WELCOME TO OUR

Monthly Newsletter

Stories of learning, growth, and opportunity

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

A community with a purpose



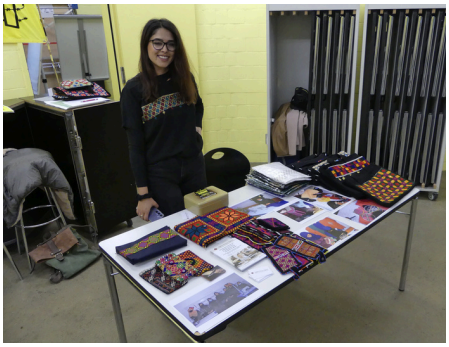
Afghan Women Support (AWS) began in Afghanistan in 2018 and was officially recognized in Switzerland in 2022. Today, we work alongside Afghan women and girls to expand access to learning, develop skills, support well-being, and create opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Behind this work are students exploring new possibilities, educators sharing their knowledge, and people across our community working together to make learning meaningful.

Welcome to AWS Monthly — a space to share these stories, celebrate progress, and bring you closer to the people and programs shaping our work. Thank you for being part of this journey.

AWS AT A GLANCE

- Our Journey: Initiative launched in Afghanistan in 2018; officially recognized in Switzerland in 2022.
- Based in: Switzerland.
- Our Community: Afghan women and girls, educators, volunteers, and collaborators across borders.
- Our Focus: Education, skills development, creativity, well-being, and professional opportunities.



A NOTE FROM AWS

"Education is freedom, and together, we are building the bridges of hope."

Dear AWS Community,

The past two months have brought continued progress, creativity, and new milestones across AWS. From the development of new products through our handicraft initiatives to the completion of Chapter One of our comic project, our programs continue to create opportunities for Afghan women and girls to learn, express themselves, and build new skills.

Alongside these achievements, we are looking ahead to new opportunities, upcoming activities, and ways to strengthen our community. Each step forward reflects the dedication of our students, educators, volunteers, and team members, whose efforts help bring our mission to life.

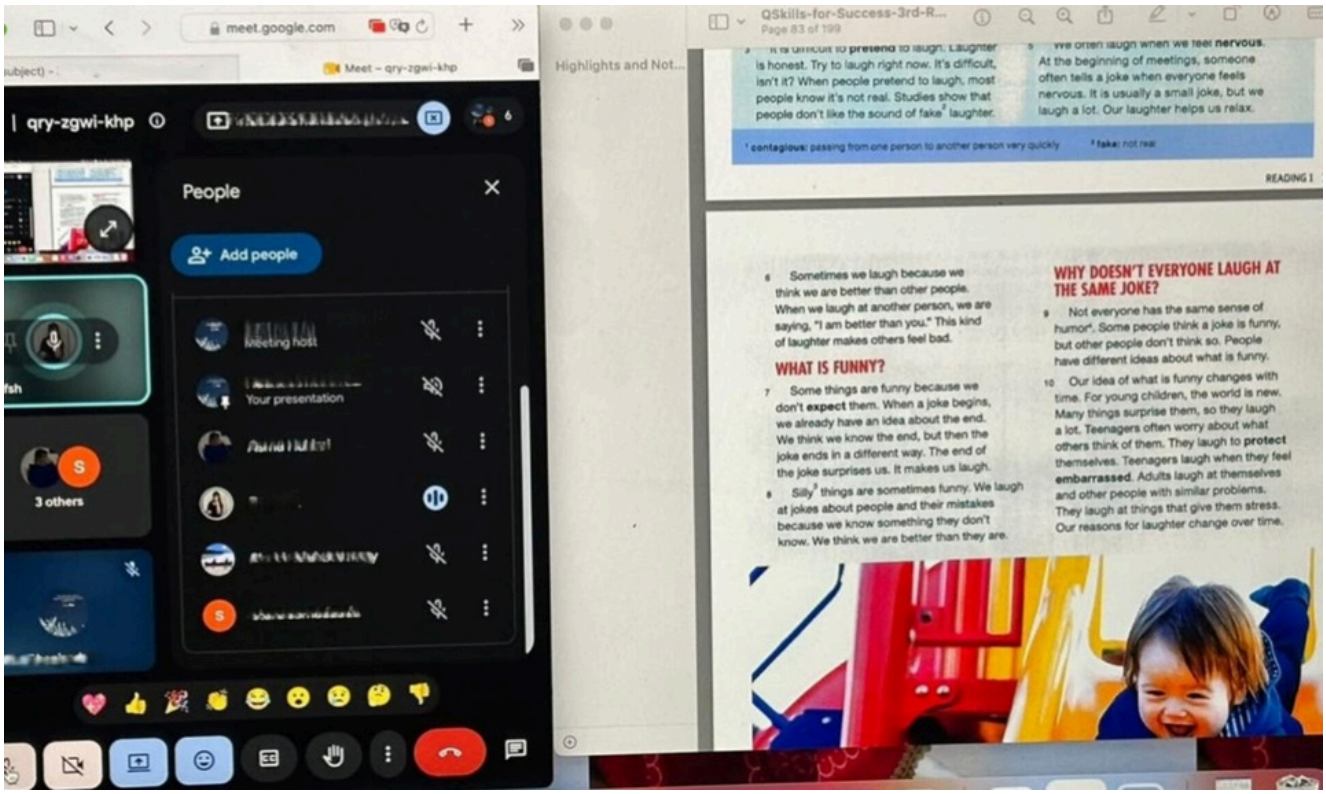
We are grateful to everyone who contributes their time, skills, and support to this shared mission. Thank you for being part of the AWS community and for helping us continue creating opportunities for Afghan women and girls to learn, grow, and pursue their aspirations.

