

CISDA association has been developing projects of solidarity in favour of Afghan women since 1999. The association's first step was inviting activists from two Afghan organizations (RAWA and HAWCA) to the 3rd "Assembly of the Peoples' UN" held in Perugia (1999), which was titled "Another world is possible. Let's build it together. The role of global civil society and local communities for peace, an economy with justice and international democracy."

Since then, CISDA women keep cooperating with Afghan associations of women committed to the promotion of human rights and women's rights in Afghanistan. CISDA takes part in an extended network, made up by both Italian and international grassroots associations, and including individuals who share the same view on development programmes.

CISDA mission is to boost the international cooperation based on shared political principles and human values, such as democracy, secularism, human rights and women's rights. Particularly, we focus on underprivileged women suffering from social, economic, and political oppression. We believe that self-determination and active participation of women in the political and social life are the foundations of democracy and freedom. Therefore, our projects aim at disseminating information and building solidarity bridges with Afghan movements of women through communication, education, cultural and political activities, both in Italy and abroad.

CISDA is an Italian ONLUS ("Organizzazione non lucrativa di utilità sociale", a non-profit organization) since 2004, when the group decided to register officially in order to submit bids in response to calls for tenders. Nevertheless, the association remains firmly independent from any State institution, and operates as a grassroots organization networking with many and diverse civil society movements.

Currently, CISDA main partner associations include The house of women of Viareggio, The house of women of Turin, several Italian NGOs, such as Insieme si può (Belluno), Istituto per la cooperazione allo sviluppo (Alessandria), Progetto di aggregazione giovanile (Trieste).

CISDA is mostly cooperating with three Afghan associations of women: RAWA (Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan – [www.rawa.org](http://www.rawa.org)), HAWCA (Humanitarian Assistance for the Women and Children of Afghanistan – [www.hawca.org](http://www.hawca.org)) and OPAWC (Organization for Promoting Afghan Women's Capabilities).

Besides, we are supporting Afghan deputy Malalai Joya (<http://www.malalaijoya.com/index1024.htm>), who was expelled from the Parliament (Wolesi Jirga) in May 2007, and other women who are fighting for freedom and democracy in Afghanistan.

### **Books**

- ***Afghanistan nel cuore***, edited by Laura Quagliuolo (essays by Giuliana Sgrena, Barbara Laveggio, Luisa Morgantini; photos by Mauro Sioli, Ivana Stefani and Francesca Flumeri), 2003
- ***Zoya la mia storia***, by John Follain and Rita Cristofani (interview to an activist of Rawa), Sperling & Kupfer, 2004
- ***Mai tornerò indietro***, by Melody Chavis, Sperling & Kupfer, 2005 (*Meena, Heroine of Afghanistan*, St. Martin's Griffin 2004; translated into Italian by CISDA)
- ***Get the word out. La forza delle donne afgane. Il riscatto di una dignità negata***, by Simona Cataldi, MEF-L'Autore Libri Firenze, 2006
- ***Il voto femminile in Afghanistan***, by Simona Cataldi, EDUP, 2009
- Upcoming publication: *War crimes by fundamentalists from 1992 to 1996*, by RAWA.

## Articles

Contributions to the journals: "**Guerre & Pace**", "**Annuario della Pace**", "**Rivista del Volontariato**", "**Marea**", "**Qui appunti dal presente**"

## Films sponsored by CISDA

- **Donne di Kabul**, by Ivana Stefani, 2002, 20'
- **Kabul 2003**, by Libera Mazzoleni, 2003, 30'
- **Boccioli di Rabbia**, by Michela Guberti, 2006, 52'

## Film about women supported by CISDA

- **Enemies of Happiness**, by Eva Mulvad and Anja Al Erhayem (2006), about the electoral campaign of Malalai Joya: italian subtitles by CISDA. 55' (Silver Wolf Award at the Amsterdam IDFA 2006, Sundance Festival Award 2007)

## Travels to Afghanistan and Pakistan

CISDA has been organizing trips to Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan and to Afghanistan since 1999. CISDA is used to invite representatives from public institutions, associations and unions to travel to Afghanistan, in order to see the reality of this worn-torn country, meet Afghan civil society organizations, and visit CISDA projects being developed.

## Travel of Afghan delegates to Italy

At least a couple of times a year, CISDA invites delegates from the Afghan associations supported to come to Italy, where they hold conferences about the situation of their country.

