

## **Being a Woman in Afghanistan**

*A statement issued by Women in Black in Adelaide on 28 April 2010.*

Women in Afghanistan often say that their major needs are education and basic services such as health. It is hard to imagine the day-to-day dangers and hardships of their situation.

In the disruption of war and extreme poverty, it is difficult to provide basic services. But there is also actual opposition to the education of girls, for instance. In 2008, 670 education-related attacks were reported - for example, violence against teachers, and acid attacks on students. The attackers are reportedly from violent groups within the country such as the Taliban.

Why would these attackers go to so much trouble? What difference would a little education make? It could be that with a very small amount of information, some basic literacy and numeracy, and with improved communications both with each other and with the outside world, Afghan women could contribute significantly to the easing of tensions within their country.

Violent groups who want war to continue may well think that they have reason to fear and hate a more unifying, more connected, and more humane influence within their own community.

Building the strength and independence of Afghan women through health and education services could be a successful way for them to map out a path towards peace for themselves, their families and their communities. Women in Black encourages the Australian Government to help build the health and connectedness of the Afghan community, especially the education of Afghan girls.

*Women in Black is an international anti-war movement. Vigils are held in approximately thirty-one countries around the world - countries such as Italy, USA, Canada, Germany, India, Palestine and Israel.*

*Downloaded from [www.sawa-australia.org/background.html](http://www.sawa-australia.org/background.html)*