With gratitude,

The AWS Newsletter Team

AWS MONTHLY OVERVIEW

SELAI DESIGN | ENGLISH BRIDGING | STEM | COMIC | MENTAL HEALTH | UNIVERSITY INTERNSHIPS



FROM LEARNING TO CREATIVE OUTCOMES

INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE PATHWAYS FROM FOUNDATIONAL EDUCATION TO PROFESSIONAL CREATION.



SELAI DESIGN

NEW PRODUCTS



COMIC PROJECT

CHAPTER 1 COMPLETETD



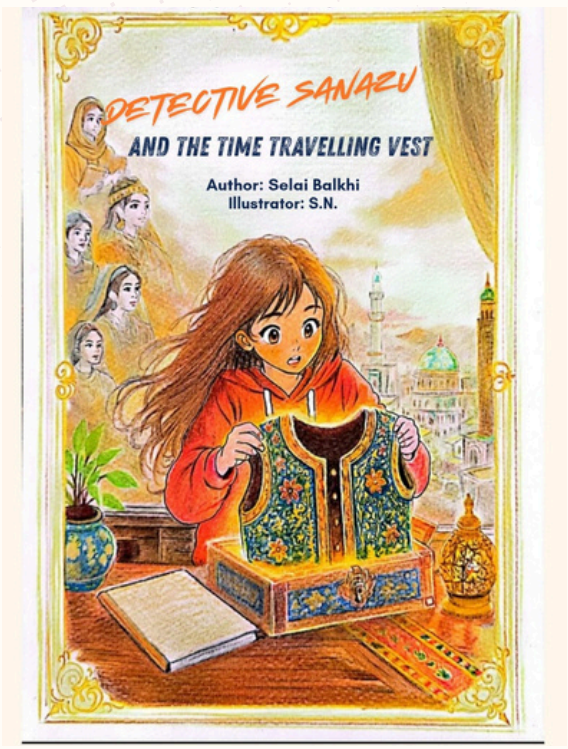
ENGLISH PROGRAM

+42 STUDENTS PARTICIPATED

Afghan Women Support
Empowerment through education and work

COMIC PROJECT

October 2026 Vol.1



DETECTIVE SANAZU AND THE TIME-TRAVELING VEST

Every story carries a piece of history. Every girl deserves the chance to imagine what comes next.

