$55.00) per month and cleans homes when possible. She has the skills of tailoring, knitting, and embroidery, and hopes that with a small loan from AWC she could start a small embroidery business.