

TAKE ACTION ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN AFGHANISTAN

Ordinary people are doing extraordinary work

Doctors, teachers, journalists, activist and lawyers. Ordinary people are doing extraordinary work, risking their safety, to help women across Afghanistan know and access their rights. Their work is vital.

Because of their work women's rights in Afghanistan have greatly improved in recent years. But the threats and violent attacks on them and their families continue and the future looks increasingly dangerous.

UK governments have worked to encourage women to take up public roles like these in Afghanistan. But as international forces prepare to withdraw from the country the British Government must act now to support and protect women's rights in Afghanistan.

'I am like you, I just want to be able to go to work, to do my job and feel safe. Most of the time I do not feel secure. I sometimes even think I might not return back home in the evening as this has happened to many.' Samira Hamidi

Samira Hamidi is an activist who has been working to protect and promote women's rights in Afghanistan for the past 10 years. She worries about an increasingly dangerous future for women in Afghanistan.

Many countries, including the UK, have committed to withdraw troops from Afghanistan at the end of this year.

As world leaders meet at the NATO summit in Wales this week to decide the future of Afghan security our government can lead the way and make a big difference to these women and women's rights across Afghanistan before all NATO troops pull out.

Women like Samira, need support and protection to continue their work. Afghanistan has been named 'the worst place in the world to be a woman'. Help us change this.

Ask the British Government to take these simple steps to support and protect Afghan women.

The British Government must act now to support and protect women's rights in Afghanistan after NATO troops pull out. Join with Samira and other women at risk for their work who ask:

Know who I am - The British Embassy in Kabul should create and maintain a database to know who is at risk.

Talk to me - The British Embassy in Kabul should have staff whose job it is to keep in regular contact with women at risk.

Stand with me - By knowing who is at risk and what support they need the British Government can better stand up for women's rights in Afghanistan.

If the Afghan Government pass discriminatory laws the British Government should condemn them. If individuals at risk face threats or acts of violence the British Government should

condemn them and have a system in place to provide emergency support – including safe houses and relocation.

Background

In Afghanistan, being a doctor, teacher, working in the police force or politics puts you at huge risk – especially if you're a woman.

Our campaign asks the British Government to safeguard the rights of the brave women in Afghanistan who go to work every day despite facing serious threats to their lives continues.

Women are a force for change in Afghanistan

The UK government has encouraged women to take up public roles in Afghanistan. There have been significant improvements to the lives of girls and women all over Afghanistan, thanks to women working in education, healthcare and political participation:

Afghanistan's maternal mortality rate has fallen from 49.4% to 17.9% since the fall of the Taliban because of the hard work of midwives and women doctors

There are now more than 8.3 million students in Afghan schools, nearly 40 per cent of them girls, thanks to a surge in dedicated women teachers.

While these gains have improved life for all women and girls in Afghanistan, the women leading the way carry out this work at great personal risk. And they don't have the support and protection they need to carry on their work without fear of attack.