A Story Taking Shape, A Heritage Brought to Life

Some stories do more than entertain. They help young readers discover their roots, connect with their cultural heritage, and imagine new possibilities.

Created through the collaboration of writer Selai Balkhi and illustrator SN, **Detective Sanazu and the Time-Traveling Vest** brings Afghan history and culture to life through illustrated storytelling. Through SANAZU's adventures, girls are invited to discover inspiring Afghan women and see their heritage through a new lens.

More than a comic, SANAZU is a growing storytelling project that connects creativity, cultural learning, and the next generation

TOP NEWS

TOWARD PUBLICATION

With Chapter One complete, the team is working toward publication and seeking grant funding to bring SANAZU's story to more readers.

THE SANAZU COLLECTION

The world of SANAZU is taking shape beyond the pages, with a collection of physical items inspired by the story, including a vest, tote bags, and hang tags.

NEW WORLDS AWAIT

The next chapters will take SANAZU deeper into Afghanistan's rich history, where extraordinary figures, fascinating encounters, and unexpected discoveries await.

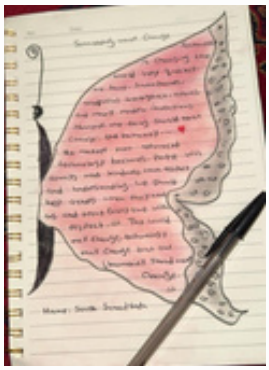
CHAPTER ONE: A MILESTONE REACHED

In July 2026, **Selai Balkhi's** participation in Comic-Con helped bring SANAZU into a wider international comics setting - a significant step in bringing this story to life.

Through illustration and research into Afghan history and cultural heritage, the team is building a story that connects young readers with their roots and introduces them to the inspiring women of Afghanistan.



MONTHLY PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHTS



ENGLISH BRIDGING PROGRAM

The English Bridging Program is working toward a more connected learning experience, giving current students opportunities to strengthen their English skills through a wider range of classes within the AWS community.

The program continues to broaden English-learning opportunities across the AWS community.

New classes:

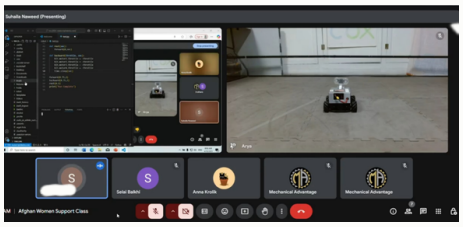
- The B1/B2 class launched on October 12 with seven students, while another B1 class is in preparation for 10–12 learners.
- Shared reading: The Anne of Green Gables book club brings together 12 participants.
- Learning outcomes: Students have expressed satisfaction with the program's teaching methods and learning materials, alongside opportunities to develop reading and writing skills.



Mental Health Support

This month, AWS continued its mental health support for women in Afghanistan through a counselling session focused on emotional well-being and psychoeducation, alongside a collaboration with Mentee. These efforts reflect the program's commitment to making emotional support and mental health education more accessible.

STEM & Mathematics Program



AWS is developing a STEM initiative to expand access to mathematics education for Afghan women and girls, supported by local and international instructors. The program is currently gathering data on students' needs and interests to guide curriculum development and future learning opportunities.

Key Updates

- Understanding learning needs: Surveys and data collection are underway to better understand girls' learning needs, interests, and educational priorities.
- Planning next steps: The findings will help guide the development of a structured curriculum and suitable learning opportunities for students.



Selai Design Initiative

Selai Design is moving toward a new stage of development, building on the sewing, design, and business skills gained through training. With the training phase successfully completed, the initiative is now preparing to connect women's skills with future production, market access, and income-generating opportunities.

