

Afghanistan human rights

WOMEN FOR CHANGE

Human rights defenders are under attack in many countries. In Afghanistan, the environment for **women human rights defenders** is considerably more difficult and dangerous. Over the past few years there has been a significant increase in threats, intimidation and attacks against those at the forefront of promoting and protecting women's rights.

Women acting in public life are subject to pressures and threats from traditional social circles, and they are not adequately protected in the exercise of public functions in freedom and autonomy.

Education is important to empower women and to prepare the ground for their participation in political and public life: no investment in education, means less female protagonism in political life.

Supporting the political, and **civic leadership of women** in the country is an essential policy to stimulate effective and sustainable change in local society.

"Political rights, this is what we need. We need a lasting change"
Human Rights Defenders say.

Empowering women's political and civil leadership means as well affecting structural factors of bad governance, and not merely dealing with its consequences.

AHRAM / afghanistanhumanrights.org

Ahram project's objective is enhancing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Afghanistan, by supporting human rights' defenders. **Ahram project promotes the national and international campaign "Women for Change"**

COSPE / cospe.org

COSPE Onlus is a private, secular and non-profit organization. It aims at creating a change which guarantees equal and sustainable development, the respect of human rights, and peace and justice among people.



Co-funded by
the European Union



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN



Women as drivers of change

We want to draw attention to the need of **removing the obstacles** limiting the access to education of girls and **preparing female leadership** in the country. We support positive measures to **protect the role of women** in politics, in social institutions and in the community **as drivers of change**.

WHAT WE DEMAND

To the Afghan government:

- 1. Protect women victims of threats and violence due to their engagement in human rights defense, political or public activities** by taking appropriate actions and prosecute responsible persons in a fair, unbiased and fast way.
- 2. Re-establishing the 25% women quota** for the seats at Provincial Councils, and applying similar mechanisms in District and Village elections; Remove the **minimum level of education requirement** to candidate at the election that restricts female access to active political life.
- 3. Increasing the recruitment of women**, especially newly graduated, as **civil servants and in government institutions** through quotas, and ensuring their representation in recruitment committees.
- 4. Take measures to remove biases limiting women's access to education**, encouraging families to let girls complete their studies, preventing girls' school drop-out at young age (10-13 years old) and **enrolling female teachers** with prerequisite qualifications.

WHAT WE DEMAND

To the international community:

- 1. Donors should make pressure on Afghan government:** to enhance women's participation in public life and education asking to provide security protection measures for women candidates, female teachers and those who are defending women's rights.
- 2. EU and Member States should allocate a relevant percentage of their resources for cooperation to:**
 - A. Guarantee physical safety protection and a real participation of women to public life**
 - B. Upgrade access to education** of girls reducing discrimination *e.g. through the offering of international scholarships for young women*
 - C. Promote job inclusion for women** in strategic sectors for the defense of women HRDs, such as the juridical, the security-related, and the professional journalism sectors
- 3. The International Community should encourage Afghan Government to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**, and to align national law with international standards, implementing the **Elimination of violence against women law (EWAV law)**.