## Afghan citizens treated in Italy

Some Afghan women suffering from various diseases have been medical treatment in Italy.

## Children Welfare Project - Children from Afghan orphanages in Italy

Children from AFCECO Afghan orphanages are taken in by Italian families in San Giuliano Milanese and San Donato Milanese for some months. They are taken care of, they are vaccinated, and they usually attend Italian schools (since 2007).

## Children from Afceco orphanages on holiday in Italy

December 2007-January 2008: Mahbooba, Razma and Storey were guests of three families in San Donato Milanese. The project will continue next year.

## Public meetings in Italy and political activities

- Promoted several meetings in many Italian cities, such as Milan, Rome, Florence, Como, Lecco, Viareggio, Torino etc (1999-2009)
- Organised an international demonstration in favour of the reinstatement of Afghan deputy Malalai Joya expelled from the Parliament (Wolesi Jirga) (Italy, Canada, Spain, USA, Australia, Germany, May 2007)
- Promoted the Italian campaign for the suspension of death penalty for Parwiz Kambakhsh, charged of opinion crime by an Afghan court

## Italian awards received by Afghan human rights activists

- Honorary acknowledgment to RAWA by city of Verbania (May 2000)
- Isimbardi Award to RAWA by the Province of Milan (December 2001)
- Honorary acknowledgment of Region Lombardia to RAWA, in occasion of Award for peace to RAWA (2003)
- Acknowledgment to RAWA, by Associazione Mara Soldi, Cremona (2003)
- Donna dell'Anno Award (Valle d'Aosta) to Malalai Joya, MP of Afghan Parliament and director of OPAWC NGO in Farah Province (2004)
- Viareggio Award for human rights promotion to Zoya, RAWA activist (2002)
- Mare Nostrum Award to Malalai Joya, Viareggio, October (2007)
- Giglio d'Oro Award to Malalai Joya by the city of Florence (2007)
- Le case degli angeli di Daniele Award to Malalai Joya, Bologna (October 2007)

- “Special Mention” to CISDA at the Premio Pace Regione Lombardia (2007)
- Don Ernesto Balducci Award for Human Rights Promotion to RAWA (2009)

### **Projects**

- Organized long distant adoptions of children from the orphanages of RAWA and OPAWC – funds from CISDA and ISCOS Piemonte e Lombardia
- Participated in MAE project (Italian Ministry of foreign affairs) “HAWCA’s shelter for women in Kabul and training centre”. See website: <http://www.afghanistanitw.org/eng/introduzione.php>
- Set up literacy courses for women in Peshawar
- Supported Malalai Hospital in Khewa refugee camp (Peshawar), financed from the municipality of San Giuliano Milanese in 2004 and 2005
- Set up the Medical centre Behsood in Nangrahar province (Jalalabad) – funds from Region Veneto and CISDA
- Started a tailoring course (RAWA) – funds from municipality San Giuliano Milanese
- Started an ITC school in the Province of Farah (OPAWC)
- Provided food supply in Bamyan province (2008-Hawca)
- Financed the Truth and Reconciliation Project (Civil society at work for the denunciation of atrocious crimes and human rights violations committed in Afghanistan between 1979 and 2001), through the European Commission and the Afghan Association of Justice Seekers (2008-2009)
- Started a Vocational Training Center in Kabul through financing from the Regione Toscana
- Required the refinancing of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs project in Kabul: Printing House, House for maltreated women, Cultural Centre

### **Other activities**

- Supported the Afghan community in Italy
- Organized cultural events promoting the Afghan culture
- Contributed to Immagimondo 2003, Osnago (Festival of travels, countries and cultures)
- Organized classroom activities in Italian High Schools, focusing on human rights violations in post-conflict situations (Liceo Carducci, Milano; Liceo Primo Levi, San Donato Milanese)
- Sponsored Afghan documentaries made by Afghan directors to the Festival of Cinema in Venice, Festival of Mestre and to the Video Festival of Canzo (Como)

*COORDINAMENTO ITALIANO SOSTEGNO DONNE AFGHANE Onlus*  
*Codice Fiscale 97381410154*

*BANCA POPOLARE ETICA – Agenzia Via Melzo, 34 – Milano*

*C/c 113666 – CIN U – ABI 5018 – CAB 1600 - IBAN: IT64U050180160000001136666*