HANDICRAFT WORKSHOPS





KABUL WORKSHOP UPDATES

One of two Selai Design production units, the Kabul workshop supports women in sewing, design, and business skills. Seven women participate in Kabul, and all 14 participants across both locations completed training by September 13, 2026, meeting the mid-term review target.

This month, participants began developing sample vests, tote bags, and bag tags. The next phase will focus on production, market access, and income generation.

HERAT WORKSHOP UPDATES

The Herat workshop is one of two Selai Design production units, with seven women participating in the program. By September 13, 2026, the training-completion target had been achieved across both locations, with all 14 participants completing their training.

Participants are now applying their sewing and design skills to products such as tote bags, bag tags, and traditional Afghan waskats (vests). The workshop also encourages teamwork, peer support, and confidence as women continue developing their practical skills.





ENGLISH BRIDGING PROGRAM

Afghan Women Support
Empowerment through education and work

The AWS Diary

IN CONVERSATION WITH FLURINA

Exploring the people, perspectives, and purpose behind AWS.



About Flurina

Flurina joined AWS as one of its first English teachers in early 2023. What began as a teaching role became something much deeper: lasting connection with Afghan women across the world and a renewed perspective on life, education, and human connection.

01-Her Journey

Could you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what first brought you to AWS?

I'm kind of the "Mama of AWS". I've worked as a teacher and healer around the world for years. I first came into contact with Selai through a young Afghan woman who had made a dangerous journey from Iran to Greece with her mother. A few weeks later, when AWS was looking for an English teacher, thought, "Why not?" I had no idea what world I was about to enter.

02-MORE THAN A COMMUNITY

What motivates you to continue being part of AWS, and what does this community mean to you personally?

These women in Afghanistan and the ones who have escaped during the past years have become my family.
I tell people it's no different from supporting my sister, my parents, or my neighbours. We breathe the same air, look at the same sun, drink the same water and stand on the same tiny rocket ship called Earth.

There is not a day when I'm not in touch with my Afghan family. What really like about AWS is that it's a small, grassroots organization. The connections are real, and politics cannot stop us from meeting.

03- COURAGE IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

Can you share a memorable experience with AWS that reminded you why this work matters?

In the beginning, many young women were struggling deeply.
Being there and witnessing their growth and blossoming has been incredibly moving.

" I never found broken women.
I found some of the most courageous women I ever met."

A MESSAGE TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Is there a message you would like to share with our donors and supporters?

"If we treat one another in the way we would like to be treated, we change the world. Some changes may seem small. But hasn't even the biggest tree started with a small seed atom by atom?"

Afghan Women Support
Empowerment through education and work

MONTHLY STUDENT STORY SPOTLIGHT

Hope Found Its Way Back

Niamh Molloy | AN AWS Student Story

When girls' schools in Afghanistan closed, I was in Grade 10. Education had always been one of my greatest passions, and I dreamed of becoming a doctor and an independent woman. Losing access to school deeply affected me, and for a while, it was difficult to imagine a future where my dreams could come true.

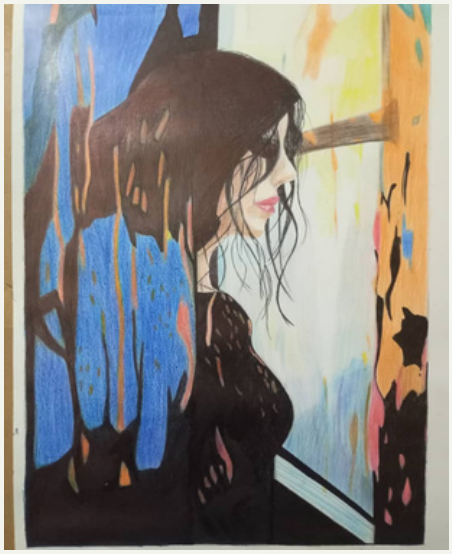
But I did not want to give up.

