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SUPPORT FOR AFGHAN WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA NOW URGENT

AWOTM is seeking grants to provide urgent and practical support to Afghan women and their families living in and newly arrived in Australia.

Maryam Zahid, Founder and Director of the Australian-based not-for-profit **Afghan Women on The Move** (AWOTM), is receiving hundreds of calls for help from the 3000+ Afghan women in her online community.

“They are struggling with a range of issues”, explains Zahid, “from practical things like a lack of computers to home-school their children to more complex challenges including mental-health issues, like post-traumatic stress being triggered by the recent events in Afghanistan... Today’s news will heighten their distress”.

The lockdown was already causing difficulty and distress for many Afghan women and families in Australia. The sudden fall of Kabul to the Taliban last month and the new government announced today, adds enormous strain to these women and families. Almost all of them have family and friends back in Afghanistan. AWOTM is very concerned about mental health issues in our community at this time.

AWOTM supports the health, mental wellbeing, individual growth and development of Afghan and other women of diverse backgrounds in Australia. We provide our women with opportunities to grow and develop in a safe place. We use art, music and poetry as a healing language for our members. We also work to educate the mainstream, broader community on the issues faced by culturally diverse women in today’s Australian society.

Due to the recent crisis in Afghanistan, and the ongoing strain of COVID-19 restrictions, Afghan women and their families living in Australia are in urgent need of practical support and mental health assistance. By obtaining funding, AWOTM would be able to further help provide the support desperately needed, critical information and resources to its own community.

Maryam Zahid is available for interviews.

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