Afghan Women Support became a source of hope when I needed it most. Through AWS, I receive mental health support and continue learning English. The poetry group has also given me a space to express my feelings, share my writing, and connect with others through words.

Today, I continue to paint, write poetry, study English, and work toward completing my education. I dream of becoming a doctor, supporting my family, and inspiring other Afghan girls to believe in themselves.

I may not know exactly what the future holds, but I know I will keep trying. With hope in my heart and determination in my steps, I am still writing my story — and I believe its most beautiful chapters are yet to come.







Achla

Mathematics & STEM Department
Member Highlight

"Hello, I'm Achla. I aspire to make learning a journey of confidence, growth, and healing for everyone. Through this initiative, I hope to see more Afghan women discover their inner potential, inspired by Selai's empowering work, creating a future where every woman feels seen, valued, and empowered to shine."

EDUCATION

Master's in Applied Mathematics
Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling & Mental Health

EXPERIENCE

Nearly 2 years of professional experience in education.

ROLE AT AWS

Leading the newly launched project: Empower through Maths.

> *"Even an obscure star that dœs not shine at the highest peaks of the night is still a star if it wishes to shine. I believe even the smallest efforts can spark meaningful change."*
> *—Achla*

Upcoming Events

GENEVA HEALTH FORUM | Academic Presentations



AWS Global Advocacy in Geneva

Afghan Women Support Switzerland is proud to announce its official participation in the prestigious **Geneva Health Forum**, scheduled for this upcoming **November 2026**. This international platform serves as a critical milestone for our organization to present sustainable initiatives, share research insights, and engage in high-level advocacy for Afghan women. Through this global network, we continue to bridge local talent with international policy platforms to foster meaningful, lasting change.

We are proud to highlight our distinguished research colleagues, **Selai Balkhi** and **Nabi Anis Tobish** , who will be officially representing AWS at the upcoming forum in Geneva. Bringing their rigorous academic expertise to this global platform, they will present their Master's theses focusing on ***Gender Apartheid*** and ***Feminism in Afghanistan.*** Their participation underscores AWS's commitment to driving international advocacy through structural research, bridging local knowledge with global policy networks to amplify the voices and intellectual resistance of Afghan women.



Meet our intern



Phuöng Nga Tran

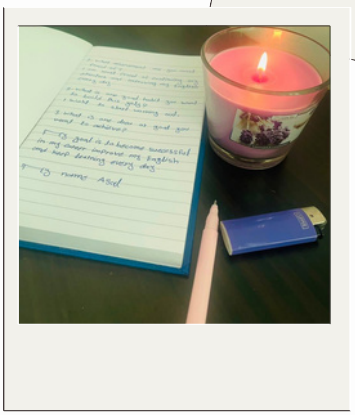
MSc Candidate in Global Health | University of Geneva

"As a Master's student in Global Health at the University of Geneva, I am deeply motivated by AWS's practical approach of working directly alongside local communities to promote long-term independence and sustainable opportunities for women. Through this internship, I look forward to translating my academic learning into practical experience in program assessment, research, and stakeholder collaboration—contributing meaningfully to AWS's inspiring ongoing initiatives."

CREATIVE & CULTURAL JOURNEYS

Global Journeys & Exchange
AWS has welcomed Patricia, an author and global traveler, as a volunteer contributor. Through an interactive community platform, she shares her international stories to foster cross-cultural learning. This collaborative space focuses on cultural exchange, listening to students' narratives, and bringing the voices and resilience of Afghan women to a wider global audience.





AWS Poetry Publishing Project
We have recently created a new Poetry & Creative Writing group at AWS. This small, creative space is dedicated to emotional healing and personal growth, capturing the heartfelt reflections and writings of young Afghan women. By using the power of the pen, this initiative simply helps our students grow creatively, and bring their authentic stories to the world.

Thank You

for being a vital part of our journey.

Every milestone we reach is made possible through your trust, dedication, and continuous support for Afghan Women Support

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